

The TOPS Reminder

A newsletter for Western Massachusetts Counties

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Re-instated KOPS

Congratulations to Jill Greene of Pittsfield 0009

Dice Game

Submitted by Sharon Marks, 0411 Westfield

Instructions for dice will be at the end of newsletter. Three dice are made two of them have numbers or dots on them. The third dice has exercise activities to do such as toe touches, arm circles and leg lifts.

Workshop

Mark November 1 on your calendars .I'm holding a workshop at the Shriners' hospital in Springfield. Beverly Enos will not be able to make it as I planned. Does anyone know of a dietician or a good speaker they feel others would be interested in?

KOPS Honor Society

I have not forgot about Starting a group .I have 3 chapters interested out of 16. The chapters are Westfield 0412, Chicopee 0211, and Greenfield 0395. My problem is finding a place to hold the meetings.

Lost phone

I lost my cell phone and I lost all the nice pictures I took when I visited your chapter. I will try to remember all of stories in the next 2 newsletters.

Chapter 0187 North Adams

Here are some of the great things that they have been or just started to do in their chapter.

A stuffed bear was given to them by Barbara Todd a retired Area Captain. This bear was first given to a member that had a difficult week to remind them that they are loved and cared about at their chapter. The next week he/she gives it to a member they feel needs to take the bear home.

Book of Inspiration

Each week the book is sent home to someone in need. They write something of inspiration to bring back to the chapter and they have the notebook which is quite thick to read during the week. They read their inspiration during the meeting the next week.

Safety pins with pony beads

A large safety pin was given to each member .Every time a pound is lost they will receive a pony bead. They plan on making bracelets then necklaces. I'm looking forward to seeing their success.

Cooking With Whole Grains



Whole grains - full of protein, fiber, vitamins, minerals and low-glycemic carbohydrates - are an important part of my [Anti-Inflammatory Food Pyramid](#), but I always specify "true" whole grains. This means when using or cooking with whole grains, the individual grains must be intact or cracked into a few large pieces, *not* ground in flour. Few nutrition guides make this distinction, but it is vital - with true whole grains, the outer bran and germ layers remain to encase the starchy endosperm within. This means it takes longer for

digestion to occur, which slows the conversion of starch to sugar, keeping you fuller longer and preventing spikes in blood sugar that can lead to insulin resistance - a major driver of [obesity](#), [high blood pressure](#) and type 2 [diabetes](#).

Don't be fooled by "whole-grain" products such as whole wheat flour (or bread made from it), which have a glycemic index nearly as high as that of refined flour. Grains that have been pulverized into flour, whether "whole" or not, have a significantly expanded starchy surface area available to digestive enzymes, and cause blood sugar levels to spike dramatically.

In addition to regulating blood sugar levels, the fiber in whole grains improves cholesterol ratios and aids the digestive system. A recent government study even linked the fiber found in whole grains specifically to longer life (a lower risk of death at any age from common fatal conditions such as cardiovascular, respiratory and infectious diseases and possibly even cancer).

A serving of true whole grains - embellished or plain - makes a healthy side for almost any meal, but they are also wonderful in soups, stews, salads and stuffings. Alternatively, try any of the following grains as breakfast porridge (in the same way you would enjoy oats), cooked a little longer if necessary. Serve with fruit, [cinnamon](#) and/or a

healthy sweetener such as a bit of maple syrup.

However you serve your whole grains, know that you are making a good choice for your heart, waistline, blood sugar levels and food budget.

General tips on cooking with whole grains:

- For most grains, rinse prior to cooking to remove any debris (rolled oats and kasha are exceptions). It's particularly important to rinse quinoa, which has soap-like components called saponins that can taste bitter and have a laxative effect. To rinse, place in a bowl of cold water and swish around with your fingers, refilling the water once or twice. Drain in a fine-meshed strainer.
- The instructions given for each grain here are for stovetop preparation. But you can also use a rice or pressure cooker for any whole grain instead of a pot on the burner; just know that the cooking times and liquid ratios provided may need to be adjusted.
- To reduce cooking time for longer-cooking grains, pre-soak them for a few hours or overnight (with the exception of quinoa, which has a bitter coating that can be

absorbed if soaked; rinse quinoa briefly instead).

- Except where stirring or uncovering is suggested, don't remove the lid while cooking grains, as it disrupts the steaming process.
- If you are watching your sodium intake, feel free to cook your grains in unsalted water. Otherwise, one-fourth teaspoon of sea salt goes a long way (add salt when you combine grain and water in the pot). Alternatively, try using vegetable broth as the cooking liquid, or for a more exotic flavor, a 50/50 mixture of water and juice. You can even add a splash of wine or dried herbs.
- It's generally a good idea to purchase grains in bulk, except where otherwise noted. Some grains such as rice and oats are found at typical supermarkets, but you will have better luck finding more obscure grains, such as teff and amaranth, at your local natural foods store. For all grains, opt for organic varieties from the bulk bins of health food stores whenever possible - they have higher turnover rates, which improves the likelihood of freshness.

- Store in tightly sealed containers in the pantry (or another cool, dry, dark place). Even better: store in the refrigerator if you have room. Unless otherwise noted, properly stored grains can last up to one year.

The grain-by-grain guide below offers everything you need to know about cooking with whole grains, including historical and cultural heritage, common varieties, nutritional value, storage tips, healthful recipes, and standard cooking instructions. Try these grains as part of a healthy diet plan:

What Does Eating in Moderation Mean?



By +Leyla Shamayeva

Dieting: a word that turns off both nutritionists and those trying to lose weight. It conjures up thoughts of diet restrictions, "bad" foods, and delivery meal plans. As many experts will

tell you, however, the key to successful and sustained weight loss, as well as the secret to overall health, is moderation. We always hear "everything in moderation," but what exactly does that mean for how you eat?

How Do I Eat in Moderation?

According to the dictionary, moderation simply means "the avoidance of excess or extremes." One of the first thoughts that should come to mind is portion control. In today's super-sized society we are often presented with way more food than we need. Foods that are nutrient-poor, like processed foods, fast food, sweets, as well as high sodium options make up the American diet and are not only readily available, but often craved. Because complete avoidance can lead to over-consumption of that food or other foods later on, learning to control these foods in your diet can help you become a healthier eater over time.

A second thought to consider is variety. Eating a variety of foods ensures that your body is getting all the nutrients it needs. Eating a certain food or food group in excess can lead to nutrient imbalances and unhealthy eating patterns. According to a

recent position paper released by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (AND), labeling foods "good" and "bad" can "foster unhealthy eating behaviors" and "can cause many people to abandon efforts to make dietary improvements." Taking on a total diet approach is better for you.

How Do I "Cheat" In Moderation?

Taking a total diet approach means having an overall healthy diet while enjoying all foods you love in moderation. This includes those sweet, salty, processed foods that would typically be labeled as "unhealthy."

One of the best ways to incorporate these is to cheat a little on your good diet! While there is no one magic way that works for everyone, there are a few methods of cheating that you can try to see which works best for you.

Remember though, even when cheating, the key is still portion control! Avoid excess and have just enough to satisfy a craving to avoid overdoing it. Planning your cheats is helpful in preventing overeating later on, but keep your total daily caloric intake in mind. As a benchmark, try not to go

beyond 500 calories above your daily calorie allotment with "cheat" eating.

Cheating Every Day

Cheating once a day is doable, but make sure you're within your daily caloric limit. The [MyPlate guidelines](#) stipulate 267 calories on a 2,000 calorie diet. This translates to about 13% of daily calories. That's about 200 calories a day for those on a 1,500 calorie diet. This means that a whole dessert or candy bar may be too much. Instead, the daily cheat allows for a smaller portion or a "tastier" version of healthy foods. For example, sugar-sweetened yogurt, full-fat cheese, or the addition of a half serving of chocolate chips to otherwise healthy oatmeal.

Have a Cheat Meal

A cheat meal is one meal where you can have anything you'd like. If you're eying a hamburger, fries, and shake, make other meals in your day more clean and lean. A cheat meal should have you extra-full, so you may find you're not as hungry in a subsequent meal anyway.

Have A Cheat Day

If you've been eating healthy, whole foods, staying within your calorie limit, and working out consistently all week, a

cheat day can be a nice reward when the week's up. Choose one day to splurge and eat anything you'd like, within a reasonable balanced set of meals of course and without going beyond 500 to 1000 calories above your daily calorie allotment. This shouldn't translate to three colossal meals. It means you can add a rich dessert to a well-balanced dinner and maybe a larger breakfast or lunch than usual. When planning your cheat day, be sure to remember it's one day a week, not two. Some may try to have both weekend days to cheat, but this ends up being more tricky and may wipe out the calorie deficit you've built up all week. If you'd like more wiggle-room calorie-wise, go for a cheat day every two weeks.

How to Control Portions at Restaurants

By [+Carolyn Richardson](#) in [Dieting & You](#)



Even when you're not in your kitchen you want to be empowered to make healthier choices. The FDA is about to make this feat much easier. Part of the new healthcare law will require chain restaurants with more than 20 locations to prominently display their [calorie counts on menus](#). Sit-down restaurants remain some of the hardest places to control calories. As if the lack of nutritional information available online wasn't enough, the variability of ingredients used, unregulated cooking methods, and ever-changing menu items could send your calorie count totals through the roof. To keep you in the driver's seat we compiled restaurant ordering strategies that will help you enjoy your meal without unwanted calories.

Avoid Ample Appetizer Calories

The starter items on many restaurant menus are appetizing, but they may not be the best way to start a healthy meal. In fact, you may be hard-pressed to find an appetizer that isn't fried or full of empty calories. So says a [report](#) by the RAND corporation published in *Public Health Nutrition* that found appetizers had more calories, fat, and sodium than all other types of food on the menu. As you await

your entree, ask for foods that will ease your hunger. A [study](#) published in the journal *Appetite* found eating soup prior to a meal can lower caloric intake by 20%.

Starter Tips:

- Opt for a broth-based soup, salad, or a plate of fresh vegetables with hummus
- Ask for salad dressing, croutons, cheese, and other "extra" calories on the side
- Add cucumbers, bell peppers or a hard-boiled egg to boost a salad's satiety quotient
- Order a glass of water or unsweetened tea with a few slices of orange, cucumber, or lemon to taste

Downsize Your Meal

If you can attribute some of your pounds to the Super-Size craze, you can get some much-needed revenge by downsizing your meal. If you were around in the 1950's, a restaurant-size meal is now four times larger than it once was according to the RAND study. Fight the portion distortion by getting a meal that's the [right portion size](#)

for you. If the advice to take home half your meal is a no go, there are other ways to lose unwanted calories. A [trial](#) by Harvard Business School professor Jason Riis, Ph.D shows consumers will save calories if given the option.

Ways to Downsize:

- If you can't refuse freebies like bread, tortilla chips, or popcorn, stick to a single serving
- If you don't skip sugar-sweetened beverages, ask for a child's size cup and request no refill be served
- Share one entree with a friend and eat from small plates
- If meat, potato, or grain portions are too large, ask for half the portion be exchanged for veggies or fruit.
- Skip sour cream, guacamole, butter or other condiments that don't add calories without adding much flavor
- Swap sauce on your meal for a small cup on the side and instead of dunking or pouring the sauce over your entire meal, dip your fork

first before adding a bite of food

Boost Nutritional Value

In addition to smaller portions, you can boost the nutritional value of your meal simply by making these simple swaps.

Swap it Out:

- Swap a side of garlic cheese toast for additional bell peppers, broccoli, or peas in your meal
- Swap mashed potatoes for a bed of spinach or other leafy greens
- Swap a stir-fry or fried rice for steamed vegetables and chicken, fish or shrimp with steamed brown
- Swap Alfredo or pesto sauce for marinara
- Swap out half of your pasta for additional fresh tomatoes and green vegetables such as asparagus, zucchini, broccoli, or celery

What's for Dessert?

Last, but definitely not least, dessert can be on your menu of calorie counting success. Take advantage of the restaurants' fresh fruit like strawberries or blueberries, ask for a kid's size half,

skip the whipped cream or ice cream, or share with the table. Making small changes can help you satisfy your sweet tooth on fewer calories. Or skip dessert altogether and opt for a warm cup of tea.

Your thoughts...

What strategies do you use to win the battle against large portions at restaurants?

Remember

With baby steps you can climb any mountain to your goal!



Terri