

**Watch Out!
Here it Comes!**

Perry Dyea (Laguna-Kawaika) used to clean his plate. Now he eats smaller portions. He changed his way of thinking about food. He changed his habits. He lost 55 pounds.



The Bigger-Than-Life Portion!

You have it all figured out. You order a small dinner, a 4-ounce steak, no bigger than the palm of your hand. You are going to eat only half of the potatoes. You plan to work off many of the calories tomorrow by walking six miles.

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...Then your friend suggests ordering one piece of cake and two forks. Why not? A few bites of cake won't hurt. Then the cake arrives, weighing more than your carry-on luggage! It's the biggest slice in the entire history of reservation-sized portions! The two forks are dwarfed by the massive mound of gooey chocolate. Your plan of having one or two bites is dashed. It's over. Your sensible eating plan is ruined again by the Bigger-Than-Life-Portion. Or, maybe your plan is not ruined....

This really happened!

This story is true. Perry Dyea (Laguna-Kawaika) ordered just such a dinner: a small, 4-ounce steak with no visible fat. He has a rule of never eating a steak that is bigger than the palm of his hand. He ate only half the potatoes. He was well on his way to wrapping up his sensible meal, when the Bigger-Than-Life-Portion of cake arrived with a thunk, smack dab in front of him.

What did Perry do? What would you do?

The reason why portions are so big

Bigger-Than-Life-Portions are common. Restaurants do not serve foods in one-portion sizes. A portion of most foods is about one-half cup. A portion of noodles, for example, is one-half cup. The tomato sauce portion is one-half cup. But when you go out to eat, you get

much more. A restaurant may give you four portions, or two cups of spaghetti and two cups of sauce!

Restaurants do this for a few reasons. They can charge more money if the food fills the plate. Who would pay \$8 for a half cup of spaghetti? But, if the spaghetti is spilling over the sides, it is worth \$8!

Plus, we have gotten used to huge portions. If a restaurant serves a regular portion, it looks too small! If a restaurant served you a half cup of spaghetti, would you be happy? No! You would complain! Or, the next time you went out to eat, you would go to the Bigger-Than-Life-Portions restaurant. (We all know where they are!)

Perry knows of a restaurant near his Laguna Pueblo home that serves a 3-pound steak. "If you can eat it all, you don't have to pay for it!" he says. Perry is shocked that anyone would want to eat a 3-pound steak. But he remembers when he used to order steaks that were as big as placemats. "I wanted to get my money's

worth. So what would I do? I'd eat the whole thing!" he says.

Cutting back for a healthy heart

The days of eating Bigger-Than-Life-Portions are over for Perry. He changed his eating habits. He wanted to avoid heart problems. He wanted to lose weight and feel better. He didn't go on a diet. He started eating regular portions of food.

Perry says that for him, "going on a diet" does not work. He says he could not eat entirely different foods. "I've eaten certain foods for over 70 years! Suddenly, I'm told to eat an orange for a snack? That won't work! I still eat tortillas, beans and meat. But, I eat smaller portions. And, I add vegetables. I've lost 55 pounds."

Perry makes it sound so easy. In some ways it is. There are no foods that you can't eat. So, you never feel deprived. But, you can't eat Bigger-Than-Life-Portions. To lose weight and stay at a healthy weight, a person needs to eat *less* food.



Perry did not give up food he loves. He says he decreased portion sizes, and increased the amount of vegetables he eats.

The tablespoon method

Sometimes, eating less food can be hard. “We have a lot of fiestas. They say, ‘Have some more! Eat plenty!’ And they stack a bunch of tamales in front of you.”

At first, Perry felt he needed to have a portion of each dish. Then a friend told him how to be polite, enjoy the food, and not overeat at fiestas. “I serve myself just one tablespoon of each dish. I don’t eat a whole portion of seven dishes! I eat one spoonful of each. I can taste every one of them!”

Losing 55 pounds might seem like it was easy for Perry. He doesn’t watch every little thing he puts in his mouth. He doesn’t worry about eating a little food that has high fat or high sugar. Sometimes he eats them. But, he usually eats regular portions, and he eats a lot of vegetables.

He walks, therefore he treats himself

There is one more thing that Perry does that helps him stay at a healthy weight: he

walks. “The strict diets aren’t for me,” he says. “I don’t have to ‘go on a diet’ to keep the weight off. That’s the ‘couch potato’ diet. I walk, so I can have an occasional treat.”

Did Perry have the Bigger-Than-Life-Portion of gooey chocolate cake? No. Perry was going to walk six miles the next day. Still, he didn’t eat the huge cake. What did he do? Perry ate a few forkfuls and, his friend ate some. Then he took the leftover cake to a table of four friends, and let them share it.



Restaurant Eating Made Easy: You Can Eat Out and Not Overeat

It is more common to eat out. A restaurant meal is often much larger than a home-cooked meal. Here are ways to eat regular portions when eating

- ▶ Order a senior or smaller portion meal
- ▶ Eat half of what is served
- ▶ Order an appetizer and eat it as your meal
- ▶ Take leftovers home
- ▶ Split a meal or a sandwich with a friend



Perry ate half of this meal.

What Exactly is a Portion?

No one carries around a measuring cup in their pocket. Still you can know the portion sizes of many foods.



- ▶ Palm of your hand is the size of a portion of meat, chicken, or snack foods like pretzels
- ▶ Your fist is the size of a portion of corn, peas, beans, cereal, rice or a baked potato
- ▶ Two cupped hands is the size of a portion of broccoli, cabbage or green salad



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