

Fullness Signals

To avoid unwanted calories, you will need to stop eating at the point of **comfortable fullness** most of the time. **Comfortable fullness** is a point you may not recognize or you may routinely pass despite recognizing it. Either way, if you continuously eat more than your body needs, you will most likely gain unneeded weight.

Food's primary role is to fuel the body, just as gas fuels a car.

Just as it is not necessary to overfill a car's gas tank, eating more food than you need is also unhelpful. Your metabolism can adjust to an occasional overeating experience. But if the overeating occurs daily or even weekly, your metabolism cannot burn off the extra calories.

Comfortable Fullness: The Key to Avoiding Excess Calories

In order to stop eating at the point of satisfaction or comfortable fullness, you will first need to recognize that point. If you've been chronically restricting your food, either dieting or "cutting back," it may be hard to recognize fullness signals at first. But with practice, you will be able to notice true physical satisfaction and learn to stop eating at that point.



Fullness Signals

During your meals and snacks, you should pay attention to how full you are getting. Below are some common fullness signals. Be sure to add your own, too!

Light to comfortable fullness

- Feeling of satisfaction or relief, like:
"Ah, I'm not hungry any more."
- Peacefulness
- No more stomach pangs or twinges
- Feeling like you don't need any more food
- Food starts to taste less good

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Over-fullness

- Realizing you didn't need those last few bites
- Very "full" feeling; discomfort or pain in the stomach; "stuffed" feeling
- Need to loosen clothing at the waistband
- Fatigue or sleepiness
- Food is substantially less tasty

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Tips for Avoiding Overeating

Do not let a restaurant, or a pre-served amount of food, determine your portion. For example, just because you order a large french fries, that doesn't mean you must eat them all! You should eat only as much as it takes to satisfy you. That might mean leaving some fries behind.

Resign from the 'Clean Plate Club.' Although your parents meant well when they told you to clean your plate, practice telling yourself it is okay to leave food on your plate. If you are in a restaurant, bring what you don't eat home with you.

Make sure not to be distracted while eating. Otherwise you may eat past the comfortable fullness point without wanting to. Try not to study, work, watch TV, be on the computer, etc. while eating. Socializing with family or friends at the "dinner table" is a normal part of eating, however. Just make sure to "check in" with your stomach during the meal to see how full you are. Put down the fork between bites.