

Stop sabotaging your diet

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(HealthDay)—You could be standing in the way of your own weight loss, eating more calories than you realize. Here's how to keep your head in the game.

- No more [mindless eating](#). Research consistently shows that people who eat while watching TV, reading or just listening to music eat about 10 percent more at any given meal than they would if they were focused on their food—and they go on to eat up to 25 percent more total calories over the course of the day.
- Don't eat so fast. You'll eat 15 percent less or about 112 fewer calories, in a meal by just doubling the number of times you chew before swallowing. That could add up to an extra half-pound lost every week.
- Don't eat to soothe overwrought emotions. Emotional eating often leads to eating too much high-calorie, high-sugar and high-fat food.
- Start reading labels so you can measure out exact portions with measuring tools. "Guesstimating" or just eyeballing them can put you over your true calorie needs every day.
- Use a journal to keep track of the [calories](#) in the actual portions you eat.
- Don't use other family members as an excuse to buy tempting treats that you'll just end up eating. Everyone will benefit from healthier foods like fruit.

An extra bonus? Kids will follow the example that Mom and Dad set.

More information: The U.S. Food and Drug Administration has hints to help you decipher portion and calorie information on [nutrition labels](#).

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