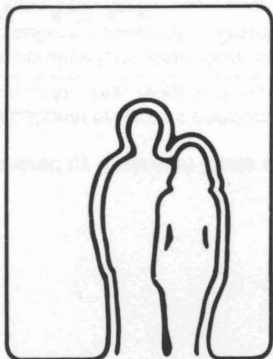


FOR WEIGHT CONTROL, EAT MORE SLOWLY

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**TEXAS AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION SERVICE**  
**The Texas A&M University System**

Waist Watcher:

If you or any member of your family seems to finish your meal before others begin theirs, you will find this lesson helpful.

This letter series and other educational programs are provided at no charge by the Texas Agricultural Extension Service. If you would like to receive other Extension publications, which are free upon request from my office, or want to know more about other Extension programs, please contact me.

Sincerely,

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County Extension Agent

## FOR WEIGHT CONTROL, EAT MORE SLOWLY

Many overweight people eat too fast. Research studies show that overweight people eat faster (26 percent) than people who do not have a weight problem. This allows them to eat more food in the same amount of time than a thin person would eat.

It takes about 20 minutes to begin to digest food so that you no longer feel hungry. If you eat quickly, you put more food into your body before your hunger is satisfied. An obvious solution is to slow down when eating. Think for a minute of some ways you can slow down your eating.

- Put your fork, knife, spoon or finger foods (sandwich) down after every bite. By slowing down, you will be more sensitive to feeling satisfied by the food.
- Taste, chew thoroughly and swallow the food before taking another bite. This will be difficult for a while if you are in the habit of loading up your fork before you swallow what is in your mouth.
- Stop eating in the middle of the meal or snack and wait 2 minutes by the clock, or count to 120. This gives your body more time to begin to digest the food and for you to feel satisfied before you have overeaten.
- Leave the table and come back after 2 minutes, or talk to someone during this time. Be sure it is a pleasant conversation.
- Use a fork or spoon to eat everything. No fingers please!
- Avoid bending over your plate while eating. Sit up straight and bring the food to your mouth — not your mouth to the food.

- Count the number of bites you take in one minute. A small punch counter may be helpful.
- Chew food thoroughly before swallowing it.
- Try to eat so slowly that you are the last one finished eating, without taking second helpings.
- Use a smaller plate than you usually do and take smaller bites.

Have you ever felt you could not stop eating once you started? Many people who overeat feel this way. In part, this reaction is because overeaters are more sensitive to the sight of food. They want to eat everything that they can see. It is also because they do not want to waste any of their food. They belong to the "clean plate club." You do not have to be a member of the "clean plate club" to be well nourished. To avoid overeating:

- Leave the table as soon as you have finished eating.
- Do something that signals the end of the meal — have a cup of coffee or tea, brush your teeth or wash your hands.
- Set aside one bite of food at the beginning of a meal. Always leave that one bite on the plate to help you realize that you do not have to eat everything that is placed in front of you.
- Drink a glass of water before sitting down to eat.



Prepared by Extension foods and nutrition specialists, The Texas A&M University System.

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