

Weight Loss Tip: One Bite Less

Can you guess how many calories overeaten per day cause a 100-pound weight gain over 20 years? This happened to me after high school. While that is a shocking amount, it's not hard to do if you gain five pounds a year consistently!

I did the math to see how many calories overeaten per year would cause a 100-pound weight gain over 20 years. Here's my math:

1 pound = 3500 calories

5 pounds per year x 3500 calories = 17,500 calories/year

Now, how many calories overeaten would that have been each day? Time to do the math again:

$17,500 / 365$ days per year = calories per day

When I saw that number, I almost fainted. I thought, "This cannot be right."

Just by overeating 48 calories per day more than my body needed, I had gained 100 pounds over 20 years. Do you know which items equal approximately 50 calories? Let's put this in perspective using some common foods:

- 1/3 can of soda
- 1/3 of a taco
- 1/6 slice of supreme pizza
- 7 potato chips
- 1/8 cup of macaroni and cheese

- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ tablespoons of tartar sauce
- $\frac{3}{4}$ tablespoons regular Italian salad dressing

That is not a lot of overeating, but it adds up if you do it every day. This shows you that time is the great multiplier. When multiplied over time, one little extra bite *does* hurt.

It's time to make time work for you instead of against you!

If you are having problems with overeating, make it a goal to start eating *just one bite less* than you normally would. Put it to the test for one meal each day. Once you are comfortable doing it for one meal, then you can work up to doing it for another meal, then another. Like building up muscles in the natural, you can do this to start building your self-control muscles.

Plant this Scripture in your heart, memorize it, and meditate on it: "When you sit down to eat with a ruler, consider carefully what is before you; and put a knife to your throat if you are a man given to appetite. Do not desire his delicacies, for they are deceptive food" (Prov. 23:1-3).

In this case, *you* are the ruler, since you are the one controlling what you put in your mouth. Here are some tips that can make practicing "one bite less" easier, inspired by the Scripture:

- **Eat sitting down.** Stop eating standing in front of the refrigerator, at the counter or in another location in which you are distracted. It is easy to overeat when you aren't paying attention.
- **Appreciate every bite.** Many people say they love food, but the truth is they don't even slow down long enough to taste it. What they are really doing is seeking to stuff themselves until they can't feel anymore. God designed food to nourish your body, not to be nutritional Novocain. If you need

emotional comfort, go to the Lord, not to the lard.

• **Consider carefully the foods that you are eating.** Some man-made foods just naturally make you want to overeat, which includes sweets (candy, cookies, cakes), refined carbohydrates (white breads, white pastas, white rice) and high-fat foods (chips, french fries, burgers and other deep-fried items). To maintain emotional stability, the brain must maintain a delicate balance between three chemicals: glucose (blood sugar), serotonin (a neurotransmitter associated with feelings of calm and relaxation) and beta-endorphin (the body's natural pain reliever). Processed foods disrupt that balance.

Substituting these foods with foods close to the way God made them (vegetables, fruits, protein, moderate amounts of whole grains) can help your brain to get back in balance.

I'd like to add one bonus tip. I realize now that if I had instead exercised that 50 calories off per day, then the 100-pound weight gain never would have happened after high school.

The following exercises are some that would have burned the 50 calories:

- 10 minutes of light dancing
- 10 minutes of light cycling
- 15 minutes of light walking
- 7 minutes of light aerobics class
- 7 minutes of stair-climbing
- 5 minutes of jump-roping

While it didn't take a lot for me to gain weight, it wouldn't have taken a lot to prevent it either. All it would have required was to expend just a little more energy than I was used to each day. So you see, those small choices you make

every day *do* make a difference over time.

Praise God, He woke me up! I lost 85 of those pounds and have maintained that loss for several years. In my case, I was willing to make bigger changes, so it didn't take me 20 years to undo the damage.

However, if you are feeling stuck and unmotivated, then one bite less every day is a simple goal to start. This small discipline can be the start of a big change!

Kimberly Taylor *is the author of The Weight Loss Scriptures and many other books. Once 240 pounds and a size 22, she can testify to God's goodness and healing power. Visit and receive more free health and weight-loss tips.*