

## 5 STEPS TO

# PERFECT PORTIONS



"I prefer to have a few smaller meals a day. I feel better doing that," Holly Valance told WHO in 2008. "Two big ones is just, oh, you feel like you are stuffed!"

The secret to losing weight, according to dietitian Amanda Clark, author of *Portion Perfection*, is not what you eat, it's how much you eat. With the festive season hotting up, "It is a time to socialise more, eat more and relax your normal routine," says Clark, who has devised a plan to get you through the celebrations 100 calories (420 kJ) at a time.

**1 Plate up** The key is choosing a smaller plate to eat from. There is clear evidence that the more food we put on our plates, the more we eat. Plus, the bigger the plate, the more food we serve on it, so use a smaller plate.



Danni Minogue carries protein bars in her handbag to satisfy snack cravings.

**2 Portion perfection** Fill your plate with half salad, a quarter carbs and a quarter protein. This pattern provides optimal nutrition and lowers the kilojoule content. The secret is the half-plate of salad or low-starch vegetables—it has almost no kilojoules, but it takes up half the space in your stomach.

**3 Space food out evenly through the day** Eating three meals and three snacks helps control cravings and keeps you feeling satisfied. It keeps your body fuelled throughout the day, so you don't go into famine mode, and it controls the problem of late-night eating. Research shows that people who eat breakfast eat fewer total kilojoules than those who skip it.

**4 Buy snack foods in 100-calorie (420 kJ) packages** When total kilojoule needs are spaced out evenly throughout the day, we find an ideal intake for mid-meal snacks is 100 calories (420 kJ) to lose weight, or 200 calories (840 kJ) to maintain weight. We know that the bigger the food package, the more we eat, so aim for the right-sized package and you'll be more in control. For example, a large piece of fruit, a 100g yoghurt, a 20g muesli bar, or 20g of chocolate or potato crisps are each approximately 100 calories. You can eat chocolate or chips occasionally, but get the portion size right.

**5 Limit kilojoule-filled drinks** Most people don't consider the kilojoules of their drinks to be part of their meal. An extra-large milk-based coffee can add up to 480 calories (2,000 kJ), while a large juice or milkshake can add up to 300 calories (1,260 kJ). The kilojoules found in these drinks makes *them* the meal, not just the drink that goes with a meal. Choose water, mineral water, tea or occasionally a diet soft drink.



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## HELENA CHRISTENSEN

A recent convert to exercise, the 40-year-old model is a reluctant runner. "Age in itself doesn't freak me out. I'm in better shape than I was at 25 because I'm actually doing something physical, which I never did until two years ago because I was way too lazy. I'm still really lazy about it. I try to go boxing twice a week and I run, but after exactly 21 minutes, I'm ready to lie down and vomit. I'm super-lucky with my metabolism. I eat more than anyone I know, so I have to be realistic, that might not always be the situation. That's why I chose really intense training. It was a question of, if I want to continue eating that much, I need to balance it out."

Christensen is "obsessed" with food—"Oh my god, I'm a pig!"—but counters the calories with lots of exercise.

**STAR BODY SECRETS**