



Sneaky ways to cut calories

If you're looking to lose weight, it's important to keep an eye on your calorie intake. But that doesn't mean you have to feel hungry all the time. Feeling full and satisfied is actually possible while you're working towards your weight goals. Here's a neat trick: focusing on foods that have a lot of volume can help.

There are two simple secrets to feeling full without consuming too many calories: water and fiber. Foods with plenty of water and fiber can make you feel satisfied without piling on extra calories. This way, you can eat more without overdoing it and still manage to reach your weight goals. You don't have to give up your favorite foods entirely. It's all about balancing your meals with more foods rich in water and fiber and fewer calorie-dense options.

Here are foods to include more of in your diet (these have plenty of water and fiber):

- Fruits
- Vegetables
- Veggie Soup (the broth-based kind, not creamy)
- Salad
- Intact whole grains (those that are still whole, like brown rice, quinoa, and wheat berries)
- Beans and lentils
- Tofu

Here are foods to portion out carefully (these have fiber but not much water):

- Nuts, nut butters, and seeds
- Bread and tortillas
- Starchy vegetables
- Plant-based "meats" like soy burgers

Here are the foods to cut back on (these are generally lacking in both fiber and water):

- Fried foods
- Cheese
- Desserts, sweets, and candy
- Refined and/or sweetened breakfast cereals
- Added sugars
- Added oils/fats
- Heavily processed chips and other snack foods
- Meat (especially red and processed meat) & poultry
- Sweet sauces and condiments like ketchup, sweet and sour, bbq, etc.

And as always, whether or not you need to lose weight, it's always a good idea to avoid sweetened beverages, fruit juices, and alcoholic beverages.

Here are some ways to put this into action:

- Mix pasta with plenty of grilled or roasted vegetables.
- Use lettuce or collard leaves as wraps in place of bread and tortillas.
- Enjoy just half a portion of your favorite Chinese food takeout and "stretch" it with some lightly steamed fresh vegetables.
- Eat a bowl of vegetable barley soup for lunch or dinner with a slice of whole wheat bread or a few whole grain crackers.
- Use cauliflower rice in place of regular rice in your favorite rice recipes.
- Use zucchini noodles ("zoodles") in place of regular noodles in your favorite pasta recipes.
- Make spaghetti squash in place of spaghetti (see recipe below!).
- If you use ground beef or turkey, use a 1:1 ratio of with ground up cooked mushrooms.
- Pile vegetables on your pizza and go light on the cheese.
- Make chili with half of the meat (or none) and double up on the diced vegetables and beans.
- Eat a fruit or vegetable at the first sign of hunger to ward off unhealthy snacking.
- Drink plenty of water between or with meals.

Spaghetti Squash with Marinara Sauce and Fresh Herbs



Ingredients:

- 1 medium spaghetti squash
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1½ cups marinara sauce (homemade or no-sugar-added from a jar)
- Fresh herbs (such as basil or parsley) for garnish
- Grated Parmesan cheese (optional)

Instructions:

Preheat your oven to 375°F (190°C).

Carefully cut the spaghetti squash in half lengthwise using a sharp knife. Scoop out the seeds and the stringy bits from the center using a spoon.

Drizzle the inside of each squash half with 1 tablespoon of olive oil, and season with salt and pepper.

Place the two halves, cut-side down, on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper.

Bake the squash in the preheated oven for 35-45 minutes, or until the flesh is easily pierced with a fork and the strands separate easily.

Once the squash is cooked, use a fork to scrape out the flesh, which will naturally separate into spaghetti-like strands.

Transfer the spaghetti squash strands to a bowl and toss with the marinara sauce until evenly coated.

Garnish with fresh herbs and, if desired, sprinkle some grated Parmesan cheese on top for added flavor.