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JAN 6, 2017 @ 09:11 AM 3,269 👁

# 4 Tips To Help You Keep Your Resolution To Eat Healthier And Lose Weight

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I couldn't help but wonder whether the effect might be different depending on whether a person was overweight. Would people of normal weight be more likely or less likely than overweight or obese people to feel guilty about serving themselves a hearty portion of a high-calorie dish? But Hagen and her coauthors did not ask their subjects about their body mass index (BMI), so she couldn't answer my question.

“This effect will be stronger for some people than others,” acknowledged Hagen, whose last name happens to be pronounced the same as the first name of that really high-fat [brand of ice cream](#). “Some people just don't feel as bad about unhealthy eating.” And, she said, some people might mistakenly think a dish is healthy when it's actually loaded with calories.

Hagen did speculate that, although four of her five experiments were conducted with college students, the findings probably would hold true for older people. One possible difference, she said, might be that younger individuals would feel guilty about eating unhealthy foods because of the potential impact on their appearance, while older individuals might be more concerned about the impact of such foods on their health.

But even if you serve yourself a modest portion, what's to stop you from going back for seconds or thirds? Hagen has two more suggestions, based on research by others, that you could help you resist multiple servings at home:

- Use a smaller serving bowl instead of one that could double as a punch bowl. “The larger the serving bowl, the more people end up eating,” Hagen

said.

- After you've served yourself a portion, put the leftovers out of sight in the refrigerator or a kitchen cabinet. If you must keep non-perishables on your counter, at least make sure they're in opaque containers, not, say, a clear glass cookie jar. What you can't see can't tempt you as much.

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In their latest experiments, Hagen and her coauthors, Aradhna Krishna of the University of Michigan and Brent McFerran of Simon Fraser University in British Vancouver, have given their subjects the choice of serving themselves or being served.

Not surprisingly, when the food is considered to be unhealthy, Hagen said, "people are vastly more interested in having someone serve them."