

Recently a magazine cover that said “10 Best Slimming Foods” caught my eye. Are there specific foods that can assist with weight loss? It’s deceiving because it’s our overall calorie intake and calorie expenditure that determines our body weight. If you take in more calories than you expend, you will gain weight no matter which foods you are eating. However, there are certain foods that promote satiety or fullness which may make a difference in how much we eat over the course of the day. Foods that keep us full for a longer time generally have more fiber, healthy fats and protein and/or a high water content. Dr. Barbara Rolls, a professor of nutrition at Penn State University has written a book about this called “The Volumetrics Eating Plan”. The bonus is that many of these same foods offer important nutrients, vitamins and minerals. Here are some of those foods to consider:

1. **Apples/Pears** – This is the time of year for the best tasting apples and pears! They are both portable, offer high water content and soluble fiber. Apples contain quercetin, a flavonoid shown to fight some cancers, to reduce cholesterol damage and promote healthy lungs. Pears are a good source of vitamin C and copper, both beneficial antioxidants. It’s important to eat the peel of both to get all of the benefits!
2. **Eggs** – They are a great source of high quality protein that will keep you full longer. The AHA still recommends limiting intake to 300 mg cholesterol per day and an egg yolk has 213 mg of cholesterol. Substitute 2 egg whites for each whole egg in baking or eating eggs if done on a regular basis.
3. **Cauliflower/Broccoli/Green beans** – Non-starchy vegetables are a good way to fill up due to their fiber, high nutrient content and great taste. Many also offer healthful plant compounds that lower risk of cancer and heart disease.
4. **Low fat yogurt** – Dairy foods have been shown to be helpful for weight loss. It’s believed to be the calcium combining with other bioactive compounds in dairy products to slow down the process of making fat and increasing fat burning. Look for low fat yogurt that is lower in sugar content or use plain yogurt and add your own fruit or use for dips, sauces, salad dressings or in place of mayonnaise or sour cream. Yogurt with live cultures also offers the benefits of probiotics which are beneficial bacteria.
5. **Oatmeal** – Eating breakfast keeps you from eating more later in the day. Cooked oatmeal has been ranked as one of the most satisfying breakfasts in terms of satiety. It offers soluble fiber and a good source of protein. Add it to baked products to enhance their nutritional value as well.
6. **Nuts** – Nut eaters generally eat less over the course of the day. Nuts offer protein, healthy fat, vitamin E and fiber. Be aware that nuts are high in calories and measure them out. However, even a 1 ounce serving (about 170 calories) will satisfy you and stay with you much longer than many other snack foods.
7. **Soup** – Adding broth-based soup has been shown to help you feel fuller by adding volume and limits calorie intake over the course of the day. If vegetables or beans are in the soup you get the added nutrients and fiber of those foods.
8. **Bulgur and other high-fiber grains** – Bulgur cooks in 10 minutes making it a good substitute for rice and pasta which are refined and lower in fiber content. With the fiber comes other nutritional benefits like iron and vitamins E and B6.
9. **Fish** – Fish tops even oatmeal and vegetables in satiety value. It’s packed with protein and it’s strong flavor may also lead to greater satiety and less need to eat afterwards. The fatty fish such as salmon, herring, sardines, and tuna offer the added benefit of omega-3 fatty acids which prevent clotting and help to lower triglycerides and may also give a boost to good cholesterol (HDL).

10. **Salad** – Salad can fill you up particularly if it has added vegetables, lean protein, beans and healthy fats (dressing). Make the basis of your green salad a darker green such as Romaine or spinach for more flavor and more nutrients such as iron, calcium, vitamin C and folate

Just remember just as there is no such thing as a magic bullet diet for weight loss, there is no such thing as miracle slimming foods! It's your overall dietary intake and your exercise program that will determine your weight and ultimately, your health and wellness.

Make this a wellness weekend with some healthy eating and staying active in the beautiful fall weather that is predicted!

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