

Perception of Food Volume Linked to Satiety

by [Matthew Kadey, MS, RD](#)

The sheer number of calories in a plate heaped with pasta alfredo may not be the only reason you push away from the table feeling stuffed. A study presented at a 2017 meeting of the British Psychological Society suggests that sensations of hunger and satiety may be linked to how we *perceive* a meal, not just how many calories we consume.

On two occasions, British researchers served study participants a three-egg omelet for breakfast—but told the volunteers the first meal had two eggs and the second had four. When people thought they'd eaten a smaller breakfast, they reported feeling hungry sooner afterward and also ate more throughout the day than they did when they thought they'd consumed a larger breakfast. The study detected no changes in hunger hormones, suggesting our mental perceptions of a meal can significantly influence food intake later on.

To stay full on fewer calories, try adding low-calorie volume to meals; for example, fill out a plate of pasta or scrambled eggs with veggies. Putting more food on a plate or in a bowl can trick the brain into thinking you're consuming plenty of calories and, in turn, you'll need less food in subsequent meals and snacks.

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