

# PRESS ARTICLE

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## HOW TO STOP HIDDEN WEIGHT GAIN

By Christina Jordan

We all know it's best to swap pizza for a healthy salad or to drink water rather than a sugary soda. But why are those last 10, 25 or even 50 pounds still there? Studies show that weight gain plagues the minds of millions of Americans. We are a nation dedicated to the art of weight loss, yet a majority of our nation is suffering from being overweight. Why is that? It's because weight loss can be very difficult, especially when age, hormones and other medical conditions are involved. For this reason we asked Dr. SUZANNE BENTZ, who is board certified in bariatric medical weight loss, to compile a list of nine hidden ways our body packs on those extra pounds; plus a few tips and tricks on how to avoid them.

If you're ready to lose the weight and look great this summer, you have got to read this article!

### **THE TOP HIDDEN WEIGHT GAINERS:**

#### 1. YOU'RE A FAST EATER

**The problem:** Once you begin eating, it takes 15 to 20 minutes for you to actually start feeling full. Eating too fast almost guarantees you'll overeat.

**What to do:** Slow down and chew your food. You'll not only cut how much you eat, you'll also increase the enjoyment you get from food.

#### 2. YOU EAT IN FRONT OF THE T.V. OR COMPUTER

**The problem:** Science proves people eat mindlessly (and more) when distracted (like when watching TV or surfing the internet).

**What to do:** Make it a rule to never eat away from the kitchen table. You'll focus on your food and eat less as a result.

### 3. YOU EAT “HEALTHY” FOODS AT RESTAURANTS

**The problem:** It may seem like a good idea to eat a sub sandwich instead of a cheeseburger, or a Caesar salad instead of a steak, but watch out for all those extras. You could add hundreds of calories by saying yes to cheese, high-fat creamy dressings, heavy sauces, bacon bits or croutons.

**What to do:** Skip the fatty accoutrement and ask for all sauces on the side.

### 4. YOU’RE USING LARGE PLATES

**The problem:** Just like portions and the food packages, plate sizes have also exploded in size in the past 50 years. Size can be deceptive. The larger the dish, the smaller the food will look on it. You are tricking your mind into believing you’re eating less than you really are.

**What to do:** Swap your super-sized plates or bowls (and even utensils) for smaller-sized dishes.

### 5. THE SCALE IS YOUR ENEMY

**The problem:** Scales can be scary, but stepping on them on a regular basis will help you maintain (and gauge) a healthy, normal weight. However, weighing yourself too frequently through the day or letting the number on the scale dictate your self-worth or mood is unhealthy. And it can sabotage your weight loss efforts by upsetting you to the point you eat (and eat too much) for comfort.

**What to do:** Step on the scale once a day, preferably in the morning after you have emptied your bladder and before you dress. But don’t get obsessive about the number you see on the scale. Your weight usually fluctuates one to two pounds every day, depending on varying factor(s); such as water retention and how much food you’ve consumed.

### 6. YOU’RE STRESSED

**The problem:** When you’re stressed, your body overproduces cortisol, a stress hormone responsible for keeping your blood pressure and sugar levels in check. Scientists believe that when it’s overproduced, it stimulates your appetite and sweet tooth. And it has been linked to abdominal fat.

**What to do:** Keep your stress levels low by enjoying light exercising or taking up a soothing activity like yoga, meditation or journal writing.

### 7. YOU’RE COLD

**The problem:** When you’re cold, you may tend to crave rich (often calorie-laden) foods. Giving in to your chill-induced cravings will result in weight gain.

**What to do:** Add an extra exercise class to your weekly routine, or add a side salad to every meal (it will make you feel fuller without adding extra calories –

just watch the dressing and croutons). Also, remember to carry a sweater around with you. And turn down that air conditioner in the summer; it could have the same effect. Lastly, never underestimate the effectiveness of doing 30 jumping jacks or taking a brisk walk in the warm Arizona sunshine.

#### 8. YOU DON'T SLEEP ENOUGH

**The problem:** When you are tired, your body goes into a hunger tailspin and your hormones tend to go haywire (overproducing ghrelin; an appetite booster, and lowering leptin; an appetite suppressant). The result: Hunger pangs that make you think you're starving when you're not.

**What to do:** Develop a consistent sleep schedule by getting eight hours of sleep every night. If you're tired during your day, take a 15-minute power nap.

#### 9. THE COMPANY YOU KEEP

**The problem:** When you get together with family or friends, do you dig into fried foods or alcohol? Do you spend more time sitting around rather than doing group activities? If so, you, and everyone around you could be consuming hundreds of empty calories, all without burning them off.

**What to do:** Get into the habit of preparing healthy nibble-worthy snacks, and swap what you do at get-togethers. Try fun, group activities that involve burning energy; such as volleyball, horseshoes or other calorie-burning activity your group will enjoy.

For more weight loss tips, information about the different options available for medical supervised weight loss, or to view the many options of individualized weight loss programs offered, visit [www.redmountainweightloss.com](http://www.redmountainweightloss.com).