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Now, a dish that 'talks' to fight obesity

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Now, a dish that 'talks' to fight obesity (Thinkstock photos/Getty Images)

The National Health Service (NHS) has introduced a *talking plate* in the UK, which warns fat families about their eating habits and tells people not to wolf their food.

The Mandometer, which is available for 1,500 pounds, monitors the amount of food leaving the plate and tells users who gobble to "please eat more slowly."

The Swedish device is to be used in an NHS initiative to help hundreds of obese families lose weight.

The device comes in two parts, a scale placed under the plate and a small computer screen showing a graphic of the food that gradually disappears as the user eats.

A red line on the screen shows the user's speed of eating, while a blue line shows a healthy rate.

If the user guzzles, the red line angles away from the blue one, warning them to ease off, and if the lines deviate too much, the computer voice tells them to slow down.

The screen also flashes up messages like "are you feeling full yet?", to remind users to think whether they have had enough.

Around 600 families with at least one obese parent and child, aged from just five, will be targeted in the project by Bristol University in conjunction with GPs and nurses.

A further dozen obese adults and children who carry a mutation of a gene linked to the brain's ability to recognise feeling full will take part in a smaller study at the Biomedical Research Unit of the University Hospitals Bristol NHS Foundation Trust.

Professor Julian Hamilton-Shield, who is leading the initiative, said that obese children and adolescents using the Mandometer ate from 12 to 15 percent less per meal at the end of the 12-month trial.

Six months after they stopped using the device they still ate less and continued to lose weight.

"It will be a powerful tool to help families restrain their eating habits," the *Daily Mail* quoted Hamilton-Shield as saying.

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