

# EATING RIGHT: GIVE YOUR BODY WHAT IT NEEDS

## Portion Control: How Much Food is Enough?

Since 1990, obesity has increased by over 60 percent in the United States, and type 2 diabetes—which is closely linked to obesity—has increased by nearly 50 percent. In an era of super-sized food, we are indeed becoming supersized ourselves.

Whether your goal is to lose weight or to maintain it, calories count. The good news is that, when you limit the number of calories you consume each day, you don't need to cut out your favorite foods, you just need to know how much to cut back on the serving size. This is known as “portion control.”

Many people find portion control an important part of the solution to losing weight. By monitoring the serving size of the foods you enjoy, and by combining it with regular exercise, you can enjoy a wider variety of meals—including your favorite foods and ethnic dishes—and still lose weight. Another bonus is that you'll find your meals more interesting and satisfying.

Portion control can also help you overcome the biggest challenge: maintaining your new healthy weight. If you have diabetes and are overweight, shedding those extra pounds by trimming serving sizes and calories can help lower your blood glucose levels. You may want to refer to the following tips that offer an easy way to “eyeball” your food to determine portion size.

## How much is a portion?

Many meal plans include a certain number of servings of the different food groups. But estimating a serving size can be a challenge. Here are some useful tips to help you size up your meal:

- A one cup serving of carbohydrates, including fruit, vegetables, pasta or rice is about the size of your fist.
- One three-ounce serving of protein, such as meat, fish or poultry, is equivalent to the size of a deck of playing cards or the palm of your hand.
- A one-ounce serving of cheese is equal to the size of your thumb.
- A one cup serving of milk, yogurt or fresh greens is about the size of a tennis ball.

## Does your diet measure up?

When you monitor portion size, understand calorie content and get regular physical activity, you can choose just about anything. First, talk to your health care team so you know when and how much to eat. Then arm yourself with a few facts that can help you use your meal plan more faithfully:

- **Eat a total of five servings of fruits and vegetables every day**, including a variety of colors: green, yellow, orange and red.

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- **Aim for at least six daily servings of unrefined starches like bread, cereal and starchy vegetables.** Starchy vegetables include peas, dried beans and lentils as well as potatoes. Try replacing white rice and white bread with brown rice and whole-grain bread (read bread labels carefully; many breads that appear to be whole grain actually contain mostly refined white flour).
- **Eat sugars, sweets and desserts in moderation.** These foods tend to be high in calories and fat and contain few vitamins and minerals.

Even a small weight loss can be a big boost to your health. For example, the Diabetes Prevention Program study looked at a group of people at high risk for developing type 2 diabetes. The study showed that losing just 10-15 pounds and getting 30 minutes of moderate exercise a day, five days a week, reduced their risk of developing diabetes by nearly 60 percent during the course of the study!

### Choose Heart-Healthy Foods

You can protect your heart and blood vessels by eating less saturated fat and choosing the types of fats that help your cholesterol levels. The ingredients you use and the way you cook can make a big difference. Try these tips:

- **Cook with less fat.** Use a low-fat or fat-free way to cook. You can cut down on total fat by broiling, microwaving, baking, roasting, steaming or grilling foods. Nonstick pans and cooking sprays also work well.
- **Boost the flavor with seasonings and sauces instead of fats.** Look for recipes that use herbs and spices for flavor instead of fat. Try using these seasonings on foods:
  - \* Squeeze fresh lemon juice on steamed vegetables, broiled fish, rice or pasta.
  - \* Try lemon pepper or mesquite seasoning on chicken.
  - \* Use onion and garlic to liven up meats and vegetables.
  - \* Try baking chicken or pork with barbeque sauce or low-fat Italian dressing.
- **Trim the fat when possible.** Cut away visible fat from meat and poultry. Roast food on a rack to let the fat drip off. Make soups a day ahead so you can chill them and then remove the fat that has risen to the top.
- **Choose lean cuts of beef, pork and poultry.** To help keep your cholesterol on target, choose lean cuts of meat and poultry. Try some of your favorite recipes with these lean choices.
  - \* When selecting beef, choose lean cuts of beef such as round, sirloin and flank steak; tenderloin; rib, chuck or rump roast; T-bone, porterhouse or cubed steak.
  - \* Select lean types of pork such as ham, Canadian bacon, pork tenderloin and center loin chop.
  - \* Choose poultry such as chicken, turkey or Cornish hen without the skin. The white breast meat is lower in fat than the darker meat in the thigh and leg pieces.
- **Choose low-fat dairy products.** Dairy products can be part of your meal plan. To cut back on saturated fat, choose items made with non-fat or low-fat milk. Some low fat choices are listed below.
  - \* Milk: Fat-free, .5% and 1% milk, low-fat buttermilk.
  - \* Yogurt: low fat or fat free yogurt.
  - \* Cheese: cottage cheese, grated Parmesan, any cheese with 3 grams of fat or less per ounce.
  - \* For a frozen treat, try low-fat ice cream or frozen yogurt instead of ice cream. You can also freeze regular yogurt for a treat.

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## TIP SHEET

# Eight Food Myths

### 1 Too much fat makes you fat.

**False.** Eating foods with too many calories makes you fat, although it's wise to limit your fat intake to 30 percent of the total calories you consume. Saturated fat can raise cholesterol and, ounce for ounce, fat does have over twice as many calories as carbohydrates or protein.

### 2 Too much sugar is the problem.

**False.** Eating too much food—all types of food...especially foods high in fats and calories—is the problem. Many desserts and sweets are loaded with fat and calories.

### 3 Too much sugar “gives” you diabetes.

**False.** Too many calories can make you overweight, and being overweight is the leading modifiable risk factor for type 2 diabetes. For the record, sugar consumption does not cause either type 1 or type 2 diabetes.

### 4 If it's fat free, you can eat all you want.

**False.** Fat-free foods still have calories, often as many as their full-fat equivalents...and those calories count just as much. The same is true for sugar-free foods. Food labels can show you just how many calories a fat-free or sugar-free product has compared to its “regular” counterpart.

### 5 Foods labeled “no sugar added” have no sugar.

**False.** This only means that no table sugar has been added. “No sugar added” foods may naturally contain other types of sugar that your body recognizes as the same as table sugar—with just as many calories.

### 6 Eating protein builds muscle.

**False.** Muscle growth comes from muscle-building exercise. The average American diet, and the average healthy diet, contains more than enough protein to build and maintain muscle.

### 7 Foods need to be eaten in certain combinations to be digested properly.

**False.** A healthy diet doesn't require eating a specific combination of foods at each meal. It's the total of what you eat every day that's important; you can adapt your healthy food plan to fit your schedule, without worrying about carefully balancing each meal.

### 8 Everyone who loses weight simply gains it back.

**False.** Many people who lose weight do gain it back. But many others have managed to change their eating and exercise habits to achieve a healthy weight for the long term. Talk to your health care team about what you can do to start and stay with a program that will work for you.