



NutritionMatters

Nutrition Services | Health Services Department

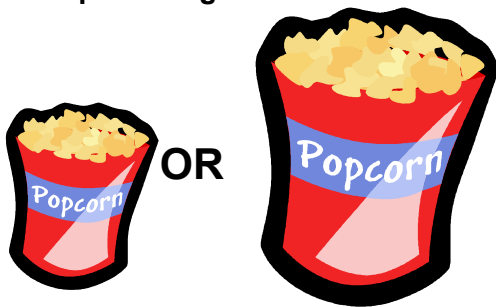
Put an End to Portion Distortion

At first glance, many people think that *Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating* calls for more servings than they could possibly eat. But a portion isn't a mountain of pasta, a mega movie theatre-sized bag of popcorn and pop, or a steak that covers your entire plate.

The food guide identifies serving sizes to help you plan—and judge—your food portions. Use the portion aids in the chart on the back of this page to visualize what one serving looks like. Then double-check the portion sizes you normally eat using a measuring cup. You may be surprised.

Remember that different people need different amounts of food, depending on their age, gender, body size, and activity level. Check the range of servings recommended. Most people fit somewhere in the middle.

A super-sizing nation



When eating out, do you usually purchase the larger-sized meal or snack to get more value for your dollar?

“Value-marketing” is an approach taken by the food industry to increase profits by providing consumers with “more for their money”. Providing larger portions of food for

just pennies more encourages consumers to purchase larger portions. This often results in overeating, and is likely a major contributor to the recent epidemic of overweight and obesity in adults and children.

So what can you do?

Do your body a favour and order the smaller size, or if you order the super-size, share it with a friend (or two).

- Go for a single scoop of ice cream rather than a double
- Split that slice of cheesecake with a friend
- Choose the smallest size soft drink at fast food outlets or movie theatres or if you order the larger size, ask for extra cups and share with others








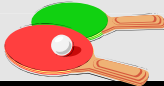
Abandon the “clean your plate” syndrome

Develop an eye for portion size and go for smaller first helpings. Then pace yourself, eat slowly and savour the flavour. Listen to your body; stop eating when you feel comfortably full. Have the leftovers at your next meal or the next day.

Snack attack?

You don't need to avoid snacking. Including two or three small snacks daily can make you less likely to overeat at your next meal. Go for healthy choices such as a glass of milk with a couple of fruit bar cookies, a few whole-grain crackers and a piece of cheese, fresh fruit with yogurt or raw veggies with yogurt dip.

Be careful of your interpretation of portion sizes.

One Serving Looks Like...	
Grain Products (5 to 12 servings a day)	Milk Products (2 to 4 servings a day)
$\frac{1}{2}$ bagel = hockey puck 	1 cup (250mL) milk = small measuring cup
$\frac{1}{2}$ cup (125mL) rice or pasta = light bulb or small fist 	$\frac{3}{4}$ cup (175g) yogurt = single-serve container 
$\frac{3}{4}$ cup (175mL) hot cereal = fist or cupped hand	50g cheese = size of two thumbs or 2 processed cheese slices
Vegetables & Fruit (5 to 10 servings a day)	Meat & Alternatives (2 to 3 servings a day)
One medium = tennis ball 	50 to 100 g meat, poultry, or fish = deck of cards, computer mouse, or palm of hand 
$\frac{1}{2}$ cup (125mL) fresh, frozen or canned = light bulb or small fist 	$\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 cup (125-250 mL) beans or lentils = light bulb or small fist 
1 cup (250mL) raw greens or salad = cupped hand $\frac{1}{2}$ cup fruit juice = $\frac{1}{2}$ small measuring cup	2 tbsp peanut butter = ping pong ball 

Some examples to keep in mind:



A large plate of pasta may count as three to four servings of Grain Products.



A large bagel may count as three to four servings of Grain Products.



A juice box (250 mL) counts as two servings of Vegetables & Fruit.

Adapted from the National Institute of Nutrition "Put an End to Portion Distortion", Healthy Bites No.1, 2000. Distributed by Nutrition Services, York Region Health Services Department, 2002. May be reproduced without permission provided source is acknowledged. For more information call a Public Health Dietitian at Health Connection, at 1-800-361-5653.