

What Counts as One Serving?

Grains

- ▲ 1 slice of bread
- ▲ ½ cup cooked cereal, rice, or pasta
- ▲ 1 cup dry cereal

Vegetables

- ▲ ½ cup cooked vegetables
- ▲ 1 cup tossed salad or raw leafy greens

Fruits

- ▲ 1 medium whole fruit
- ▲ ½ cup canned fruit
- ▲ ¾ cup juice
- ▲ ¼ cup dried fruit

Dairy

- ▲ 1 cup milk
- ▲ 8 ounces yogurt
- ▲ 1½ ounces natural cheese
- ▲ 2 ounces process cheese

Protein

- ▲ 3 ounces cooked meat, poultry, or fish (about the size of a deck of cards)
- ▲ ½ cup cooked beans
- ▲ ⅓ cup or 1 ounce nuts or seeds
- ▲ 1 tablespoon of peanut butter counts the same as 1 ounce of meat (about ⅓ serving)
- ▲ 1 egg counts the same as 1 ounce of meat (about ⅓ serving)

Oils

- ▲ 1 teaspoon vegetable oil, shortening, margarine, or butter

Estimate Portion Sizes Using Your Hands



One cupped hand will hold about 1 ounce of nuts.

Two cupped hands will hold about 1 ounce of chips, pretzels, or dry cereal product.



The palm of one hand is about the same as 3 ounces of meat. The whole outstretched hand is about the same as 1 cup of cooked pasta.



One thumb is about the same as 1 ounce of cheese or 1 tablespoon of peanut butter.

A thumb tip is about the same as 1 teaspoon of oil, margarine, or mayonnaise.



Beware of Growing Serving Sizes

The commonly served portion sizes of some foods have doubled and tripled over the years. Because of “value meals,” “combo meals,” larger plates, and “super-sizing,” we often eat more than we need. Such deals may seem like good values until you think about the health costs of extra calories from fats and sugar.

Read the Nutrition Facts labels on product packaging to find the size of one serving. For example, the label on a 20-ounce carbonated soda (below) shows that the bottle contains 2½ servings. Someone drinking an entire bottle would, in fact, consume 200 calories, rather than the 80 calories that’s listed on the label.

Servings Per Container: 2.5

Nutrition Facts

Serv. Size: 8 fl oz (240 ml)
Servings Per Container: 2.5

Amount Per Serving

Calories 80

% Daily Value*

Total Fat 0g 0%

Trans Fat 0g

Sodium 10mg 0%

Total Carbohydrate 20g 7%

Sugars 20g

Protein 0g 0%

Not a significant source of other nutrients.

*Percent Daily Values are based on
a 2000 Calorie diet

CONTAINS CARBONATED WATER, SUGAR AND/OR CORN SWEETENER, GLYCERINE, NATURAL AND ARTIFICIAL FLAVORINGS, CITRIC ACID, SODIUM BENZOATE (PRESERVATIVE), CARAMEL COLORING, PHOSPHORIC ACID, CAFFEINE, SWEETENER, GLYCERINE, NATURAL

Tips for Controlling Portions

At home:

- Measure single servings to know what they look like.
- Avoid serving food “family style.” Instead, serve food onto single plates.
- Do not go back for seconds.
- Try using a smaller plate for your meal.
- Avoid eating out of a bag or a carton.
- Avoid eating while watching television.

In a restaurant:

- Choose smaller portions, when possible.
- Eat the proper portion size and take home the rest.
- Ask for salad dressing to be served “on the side,” so you can control how much is added.
- Order from the menu rather than the all-you-can-eat buffet.
- If you order dessert, share!

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