

PORTION CONTROL- HOW MUCH FOOD IS ENOUGH?

More and more people are overweight or obese. If you are trying to lose weight, calories count. That doesn't mean you have to cut out your favorite foods. But it is a good idea to reduce your serving sizes. This is called "portion control." You can include your favorite foods in a healthy meal and still lose weight. Even a small weight loss can be a big boost to your health. For example, if you lose just 10 pounds, and get 30 minutes of exercise a day, you can reduce your chance of developing diabetes by more than half!

What should I eat?

A meal plan will help guide what you eat. Here are a few tips to get you started:

- Eat at least five servings of fruits and vegetables every day (Include a variety of colors such as green, yellow, orange, and red)
- Aim for six servings of breads, cereals, and starchy vegetables (Starchy vegetables include peas, corn, potatoes, and dried beans such as pinto or kidney beans)
- Choose 2-3 servings of low-fat dairy products like skim or 1% milk or non-fat yogurt
- Choose lean meats, chicken, and fish (Pick meats without visible fat and remove skin from chicken and other poultry. Try to include 2-3 servings of fish a week. Avoid fried meats.)
- Cut back on sweets and desserts (Most desserts are high in calories and do not contain many vitamins and minerals.)

How much?

A Serving of...	Equals...
Fresh fruit or vegetables	1 cup
Canned fruit or cooked vegetables	1/2 cup
Starchy vegetables or dried beans	1/2 cup
Bread	1 slice
Dry cereal	3/4 cup
Cooked cereal	1/2 cup
Rice or pasta	1/3 cup
Dairy products	1 cup
Lean meats, chicken & fish	3 ounces
Oil, margarine, or butter	1 teaspoon

Portion Size Tips

Here are some tips to help you with portion sizes:

- A 1/2 cup serving of canned fruit, vegetables, or potatoes looks like half a tennis ball sitting on your plate
- 3 ounces of meat, fish, or chicken is about the size of a deck of playing cards or the palm of your hand
- A 1 ounce serving of cheese is about the size of your thumb
- A 1 cup serving of milk, yogurt, or fresh greens is about the size of your fist
- 1 teaspoon of oil is about the size of your thumb tip

Restaurant Tips

Restaurants usually serve very large portions. Try these tips to cut down on your calories:

- Eat only half your meal and take the other half for lunch the next day
- Split an entrée or dessert with a friend
- Ask for substitutions (For example ask for steamed vegetables or a salad instead of french fries)
- Ask for all sauces, dressings, and gravy on the side

Diabetes Prevention Program Research Group, "Reduction in the Incidence of Type 2 Diabetes with Lifestyle Intervention or Metformin," NEJM; 346:393-403, Feb. 7, 2002, no. 6

Portion control and wt. loss tips adapted from: <http://weightloss.about.com/cs/moretips/a/aa062700a.htm>