

## Just enough for you or me



Controlling your weight calls for more than just choosing a healthy variety of foods. It also calls for looking at how much and how often you eat. In this article we'll explore how to determine the right portion sizes for you.

**What is the difference between a portion and a serving?** - A "portion" is how much food you choose to eat at one time. "Serving" is used to describe recommended amounts from each food group to be consumed daily (ex: the U.S. Food Pyramid recommends 2-4 servings of fruit daily for a 2,000 calorie diet).

**How do I know how big my portions are?** - The portion size that you are used to eating may be equal to two or three standard servings. Typically if you eat an entire package or restaurant plateful, you are eating two or more servings—and at least double the calories, fat, and other nutrients in a standard serving. Check the servings per package listed on its Nutrition Facts. You'll find that small containers often have more than one serving inside.

Learning to recognize standard serving sizes can help you judge how much you are eating. When cooking for yourself, use measuring cups and spoons to measure your usual food portions and compare them to standard serving sizes from Nutrition Facts of packaged food products for a week or so. Put the suggested serving size that appears on the label on your plate before you start eating. This will help you see what one standard serving of a food looks like compared to how much you normally eat.

**What sizes should my portions be?** - Your personal portion sizes should daily add up to the recommended number of servings for your daily caloric and nutritional needs. Here's a guide to make it easier to judge recommended normal portion sizes..

### Serving sizes for a normal portion

3 oz. serving of meat or poultry *is equal to:*

1/2 cup cooked rice, pasta, potato or ice cream *is equal to:*

4 oz. serving of fish or meat *is equal to:*

A medium piece of fruit *is equal to:*

1 1/2 oz. of low-fat cheese *is equal to:*

### Everyday objects of similar size

a deck of cards

1/2 of your closed fist

the palm of your hand

your closed fist

4 stacked dice



*(Keep in mind that these size comparisons are approximations.)*

For more help and details regarding portions see other documents and information available on our website.