



Right-Size Your Portions



Key Concepts:

- Learn the difference between recommended serving size and portion
- Relate serving equivalents to a common everyday item.
- Learn tips to control how much is eaten

Materials/Equipment Needed:

- Common everyday items (deck of cards, ping pong ball, dominoes, CD case, CD, baseball, tennis ball, stamp, computer mouse, checkbook cover)
- Food models
- Portion size food replicas
- Portion Distortion Cards
- Cereal in plastic container
- One large plastic cereal bowl
- One normal-sized plastic cereal bowl
- One plastic glass
- Water in a pitcher
- Portion dinnerware kit
- Dry measuring cup set
- Liquid measuring cup
- Plastic garbage bag
- Paper towels
- Lesson Plan
- Educational fact sheets
- Mounted Posters for Exhibit – Portion Distortion Poster and 50 Ways to Eat Healthier Poster
- 2 tables with tablecloths

Advanced Preparation:

- Check number of fact sheets to make sure you have enough copies; make copies if needed
- Review activity instructions
- Set out liquid and dry measuring cups
- Measure out 1 cup cereal into normal-sized cereal bowl and place behind exhibit poster
- Set up exhibit, posters and food models with common everyday items
- Pour water into pitcher
- Tape garbage bag to side of table

Talking Points:

- Controlling your weight is a matter of balancing how many calories you consume with how many calories you burn through activity. Many foods, like fruits, vegetables, beans, whole grains, fat-free dairy and lean protein are usually lower in calories. So if you base your diet on these, you will feel fuller on fewer calories than if you eat foods which are high in sugar and fat like baked goods, fried foods, chips and other processed foods.
- But in addition to WHAT you eat, you have to watch HOW MUCH you eat. My Pyramid recommends serving sizes for foods based upon each individual food group. A serving is a unit of measurement such as ½ cup, 1 ounce, etc. A portion is actually how much food you eat. A portion may contain more than one serving.
- Being aware of serving sizes and how they relate to a common everyday item will help put portion control into better perspective. Let's look at some of these now. (Using handout as a guide show food models and the common everyday item that correlates to it)
- Serving size is a lot smaller than most people think. Serving size is one of the first things listed on the ingredient label.
- We underestimate the amount of food we eat and overestimate the recommended serving sizes for many foods. Let's do an activity and see how you do with measuring.

Activity:

Have participants use the larger bowl to measure out what they think is 1 cup of cereal. Then pour that cereal into the measuring cup to determine how close the person measured to 1 cup. Show normal-sized cereal bowl with 1 cup of cereal already measured in it.

Have participants attempt to pour ½ cup water into the plastic cups provided. Then pour that water into the measuring cup to determine how close the person measured to ½ cup. Reinforce the point about excess calories in drinks here as a reminder of the Re-think Your Drink lesson.

Discuss the differences in why more or less may have been measured (size of bowl or glass, type of cereal, eyes bigger than stomach, etc.)

Using portion food replicas ask participants to select which portion amount they would normally eat for the food items shown (macaroni and cheese, ice cream, beef, beans, rice, mashed potatoes). The larger portion replica is twice the recommended serving size of the smaller portion replica.

After you have finished, please clean up by throwing your trash away.

Show and discuss portion distortion cards if time is permitted or have them scattered around the table for viewing.

Summary:

Here are some tips to follow to right-size your portions:

- Listen to your body's cues. If you are hungry, eat. When you begin to feel full, quit eating.
- Read the label and check serving size on label and compare to recommended serving size for that food.
- Prepare less food for meals. Put leftovers away as soon as possible – Out of sight, out of mind.
- Start with smaller servings. You can always have more if you are still hungry.
- Use smaller dishes and glasses. Smaller plates and tall, thinner glasses will make you think you are getting more with less.
- Slow down the pace of eating. Take at least 20 minutes to eat so your brain can begin to register fullness.
- Never eat out of the bag. When you do this, you usually eat more. Take a portion and put the bag away.
- Think before you order. Many meals are two to four times larger than you need. Ask for a box when you get your food and put half of it in the box to take home.
- Just say no to super-sized and combo meals. Try the small size or kid's meal.
- Share a meal with friend. It not only saves you calories but money too.
- Eat regular meals and snacks. Plan your meals and snacks and it will be easier to be satisfied with smaller portions
- Don't eat in front of the TV or computer screen. Your focus is on the TV show or game and not how much you are eating.

References	"12 Smart Ways to Right-Size Your Portions" by North Carolina NET Program
	"What's In a Serving Size?" By North Carolina SNAC
	"Picture A Serving Size" by St. Louis Library
	"Portion Control: Don't Go Overboard" by Food and Health Communications
	Measure Up, Partner Activity Sheet from Join the Pyramid Posse Lesson Plans
	"Making Sense of Portion Sizes" from the Smart Portions Curriculum

Background Resources (Sources of Additional Information for the Presenter if Needed)	"How to Avoid Portion Size Pitfalls" by the National Center for Disease Control
	"Do Increased Portion Sizes Affect How Much We Eat?" Research to Practice Series, No. 2 May 2006 by the National Center for Disease Control
	"Portion Control" Small Step Adult and Teen by Department of Health and Human Services
	"Portion Distortion" by North Carolina SNAC
	"The Secret to Serving Size Is In Your Hand" by North Carolina Color Me Healthy...Preschoolers Moving and Eating Healthy
	"Ten Easy Ways to Downsize Serving Sizes" by North Carolina NET Program
	"The Marketing of Supersize to Kids" by North Carolina SNAC

Prepared By: Terri Crawford, Extension Agent (Nutrition)
Cathy Agan, Extension Agent (Family Nutrition Program)

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