

# Discovering Smart Servings

## Fit & Fun Families

### Avoid Portion Distortion

Discover smart servings. How much is too much when it comes to food? We are all bombarded by the “Super-Sized” meals of today’s eating establishments. They seem like a good value. But they are hardly a value to our waistlines and our good health. To many people, a “serving” is the amount of food dished up on their plate. Research has shown that regardless of appetite, people eat more when served larger portions.

## Why?

- Increased portion sizes promote excessive intake at meals.
- Adults and kids respond to larger portion size by eating more.
- We overeat because we eat super-sized portions.
- We overeat because we are too busy doing other things like watching TV or working on the computer.
- We overeat because we are bored or we are stressed.

## How?

- Create small goals to eat appropriate servings at every meal.
- Use the action ideas for work and home to make small changes.
- Track your progress and goals. Write a list of the foods most often eaten. See if you can guess and then measure the correct serving size.
- Celebrate your healthy changes and share your good ideas with others.

### Tip

- Imagine that your plate is a wheel.
- When filling your plate more than half to 3/4 of the wheel should be colorful and filled with servings of fruit and vegetables.
- Fill the rest of the plate with other variety of choices.

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## Employee Tip Sheet

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### Take Action: *Put Health in Motion!*

#### What You Can Do at Home:

Discover how to balance serving sizes and appetite.

- Pay attention to feeling full.
- Serve smaller servings.
- Set snack and meal times.
- Enjoy food without TV, telephone, computer or videos.
- Get up and move! Try activities rather than eating to chase away boredom!

#### What You Can Do at Work:

**Goal: Think Smart Servings! Put your Portions Back into Proportion**

- **Create a balanced eating plan.** Fried foods, high-fat foods, and take-out foods can be part of a balanced eating plan if you do not eat them every day and only eat small amounts.
- **Challenge** yourself to buy the smaller size of the bag of chips or soft drinks.
- **Share** with someone else for healthy savings when eating fast foods!
- **Listen** to your hunger clues. You may be thirsty instead of hungry.
- **Wait** at least 15 minutes before going back to the buffet table or cafeteria line for seconds.
- **Drink** plenty of fluid with each meal.
- **Take** a break from work and walk around. Don't confuse boredom and stress with hunger. If you are still hungry, opt for small, healthy snacks.

#### Resources:

- **www.USDA.gov** This site from the U.S. Department of Agriculture gives dietary guidelines for Americans and provides Food Guide Pyramid information.
- **www.health.gov/dietaryguidelines/dga2005/document/pdf/brochure.pdf** and **www.health.gov/dietaryguidelines/dga2005/recommendations.htm** This brochure outlines the government's latest dietary guidelines and recommendations (2005).
- **www.healthierus.gov/nutrition.html** This site gives a wealth of nutrition information for all ages and conditions.
- **hin.nhlbi.nih.gov/portion/** This site provides a meal planner, sample menus, and a downloadable serving size card from the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, Portion Distortion.
- **win.niddk.nih.gov/publications/energize.htm#labels** "Energize Yourself and Your Family" A brochure from the Weight Control Information Network; an information service of the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases.
- For more information on reading nutrition labels, see Using the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, available from the Federal Consumer Information Center, 1-888-878-3256 or read Guidance on How to Understand and Use the Nutrition Facts Panel on Food Labels from the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) at **www.cfsan.fda.gov/~dms/foodlab.html**.

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### Employee Worksheet:

What is your Serving Size? Team Nutrition, FNS, USDA

This colorful poster provides a visual example of Food Guide Pyramid serving sizes compared to easily recognized/common household objects.

Print and use this as a resource.

[www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Resources/Nibbles/servingsize\\_poster.pdf](http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Resources/Nibbles/servingsize_poster.pdf)

## The Discovering Smart Servings Challenge

Challenge : **Become a Food Label Detective**

- **Challenge** yourself to read the food labels on packages. Get savvy about single size package servings.
- **Look** to see if it is really labeled to serve more than one serving per package.
- **Remove** and eat only one portion and save the rest for later.

Here are some **quick tips** for reading food labels. Food labels may help you make healthy food choices, but they can be confusing\*.

### Serving Size:

- All **information** contained on a food label is based on the serving size. Foods higher in fat and sugar may have less portion size.
- **Be careful** – one serving may be much smaller than you think. Compare what you eat to the serving size on the label. Foods higher in fat and sugar may have a smaller portion size.
- Many **food labels** say “low-fat,” “reduced fat,” or “light.” That does not always mean the food is low in calories. Remember, fat free does not mean calorie free and calories do count!

### Saturated Fat:

Saturated fat is not healthy for your heart. Compare labels on similar foods and try to choose more foods that have a 5% DV or less for saturated fat.

### Trans Fat:

Trans fat is not healthy for your heart. When reading food labels, add together the grams (g) of trans fat and saturated fat, and choose foods with the lowest combined amount.

### Sugar:

Try to choose foods with little or no added sugar.

\* From Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2000, U.S. Department of Agriculture and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. If you need a special diet, check with your health care provider before following these guidelines.

This message brought to you by CIGNA HealthCare and the Healthy Kids Challenge.  
Working to make healthy eating and physical activity a regular part of your life at home and at work.