

Making Sense of Portion Sizes

Finding it hard to determine what a serving or portion size is? Below are some ways you can picture a serving or portion size using everyday objects.

Note: hand and finger sizes vary from person to person! These are GUIDES only.

The bread, cereal, rice and pasta group

- 1 cup of potatoes, rice, pasta - is a tennis ball, ice cream scoop
- 1 pancake - is a compact disc (CD)
- 1/2 cup cooked rice - is a cupcake wrapper full
- 1 piece of cornbread - is a bar of soap
- 1 slice of bread - is an audiocassette tape
- 1 cup of pasta, spaghetti, cereal - is a fist
- 2 cups of cooked pasta - is a full outstretched hand

The vegetable group

- 1 cup of green salad - is a baseball or a fist
- 1 baked potato - is a fist
- 3/4 cup tomato juice - is a small Styrofoam cup
- 1/2 cup cooked broccoli - is a scoop of ice cream, a light bulb
- 1/2 cup serving - is 6 asparagus spears; 7 or 8 baby carrots or carrot sticks; 1 ear of corn on the cob

The fruit group

- 1/2 cup grapes (15 grapes) - is a light bulb
- 1/2 cup of fresh fruit - is 7 cotton balls
- 1 medium size fruit - is a tennis ball or a fist
- 1 cup of cut-up fruit - is a fist
- 1/4 cup raisins - is a large egg

The milk, yogurt and cheese group

- 1-1/2 ounces of cheese - is a 9-volt battery, 3 dominoes or your index and middle fingers
- 1 ounce of cheese - is a pair of dice or your thumb
- 1 cup of ice cream - is a large scoop the size of a baseball

The meat, poultry, fish, dry beans, eggs and nut group

- 2 tablespoons of peanut butter - is a ping-pong ball
- 1 teaspoon of peanut butter - is a fingertip
- 1 tablespoon of peanut butter - is a thumb tip
- 3 ounces cooked meat, fish, poultry - is a palm, deck of cards, cassette tape
- 3 ounces grilled/baked fish - is a checkbook
- 3 ounces cooked chicken - is a chicken leg and thigh or breast

Fats, oils and sweets

- 1 teaspoon butter, margarine - is the size of a stamp as thick as your finger or thumb tip
- 2 tablespoons salad dressing - is a ping-pong ball

Snack foods

- 1 ounce of nuts or small candies - is one handful
- 1 ounce of chips or pretzels - is two handfuls
- 1/2 cup of potato chips, crackers or popcorn - is one man's handful
- 1/3 cup of potato chips, crackers or popcorn - is one woman's handful

Serving dishes/utensils

- 1/2 cup - is a small fruit bowl, a custard cup or mashed potato scoop
- 1-1/2 cups - is a large cereal/soup bowl
- 1-1/2 cups of pasta, noodles - is a dinner plate, not heaped
- 1/2 cup of pasta, noodles - is a cafeteria vegetable dish

You might want to know that...

- 1 cupped hand holds 2 tablespoons of liquid if you don't have measuring spoons
- 1 slice of bread is one ounce or 1 serving; some rolls or bagels weigh 3 to 5 ounces or more making them equal to 3 to 5 servings of bread.