



# Extension Nutrition Programs

FSNE/EFNEP

## Sizing Up Servings

Think of it...more than half of the population of the United States eats out on any given day. For busy people, restaurants offer convenience, choices, and as much food as we want. "Super-sizing" is a deal too good to turn down, right? Super-sized meals provide a whopping 1,800-2,400 calories. They are also loaded with fat and the soda could contain as much as  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a cup of sugar.

We often think the amount of food put in front of us is a single serving, when it can be as much as an entire day's worth from a food group. Even when you are familiar with the Food Guide Pyramid and how many servings you need to eat, portions continue to be an issue. The two food groups that seem to be the most confusing are grains and meat.

Six to 11 servings of **grains** a day seems like a lot to eat, but let's look at what that means. A single serving from the grain group is 1 ounce of bread (sometimes less than a slice),  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup cooked pasta

*1 serving of grain is:*  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  cup  
 1 ounce

or rice, or 1 ounce of cereal. Bagels and muffins now average 4 ounces, or 4 servings of grain.

Most of us eat more **protein** than our bodies need. The Food Guide Pyramid says 2 to 3 servings daily, which is 5-7 ounces. A single serving is 2 to 3 ounces of poultry, beef, or fish.

*1 serving of protein is:*  
 2-3 ounces meat,  
 fish,  
 poultry

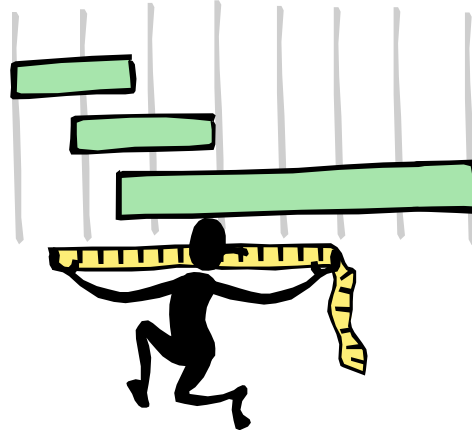


Imagine the size of a deck of cards – that is one serving. Remember beans, eggs and nuts are in this section of the pyramid as well which can add more protein servings than you think you are eating.

What's in your cup? **Beverages** may account for a larger portion of your calories than you think! Again note serving sizes, a 20-ounce soda is  $2\frac{1}{2}$  servings, not one (and an average of 260 calories). Juice and milk offer more nutrition, but 6 ounces of juice or 8 ounces of milk is considered a serving. You can reduce the calories (and lower the fat) in milk by choosing skim or 1% milk.

Instead of looking for a magic diet, take simple steps such as:

- Know how many servings you need and what constitutes a serving for best health.
- Measure everything you eat for one week to see just how much you are eating.
- Try eating more whole grains. Whole grains are higher in fiber and nutrients and tend to make your stomach feel full longer.
- Order a regular burger, small fries and milk. You've just cut about 1,200 calories from a super sized meal.
- Try to select lean meat products.
- Add a salad or other vegetable to your meal.
- Add a piece of fruit for dessert.
- Check those labels. How many servings are inside? How many calories per servings?



### The Easy Guide to Serving Sizes

<u>One serving of</u>	<u>Is the same size as</u>
Bagel	Hockey puck
Bread	Compact disc case
Cheese slice	Computer diskette
Grapes	Tennis ball
Ice cream	Tennis ball
Meat	Deck of cards
Peanut butter	Ping pong ball
Potato	Computer mouse
Rice	Tennis ball
Salad dressing (or oil or mayonnaise)	Match book
Spaghetti(bundle of dry)	Nickel



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