P A T I E N T Education

SCIENCE OF CHOICES—FACT SHEET FOR CONSUMERS

Sizing and Resizing Portions for Better Nutrition and Weight Management

Your goal is to reach and maintain a healthy weight. You want to improve your nutrition, too. In this case, what is likely to be your major concern? Most people do not want to follow a diet that makes them feel hungry or deprived.

Happily, you can achieve these nutrition and weight management goals without going hungry. The following tips can help you “right-size” portions of the “right” foods to achieve tasty, filling nutrition that also helps you lower calorie (energy) intake.

Resize the Portions on Your Plate

Rather than consider a “square” meal mostly “meat and potatoes,” mentally remap your plate.

- Make vegetable servings (or vegetables and fruit) at least half of your plate.
- Size your meat, poultry, fish, or other protein (such as tofu) dish to a quarter of your plate.
- Complete the final quarter of your plate with a whole grain or starchy vegetable.
- Use a smaller plate. Try an 8 inch plate instead of a 10 inch plate.
- Frozen single-serve meals are easy portion-controlled options.
- For more examples based on the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, see www.choosemyplate.gov.

Feature Vegetables and Fruits

Vegetables and fruits are typically rich in nutrients and relatively low in calories. So feature them at every meal and snack.

- Make vegetables and fruits at least half of the food you eat at lunch and dinner.
- Fill up on dark, leafy green vegetables and colorful vegetables such as carrots, tomatoes, summer squash, green peppers, eggplant, and onions.
- Enjoy fruit as a salad or for dessert.
- For a nutritious starch, substitute sweet potatoes, corn, or beans (legumes) for a refined grain roll or side.
- Use lower fat preparation methods: Avoid deep frying or topping vegetables with lots of butter or cheese, for example.

Begin Lunch or Dinner With Vegetable Starters

Research shows that eating a low-calorie vegetable starter can reduce the portion sizes and total calories eaten at a meal. Good choices include the following:

- A green salad with low-calorie dressing
- A vegetable soup (not a cream soup)
- Raw vegetables with tomato/vegetable salsa

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Science of Choices Fact Sheets are sponsored by the ConAgra Foods Science Institute. This handout is from your health care provider and provides a general overview that may not apply to everyone. Be sure to discuss how to use this information with your health care provider.

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Minimize the Temptation of Overeating Calories

Here are 2 ways to prevent overeating higher-calorie foods at meals.

- Serve plates in the kitchen not from dishes on the table. Store leftovers of protein dishes, starchy vegetables, and breads right away.
- Enjoy seconds only of lower-calorie, but nutrient-rich vegetables and salads. It is okay to put these bowls on the table.

Snack Smart

Most Americans eat about 2 snacks a day. These tips can help snacks work toward your nutrition and weight management goals.

- Choose a low-calorie, nutrition rich snack such as the following:
 - Veggie sticks and slices with tomato salsa or low-fat yogurt dip
 - Low-fat microwave popcorn in a single-serve package
- Do not eat right from a large package. Put a single serving in a bowl.
- Need a sweet? Try fruit or one 100-calorie single-serve package of a sweet treat.

Rushed for Time? Reach for Portion-Controlled Meal Replacements

Growing research shows that individuals who eat portion-controlled entrees or meal replacements for 1 or 2 meals a day on some days during a week usually have better nutrient intakes while consuming fewer calories. The research suggests that solid meal replacements may produce greater satiety than liquid replacements. Used as part of your diet plan, both can help you balance nutrient and energy intakes when you need something convenient.

Resources

www.choosemyplate.gov provides many tips based on the Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

www.eatright.org from the Academy for Nutrition and Dietetics provides the following articles and more:

- Kids and Portion Control (<http://www.eatright.org/resource/food/nutrition/dietary-guidelines-and-myplate/portion-distortion>)
- Frozen Foods: Convenient and Nutritious (<http://www.eatright.org/resource/food/planning-and-prep/smart-shopping/frozen-foods-convenient-and-nutritious>)
- Seven Tips for Health Dining Out (<http://www.eatright.org/resource/health/weight-loss/eating-out/eating-out>)

Recommendation From My Health Care Provider.