

Did You Know . . .

March 2013

March is National Nutrition Month

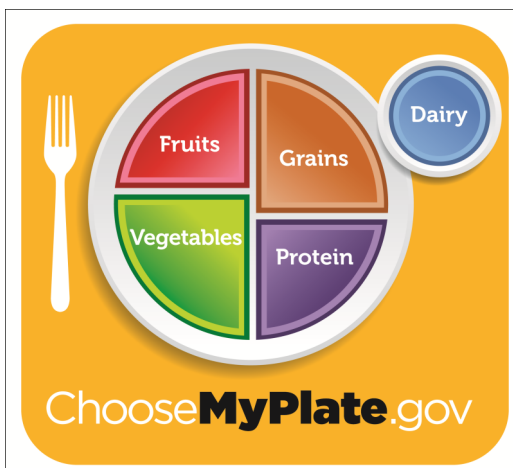
Nutrition is the process of getting food into your body to keep it healthy and functioning properly. A healthy eating plan starts with more vegetables and fruits and smaller portions of protein and grains — and don't forget dairy. Replacing unhealthy eating habits with healthier ones can be difficult, especially if unhealthy habits are all you've ever known. One key to making lasting improvements in your diet is to make changes in stages. Think about how you can adjust the portions throughout the day to get more of what you need without too many calories.

Did you know that in the 1980s, a typical bagel had 140 calories and a 3-inch diameter? Today, a bagel averages 6 inches and is a whopping 350 calories! With 64-ounce fountain drinks, jumbo-size snacks, massive restaurant entrees and the ability to "up-size" fast food for pennies more, it is easy to get confused about proper portion size.

What is the Difference Between Portions and Servings?

A portion is the amount of food you choose to eat. There is no standard or correct portion size, but eating large portions regularly causes people to overeat. A serving is a standard amount (issued by the USDA) used to give advice about how much to eat, and to identify how many calories and nutrients are in a particular food. This is the information located on the nutritional label of a food product (serving size).

For example: You eat a sandwich with two slices of bread. The nutrition label on the bread states that the serving size is one slice. Your portion is two slices, which equals two servings.



Did you know that ...

The USDA website www.choosemyplate.gov provides extensive information about healthy eating, proper portion sizes and recommended daily food intake customized to your age, gender and activity level.



Using a 10-inch dinner plate, these photos show healthy portion sizes.

Healthy Portion Sizes

For a general idea of the amount of food you should be consuming, use the following recommendations:

- A serving of meat is about 2 or 3 ounces—about the size of the palm of your hand.
- One serving of grains is equal to one slice of bread, one ounce of cereal, or half a cup of pasta or rice.
- A serving of fruit or vegetables is equal to one small piece of fresh fruit, half a cup of chopped vegetables or fruit, or ¼ cup of juice. In general, it's not as necessary to be vigilant about vegetable and fruit intake, as any amount is healthy—just be aware of the sugar content in fruit and calories in juices.
- The USDA recommends you make at least half your plate fruits and vegetables, along with lean protein and whole grains.

The recommended daily servings of each food group depend on age and gender, but here are some general guidelines for adults:

- Vegetables: 2.5 - 3 cups per day
- Fruits: 2 cups per day
- Grains: 3 - 4 ounces per day
- Protein: 5 - 6 ounces per day
- Dairy: 3 cups per day

MyPlate

The USDA created MyPlate to replace the traditional food pyramid, to make it easier for Americans to make healthy food choices. If you find it difficult to adhere to the recommended daily servings, try focusing on these MyPlate guidelines instead:

- Make half your plate fruits and vegetables.
- Make at least half your grains whole grains.
- Go lean with protein.
- Switch to fat-free or low-fat dairy.



For Generations

Tips for Choosing Sensible Portions

When eating out

- Choose a small- or medium-size portion. If out for dinner, ask if you can order a lunch portion.
- If the main dish portions are larger than you want, order an appetizer instead, or split the main entrée with a friend.
- When you are full, stop eating. Take the rest home and enjoy it as a meal the next day.
- If you see that the portion is too large, set aside part of your food to take home before you begin to eat.
- Stay away from “all-you-can-eat” buffets.

At home

- Every so often, measure out a serving (per the Nutrition Information label) of foods you eat often, using standard measuring cups and compare to the portion you normally eat. You may be surprised to see how much you are eating!
- Use a smaller plate for your meal. People tend to eat more out of habit when it’s on a bigger plate.
- Put sensible portions on your plate at the beginning of the meal, and don’t go back for seconds. Chances are, if you sit back and let your meal digest, you will find you are satisfied in about 10-15 minutes.

Spaghetti with Quick Meat Sauce

Instead of opening a jar of sauce, try this easy spaghetti with meat sauce and extra vegetables. Serve with steamed broccoli or a green salad, garlic bread, and roasted pears for dessert. The recipe makes enough for 8 servings. If you’re serving only four for dinner, cook 8 ounces of spaghetti and freeze the leftover sauce.

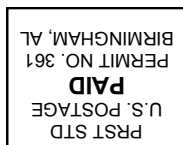
Ingredients (makes 8 servings):

1 pound whole-wheat spaghetti	2 tsp extra-virgin olive oil	1 large onion, finely chopped
1 large carrot, finely chopped	1 stalk celery, finely chopped	4 cloves garlic, minced
1 Tbsp Italian seasoning	1 pound lean (90% or leaner) ground beef	1 28-ounce can crushed tomatoes
¼ cup chopped flat-leaf parsley	½ cup grated Parmesan cheese	½ tsp salt

Cook pasta according to package directions. Drain. Meanwhile, heat oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add onion, carrot, and celery and cook, stirring occasionally, until the onion is beginning to brown, 5-8 minutes. Stir in garlic and Italian seasoning; cook until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Add beef and cook, stirring and breaking up with a spoon, until no longer pink, 3-5 minutes. Increase heat to high. Stir in tomatoes and cook until thickened, 4-6 minutes. Stir in parsley and salt. Serve the sauce over the pasta, sprinkled with cheese.

Nutrition Facts

Per serving 389 calories; 9g fat (3g saturated, 3g monounsaturated); 48mg cholesterol; 53g carbohydrate; 0g added sugars; 28g protein; 9g fiber; 416mg sodium; 709mg potassium



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