



Portion Control is Important for Health

by Tammy Roberts, MS, RD, LD,

In the last two decades, overweight and obesity have become an epidemic in America. The truth of the matter is that we are eating a lot more than we used to. It is interesting to note that the size of plate we eat on is larger than it was twenty or thirty years ago. And, we have come to expect everything to be available in a super size.

According to Karen Collins RD in an article for MSNBC, we're listening to something other than our stomachs to decide when to quit eating. In one study, people were given bowls of soup to eat. One group had a regular bowl of soup and the other group had bowls with holes that were attached to special tables that allowed the bowl to slowly refill as the person ate. People who ate from the bowls that automatically refilled ate 73% more than those that ate from the normal bowls. An interesting thing to note is that the people who ate 73% more did not believe they had consumed more and they did not report feeling fuller than those who ate from the regular bowl. Other studies have shown that when people are given more food they eat more. Unfortunately, we are eating larger portions and a lot of the larger portions are from foods that are high calorie to

begin with. Fast food restaurants are pricing the larger size at a bargain and we all love a bargain.

One double cheeseburger can add in excess of 65 grams of fat which is about the amount of fat the average American should have in one day. Add the super size French fries to that and you've eaten more than half of your fat grams for the next day. Your super sized soda can have more than 30 teaspoons of sugar making the calorie count of that one meal more than 1,500 calories. The average American should consume around 2,000 calories a day. If you're thinking most people would just eat less at the next meal, think again. Studies have shown that when people overeat at one meal, they do not compensate by eating less at the next meal.

Try experimenting with the amount of food you eat. Try eating the foods and amounts recommended by MyPyramid. Or for another challenge, next time you go to a fast food restaurant, purchase the regular burger and small fries. Take your time eating it and then wait fifteen minutes. You may be surprised to find that you are full!

missourifamilies.org/features/nutritionarticles/nut180.htm

Your super sized soda can have more than 30 teaspoons of sugar!

If you wonder how much you should be eating, go to MyPyramid.gov and enter your age, sex and activity level. It will tell you how many calories and amounts you should consume from all food groups.

Daily, the average American should consume 2,000 calories, 6 ounces of grain (about 6 slices of bread), 2 ½ cups of vegetables, 2 cups of fruit, 3 cups of milk, and 5 1/2 ounces of meat. In addition, you can have 6 teaspoons of oil and 265 calories for things like salad dressing, mayonnaise or sugar in your tea.

What counts as an ounce equivalent of grains?

1 slice of bread, 1 cup of ready-to-eat cereal, or ½ cup of cooked rice, cooked pasta, or cooked cereal can be considered as 1 ounce equivalent from the grains group.

What counts as a cup of vegetables?

1 cup of raw or cooked vegetables or vegetable juice, or 2 cups of raw leafy greens can be considered as 1 cup from the vegetable group.

What counts as a cup of fruit?

1 cup of fruit or 100% fruit juice, or ½ cup of dried fruit can be considered as 1 cup from the fruit group. The following specific amounts count as 1 cup of fruit

(in some cases equivalents for ½ cup are also shown) towards your daily intake.

What counts as 1 cup in the milk group?

1 cup of milk or yogurt, 1 ½ ounces of natural cheese, or 2 ounces of processed cheese can be considered as 1 cup from the milk group.

What counts as an ounce equivalent in the meat & beans group?

1 ounce of meat, poultry or fish, ¼ cup cooked dry beans, 1 egg, 1 tablespoon of peanut butter, or ½ ounce of nuts or seeds can be considered as 1 ounce equivalent from the meat and beans group.

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