

## What is A Serving?

Serving sizes differ depending on the food. A serving of milk is not the same as a serving of rice. Food labels tell you how much is in a serving. The tips on this page can also help you judge serving sizes. You can eat more than one serving of food at a time. But try to stick to our guidelines for the number of servings to have each day from each group. These are designed to help you get the right amount of calories and nutrients, helping you maintain a healthy weight.

**Start with the label.** Look for the box that says “**Nutrition Facts**.” The first lines tell you how much is in one serving and how many servings are in the container.

**Serving Size:** This is the amount of food in one serving.

**Servings Per Container:** Is your serving the same as the one on the label? Some packages that appear as single servings actually contain two or three. If you eat the whole package, you may need to double or triple the calories and other nutrient values as well.



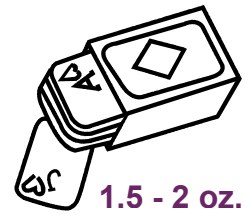
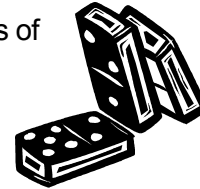
## How to Measure a Serving

Some foods are weighed in ounces. Some are measured in spoons or cups. Others, like fruits, are based on an average (“medium”) size. So what does all of this look like on your plate? Here are some serving sizes and tips to help you judge just what one serving looks like.

### Ounces

- A serving of meat, poultry, or fish is 2-3 ounces (about the size of and thickness of a deck of cards).
- A serving of natural cheese is 1.5 ounces. A serving of processed cheese is 2 ounces. One ounce of either type is about the size of a domino.

2 - 3 oz.



1.5 - 2 oz.

### Tablespoons and Teaspoons

- A serving of peanut butter is 2 tablespoons (the size of a walnut).
- A serving of salad dressing is 1 tablespoon (the size of a quarter).
- A serving of fat, oil, or sugar is 1 teaspoon (the size of a penny).

2 Tbs.



1 Tb.

1 tsp.



### Cups

- A serving of the following foods is **1/2 cup** (the size of an ice cream scoop):
  - Cooked Cereal, rice, or pasta
  - Cooked or chopped raw vegetables
  - Chopped, cooked, or canned fruit
  - Cooked dried beans
- A serving of the following foods is **1 cup** (the size of a coffee mug):
  - Raw, leafy vegetables
  - Berries
  - Milk or yogurt
  - Cooked dried beans
- A serving of vegetable or fruit juice is 3/4 cup.
- A serving of ready-to-eat cereal can range from 1/2 to one full cup. Check the serving size on the nutrition label on each package to determine.

1/2 cup



1 cup

### A Medium-Sized Piece

- A serving of fresh, whole fruit is one medium-sized piece (about the size of a fist).
- A serving of melon is one 2-inch slice.



One medium-sized piece

Learning how much food is in 1 serving can help you monitor how much you eat at one time. It will also help you manage the number of servings you eat a day from each food group. This will help you manage your weight. Here are some tips to help you manage servings:

**To Balance Your Plate:**

- Measure serving sizes. Try using measuring spoons and cups and a small food scale to learn what a serving looks like.
- Plan meals with more servings of grains, vegetables, and fruits. Aim to cover at least 75% of your plate with foods from these groups. Aim to cover 25% or less of your plate from the meat group.
- Aim for Variety. Choose foods from each group to ensure you are getting necessary vitamins and minerals.

**For Weight Management or Loss:**

- Serve main courses on small plates. Use cups for soup instead of bowls. Put cereal and fruit in small bowls.
- Eat Slowly. Put your fork down in between bites. Pay attention to your stomach – it takes about 20 minutes for your stomach to know it's full.
- Drink plenty of water with meals. This aids digestion and fills you up.
- When you eat out, ask for a takeout container when you arrive. Put half of your food in the container before you start eating, and take it home to eat for another meal.
- At salad bars and buffets, use a small plate and wait before going back.

**How Many Servings A Day?**

The number of servings you need a day from each food group depends on how much you weigh and how active you are. Here are some guidelines:

Food Group	Servings Per Day
Bread, cereal, rice, and pasta	6 – 11 servings
Vegetables	3 – 5 servings
Fruit	2 – 4 servings
Meat, poultry, fish, eggs, beans, and nuts	2 – 3 servings
Milk, yogurt, and cheese	2 – 3 servings
Fats, oils, and sweets	Use sparingly



**Additional Resources**

For assistance with finding a health educator or dietician who can help you address your specific nutrition needs, or to request more resources and health information, contact **Member Health Improvement** at **(800) 445-5747** or **health@hpmg.com**.

Visit **www.HillPhysicians.com** to find **How to Read a Nutrition Label**, plus more audio and video podcasts on a variety of health topics. Visit us

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