

# FOOD LABELS – KNOW WHAT YOU'RE GETTING

You can start to make healthy choices for your life right now — just by getting a few food packages from the kitchen and reviewing the following explanations of "Nutritional Facts." If you're counting calories, fats or carbohydrates, it's important to know how those numbers are calculated in the food you eat.

- **Serving Size:** Defines what is considered a normal serving of this food based on portion size or measurements like cups, tablespoons, etc. Information on calories, amounts of protein, fat, etc., is based on this measured size.
- **Total Fat:** Look at the grams of total fat in a serving. A low fat food is defined as containing 3 grams of fat or less per serving.
- **Total Carbohydrate:** Look at the grams of total carbohydrate, rather than the indented grams of sugar. If you look only at the sugar number, you may end up excluding foods such as fruits and milks thinking they are too high in sugar, while you may overeat foods such as cereals that have no sugar, but do contain significant amounts of carbohydrate. The grams of sugar and fiber are counted as part of the grams of total carbohydrate. If a food has 5 grams or more fiber in a serving, subtract the fiber grams from the total grams of carbohydrate for a more accurate estimate of the carbohydrate content. Sugar alcohols (also known as polyols) include sorbitol, xylitol and mannitol, and have fewer calories than sugars and starches, although use of the sugar alcohols in a product does not necessarily mean the product is low in carbohydrate. Always remember to check the label for the grams of carbohydrate. The grams of sugar alcohols are indented under the total carbohydrate heading and aligned under dietary fiber and sugars. The grams of sugar alcohols are required on the label only when a claim is made about sugar alcohols or sugars when sugar alcohols are present.
- **% Daily Value:** Indicates how much of a specific nutrient a serving of food contains compared to a 2000-calorie diet. A product is considered a good source of a particular nutrient if one serving provides 10% to 19% of the Daily Value, and is considered high in a given nutrient if it contains 20% or more of the Daily Value. If the Daily Value is 5% or less, the food is low in that nutrient.

<b>Nutrition Facts</b>	
<b>Serving Size</b>	½ cup (114g)
Servings Per Container	4
<b>Amount Per Serving</b>	
<b>Calories</b> 90	Calories from Fat 30
	<b>% Daily Value*</b>
<b>Total Fat</b> 3g	<b>5%</b>
Saturated Fat 0g	<b>0%</b>
<b>Cholesterol</b> 0mg	<b>0%</b>
<b>Sodium</b> 300mg	<b>13%</b>
<b>Total Carbohydrate</b> 13g	<b>4%</b>
Dietary Fiber 3g	<b>12%</b>
Sugars 3g	
<b>Protein</b> 3g	
Vitamin A 80%	Vitamin C 60%
Calcium 4%	Iron 4%
* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:	
	Calories: 2,000    2,500
Total Fat	Less than 65g    80g
Sat Fat	Less than 20g    25g
Cholesterol	Less than 300mg    300mg
Sodium	Less than 2,400mg    2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate	300g    375g
Dietary Fiber	25g    30g
Calories per gram:	
Fat 9 • Carbohydrate 4 • Protein 4	

Source: American Diabetes Association. [www.diabetes.org](http://www.diabetes.org)

# GOOD CARBS: THE “SECRET” TO LONG-TERM HEALTH AND WEIGHT LOSS

Would you like to lose weight, increase your energy naturally, *and* dramatically improve your long-term health? You can - with 'good' carbs! For a while now health and diet experts have been talking about the importance of eating healthy fats, but now we're learning that choosing the **right kinds of carbohydrates** is just as important for your health and wellness.

There is little doubt that the human body uses carbohydrates most efficiently for energy production (as opposed to fats and proteins). So there isn't really any reason to avoid carbs, *even if* you're trying to lose weight. But there is a BIG difference between the natural, wholesome, 'good' carbs we are designed to eat and the unnatural, highly-processed, 'refined' carbs so many of us consume on a daily basis!

These 'bad' carbs are contributing to a health crisis in America and other parts of the world in the forms of obesity, diabetes, heart disease, and cancer. Millions of people are simply unaware of what they are doing to their bodies every time they eat processed carbs. What's worse, many parents don't realize that they are setting their kids up for a lifetime of health problems by allowing them to develop the 'junk food habit' at a young age.

## Why you shouldn't avoid *all* carbs...

Despite what many of the popular 'fad' diets would have you believe, **carbohydrates are NOT bad** for you! In fact they are an extremely important part of human nutrition. Carbs give you energy and provide many of the vitamins, minerals, and phytonutrients necessary for good health. However, eating the wrong kinds of carbs on a regular basis - something that *hundreds of millions* of people do - can be very harmful. Many experts now believe that 'bad' carbs are a leading cause of obesity, diabetes, heart disease, cancer, high-cholesterol, and several of the other serious health problems we face in modern times.

## What are 'good' carbs?

The simple answer to this question is this: **good carbs are unprocessed carbohydrates in their 'natural' state** - or *very close* to their natural state. In other words they have been minimally altered by man or machine (or not altered at all). Most diet experts agree that green vegetables are the 'ultimate' good carbs. In fact, pretty much all 'leafy' vegetables and fruits fit into this category. Beans and legumes are also, generally, included on the 'good carbs' list, as are nuts and seeds. Finally, whole-grain cereal foods - including whole-grain breads and pastas - are considered by many to be good carb foods (although there is some disagreement over this).

## Good carbs have these healthy characteristics:

- **high in fiber:** helps you stay full longer (and avoid overeating), provides sustained energy, lowers cholesterol levels, helps to remove toxins from the body
- **low glycemic index:** stabilizes blood sugar levels and insulin production
- **high in nutrients:** natural vitamins, minerals & phytonutrients promote health and help to prevent chronic disease
- **low 'energy-density'** (except nuts & seeds): provides sustained energy, promotes healthy weight loss and long-term weight maintenance
- **greater 'thermic effect':** naturally stimulates metabolism and promotes fat loss

Many popular weight loss diets incorporate good carbs into their eating plans because they are so effective at lowering insulin production and stabilizing blood sugar levels. Also, because of their high fiber-content, good carbs make you feel fuller and help you to avoid overeating - a major problem for many people trying to lose weight safely!

To sum it up, the following food types are generally considered to be good carbs and should make up most or all of your carb intake:

- whole vegetables
- whole fruits
- beans
- legumes
- nuts
- seeds
- whole cereal grains

Note: Some nutritionists include 'healthy' dairy products like low-fat milk and sugar-free yogurt on the list, but there is much disagreement over this so we'll leave dairy foods off for now.

### What are 'bad' carbs...

Bad carbs are refined, processed carbohydrate foods that have had all or most of their natural nutrients and fiber removed in order to make them easier to transport and more 'consumer friendly.' Most **baked goods, white breads, pastas, snack foods, candies, and non-diet soft drinks** fit into this category. Bleached, enriched wheat flour and white sugar - along with an array of artificial flavorings, colorings, and preservatives - are the most common ingredients used to make 'bad carb' foods.

Bad carbs are harmful mainly because the human body is not able to process them very well. Our hormonal and digestive systems developed over the course of millions of years. Yet only in the past 100 years or so have humans had access to these highly-processed carbohydrates in abundance. Our bodies simply didn't have time to adapt and evolve to handle the rapid changes in food processing.

Because of this, most of the processed carbs we eat wreak havoc on our natural hormone levels. Insulin production, especially, is 'thrown out of wack' as the body attempts to process the huge amounts of starches and simple sugars contained in a typical 'bad carb'-based meal. This leads to dramatic fluctuations in blood glucose levels - a big reason why you often feel lethargic after eating these unhealthy meals.

Also, it's important to realize that most processed carb foods provide only 'empty' calories - calories with little or no nutritional-value. Eat enough of these empty calories and your body will quickly turn them into extra body fat, as anyone with a weight problem already knows all too well!

The regular consumption of large amounts of high-sugar, low-fiber, nutritionally-poor 'bad carbs' eventually leads to a **much higher risk of obesity, diabetes, cancer, heart disease, and more**. It's pretty clear that the abundance of processed carbs and unhealthy trans-fats found in so many foods is a major cause - if not the biggest cause - of many of our modern chronic health problems.

### What can good carbs do for you?

Simply put, if you eat only good carbs you can avoid many of the health problems that plague millions of people around the world.

- You will be healthier and fitter.
- You will feel better and have significantly more energy.
- You will lose most or all of your excess body fat.
- Most importantly, you'll be able to get more enjoyment out of your body and your life!

### Simple tips for incorporating good carbs into your diet...

1. Try to **cut out as much 'junk food' from your diet as possible**. This includes pretty much all chips, candy, soft drinks, etc.
2. **Avoid - or at least limit - your intake of refined-flour baked goods**, including non-whole-grain breads, bagels, doughnuts, cupcakes, brownies, cakes, etc. Also, throw out the processed, high-sugar breakfast cereals - stick to whole-grain cereals and oatmeal.
3. **Buy a variety of fresh fruits and veggies** and begin to include at least 1 or 2 servings with each meal. Also, avoid getting hungry (and overeating) by snacking on fruit or cut-up veggies throughout the day - a single large apple can easily curb hunger.
4. Try to **eat a serving of leafy green vegetables at least twice a day**. Also, eat a variety of other colorful vegetables as often as possible.
5. **Use nuts and seeds as healthy, portable snacks** you can carry anywhere. Also, they can be used to add flavor and 'texture' to many different foods (especially salads).
6. **Eat a serving of beans or legumes at least 1-2 times per day**. The dozens of different types of beans and peas can be used in hundreds of healthy recipes. Also, consider buying or making bean sprouts - they are considered to be some of the most nutritionally 'powerful' foods available!
7. If you buy grain products - including breads, cereals, crackers, pastas, etc. - **always choose whole-grain options**. Just make sure that 'whole-grain' is the first word in the ingredients list and you'll be fine.
8. When possible, always choose organic foods.

# GO-CAUTION-STOP (GLYCEMIC INDEX GUIDE)

With high levels of protein, you can maintain muscle mass and enjoy other health benefits, while losing weight quickly and safely. And you can eat plenty of great-tasting foods throughout the day and still lose weight! Follow this plan to help you stay on track towards your weight loss goals—so you can lose weight and *KEEP IT OFF!*



## The Green–Yellow–Red Food Key

GREEN = GO. Eat as many of these foods as you need to feel satisfied.

YELLOW = CAUTION. Eat these foods in moderation.

RED = STOP. Avoid these foods as they will interrupt your intensive fat-burning program.

**Protein** Cutting back on carbohydrates alone does not work. A sufficient amount of high-quality protein is critical to the success of a low-carbohydrate diet. Protein builds and maintains muscle mass, provides the building blocks of hormones and neuro-transmitters and provides the necessary elements for the body to constantly renew itself. Numerous studies have shown that weight loss is increased dramatically when a higher percentage of calories consumed comes from protein.

### Go



- Eggs, preferably egg whites
- Most fresh fish and seafood
- Pork, lamb and veal
- Poultry: chicken, turkey, particularly white meat, preferably skinless
- Tofu is healthy, but contains some carbohydrates
- Soy milk or soy cheeses

### Caution



- Cottage cheese
- Dark meat: chicken or turkey
- Low-fat cold cuts
- Red meats, particularly round cuts and top sirloin

### Stop



- High-fat cheeses
- Milk and yogurt
- Organ meats
- Processed meats such as bacon, sausage, ham, salami, bologna, pastrami, hot dogs and smoked fish (high-salt foods such as processed meats and smoked fish contain unnecessary levels of sodium that can contribute to water retention)
- All protein is permissible, almost in any quantity desired, but it is healthier to consume lean meats, low-fat proteins and whole non-processed foods.

**Carbs** Carbohydrates that should be avoided are those with a high glycemic index or foods that are quickly converted into simple sugars, because they encourage the production and release of insulin. Foods often considered healthy but which have a high glycemic index include root vegetables such as carrots and beets, and certain fruits. The elimination of these foods is critical to shutting off insulin and reversing the body from an efficient fat storer to an efficient fat burner. The only permissible carbohydrate sources are those vegetables listed under the GREEN (go) category in the chart provided.

### Go



- |                   |                |  |
|-------------------|----------------|--|
| • Alfalfa sprouts | • Asparagus    | • Bean sprouts                                 |
| • Bok choy        | • Blueberries  | • Broccoli                                     |
| • Cabbage         | • Cauliflower  | • Celery                                       |
| • Cucumber        | • Endive       | • Fennel                                       |
| • Fresh mushrooms | • Garlic       | • Grapefruit                                   |
| • Green beans     | • Green pepper | • Greens: collard, dandelion, kale and mustard |

- Hot chili peppers
- Radishes
- Scallions
- Yellow snap beans
- Lettuce
- Raspberries
- Spinach
- Parsley
- Red pepper
- Swiss chard

**Caution**



- Apricots
- Blackberries
- Kumquats
- Onions
- Peas
- Sauerkraut
- Strawberries
- Turnips
- Artichokes
- Brussels sprouts
- Oatmeal
- Passion Fruit
- Plums
- Snow peas
- Turnips
- Watermelon
- Avocado
- Eggplant
- Okra
- Peaches
- Pumpkin
- Squash
- Tomato
- Zucchini

**Stop**



- Bread and all of its relatives, crackers, cookies, pastries, doughnuts, pies and muffins
- Chickpeas, dried beans, lentils, pinto beans
- Cereals – except Oatmeal
- Most fruit
- Other products made from white flour, such as pasta
- Root vegetables such as carrots, turnips, parsnips and beets
- Snacks including pretzels, potato chips, popcorn
- Rice, potatoes and corn

**Fat** You may consume reasonable amounts of fat. Although fat is perceived as unhealthy, not all fats are bad. There are good fats, such as Omega-3 fatty acids, which help reduce inflammation and protect the heart. This “good” fat is the foundation of Herbalife’s Herbalifeline®. We also encourage the consumption of monounsaturated fats, such as canola and olive oils. Some saturated fats in red meat may be eaten, but consumption should be limited as much as possible. Trans-fatty acids, which are present in pastries and hard margarines, should be eliminated. Vegetable oils, such as corn and safflower oils that are much higher in Omega-6 fatty acids, should also be minimized.

**Go**



- Avocado oil
- Conjugated linoleic acid
- Fish oil
- Flaxseed oil
- Gamma linoleic acid such as primrose oil
- Grape seed oil
- Hemp oil
- Monounsaturated fats such as olive and canola oils
- Omega-3 fatty acids from fish and flaxseed oil

**Caution**



- Light cream cheese
- Mayonnaise
- Vegetable oils such as corn and safflower oils
- Yoghurt

**Stop**



- Hydrogenated fatty acids and partially hydrogenated fatty acids as contained in hard margarines and many processed foods
- Saturated fats from tropical oils such as coconut oil
- Saturated fats, primarily from meat, dairy and eggs
- Sour cream

# USDA WEIGHT LOSS TIPS: SMART SHOPPING

By: Gayle Alleman, M.S., R.D.

## Smart Shopping and Recipe Modification

The path to effective weight loss begins long before food hits your plate. Here are some tips for buying and preparing food that will help you on your way toward a thinner, healthier you.

**Be a Smart Shopper:** Grocery stores aren't designed to help you stick with your diet. Marketing ploys surround you, trying to get you to buy foods that are not a part of your pound-dropping plan. Why? Processed foods have a higher profit margin than many of the unprocessed foods such as vegetables and meat. But with planning and a few tricks in reserve, you can make it through the store unscathed -- buying mostly nutrient-dense, low-calorie food to further your weight-loss efforts.

Before heading to the grocery store, you should follow these calorie-cutting tips:

- Make a list before you go to the store, and stick to it for the most part. Avoid impulse buys of food you don't need.
- Try to go to the grocery store only once a week. Planning your meals and snacks for the week will help you get what you need in one trip and avoid the temptation of repeated trips to the store.
- Don't go to the grocery store hungry. You'll be less likely to buy impulsively.
- Shop the perimeter of the store first. Fill your cart with foods low in calories and brimming with nutrients, such as fresh vegetables and fruits, nonfat dairy foods, lean meats, and whole-grain bakery goods without a lot of added fat and sugar. These are the basic foods of your food pattern.
- Shop the interior aisles of the grocery store with care. Stick to wholesome foods such as rice, pasta, beans, and peanut butter. Avoid processed foods in packages and boxes, such as cookies, chips, crackers, packaged snacks, soft drinks, and most convenience foods. Processed foods often have added fats and sugars, which will tip your calorie-balance scale in the wrong direction.
- Read the Nutrition Facts panel on food products, but don't obsess about reading them all at one time. Choose a few items on your list each week to compare and make the wisest choice.
- If you do buy processed foods, read labels and choose those that have less fat, sugar, and calories.
- Don't buy problem foods that you know will call your name from the cupboard. Leave them and their calories on the grocery store shelf.
- Shopping with young children? Make a firm agreement with them ahead of time about consequences if they pester you or throw a tantrum. Appropriate behavior earns a treat, such as picking out a new fruit that they want to try. Treats don't have to be food at all, and certainly not junk food.
- Enlist older children to be label lookers and help you find the smartest choice of a product. This not only makes your job easier, it teaches them lifelong skills they'll need to manage their weight.
- Say "No, thank you" to food samples offered throughout the store.
- If possible, choose a checkout line that doesn't have candy or snack displays.
- Small shopping trip? Carry a basket rather than pushing a cart. It uses more muscle, burns more calories, and limits the room you have for impulse buys!

**Modify Your Recipes:** You'll be surprised at how many calories you can save by making simple changes in your recipes, without sacrificing flavor or texture. Fat and sugar are usually the ingredients that contribute the most calories, so this section will give you techniques for cutting back on both of them.

To decrease sugar in a recipe:

- In baking, reduce sugar by 1/4 to 1/3. There's no need for any substitutions. (However, don't reduce sugar in bread made with yeast, because the sugar is "food" for the yeast, which makes the bread rise.)
- Add spices such as cinnamon, cloves, and nutmeg to your baking, fruit, or even to vegetable preparations to give the impression of sweetness.
- Instead of frosting, lightly dust baked goods with a bit of powdered sugar.
- Use frozen 100 percent fruit juice concentrate as a mild sweetener. Try it in tea or plain sparkling water.
- Serve sweet foods warm -- it makes them taste sweeter even if they have less sugar in them.
- Add fruit and decrease the sugar content. For instance, add raisins to rhubarb-apple crisp so you can get by with less sugar.
- Replace chocolate chips with raisins or chopped dried fruit.

To decrease fat:

- Begin by using low-fat versions of ingredients, such as mayonnaise, milk, and cheese. Use caution with nonfat products that normally have a high fat content (such as cheese and mayonnaise). When all of the fat is removed from such products, they often do not produce the flavor or texture you expect. If you try a nonfat item and don't like the results -- don't give up! Try another brand or use a low-fat version of the ingredient.
- Replace whole milk in recipes with low-fat or nonfat milk.
- Use evaporated skim milk to replace cream in soups and other dishes.
- Replace sour cream with nonfat yogurt. If using yogurt in a heated dish, add 1 tablespoon cornstarch to each cup of yogurt to prevent separation.
- Use smaller amounts of strongly flavored full-fat cheeses instead of a large amount of a mildly flavored cheese.
- In baking, decrease the fat by one-quarter for cakes and by half for many quick breads, muffins, and soft cookies.
- Use unsweetened applesauce in place of fat in baked goods. In homemade goods, replace about half the fat with applesauce. For boxed mixes, replace all the fat called for with applesauce because fat is already in the dried mix.
- Reduce the number of egg yolks, since it's the yolk of the egg that contains fat. Use two egg whites in place of one egg. Baked goods made from scratch will probably still need at least one egg yolk, because eggs help provide structure, tenderness, and leavening.
- Use vegetable oils instead of solid fats. To do so, use about one-fourth less than the recipe calls for. For cakes and pie crusts, use a recipe designed for oil, because sugar proportions are different and mixing techniques may vary.
- Use only one part oil to two parts water and/or vinegar when making homemade salad dressings.
- Cook with little or no added fat. Use nonstick pans, cooking spray, vegetable broth, water, or wine to sauté or brown foods.
- Chill soups, stews, and gravies, so the fat rises to the top and hardens. Skim off the fat before reheating.
- To thicken soups, stir in instant mashed potatoes.
- To thicken sauces and gravies, use cornstarch or flour stirred into a small amount of cold water. Stir this mixture slowly into your sauce or gravy, and return to a boil to thicken.
- Use instant mashed potatoes to replace all or some of the egg yolks in deviled eggs.
- Use a low-fat cooking method such as baking, broiling, steaming, or grilling.

Now that you know the basics, take a look at your recipes. Identify the high-calorie ingredients. Gradually adjust quantities of major ingredients. Be sure to write down your modifications so you can either repeat them or continue modifying your recipe.

Source: <http://recipes.howstuffworks.com/usda-weight-loss-tips.htm/printable>

# THINK PORTION CONTROL

By: Julie D. Andrews, [www.prevention.com](http://www.prevention.com)

## Super-sized fries.

16-oz Starbucks lattes. 64-oz Double Gulps. It's no coincidence that just as Americans are growing larger so is the size of their meals and snacks.

When nutritionist and NYU faculty member Lisa Young noticed this trend several years back, she took to the streets of Manhattan with scale, notebook and camera in hand. Her goal: record the size of food people were handed at delis, hot dog stands, bakeries, and all-you-can-eat buffets.

"What I found was appalling," says Young in her book *Portion Teller: Smartsizes Your Way to Permanent Weight Loss*. "The foods we buy today are often two or three times, even five times, larger than when they were first introduced into the marketplace."

And, meals and packaged foods weren't the only things that had ballooned. American waistlines had expanded and everything from seats to Queen-sized mattresses -- even the size of medical needles were being adjusted to fit America's widening girth.

Then Young came up with a strategy: portion control. Just because restaurants serve up more food, doesn't mean customers have to finish every last bite. Using five basic food guidelines, Young devised ways for people to get and stay slim without deprivation.

## Mind your mouthfuls.

Instead of worrying about the amount of carbohydrates or fat a certain meal contains, focus on the amount you consume. Just because it's brought to you doesn't mean you have to finish every last bite.

A simple way to do this is to make visual comparisons, says Young. "Think of a deck of cards as a three-ounce serving," she says. "And, a cup of rice or pasta should be about the size of a baseball." If the piece of salmon you grilled for dinner is the size of three card decks, you've met your meat quotient for the day.

Add first, then subtract First step, fill your plate with as many portions of fresh, leafy greens and fruits as you want. Do the research and dig up some healthy recipes made with apples, apricots, plums, tomatoes, carrots, peppers, you name it.

"No one wants to be deprived or on a diet," Young says. "Before you take anything away, stock up on fruits and veggies."

## Negotiate your cut backs.

"Decrease your portions of junk food," Young says. "so you're eating fewer high-calorie foods: chips, sodas, chocolate, fried foods." You don't have to eliminate your favorite foods. "If you like ice cream," says Young, "you can eat it. But, you're going to have to learn portion control."

## Pack in protein.

Protein is not only good for you, and it makes you feel full. "In my research, I found that a lot of people were eating breakfast and all their meals, but weren't including protein," says Young.

"And, a meal without protein not going to do it. You're never going to feel full with just bread or a bagel."

Remember, there's more to the protein category than just meat. Try slipping some yogurt, an egg, low-fat dairy, or fish into every meal.

## Forget white flour.

When you eat white flour products, your body gets nothing but empty calories because the fiber, vitamins and minerals have been stripped away.

"A lot of people were under the misconception that it was carbs that were making them full and fat, when really, it was the starches," says Young.

And beware, says Young. Don't assume that because bread or other products are brown that they are healthier. They could be dyed brown with molasses. To be sure, read the label to ensure that your bread is made with 100% whole wheat or whole grain.

# SIZE DOES MATTER – MASTER PORTION CONTROL

You've heard it over and over. The key to a healthy diet and weight management is portion control. The concept is easy: if you eat less, you consume fewer calories.

But in a world where big is better and restaurants serve overflowing plates of food, it's tough to figure out what a "normal" portion size is. It is very easy to overeat when oversized portions and all-you-can eat buffets surround us. While most of us know the basics about nutrition, it's time we take a few minutes to rethink how much we eat. It's just as important as what we eat.

## Visualize Servings

A portion is how much food that we eat in a sitting, for a meal or snack. The first step to mastering portion control is to identify what a recommended serving of your food selections looks like. So when you have a meal that includes some meat, vegetables and grain, for example, you'll notice how many servings of each you have on your plate. For many of us, it will take time to retrain our bodies, eyes, and heads to recognize what sensible servings look and taste like! But by mastering portion control, you'll improve your health and manage or even lose weight.

The following tips can help you bite off less than you can chew!

- Visualize what one serving of each of the foods you are eating should look like, before digging into a meal.
- Pay attention to the food labels when you cook and eat. Make a habit of reading food labels to help you manage your portion sizes.

Use this guide to help you visualize your food choices:

<b>Grain Products</b>	<b>What One Serving Looks Like</b>
1 cup of cereal flakes	The size of a fist
1 pancake	A compact disc
½ cup of cooked rice, pasta, or potato	½ of a baseball
1 slice of bread	A cassette tape
<b>Fruits and Veggies</b>	<b>What One Serving Looks Like</b>
1 cup of salad greens	A baseball
1 medium fruit	A baseball
½ cup of raisins	A large egg
<b>Dairy and Cheese</b>	<b>What One Serving Looks Like</b>
1 ½ oz. cheese	4 stacked dice
½ cup of ice cream	½ baseball
1 cup serving of milk, yogurt, or fresh greens	The size of a fist
<b>Meats and Alternatives</b>	<b>What One Serving Looks Like</b>
3 oz. meat, fish, and poultry	Deck of cards
3 oz. grilled/baked fish	Checkbook
2 Tbsp. peanut butter	Ping pong ball
<b>Fats</b>	<b>What One Serving Looks Like</b>
1 teaspoon of oil	The size of your thumb tip

### ***One Size Does Not Fit All***

Many factors affect how much food you may put on your plate, such as age, gender, activity level, and appetite. For example, consider the difference between these two people:

Steve: Male, 50 years old, 180 pounds  
Gets 30 minutes or less of activity/day  
Daily calorie need = approximately 2200

Steve's well-portioned meal may include: 3 ounces of chicken, 2 cups green beans, and 1 ½ cups of brown rice

Judy: Female, 50 years old, 140 pounds  
Gets approximately 30 minutes of physical activity/day  
Daily calorie need: approximately 1800

Judy's well-portioned meal may include: 2 ounces of chicken, 1 cups green beans, and 1 cup of brown rice.

As you see, Judy's dietary requirements are less than her counterparts so the amount of food she eats is less. It makes good sense, doesn't it?

### ***Think Before You Bite***

"Mindful eating" is another way to help you master portion control. The concept is simple:

- Be aware. Think about what and how much you are consuming.
- Eat slowly, taste each bite.
- Recognize how frequently you eat.
- Enjoy the experience of eating.

By mindful eating, we monitor our choices and give our bodies the chance to respond to what we consume. This way we can enjoy food and share the cooking and dining experience with others, while recognizing when we have eaten enough so that we don't overeat.

### ***Hungry for More?***

There may be times when eating sensible portion sizes are hard. Special occasions, busy schedules, stressful situations, travel, and other experiences may be reason to overeat. We know how easy it is to eat more than you need to. Don't worry if you slip. Just take it one meal or snack at a time. Use these tips and make an effort to be mindful about eating, and you'll find that you can establish a routine and adjust to eating smaller amounts. You will create a habit that is a more natural and healthy way of eating. And the best part, you'll feel and look better!

Source: [www.aarp.org/health/staying\\_healthy/eating/size\\_does\\_matter.html](http://www.aarp.org/health/staying_healthy/eating/size_does_matter.html)