



Making Sense of Portion Sizes



Below are some ways you can picture portions of food using everyday objects.

The Grain Group

- 1 cup of rice (2 ounces) is a tennis ball, ice cream scoop
- 1 pancake (1 ounce) is a compact disc (CD)
- 1/2 cooked cup rice (1 ounce) is a cupcake wrapper full
- 1 piece of cornbread (2 ounces) is a bar of soap
- 1 slice of bread (1 ounce) is an audiocassette tape
- 1 cup of pasta/spaghetti (2 ounces) is a fist*
- 1 cup of cereal flakes (1 ounce) is a fist*



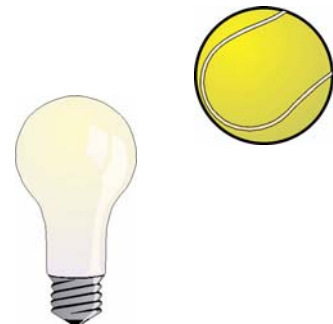
The Vegetable Group

- 1 cup green salad is a baseball or a fist*
- 1 medium baked potato (1 cup) is a fist*
- 1/2 cup cooked broccoli is a scoop of ice cream or a light bulb
- 1/2 cup serving is 6 asparagus spears; 7 or 8 baby carrots or carrot sticks or 1 ear of corn on the cob



The Fruit Group

- 1/2 cup of grapes (15 grapes) is a light bulb
- 1/2 cup of fresh fruit is 7 cotton balls
- 1 medium size fruit is a tennis ball or a fist*
- 1 cup of cut-up fruit is a fist*
- 1/4 cup raisins large egg



The Milk Group

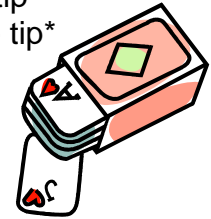
- 1 1/2 ounces hard cheese is a 9-volt battery, 3 dominoes
(counts as 1 cup of milk) or your index and middle fingers*
- 1 ounce of processed cheese is your thumb*
(counts as 1/2 cup milk)
- 1 cup of "light" ice cream (50% reduced fat) is a large scoop the size of a baseball
(counts as 2/3 cup milk)



*(Note: hands and finger sizes vary from person to person! These are GUIDES only).

The Meat & Beans Group

- 2 tablespoons peanut butter (counts as 2 ounces of meat) is a ping-pong ball
- 1 teaspoon peanut butter (counts as 1/3 ounce of meat) is a fingertip*
- 1 tablespoon peanut butter (counts as 1 ounce of meat) is a thumb tip*
- 3 ounces cooked meat, fish, poultry is a palm or a deck of cards
- 3 ounces grilled/baked fish is a checkbook
- 3 ounces cooked chicken is a chicken leg and thigh or breast



Fats, Oils and Sweets

Oils are a healthier food choice than solid fats. Solid fats and sweets should be consumed as “extra” calories (those not required to meet your nutrient needs) and do not exceed your energy requirements. Most “extra” calorie allowances are very small, between 100 and 300 calories, especially for those who are not physically active.

- 1 teaspoon butter, margarine is the size of a stamp, the thickness (counts as 38 “extra” calories) of your finger or a thumb tip*
- 2 tablespoons regular salad dressing..... is a ping-pong ball or cupped hand

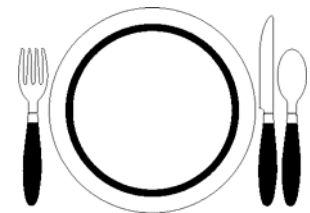
Snack Foods

- 1 ounce of nuts or small candies is one handful*
- 1 ounce of pretzels is two handfuls*
- 1/2 cup of popcorn is one man's handful*
- 1/3 cup of popcorn is one woman's handful*



Serving Dishes/Utensils

- 1/2 cup is a small fruit bowl, a custard cup or mashed potato scoop
- 1 1/2 cups is a large cereal/soup bowl
- 1 1/2 cups of pasta, noodles is a dinner plate, not heaped



*(Note: hands and finger sizes vary from person to person! These are GUIDES only).

Adapted from materials developed by Ellen Schuster, Oregon State University