

How Much are You Serving?

One of the most confusing things these days about all the diet recommendations, from the latest fad diet to the USDA Food Guide Pyramid, is the word 'servings'. It seems every package in the grocery has a different serving size. The humongous portions in restaurants and the super size deals at fast food places make us expect large portions. We read a diet book and the portions seem so tiny that we're sure we will starve. Besides, who is going to carry a set of measuring cups and spoons along, to be sure they're not eating too much?! Here are some easy ways to guess-timate your portions, using common items we're all familiar with.

A serving of dairy is 1 cup of milk or yogurt. That's about the size of a baseball.

A serving of natural cheese is 1 ½ oz, or the size of 2 - 9 volt batteries.

A serving of processed cheese is 2 oz, or the size of a CD case.

A serving of meat is 2-3 oz, about the size of a deck of cards, or the palm of your hand.

A serving of beans is 1 cup, about the size of a baseball.

A serving of peanut butter is 2 Tbsp, about the size of a roll of film.

A serving of raw vegetables is 1 cup, the baseball again.

A serving of cooked veggies is ½ cup, the size of a small computer mouse.

A serving of fruit juice is ¾ cup, about the size of 2 golf balls together.

A serving of canned or cooked fruit is ½ cup, the computer mouse again.

A serving of fresh fruit is 1 whole, medium fruit, about the same as the baseball.

A serving of bread is 1 slice, about the size of a CD case.

A serving of dry cereal is ¾ to 1 cup, about the same as the baseball.

A serving of cooked rice or pasta is ½ cup, the computer mouse again.

Remember these the next time you face the 5 ½ cup plate of spaghetti and meatballs!