

Healthy Eating

Serving and Portion Sizes: How Much Should I Eat?

Eating a variety of foods from each **food group** will help you get the **nutrients** you need.

As possible, choose foods every day from the following:



- Vegetables—2 to 3 cups
- Fruits—1½ to 2 cups
- Grains—5 to 8 ounces
- Dairy —3 cups (fat-free or low-fat)
- Protein foods—5 to 6½ ounces

A “**servicing size**” is a standard amount of a food, such as a cup or an ounce. Serving sizes can help you when choosing foods and when comparing like items while **shopping**, but they are not recommendations for how much of a certain food to eat.

The term “**portion**” means how much of a food you are served or how much you eat. A portion size can vary from meal to meal. For example, at home you may serve yourself two small pancakes in one portion, but at a restaurant, you may get a large stack of pancakes as one portion.

Snacks are okay, as long as they are **smart food choices**. If you want an afternoon pick-me-up or after-dinner snack, have a piece of fruit, or spread peanut butter on whole wheat toast.

Don't forget to include snacks in your **daily food count**. Some ideas for **healthy snacking** include:

- Have an ounce of cheese with some whole grain crackers or a 1-ounce portion of unsalted nuts.
- Keep a container of washed, raw vegetables in the fridge along with washed fruit.
- To limit your portion sizes, don't eat from the bag. Count out a serving and put the bag away.
- When you are out and need a snack, pick up an apple or banana



Portion Size Activity

Honey Nut Cheerios

- Have you eaten Honey Nut Cheerios before? Yes or No
- Go to the side of the box and find the Nutrition Facts
- How much is a serving? _____
- Take the measuring cup that is the corresponding size
- Measure out the **servicing size** of Honey Nut Cheerios
- Pour the serving into an empty sandwich bag
- This is **one serving** of Honey Nut Cheerios
- Repeat the steps until you have divided up all the Cheerios
- How many servings did you get? _____
- When you are ready to eat the Cheerios, the amount that you eat is a **portion**.



Garden Veggie Straws

- Have you eaten Garden Veggie Straws before? Yes or No
- Go to back of the bag and find the Nutrition Facts
- How much is a serving? _____
- Take the measuring cup that is the corresponding size
- Measure out the **servicing size** of Garden Veggie Straws
- Put the serving into an empty sandwich bag
- This is **one serving** of Garden Veggie Straws
- Repeat the steps until you have divided up all the Garden Veggie Straws
- How many servings did you get? _____
- When you are ready to eat the Veggie Straws, the amount that you eat is a **portion**.

