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FOOD

Right Bites

Portion control is nothing to dread

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If weight control is your goal, portion control is the key.

You can't eat huge platters of pasta or steaks that hang off the plate and hope to keep unwanted pounds at bay.

According to the most recent survey done by the Calorie Control Council, 84 percent of dieters say they eat smaller portions of their favorite foods to control their weight. But what does portion control mean? Are we doomed to a life of postage stamp-size servings and forever banned from buffets?

The short answer is no.

Controlling portions starts with understanding how much of each kind of food you should have a day based on your total caloric needs.

According to **Lisa Young**, a registered dietitian whose specialty is portion control, "It's not what we eat, it's how much we eat. It's portion size that is making us fat."

In her book, "*The Portion Teller*" (Morgan Road Books, \$19.95), **Young** teaches "smartsizing," which means knowing what a food choice is really "worth."

For instance, the typical 5-ounce deli/bakery bagel might be a popular grab-and-go breakfast, but did you know that it contains about the same calories and nutrients as five slices of bread? If you know you should only be eating six to nine portions of grains a day, then you can see that the bagel is taking a big bite out of your budget.

HOW MUCH SHOULD I EAT?

- One size doesn't fit all, so go to mypyramid.gov to figure out your daily needs.
- Don't forget that under the new food pyramid, "servings" are out and ounce or cup "equivalents" are in. So instead of saying a person needs eight servings of grains, the

guidelines recommend eight ounce equivalents.

MEN 26 to 45 who exercise 30 to 60 minutes most days:

2,600 calories

Grains: nine 1-ounce equivalents

Vegetables: 3 1/2 cup equivalents (more is encouraged in this category)

Fruit: 2 cup equivalents

Milk: 3 cup equivalents (low fat or fat free)

Meat and beans: 6 1/2 ounce equivalents

Oils: 8 teaspoons

WOMEN 26 to 50 who exercise 30 to 60 minutes most days:

2,000 calories

Grains: Six 1-ounce equivalents

Vegetables: 2 1/2 cup equivalents (more is encouraged in this category)

Fruit: 2 cup equivalents

Milk: 3 cup equivalents (low fat or fat free)

Meat and beans: 5 1/2 ounce equivalents

Oils: 6 teaspoons

These food amounts require that you also limit extra calories from solid fats and added sugars. If you still need to lose weight after cutting back on fats and sugars, try exercising more.

PUTTING FOOD FACTS INTO PROPORTION

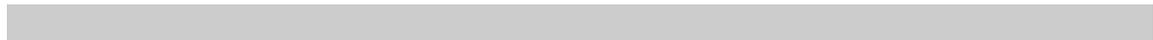
•You might have one bagel for breakfast, but keep in mind that a typical large bagel counts as four ounce equivalents. For the typical woman, that's two-thirds of your

recommended daily intake.

- You can eat more than a small portion in one sitting. Three ounces of meat might be the size of a deck of cards, but the portion of steak on your plate can be two or three decks of cards, depending on your total caloric needs.

- Olive oil might be a healthier fat than butter, but it contains the same number of calories per teaspoon.

- Some good news. Cooked weights might be lower than quoted on the menu. Restaurants list the raw weight of meats, so an 8-ounce filet mignon will often shrink to 6 ounces.



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