

SIZE MATTERS

LOSING WEIGHT WOULD BE A WHOLE LOT EASIER IF WE DIDN'T HAVE TO MONITOR EVERYTHING WE PUT IN OUR MOUTHS.

But the truth is, a calorie is a calorie, and having too many will pack on pounds, says Lisa Young, R.D., a dietitian in New York City and author of *The Portion Teller Plan* (Broadway). "Nutritious foods like whole-wheat pasta and nuts can do just as much damage to a diet as pizza and cupcakes if you forget to watch how much you're eating," she says.

To see serving-size slipups in action, we recruited two dozen volunteers and asked them to help themselves to five foods that are linked with a host of health benefits, including weight management. In nearly every case, our test subjects took more—sometimes two or three times more—than the recommended amount. Here's what we found, plus size-wise tips to make these nutritious foods do the weight-loss work for you.

TOO MUCH OF A GOOD THING IS, WELL, STILL TOO MUCH. IF YOU'RE STRUGGLING TO DROP POUNDS, IT MAY BE YOUR SERVINGS OF HEALTHY FOOD THAT ARE WEIGHING YOU DOWN.

BY NICCI MICCO photography by James Worrell



→ WHOLE-GRAIN CEREAL

People who eat breakfast—particularly cereals—tend to have healthier body weights and also eat more fiber, which helps you feel fuller for longer. Plus, while dieting often leads to lower levels of important nutrients like iron and magnesium, fortified whole-grain cereals can help fill the gap.

SIZE-WISE TIPS

- **Buy a bowl that tells you your portion sizes.** The Measure Up Bowl (shopmeasureup.com, from \$14) looks like a regular dish but has discreet measurement lines at ½, 1, 1½ and 2 cups.
- **Pick a lower-calorie cereal if you like to see a full bowl.** (Be sure to check the serving size when you're comparing calorie counts!) Boost the volume of your favorite hearty cereal by mixing it with a low-calorie type like whole-grain puffs (which generally contain 60 to 70 calories per cup).

Don't assume that your cereal bowl corresponds to the serving size on the box. If you're trying to lose weight, measure.

→ PEANUTS

Although nuts are high in calories and (healthy) monounsaturated fats, studies show that people who eat them regularly tend to be leaner than people who don't. One explanation is that nuts are an especially satisfying snack that results in people consuming fewer calories later.

SIZE-WISE TIPS

→ **Count them out.** There are about 28 peanuts in a 1-ounce serving. To get more accurate portioning, use a digital kitchen scale like EatSmart's Precision Pro (from \$25, amazon.com).

→ **Shell nuts yourself.** A recent study found that when given unshelled nuts, people consumed 41% fewer calories than people offered shelled ones. Why it works: Unshelled nuts look more substantial than shelled ones; it takes longer to eat them; and seeing the empty shells encourages you to eat less.

Calorie difference between the recommended serving and the testers' average serving: about 70. If you do this every day and don't subtract those calories somewhere else, over a year they could add up to 7 pounds.

RECOMMENDED SERVING
1 OZ
(170 calories)



TESTERS' AVERAGE SERVING
1.42 OZ
(240 calories)



Moderate alcohol intake is considered one 5-ounce drink per day for women, two for men. Over-pouring on a regular basis may increase your risk for high blood pressure, liver disease, cancer and other problems; it also can add up to a lot of extra calories.

→ RED WINE

A moderate amount of alcohol, including antioxidant-rich red wine, may protect your heart; it also may help keep you trim. Last year researchers at Brigham and Women's Hospital and the Harvard School of Public Health reported that, compared with nondrinkers, women who consumed small to moderate amounts of alcohol gained less weight and were less likely to become

overweight during the nearly 13-year study. It's believed that women may choose wine instead of eating higher-calorie foods, like dessert.

SIZE-WISE TIPS

→ **Use smaller glasses.** Sipping everything out of big Burgundy glasses can easily lead to portion distortion.

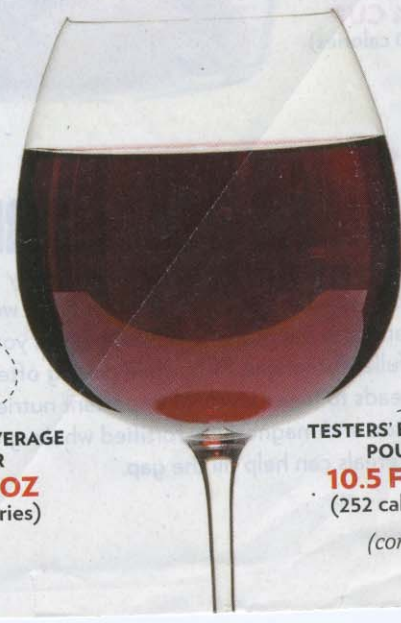
→ **Raise your glass awareness.** Take out your favorite wine glass. Now grab a measuring cup. Fill the cup with 5 fluid ounces of wine and pour it into your glass. Note how high the wine reaches. Do this repeatedly until you have sense of what "one drink" looks like.



STANDARD SERVING
5 FL OZ
(120 calories)



TESTERS' AVERAGE POUR
6.7 FL OZ
(161 calories)



TESTERS' BIGGEST POUR
10.5 FL OZ
(252 calories)

(continued)