

Path to Health

Serving Sizes



If you need to lose weight, ask your doctor or your dietitian for help setting a calorie limit. You want to find a limit that's right for you without sacrificing nutrition. This chart, adapted from the American Heart Association, can give you an idea of how many servings of each type of food you should include if you are cutting back on calories. Find the calorie limit that your doctor recommends across the top row. Then look down that column to see how much of each food group you can have and still lose weight.

Food Servings Per Day on a Calorie-Restricted Diet

Type of Food	1,200 Total Daily Calories	1,600 Total Daily Calories	1,800 Total Daily Calories
Lean meat, fish, poultry	6 oz., cooked	6 oz., cooked	6 oz., cooked
Eggs, whole	3 per week	3 per week	3 per week
Vegetables	4 servings	4 servings	4 servings
Fruits	3 servings	3 servings	3 servings
Breads, cereals, starchy vegetables	3 servings	4 servings	6 servings
Nonfat or low-fat dairy products	2 servings	3 servings	3 servings
Oil or margarine	3 tsp.	4 tsp.	5 tsp.

Based on information provided by the American Diabetes Association website, serving sizes are important. Losing just 5-10 pounds will lower your chance of diabetes. Counting calories is a good place to start, but portion control is just as important! Don't feel bad and think you have to lose a lot of weight. You only have to lose 5-10 pounds to lower your chances for diabetes. If you have diabetes, losing 5-10 pounds could help you manage it.

- See how much you eat
- Decide how much to eat
- Cut back on portion size

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Look at your list and compare to the serving size guide below. How does your list compare?

Here are some serving size guidelines:

- Meat, fish, poultry—3 oz. (about the size of the palm of your hand)
- Cheese—1 oz. (about the size of your thumb)
- Milk, yogurt, fresh vegetables—1 cup (about the size of a tennis ball)
- Bread—one slice
- Rice or cooked pasta— $\frac{1}{3}$ cup
- Potato or corn— $\frac{1}{2}$ cup
- Dry cereal— $\frac{3}{4}$ cup

You may find that your serving sizes are much bigger. If so, it's time to make a change! Get started by using measuring cups and spoons to serve your food. After a while, you'll be able to "eyeball" the amount.

- Are your portion sizes too large?
- Are you eating enough vegetables?
- Are you eating too much meat?