



Portion Distortion

The amount of food we eat is as important as what we eat. Many of us feel the need to finish what is in front of us even if we are not hungry! Over the years there has been a steady increase in **portion sizes**. This means that finishing an order of french fries twenty years ago was very different from polishing off a plate of fries today. Consider the following...

20 Years Ago...

- A bagel was **3 inches across, 140 calories**
- A soda pop was **195 mL, 85 calories**
- A blueberry muffin had **210 calories**
- A serving of fries was **70 grams, 210 calories**
- A cookie was **1½ inches, 55 calories**

Now...

- A bagel is **6 inches, 340 calories**
- A soda pop is **600 mL, 250 calories**
- A blueberry muffin has **500 calories**
- A serving of fries is **200 grams, 610 calories**
- A cookie is **3½ inches, 275 calories**

Think about all these changes.

What used to be a normal serving of french fries is now considered a child's order. What would you do if you went to the bakery and were handed a cookie that was **1½ inches**?



What happens when we eat extra calories?

Take into account how easily portion sizes can affect you. Let's imagine that you eat a sandwich every day for lunch at work, five days a week. Instead of putting one tablespoon of mayonnaise on it you put two tablespoons. Over the course of a year you could gain **over 7 pounds!**

Proper Portion Sizes

Everyone needs different amounts of foods. A growing teenager who plays hockey would need much more food than a middle aged adult who works at a desk all day. Use **Canada's Food Guide** – www.healthcanada.gc.ca/foodguide – to determine how many **Food Guide Servings** you should eat from each food group.

What exactly is one Food Guide Serving?

| Grains | Milk Products | Meat & Alternatives | Vegetables & Fruit |
|--|--|--|---|
| 1 slice of bread (35 g) 1 small roll ½ cup (125 mL) rice (cooked) ½ cup (125 mL) pasta (cooked) ½ bagel (45 g) | 1 cup (250 mL) milk ¾ cup (175 g) yogurt 1½ ounces (50 g) hard cheese 1 cup (250 mL) fortified soy beverage | 2 tbsp. (30 mL) peanut butter ½ (125 mL) can tuna 2½ (75 g) ounces of meat ¾ cup (175 mL) brown beans | 1 medium piece of fruit ½ cup (125 mL) vegetables 1 cup (250 mL) salad ½ cup (125 mL) 100% juice |

What is an easy way to remember portion sizes?

Try visualizing the following items when preparing or buying meals and snacks.



One serving of meat should be about the size of a deck of cards.



Two servings of pasta is the size of a tennis ball.



Cheese should be about the size of four dice.



A muffin should be no larger than a light bulb.