

How Does Your Food Measure Up?

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Are you eating a portion or a serving?

The difference between a portion and a serving size can be confusing. A person selects a **subjective amount** of food to eat to determine their **portion**. The **serving size** of a food is located on the **Nutrition Facts Label** found on the packaging of the food. This serving size is a reference amount of food determined and regulated by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

Serving size is listed on the Nutrition Facts Label as a measurement of food, often in **cups, tablespoons, teaspoons, or ounces**.

Turn the page for more info on Nutrition Facts Labels!

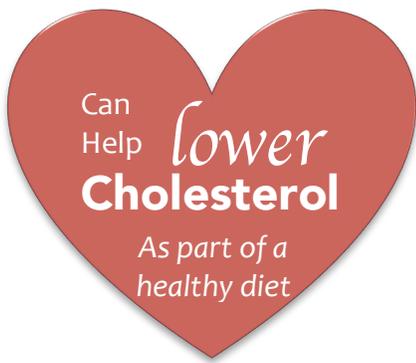
No Scale? No Problem!

Ideally, everyone has a kitchen scale and several different sized measuring cups and spoons so that measuring out or scaling up a recipe is no problem. However, this is not always the case so having these common conversions handy can be helpful.

1 Gallon = 4 quarts 8 pints 16 cups 128 fluid ounces 3.8 liters	1 Quart = 2 pints 4 cups 32 fluid ounces .95 liters	1 Pint = 2 cups 16 fluid ounces .48 liters
1 Cup = 8 fluid ounces 240 milliliters	1/4 Cup = 4 tablespoons 12 teaspoons 2 fluid ounces 60 milliliters	1 Tablespoon = 3 teaspoons 1/2 fluid ounce 15 milliliters

Did you know?

The Nutrition Facts Label may be changing soon. One proposed change is update serving sizes to reflect how people actually eat and drink.



Now Serving... Nutrition Facts Label

What's up with those labels on the front of packages?

The FDA is the government agency that rules on what companies are allowed to say on their packages. Certain kinds of labels are permitted as long as they aren't misleading.

Health Claims describe a relationship between a food item and reduced risk of disease. These claims must meet certain criteria and be authorized by the FDA.

Example health claim:
"Healthful diets with adequate folate may reduce a woman's risk of having a child with a brain or spinal cord defect."

Nutrient Content Claims describe the level of a nutrient in the product. Terms used include *free*, *high*, and *low* when describing the level of a nutrient, and *more*, *reduced*, and *lite* when comparing to another food. Rules for using these terms on a product can be found on the FDA's website.

Example nutrient content claim:
"Reduced Sodium"

Structure/Function Claims describe an intended effect of a nutrient or ingredient on a structure or function of the body. These claims can include benefits to or maintenance of a body structure or function.

Example structure/function claim:
"Calcium Builds Strong Bones"

Knowing the serving size of a food allows for calculation of the total amount of calories and nutrients.

Here's an example of a Nutrition Facts Label...

Macaroni and Cheese (Sample Label)

Nutrition Facts			
Serving Size 1 cup (228g)		←	
Servings Per Container 2		←	
Amount Per Serving			
Calories 250	Calories from Fat 110		
% Daily Value*			
Total Fat 12g			18%
Saturated Fat 3g			15%
Trans Fat 3g			
Cholesterol 30mg			10%
Sodium 470mg			20%
Total Carbohydrate 31g			10%
Dietary Fiber 0g			0%
Sugars 5g			
Protein 5g			
Vitamin A 4%	Vitamin C 2%		
Calcium 20%	Iron 4%		
*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.			

One serving of this product is 1 cup of Macaroni & Cheese.

Since there are 2 servings per container, if you wanted to eat the **whole package**, you would need to **multiply** the other nutrition components **by 2** to determine your total.



Did you know?

Containers can be misleading. This can especially happen with beverages. Although it is common to drink an entire can or bottle, the serving size may actually only be for half the container. Be sure to read the Nutrition Facts Label carefully.

Handy Portion Size Estimates

Knowing how much food we're eating can help us be aware of the calories and nutrients we're consuming. But what do we do when there are no scales or measuring cups handy? One way to estimate portion sizes is to use hands for comparison. Fists, palms, thumbs and everyday objects can give us an idea of how our portion compares to a standard serving size.



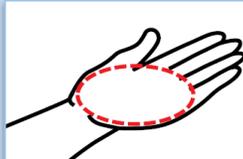
One fist is about the same volume as **1 cup**.

Food examples include dry cereal, fruit, and vegetables



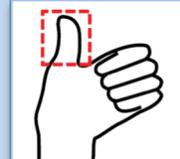
Two fists are about the same volume as **2 cups**.

Food examples include raw leafy greens, such as kale and spinach.



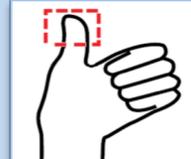
One palm is about the same size as **3 ounces of meat**.

Food examples include chicken, beef, fish, and pork.



One thumb is about the same size as **1 tablespoon**.

Food examples include ketchup and peanut butter.



One thumb tip is about the same size as **1 teaspoon**.

Food examples include jam, butter, and margarine.



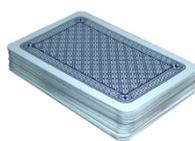
One baseball is about the same volume as **1 cup**.

Food examples include dry cereal, fruit, and vegetables



One tennis ball is about the same volume as **1/2 cup**.

Food examples include pasta and rice.



One deck of cards is about the same size as **3 ounces of meat**.

Food examples include chicken, beef, fish, and pork.



One ping pong ball is about the same size as **2 tablespoons**.

Food examples include salsa and hummus.



One golf ball is about the same size as **1/4 cup**.

Food examples include dried fruit and nuts.



Spinach, You're So Dense

The amount of food considered a serving may depend upon the **density** of a food. The density of food is the compactness and amount of space a food takes up.



For example, 2 cups of raw spinach is considered 1 serving of vegetables, whereas 1 cup of cooked spinach is considered 1 serving of vegetables. (See Lesson 4 for more information about MyPlate)

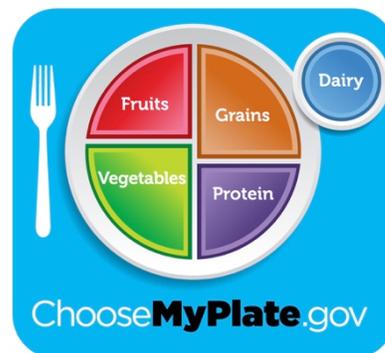
This dramatic change in size happens due to water being drawn out during the cooking process.

Don't Be Confused: Density vs. Nutrient Density

You may have heard the term “nutrient-dense” when referring to a food item that is generally recognized as being a healthier option. The nutrient density of a food is the proportion of nutrients within that given food.

Foods that are considered nutrient-dense are in all five food groups and include:

- Brightly colored fruits and 100% fruit juice
- Vibrantly colored vegetables
- Whole grain, fortified, and fiber-rich grain foods
- Low-fat and fat-free milk, cheese, and yogurt
- Lean meats, poultry, fish, eggs, beans, and nuts



Test your knowledge! Take our Nutrition Facts Label quiz!

Food A

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 1/2 cup (121g)	
Servings Per Container 3.5	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories	35
% Daily Values*	
Total Fat 0g	0%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 25mg	1%
Potassium 230mg	7%
Total Carbohydrate 7g	2%
Dietary Fiber 2g	8%
Sugars 3g	
Protein 1g	2%
Vitamin A 8%	• Vitamin C 20%
Calcium 4%	• Iron 4%
Vitamin E 6%	• Manganese 6%
*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your Daily Values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.	
	Calories 2,000 2,500
Total Fat	Less than 65g 80g
Sat Fat	Less than 20g 25g
Cholesterol	Less than 300mg 300mg
Sodium	Less than 2400mg 2400mg
Total Carbohydrate	300g 375g
Dietary Fiber	25g 30g

Food B

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 1/2 cup (123g)	
Servings Per Container 3.5	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories	30
% Daily Values*	
Total Fat 0g	0%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 280mg	12%
Potassium 260mg	7%
Total Carbohydrate 6g	2%
Dietary Fiber 2g	8%
Sugars 3g	
Protein 1g	2%
Vitamin A 2%	• Vitamin C 6%
Calcium 2%	• Iron 4%
Vitamin E 4%	
*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your Daily Values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.	
	Calories 2,000 2,500
Total Fat	Less than 65g 80g
Sat Fat	Less than 20g 25g
Cholesterol	Less than 300mg 300mg
Sodium	Less than 2400mg 2400mg
Total Carbohydrate	300g 375g
Dietary Fiber	25g 30g

- Which food has more calories per serving?
 - Food A
 - Food B
 - They are the same
 - There is no way to tell
- If someone ate the entire package of Food B, they would be eating...
 - 30 calories
 - 35 calories
 - 60 calories
 - 105 calories
- Which food has more dietary fiber per serving?
 - Food A
 - Food B
 - They are the same
 - There is no way to tell
- Which food has a larger portion size?
 - Food A
 - Food B
 - They are the same
 - There is no way to tell

The Results are In!

If you got all four right:

You are a Nutrition Facts Label reading pro! You know how to use serving sizes to make informed choices. Keep getting out there and learning more!

If you got two or three right:

You're on the right track! Try finding the information you missed in other pages of this newsletter to become a Nutrition Facts Label master!

If you got one or less right:

It just means you have more opportunities to learn. Read through the newsletter again.

Check your answers at the bottom of the page!



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