

## Getting Started

Weight loss is a way to prevent and help chronic health conditions from becoming worse. In addition to exercise, the healthiest way loose weight is to reduce calorie intake and decrease portion size of the foods we eat.

One way to do this is to see how much you actually eat each day.

- Write down everything you eat and measure it to have an idea of the size of the servings you are eating and drinking.
- Include meals, what you drink, and snacks.
- Do this for at least 3 days.

Many people find they eat more than they thought!

## Serving Sizes

Below are some general suggested serving sizes. You can compare these with your own list of what you actually ate from your written intake list.

Be aware that each of us have different calorie needs and may have different restrictions on diet based on our individual health conditions and activity level. Please consult your physician for a dietitian referral for more specific diet plans.

Depending on your body's caloric needs, it is recommended that we have a certain number servings in several food groups each day. The amount of servings per food group and caloric intake should be determined by your physician and dietitian. Your needs depend on your activity level, age, and general overall health.

- Fruits: 1/2 cup is a serving size
- Vegetables: 1/2 cup is a serving size
- Meat, fish, poultry: 3 oz is a serving size
- Grains: 1 slice of bread, 1/2 cup of rice or pasta or cooked cereal, 1 oz of of dry cereal

**"In the United States 65% of adults are overweight. In order to reverse this trend, many Americans need to consume fewer calories, be more active and make wiser food choices."**

Excerpted from: *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*

US Dept of Health and Human Services 2005

### SUGGESTIONS TO DECREASE PORTION SIZE:

1. Use Measuring cups to serve your food to get used to the actual portion size
2. Read the labels on foods that are packaged for serving size, and nutritional information
3. Avoid processed foods (most contain high amounts of trans fats and sugars)
4. If you are dining out: divide the meal in half and take it home or split a meal with someone to decrease portion sizes

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