

Just how much is a “serving” of each type of food?

Not all of us have food scales or measuring cups on hand every time we eat. But here are some ways that everyone can be sure they are getting the right number of servings from each food group every day!

GRAINS

(Eat about 6 ounces a day)

One ounce of grains = One regular sized slice of bread



A sandwich made with two slices of regular bread equals two ounces from the grain group—that’s a third of what you should get in a day!

If you’re used to eating really big or thick bread slices, they might be two ounces per slice or four ounces per sandwich. Four ounces out of a daily six—that’s two thirds of your grains!

Remember, one giant muffin you get at the bakery might be three ounces or more, so that’s half your daily grains, just on breakfast, and you’ve still got lunch and dinner to think about!

Here are some more examples of one serving of grains:

- 1/2 cup of oatmeal or other hot cereal
 - About 1 cup of dry cereal
 - 1/2 cup of cooked pasta or rice
 - 1/2 of an English muffin
-

VEGETABLES

(Eat about 2 to 2.5 cups a day)

One serving or one cup of vegetables = one baseball

One serving or one potato = one computer mouse



An important point to remember with vegetables is that for raw leafy green vegetables, like lettuce and spinach, two cups (or two baseballs) only counts as one serving. However, these leafy greens are packed with important nutrients and can be used to make delicious meals such as salads!

Here are some more examples of one serving of vegetables:

- 1 cup of most raw or cooked vegetables or vegetable juice
 - 2 medium carrots or a dozen baby carrots
 - 1 large sweet potato or 1 medium white potato
-

FRUIT

(Eat about 1.5 - 2 cups a day)

One serving or one cup of fruit = one tennis ball



Lots of fruits contain vitamins and natural sugars, which gives them their super sweet taste!

Here are some more examples of one serving of fruit:

- 1 medium apple
- 1 cup of fruit cocktail
- 1 large banana
- 1 cup of applesauce

DAIRY & MILK

(Eat about 3 cups a day)

One serving or one cup of dairy = two dominos or four dice



Often times with dairy products such as milk, yogurt, and cheeses, low-fat or non-fat options are available. These lower fat dairy products provide important nutrients such as calcium without the negatives of added sugar or empty calories.

Here are some more examples of one serving of dairy:

- 1 cup of milk (a half pint container)
- 1 cup of yogurt (a regular 8 ounce container)
- 1.5 ounces of natural cheese (like cheddar or Swiss)
- 2 ounces of processed cheese (like American cheese slices)

PROTEIN

Meat and Beans: (Eat about 5 to 5.5 ounces a day)

One serving or one ounce of meat/beans = 1/3 to 1/2 a deck of cards



Here are some more examples of one serving of protein:

- 1 ounce of cooked lean meat, poultry, or fish
- 1/4 cup of cooked dry beans or 1/4 cup of tofu
- 1 slice sandwich turkey
- 1 egg
- 1 tablespoon of peanut butter or 1/2 ounce of nuts or seeds

It can be easier than you think to eat the recommended daily amount of protein or even to eat too much. Here are some common foods to give you a better idea of just how much protein is in each item:

- 1 small steak = 3.5 to 4 ounces
- 1 small chicken breast = 3 ounces
- 1 small lean hamburger = 2 to 3 ounces
- 1 can tuna = 3 to 4 ounces
- 1 salmon steak = 4 to 6 ounces
- 1 cup split pea or bean soup = 2 ounces
- 1 soy burger = 2 ounces

What are some observations about portion sizes after seeing these items? _____
