

Food Portions and Serving Sizes in Diabetes Meal Plans



Pia Pizzolato MS, RD

This slide show explains:

- Difference between a serving and a portion
- Where to find serving sizes on food labels
- Serving sizes for meats, fruits, vegetables
- Using your hand to estimate portions

Pia has a Bachelors Degree in Clinical Nutrition from Cornell University and a Masters of Science in Nutrition from New York University. She completed a dietetic internship at the Bronx Veterans Medical Center in order to become a registered dietitian.

Prior to joining BD, Pia educated people with diabetes about medical nutrition therapy in a private physicians office, an outpatient clinic at a hospital and a nursing home where she counseled patients one-on-one and in group classes.



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Next
slide

The difference between a serving size and a portion of food

A "serving size" is the amount of food that is used to calculate the nutritional values on a food label. For example, a serving size might be 1 cookie, or $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of cereal.

A "portion" is the actual amount of a food that you **choose** to eat. A portion might consist of several "servings".

Example 1

A serving of unsweetened applesauce is $\frac{1}{2}$ cup, and it has 14 grams of carbohydrate.

However, you may choose to eat a 1 cup portion of applesauce. That equals 2 servings of applesauce, totaling 28 grams of carbohydrate.



Example 2

Your diabetes meal plan may say that you should eat 3 fruit servings per day. You like bananas, but a serving of banana is either $\frac{1}{2}$ of a large banana or one small banana (less than 6 inches long).

You can have your 3 fruit servings in 2 portions:

Portion 1: $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of orange juice in the morning. A serving of orange juice equals $\frac{1}{2}$ cup.

Portion 2: One large banana as an afternoon snack. This equals 2 servings of banana.



Previous
slide



Next
slide

Knowing the correct serving size can help you count carbohydrates more accurately.

Being accurate with your carbs will help your blood sugar medications to work properly, so that your blood sugar stays on target.

Your blood sugar medication doses are based on your eating a certain amount of carbohydrate at each meal.

If you eat more carbs than you should, then the blood sugar medication will not be able to offset the effect of all the carbs, and your blood sugar will rise and stay high.



Correct serving sizes of meat, fish and cheese

Meat serving size:

1 ounce

Cheese serving size:

1 ounce

Fish serving size:

1 ounce

Cottage cheese serving size:

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup



Correct serving sizes of popular fruits and vegetables



Apple	1 small (4 ounces)
Pear	½ large pear
Grapes	17
Banana	1 extra small (less than 6 inches long)
Apricot	4
Melon	1 cup
Orange	1
Peach	1 medium



Green/red pepper	1 cup
Cucumber	1 cup
Tomato, raw	1 cup
Potato, baked	3 ounces
String beans	½ cup
Broccoli, cauliflower	½ cup
Eggplant	½ cup
Corn on cob	½ a large ear
Carrots, cooked	½ cup



Correct serving sizes of bakery products

Vanilla wafer cookies	5
Chocolate chip cookies	2, 2¼ " diameter
Frosted cake	2" square
Small frosted cupcake	1
Fruit pie, 2 crusts	1 slice = 1/6 pie
Pumpkin or custard pie	1 slice = 1/8 pie
Donut, cake-type, plain	1 medium
Donut, yeast-type, glazed	1, 3¾" diameter
Muffin	¼ of a large muffin
Banana nut bread	1 slice, 1" thick
Danish pastry	1, 4¼" diameter
Granola bar	1, 1-oz bar
Sweet roll	1
Small brownie, plain	1¼" square
Fruit cobbler	½ cup
Angel food cake, plain	1 slice = 2 oz



Packaged foods: the label tells you the serving size and grams of carbohydrate per serving

Example:

This label says that 1 bar equals one serving. The 1-bar serving contains 33 grams of carbohydrate.

If you are a beginner to diabetes meal planning, just count the total carbohydrates. Ignore the dietary fiber and the sugars, they are included in the 33 total grams of carb.

Use measuring cups and spoons to measure your food servings at home.

Put the suggested serving size that is listed on the food label on your plate before you start eating.

This will help you see what one standard serving of a food looks like compared to how much you would normally eat.

Serving size is here








Carbohydrate grams per serving are here



Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 1 Bar (85g)	
Servings Per Container 4	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 170	Calories from Fat 50
<hr/>	
% Daily Value *	
Total Fat 6g	9%
Saturated Fat 4g	19%
Trans Fat 0g	
Polyunsaturated Fat 0.5g	
Monounsaturated Fat 1g	
Cholesterol 13mg	4%
Sodium 83mg	3%
Total Carbohydrate 33g	11%
Dietary Fiber 4g	16%
Sugar 25g	
Protein 3g	
<hr/>	
Vitamin A 110%	• Vitamin C 2%
Calcium 10%	• Iron 3%
*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 2,400mg 2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate	300g 375g
Dietary Fiber	25g 30g
Calories per gram:	
Fat 9	• Carbohydrate 4
	• Protein 4



A guide to using your hand for portion control

HAND PORTION	SERVING SIZE	FOOD & DRINK
One fist, clenched	8 fluid ounces 	Hot and cold beverages
Two hands, cupped	1 cup 	Dry cereal, Mixed dishes (stew, chili), Soup, Green salads, Ethnic mixed dishes, such as Asian, Italian, Mexican food
One hand, cupped	1/2 cup 	Pasta, Rice, Mashed potato, Beans, Potato salad, Cole slaw, Hot cereal, Fruit salad, Applesauce, Cottage cheese, Pudding, Gelatin
Palm of hand (women's)	3 ounces 	Cooked meat or fish, Canned fish
Two thumbs together (women's)	1 tablespoon 	Salad dressing, Sour cream, Dips, Cream cheese, Mayonnaise, Peanut butter, Dessert sauces, Whipped topping,
Tip of thumb (to first knuckle)	1 teaspoon	Margarine, Oil



Managing portions when you eat out

- Visualize your "at-home" portions when dining out - restaurant entrées can be twice the size of your usual home servings!
- Ask for a take-home box at the beginning of the meal and place half of your meal in the box.
- Split an entrée or a dessert with your dining partner.
- Use an appetizer as your main course (meat, poultry or seafood).
- Request a "lunch portion" when ordering dinner.
- Limit bread, chips, or rolls before your meal (set aside one roll or a small portion of chips and ask that the rest be taken off the table).
- Have a salad as a main course – ask for high calorie cheeses and salad dressings on the side and use only a small amount.
- Avoid "all-you-can-eat" restaurants (you are likely to overeat).
- Try three "one-minute time-outs" during your meal - stop eating after four to five minutes and then relax for one minute. Repeat three times during your meals and you may find you eat less.



Alcohol Serving Sizes

Alcohol is high in calories. Many drinks are also high in carbohydrate.

One serving is approximately 80-150 calories.

If you are overweight, substitute alcohol for the fat calories you are allotted for the day.

Alcohol serving sizes:

Men – Two servings a day

Women – One serving a day.

One serving of alcohol equals:

6 ounces of wine,

12 ounces of beer,

1½ ounces of distilled (hard) liquor

