



# Does Portion Size Matter?

Portion size is almost always part of conversations about eating well, but why is portion size so important? If eating well were as simple as just eating the right amount, we would all be very healthy. Right?



## What is portion size?

When we say portion size we are usually talking about the amount of a food that we eat at a given time. This is often different from serving size, which refers to the “recommended” or “usual” amount of a food that is included on the nutrition label or in messages about eating better. For example, a serving of cooked pasta is 1/2 cup, but the portion we eat at dinner may be 1 1/2 cups of spaghetti.



## How does portion size impact how we eat?

Most of us are not very good at estimating how much food we are eating unless we are measuring in some way. Influences such as the color of a plate, the size of a plate and even whether a plate has a rim can alter how much food we perceive is on the plate. We also tend to eat more when we start with a larger portion on our plates, leading us to eat more than we thought or wanted.



## Better Portioning

To familiarize yourself with standard serving sizes and what they look like on a plate, practice with measuring cups at home. Start meals by serving yourself a measured amount that you think will be enough and only go back for more if you are not satisfied. This practice can help you get better at estimating portion size and can also help you understand how much food you actually need. When eating out, you can practice your portioning too. Many of our cafes have signs and marked serving utensils that can help you better estimate your portion sizes.



#### REFERENCES:

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