

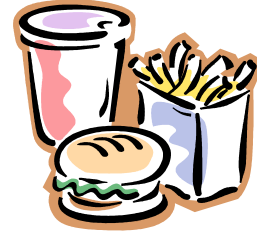


## Sizing up food portions: How much are *you* eating?

“Would you like that super-sized?”

“For 39¢ more, you can have the mega fries and drink!”

“It’s actually cheaper to get the larger meal.”



How often are we convinced to get the larger meal and then we eat it all? Many of us feel that the bigger the portion, the better the deal. This may be true economically, however this is not true if you are trying to manage your weight and perhaps your blood pressure, cholesterol and blood sugar.

Ever since restaurants and fast food joints began to offer super-sized meals, Americans have begun to eat more. And we’re not just eating more when we eat out; we’re also training ourselves to eat more at home too. We also seem to be moving less, which means we really don’t need as many calories. As a country, we’re becoming larger and larger and seeing more and more chronic health problems like hypertension, heart disease, diabetes and certain cancers.

For a few cents more, we can get the larger meal as well as the extra calories that we may not need. On average, eating an additional 100 calories a day beyond what your body needs can lead to a weight gain of 10 pounds a year. Wow! A key to getting or keeping your weight in a healthy range is to eat sensible portions.

This means following the Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2010 and MyPlate. Recommended daily amounts from each food group are *guides* to help determine your daily intake. Your *portions* may not match the standard *serving* size, but the amount you eat in a day should match the total amount that is recommended.

What’s the difference between a *portion* and a *serving*? A **portion** is the amount of food you choose to eat. There is no standard portion size and no right or wrong portion size. A **serving** is a standard amount used to help give advice about how much to eat, or to identify the amount of calories and nutrients found in a food.

Many foods come packaged in larger sizes—check the food label to see how many servings come in one package. Choose sensible portions to control your calorie intake and to manage your weight in a healthy range.

How much *are* you eating? That’s up to you.

Visit our Nutrition Education for Wellness (NEW) website at [www.ctahr.hawaii.edu/NEW](http://www.ctahr.hawaii.edu/NEW)