

# Habits for a Healthy Life



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## Healthy Habit #3

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The holidays are just around the corner. As we approach Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day, we must also continue with the healthy habits MAC4Wellness has introduced. Hopefully, you will be able to include these ideas as well.

Food portions are getting bigger and bigger... not only at restaurants — both fast food and regular — but also candy bars and other snacks we purchase.

One easy tip for healthy eating is to watch portion sizes. How do we do that? Just look at your hand! One serving of

protein should be about the size of the palm of your hand. One serving of green vegetables or salad greens could be the size of two fists. Starchy foods such as potatoes and pasta should be about the size of one tightly clenched fist.

I have included a serving size card developed by The National Institutes of Health and National Heart, Blood, and Lung Institute. Make it a habit to read the food label to help you manage the portion sizes.

When you eat out, ask for a to-go container, take half of the meal home; then, you actually have two meals for the price of one! If the smaller portion leaves you a little hungry, eat vegetables such as carrots and celery, or salad with limited dressing.

AARP has provided some basic healthy eating tips to help with portion control: think about what and how much you are consuming; eat slowly and taste each bite; enjoy the experience of eating; and recognize how frequently you eat.

Statistics continue to show that eating as a family provides numerous positive outcomes:

- children are less likely to snack
- teens are less likely to smoke, drink alcohol, use street drugs
- opportunity for family members to share the events of their day with each other
- opportunity to teach civilized behavior and manners
- and, most importantly, for each member to feel nurtured and part of the family

Don't forget to stock up on healthy foods. Children will eat what is available at home; so, keep fruits, vegetables, low-fat yogurt, peanut butter, and cheese on hand. Try to have a wide variety of healthy foods available. By doing this, you will be able to continue the healthy habits you have already started. Make chips and candy "once-in-a-while" foods.

A lot of us are guilty of eating meals or snacks while watching TV or using the computer. Unfortunately when we do this, we may not pay attention to feelings of fullness, which will then lead to overeating. More importantly, we lose quality "conversation" time with each other.

We all know that food is an important part of our holiday season. Are there "good" and "bad" foods, or is it really only good and bad eating habits? What matters most is the total amount and types of food we eat. Choose well and take control of what and how much you eat. Eat smaller portions of food, eat slowly, go for a walk after a meal, avoid fast food, and don't park yourself in front of the buffet!

When preparing foods:

- add healthy ingredients like raisins or toasted nuts
- choose products that are trans fat-free
- use two egg whites in place of one egg
- try dried fruit instead of nuts
- use three tablespoons of cocoa powder and one tablespoon of oil in place of baking chocolate
- top casseroles with almonds instead of fried onion rings
- choose reduced-fat cheeses for salads and casseroles

May we have a joyous holiday season and continue with the healthy habits for a healthy life!

### SERVING SIZE CARD:

Cut out and fold on the dotted line. Laminate for longtime use.

<p><b>1 Serving Looks Like . . .</b></p> <p><b>GRAIN PRODUCTS</b></p> <p>1 cup of cereal flakes = fist </p> <p>1 pancake = compact disc </p> <p>½ cup of cooked rice, pasta, or potato = ½ baseball </p> <p>1 slice of bread = cassette tape </p> <p>1 piece of cornbread = bar of soap </p>	<p><b>1 Serving Looks Like . . .</b></p> <p><b>VEGETABLES AND FRUIT</b></p> <p>1 cup of salad greens = baseball </p> <p>1 baked potato = fist </p> <p>1 med. fruit = baseball </p> <p>½ cup of fresh fruit = ½ baseball </p> <p>¼ cup of raisins = large egg </p>
<p><b>1 Serving Looks Like . . .</b></p> <p><b>DAIRY AND CHEESE</b></p> <p>1½ oz. cheese = 4 stacked dice or 2 cheese slices </p> <p>½ cup of ice cream = ½ baseball </p> <p><b>FATS</b></p> <p>1 tsp. margarine or spreads = 1 dice</p>	<p><b>1 Serving Looks Like . . .</b></p> <p><b>MEAT AND ALTERNATIVES</b></p> <p>3 oz. meat, fish, and poultry = deck of cards </p> <p>3 oz. grilled/baked fish = checkbook </p> <p>2 Tbsp. peanut butter = ping pong ball </p>