

Happy July,

I hope your 4th of July is a fun holiday. Usually for the 4th we go to pot lucks and eat a bit more than usual. The news below is all about portion control. I don't mean to send it to you right before an enjoyable pot luck holiday; I send it now only because of time constraints for me. Enjoy the 4th and by all means if you go to a pot luck and eat more than usual, don't feel guilty. Acknowledge the fun you had with your companions and remember the enjoyable food you received.

What is written in blue, are comments from me except for the last paragraph. The ACSM's Health and Fitness Journal had a great article called "Portion Distortion: Sizing Up Food Servings" by Laura J Kreskall, Ph.D., R.D., FACSM. Below are some key phrases from the article. If you are struggling with weight loss, check this out!

"...Americans are growing heavier by the day, with no immediate trend in sight for achieving healthy body weight.

...the basic cause remains an imbalance between energy intake (food eaten) and energy expenditure (exercise)."

"Americans consume one billion commercially prepared meals each week. We now spend nearly half of our food dollars on meals away from home and not just at restaurants and fast-food outlets. Food is sold almost everywhere; we are surrounded with food-buying and food-eating opportunities at the mall, sporting events, movie theaters, coffee bars, gas stations and the workplace with the convenience of vending carts and machines. Our current eating environment is characterized by relatively inexpensive, convenient and tasty foods served in large portions."

"Barbara J Rolls, PhD., et al. (2002) reported that large portions led to greater energy intake (eating more) regardless of the serving method and subject characteristics. Subjects in their study consumed 30% more energy when offered the largest portion than when offered the smallest portion." Test this yourself, keep your portions smaller on your plate when you serve yourself and see what happens.

"..commercially prepared foods often have more sodium, saturated fats and cholesterol, which Americans over-consume, and less of the nutrients, such as calcium and fiber, which we under-consume."

"In a study published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, the authors reported that portion sizes have increased between 1977 and 1996 both inside and outside the home."

"More recent data suggests that even after adjusting for lifestyle and dietary confounders, consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages is associated with increased weight gain and risk for the development of type 2 diabetes, and the consumption of high-fructose corn syrup in beverages may play a role in the current U.S. obesity epidemic. Furthermore, a

recent study reported that consumption of fast food as a strong positive association with body weight gain and insulin resistance.”

Looking at foods that are being consumed on a regular basis:

- ? Today’s muffin weighs 4 to 6 ounces, the USDA defines a serving size for a muffin as 1 ounce
- ? Restaurants serve 12 – 16-ounce portions of meat – the USDA estimates that young, moderately active women need approximately 6 ounces of meat and beans a day.
- ? A sticky roll from a chain coffee shop can contain approximately 700 kcal. Other breakfast buns may have more than 50 g of fat, 15 or more of them saturated and approximately 1,100 kcal, or almost the entire day’s worth of energy for some individuals.
- ? Many burritos at popular chain restaurants contain more than 1,000 kcal; some even contain 1,500 kcal, and these energy levels do not include the chips, sides or sugar-containing beverages. (I do eat at Senior Sam’s and I enjoy three meals with one big burrito.)
- ? In the 1990’s, the typical fast-food hamburger weighed little more than 1 ounce of cooked meat for 210 kcal. Today, it often consists of a double meat patty with sauce and cheese, and may weigh 6 ounces or more and contain 1,000 kcal or more.
- ? Today, a fast-food restaurant meal containing a double meat patty with cheese (apprx. 700 kcal), large fries (apprx. 500 kcal) and a large cola (apprx. 300 kcal) may total 1,500 kcal. This could easily be close to the entire day’s energy requirements for some women and older adults.
- ? A common two-cup portion of steamed rice from an Asian takeout is equivalent to four servings of grain and 320 kcal, and this does not include the meat and vegetables that are considered the main dish.
- ? 20 years ago, a traditional pasta dinner consisted of one cup of spaghetti with sauce and three small meatballs (500 kcal). Today, it is common to receive two or three cups of pasta with sauce and three large meatballs for a total of 1,025 to 1,250 kcal.
- ? 20 years ago, an order of movie theater popcorn was five cups. Today, the average medium-size popcorn is 16 cups and 900 kcal (1,220 with butter). The large 20-cup size, often with free refills, contains 1,160 kcal (1,640 with butter).

- ? A single cookie at a bakery-type restaurant or sandwich shop may contain more than 600 kcal and 30 g of fat.
- ? A 12 oz can of sugar-containing soda has approximately 150 kcal.
- ? Beverages ranging from 32 to 64 ounces have 400 to 800 kcal just for that beverage.

“A 130-pound person would have to walk for approximately three hours to expend the energy consumed in one of the beverages listed above.”

Image the amount of calories consumed at an all you can eat restaurant (Hometown Buffet)! Please realize that if you are active, it might be ok. Keeping the body moving helps tremendously.

“People who continue to follow fad diets often think that the type of food they eat is more crucial to weight loss than the amount they eat.”

“Data from the National Weight Control Registry suggest that people who are successful at losing weight and keeping it off practice portion control, exercise regularly and keep food records.”

Although portion control is not as easy and choices become more difficult to manage in commercial food service setting, I encourage you to limit the number of times per week you eat away from home. Below are some suggestions that may help make better choices when you do eat out:

- ? Ask for half the meal to be placed in a box before it arrives at the table. Take the portion home for another meal.
- ? Skip the appetizer.
- ? Share an entrée.
- ? Order an appetizer instead of an entrée.
- ? Stick with water, diet soft drinks, tomato juice, or skim or 1% milk.
- ? Order baked or broiled entrees.
- ? Ask for steamed vegetables without added fat.
- ? Ask for all condiments and added fat on the side, and use sparingly.
- ? Don't worry about whether to eat high carbohydrates or high protein, simply try to eat less of everything.

Attached is the end of this article with a graph showing what a serving size really looks like. Print this last page out and place it on your refrigerator. Explore and check to see what size a serving you are eating. If you are eating large servings, I encourage you to challenge yourself to eat less. Check it out for one week, eat smaller portions, and see how you feel at the end of the week. Are you starving? Do you need more food? If you are exercising, you might, so honor that and feed yourself the fuel you need. If you aren't starving, can you continue eating smaller portions? What comes up around doing that?

Look back at your childhood. What was food like when you were young? How does this relate to today the year 2006?

Have a cool July. I will be back in August and until then, keep up the good work! I know you can do it!

Carol Lee