

March 2024

3/5/2024: Tips to keeps portions in check

What's in a name? That which we call a portion size by any other name would still not be a serving size.

So what's the difference between a portion size and serving size. I'm Clarissa Moon here to set the record straight. A SERVING size is the amount of food that's listed on the nutrition facts label. A serving size is NOT a recommendation for how much food/drink to consume. It is required by law to be based on data that an American typically eats. So, a PORTION size refers to how much food we are served, not how much we eat. These are not regulated by the government because portion sizes can be unique to every individual and may be different than the serving size that's listed on the nutrition facts label.

Portion sizes have grown exponentially in recent years, and have likely had a direct link to obesity. The more you're served, the more you eat. Here's a few tips on how to keep those portions in check.

1. When shopping, consider choosing food and drinks in smaller sizes so that you're not tempted to eat the whole thing and consume extra calories.
2. When eating out, try choosing smaller portions, sharing a meal with someone else, or getting a take-out box and taking half of the meal home.
3. Allow smaller portions to become your new normal
4. Eat slowly and pay attention to hunger cues.

Remember, wherefore art thou portion size is not a serving size. Choose portions that are best for YOU. Learn more at foodinsight.org or panola.agrilife.org.

<https://foodinsight.org/your-guide-to-portion-size/>

3/12/2024: Stress relief from laughter? It's no joke

Call it cliché, but whoever said "laughter is the best medicine" was really onto something! While a good chuckle surely won't cure everything, data is showing that laughter really does some good. I'm Clarissa Moon here to explain it all for you!

Short-term benefits of laughter:

- Increases oxygen and endorphins, stimulating your heart, lungs, muscles and brain.
- Activates and then relieves your stress response leaving you feeling relaxed.
- Stimulates circulation and muscle relaxation, reducing tension in the body.

Long term effects:

- Improving your immune system, relieving pain, increasing personal satisfaction and improving mood.

If you're afraid some laughter is missing from your life- fear not! Try and incorporate more humor into your life. Look on our website for some suggestions!

Visit panola.agrilife.org or mayoclinic.org to learn more. Thanks for listening to the Moon Minute!

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/stress-management/in-depth/stress-relief/art-20044456>

3/19/24: 10 Ways to Make Veggies Tastier

Do you have a love/hate relationship with vegetables? If so, you're not alone. I'm Clarissa Moon here with 10 tips on making veggies tastier!

- 1) Add cheese! Because everything is better with cheese on it.
- 2) Squeeze some lemon juice on there for a tangy surprise
- 3) Sauté with herbs. They add flavor without adding extra sodium.
- 4) Spice them up! Try some new veggies and veggie combos for your favorite dishes whether its omelets, pizza, soup, anything!
- 5) Healthy Dipping! Everything is more fun when you can dip it. Consider hummus, a bean dip, or good ole ranch dressing.
- 6) Mix with fruit. Adding fruits to a salad provides such a nice touch of sweetness.
- 7) A flavorful soup- this is a great way to add more veggies to your life- and use them up before they go bad!
- 8) Drink them- juice some fruit and veggies together and have some nutritious deliciousness.
- 9) Grill 'em! Cooking them makes them softer, plus grill marks are so sexy.
- 10) Stuff 'em! Mushroom caps and bell peppers are hollow and begging for you to have a party in their belly. Add in some cheese and breadcrumbs, and you're basically a professional chef.

That's it for today's Moon Minute! Check out fruitsandveggies.org or panola.agrilife.org for more info!

[Source: fruitsandveggies.org](https://fruitsandveggies.org)

3/26/2024: Save your vision month- 8 tips to protect your vision

March is Save your Vision Month! I'm Clarissa Moon here with some tips on saving your vision.

- 1) Find an eye doctor
- 2) Ask how often you need a dilated eye exam- the best way to find eye diseases early on
- 3) Move more- physical activity lowers your risk for several chronic diseases that can affect eye health
- 4) Talk to your family about eye health history. Some eye diseases can run in families.
- 5) Focus on nutrition this is another way to prevent chronic conditions that can affect eye health. Focus on leafy greens and omega 3's.
- 6) Wear your sunglasses. UV rays can damage eyes as well as skin, find some shades with 99-100% of UV protection.
- 7) Stay on top of health conditions like diabetes and hypertension
- 8) Smoking can also increase your risk for eye diseases- so make a plan to quit!

For more info, visit the National Eye Institute at nei.nih.gov or panola.agrilife.org

[Source: National Eye Institute \(NIH\)](https://nei.nih.gov)