This issue of *Healthy Living* includes information regarding portion control, eating healthy on a budget, and recipes. One of the most essential components to losing weight is serving size and portion control. Be sure to eat a variety and the correct **quantity** of foods. Eating healthy does not have to break the bank. Also, included are several tips to eat healthy without hurting your wallet.

**Portion control**

Portion control is a useful tool to help you maintain a healthy weight. The sizes of your portions and types of foods you eat affect how many nutrients and calories you’re getting. By avoiding large portions of high-calorie foods and eating more low-calorie foods, such as fruits and vegetables, you’ll get the nutrients you need, feel satisfied and reduce the number of calories you consume.

**Understanding serving sizes is key to losing weight**

Eating sensible food portions (portion control) is essential to weight loss as well as to maintaining a healthy weight. Unfortunately, the importance of portion control is often underestimated. In fact, the trend toward larger food portions gets much of the blame for the growing number of overweight people.

You may think one portion of food is the same as one serving, but that’s rarely correct. A serving is a standardized amount of food with specific calorie and nutrient content. Servings usually are defined by common measurements such as cups, ounces or pieces. On the other hand, a portion is the amount of food you choose to eat and is often greater than one serving size. Understanding this distinction can help you learn how to eat the right amount of food.

**Sizing up your servings**

The first step in portion control is to understand serving sizes, which may be smaller than you think. Use these visualizations to estimate appropriate serving sizes:
• A fist or cupped hand = 1 Cup (1 serving = ½ cup of cereal or cooked pasta)
• A thumb = 1 oz. of cheese
• A handful = 1-2 oz. of snack food (nuts or small candies)
  • Palm = 3 oz. of meat
  • Thumb tip = 1 teaspoon
  • 1 tennis ball = 1 serving of fruit

Right-size your portions

If you’re finding it difficult to bring your portions in line with recommended servings, try these suggestions:

• Read food labels to determine serving sizes.
• Discourage overeating by placing only the appropriate servings of food on dinner plates, rather than put serving bowls on the table.
• Don’t eat second helpings.
• When eating out, ask for a takeout container. Save part of the meal for another time.
• Split a meal with your spouse or friend.
• Don’t feel as if you have to clean your plate.

Portion control when eating out

Many restaurants serve more food than one person needs at one meal. Take control of the amount of food that ends up on your plate by splitting an entrée with a friend. Or, ask the wait person for a “to-go” box and wrap up half your meal as soon as it’s brought to the table.

Go ahead, spoil your dinner

We learned as children not to snack before a meal for fear of “spoiling our dinner.” Well, it’s time to forget that old rule. If you feel hungry between meals, eat a healthy snack, like a piece of fruit or small salad, to avoid overeating during your next meal.

Be aware of large packages

For some reason, the larger the package, the more people consume from it without realizing it. To minimize this effect:

• Divide up the contents of one large package into several smaller containers to help avoid over-consumption.
• Don’t eat straight from the package. Instead, serve the food in a small bowl or container.
Eating Healthy on a Budget

Make it from scratch

Many of the prepackaged, boxed, canned, and frozen foods you buy from the store are high in fat, calories, sodium, sugar, and cost, compared to foods prepared at home. They may also be comparatively lower in vitamins and minerals. You pay for the fancy packaging and convenience of these items, but you get much less for your money. For example, you can make many more bags of popcorn from a bag of un-popped corn compared to buying a bag of already-popped popcorn. The pre-made popcorn is much more expensive and has more fat and sodium than what you can make at home. Of course, making food from scratch may take a little more time, but it can be well worth it in terms of cost and nutrition.

Have a game plan for shopping

Your game plan should include what you’re going to buy and where you’re going to buy it. Here are some tips on developing a shopping plan:

- Plan meals and snacks several days in advance. Then write out a shopping list, and stick to it.
- Compare prices among grocery stores. Shop at national chains and discount food outlets. Don’t shop at convenience stores.
- Go to stores that sell generic foods, store brand foods, and foods in bulk.
- Use coupons with caution. They are often for foods that are more expensive. Don’t buy junk food, or something you normally wouldn’t buy, just because you have a coupon.
- Never shop on an empty stomach.
- Look for sales on items that are on your list.
- Make sure the food you buy is fresh. Food on sale is sometimes starting to get old. Always check the dates on perishable food such as milk and meat, because you want it to be safe.

Check the unit prices of items

The unit price calculates the cost of a product per unit. For example, a unit could be by the ounce, pound, or number of items in a package. Unit prices are usually marked on the shelf below the product. For example, let’s say you’re looking for canned beets and there are three different brands to choose from. If you look at the unit price below each one, you can find the brand that is cheapest, especially if you buy the largest can. However, it only makes sense to buy the largest can if you’re sure you’ll use it all.

Eating Out

Eating out can be expensive and the food is often high in fat, salt, and sugar. A spaghetti dinner at a restaurant could cost $10 or more but only a few dollars if you prepared it at home. At a restaurant, your extra costs go toward profits and tips. Consider having a potluck. When you entertain guests at home, ask them to bring a dish.
Tortilla Soup

2 cups tomato sauce
1 1/2 cups water
1 cup bottled salsa
1 cup frozen whole-kernel corn
1 teaspoon dried oregano
1 teaspoon dried basil
1 teaspoon instant minced garlic
1 (15.75-ounce) can fat-free, less-sodium chicken broth
1 (15-ounce) can kidney beans, rinsed and drained
1 cup (4 ounces) shredded reduced-fat sharp cheddar cheese
30 fat-free baked tortilla chips

Preparation:
Combine first 9 ingredients in a large saucepan. Bring to a boil; cover, reduce heat, and simmer 12 minutes.
Serve with cheese and tortilla chips.

Yield: 6 servings (serving size 1 1/3 cups soup, about 3 tablespoons cheese, and 5 tortilla chips)

Nutritional Information
CALORIES 248 (17% from fat); FAT 4.7g (sat 2.2g, mono 1.1g, poly 0.4g); PROTEIN 14.7g; CHOLESTEROL 13mg; CALCIUM 238mg; SODIUM 1158mg; FIBER 5.5g; IRON 3.1mg; CARBOHYDRATE 39.

Mediterranean Style Grilled Fish

1 tablespoon minced garlic
4 tablespoons chopped fresh basil
tablespoon chopped fresh parsley
2 tablespoons lemon juice
4 cod fillets, each 6 ounces
Cracked black pepper, to taste
4 green olives, chopped
4 thin slices lemon

Preparation
Prepare a hot fire in a charcoal grill or heat a gas grill or broiler. Away from the heat source, lightly coat the grill rack or broiler pan with cooking spray. Position the cooking rack 4 to 6 inches from the heat source.
In a small bowl, combine the minced garlic, basil, parsley and lemon juice.
Place aluminum foil on a baking sheet or a grill-pan designed for grilling seafood. Spray with cooking spray. Place fish on aluminum foil and spray with cooking spray. Top each fillet with equal amounts of the garlic mixture.
Sprinkle with black pepper.
Grill over medium heat, turning once, until the fish is opaque throughout when tested with the tip of a knife, about 10 minutes.
Garnish with green olives and lemon slices. Serve on warmed plates.

Yield: 4 servings

Nutritional Information
Serving size: 1 fillet Calories 145, Total fat 2g, Saturated fat trace, monounsaturated fat 0.5g, Protein 30g,
Carbohydrates 2g, Cholesterol 75mg, Sodium 175mg, Fiber trace, Potassium 731mg, Calcium 35mg