

PORTION CONTROL:
Seeing the Healthy
Way to Eat

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TEACHER'S RESOURCE BOOK

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PORTION CONTROL: SEEING THE HEALTHY WAY TO EAT

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Big Gulps®. Biggie® fries. Extra-large bakery cookies. Today's teens have grown up in a world where huge portions are the norm. Indeed, many young people don't realize that what they consider a "normal" sized meal is actually large enough to nourish an adult for an entire day! Far from being an insignificant issue, this "portion distortion" problem is fueling a dangerous obesity epidemic among teens.

From the 1960s to the 1980s, the number of overweight or obese teens remained steady—at about five percent. However, that number has tripled since the 1980s. This is a troubling statistic: not only do overweight teens suffer from social disapproval and reduced ability to participate in physical activities, they are also at an elevated risk for serious health problems like cancer, heart disease, high blood pressure and diabetes. In fact, a recent study by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention revealed that obesity is the second leading preventable cause of death in America, right behind tobacco.¹

There are several explanations for the increase in obesity among young people, including a lack of physical exercise and a diet that is too high in fat and calories. However, growing portion sizes undoubtedly play a key role in the "oversizing" of American youth. During the 1980s, many new large-sized products first hit the market. Since then, the number of super-portion products has increased right along with obesity rates. A 2002 study published in the *American Journal of Public Health* showed that the size of food portions of all types, including store-bought items and restaurant meals, has increased dramatically since the products were first introduced.² The burgers, fries, and sodas offered at fast-food restaurants are now two-to-five times larger than they were in the past. Few teens realize that these giant portions greatly exceed the United States Department of Agriculture standards for a single serving.

Considering how many of these super-sized meals an average youth consumes over a year—meals that are often high in calories and low in nutritional value—it is no wonder that obesity is a serious concern among American youth. In order to fight the unhealthy habit of overeating, teens need to change their attitudes as well as their eating patterns. The first step is understanding what a normal portion really is. Once students learn the tools to judge healthy portion sizes, they will be able to make smarter eating choices. Young people may be surprised to find that they are just as satisfied with a sensible portion as they are with the extra-maxi-king-supreme version. ***Portion Control: Seeing the Healthy Way to Eat*** is designed to help young people learn valuable information about portion control that will prepare them for a happy, active and healthy lifestyle.

¹ "Death Rate from Obesity Gains Fast on Smoking," [The New York Times](#), March 10, 2004.

² Young, Lisa R. and Marion Nestle. "The Contribution of Expanding Portion Sizes to the US Obesity Epidemic," [The American Journal of Public Health](#). February 2002, Vol. 92, no. 2.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After watching the video *Portion Control: Seeing the Healthy Way to Eat* and participating in the class activities included in this Teacher's Resource Book, your students will be able to:

- estimate the serving size of a variety of foods by visually comparing servings to ordinary objects such as the human hand
- explain the health risks of being overweight or obese
- evaluate their own eating patterns to pinpoint their own bad habits or unhealthy food choices
- determine their own Body Mass Index (BMI)
- control the portions they eat using simple tips and visual guidelines
- recognize that portion sizes have increased over time to unhealthy levels
- understand how calories and exercise are related to gaining or losing weight
- realize that they will be just as satisfied with smaller, more sensible portions
- better understand the importance of eating a variety of foods to get all the nutrients they need

PROGRAM SUMMARY

The video opens with two young hosts ordering from a fictional fast-food restaurant's drive-through. One host asks for the "Jumbo Burger" with "Colossal Fries" and a "Gallon Gulper," then decides to "Super Sick-Size" his meal for a few cents more. When the food arrives, it barely fits in the car—the sodas come in buckets and the food is packed into shopping bags.

Back in the studio, the hosts discuss the real phenomenon of extra-size meals at fast-food restaurants. They remind students that not only is fast food high in fat and calories, but that eating large portions of it is harmful to their health.

The video expands on this point by revealing that a recent Centers for Disease Control and Prevention study reported that 64 percent of American adults are overweight. In addition, 40 million Americans were classified as obese in 2001. Health expert Ellie Krieger then explains to viewers the difference between being overweight and being obese.

The dangers of obesity are then emphasized. The hosts report that obesity is now the second leading preventable cause of death—and that it will surpass tobacco to become the leading cause of preventable death if the trend continues. This is because obese people have a higher risk for illnesses like diabetes, heart disease, cancer and high blood pressure.

Using a graph, the video then illustrates that young people need to be concerned about obesity as well. When researchers first began keeping track in the 1960s, about five percent of American teenagers were overweight. That number stayed constant until the 1980s—but then the percentage tripled.

Next, the hosts point out the negative consequences of being overweight. Extra pounds make it harder to participate in athletics and other physical activities, can adversely affect mental performance, and can make teens feel that they "don't look or feel as good as you want to."

So why are so many young people overweight? The video turns to on-the-street interviews with real teens for the answer. The teens list several reasons, including lack of exercise, too much time spent playing computer games and watching TV, driving instead of walking, eating junk food, and simply eating too much.

The hosts then explore the last reason: eating too much. They tell viewers that restaurant portions weren't always as big as they are today. Super-sizing foods didn't start until the 1980s; before then, Americans ate less. For example, in the 1950s the normal portion of French fries was 2.5 ounces and 217 calories, which is equal to today's small size. Now, most fast-food meals come with large fries, which are 6 ounces and 517 calories—two and a half times as many calories.

The hosts go on to present the examples of soda and burger portion sizes. In the 1950s, the normal soda was 7 ounces and 84 calories. Now, the child size is 12 ounces and 144 calories, the large is 32 ounces and 388 calories, and the “Double Gulp” size is 64 ounces and almost 800 calories. In addition, the typical restaurant cheeseburger has gone from 5.8 ounces and 397 calories to 7.3 ounces and 533 calories in the past 30 years. The hosts reveal that a meal of a burger, fries, and drink can contain 1,100 more calories today than it did 50 years ago!

The video moves beyond fast-food restaurants to note that the extra-size trend can be seen in several places: restaurants typically use larger plates and cups, bakers use larger muffin tins, pizzerias use larger pans, and cookbooks make larger recipes. It seems that Americans are obsessed with big.

Unfortunately, the hosts explain, eating huge portions combined with a lack of exercise can cause weight gain. When someone consumes more energy—or calories—than he or she burns in exercise, the excess energy becomes fat. However, viewers don’t need to count every calorie they eat—they can manage their weight using “portion control.”

The video moves on to explain several methods teens can use to control their portions. One method is to think about the size of their stomachs. The hosts tell viewers that their stomachs are about twice the size of their cupped hands—or, roughly 50 milliliters in volume when empty. Of course, the stomach expands when someone eats, which is demonstrated with a balloon and soda.

Next, the hosts point out that people don’t always stop eating when their stomachs have expanded enough—that’s because it takes about 20 minutes for the brain to get the message transmitted telling the stomach that it’s full. It takes food 20 minutes to reach the small intestine, where a hormone called Cholecystokinin is released. This hormone lets the brain know the stomach is full. Unfortunately, people may keep eating during those 20 minutes and end up feeling stuffed.

Ellie Krieger returns to tell viewers about the importance of paying attention to the body’s cues. This leads into the second method of portion control: taking a reasonable portion to start and eating slowly, then waiting 20 minutes to get seconds to make sure you are really hungry.

Next, the video turns to the topic of reasonable portions. The hosts explain that viewers can use their hands to illustrate the right portion sizes for all kinds of foods. For example, a closed fist is about the size of half a cup, which is the proper portion of pasta, rice, cooked vegetables, beans or legumes, breakfast cereal, toubeleh, or kasha.

The hosts then remind teens that pasta and grain portions are much healthier if they are made of whole grains rather than refined grains. Therefore, brown rice, whole wheat bread and whole grain cereal are better choices than white rice, white bread, and refined cereal.

Next, the video uses a hand holding a tennis ball to illustrate the size of one cup. This is about the right portion of milk, juice, canned fruit, or raw vegetables. Then the hosts use the size and thickness of a person's palm to show the correct portion of meat, fish, a burger, a skinless chicken breast, a pork chop, turkey, ham or any other kind of meat, poultry or fish. The last tool for measuring portion sizes is the thumb, which represents the right portion of cheese or peanut butter. The tip of the thumb shows a portion of butter or margarine.

Next, the hosts remind teens that some foods count for more than one portion. One host points out that a large bagel counts for about four portions of bread, and that big pieces of fruit can be equivalent to two or three portions. That doesn't mean that it's a bad idea to eat bagels or large pieces of fruit—teens should just keep their size in mind.

The video then turns to “plate geometry,” a simple way for viewers to determine how much of the various food groups they should eat. Using a marker, the hosts divide a plate into three equal sections. They explain that one-third of the plate should be filled with a non-starchy vegetable, one-third should be filled with grains, pasta and starches, and the last third should contain some kind of protein—meat, fish, poultry, eggs, dairy or tofu. The plate geometry concept helps teens keep their portions in a healthy proportion.

The hosts now move on to a discussion of what a day's worth of healthy portions look like. First, they show an example of an unhealthy breakfast: a plate loaded with pancakes, eggs and fried potatoes. This plate is quickly replaced by a better example: slices of cantaloupe, one egg and a smaller whole wheat pancake. Other breakfasts are also displayed in the correct proportions. The hosts also tell viewers that their energy needs depend on their size and activity level; a 6'5" basketball player obviously needs more calories than a 5'6" couch potato.

At this point in the video, teens see an example of an unhealthy lunch: a giant cheeseburger, fries, soda and a fried apple pie. Viewers are then encouraged to choose healthier portions even when they are at fast-food restaurants, such as smaller burgers, fruit, salads, grilled sandwiches or sub sandwiches with vegetables.

The example of an unhealthy dinner is a plate covered by a huge steak, a potato and a tiny bit of broccoli. However, the hosts explain that the plate could represent a good meal if the portions were altered: by adding a lot more broccoli and cutting down the size of the steak, the dinner would be much better. Of course, a low-fat choice like fish would be even better.

The video finishes the discussion on a day's worth of healthy meals with a few tips: people can eat all the vegetables they want, everyone should try to have two or three portions of fruit each day, and it's okay to have snacks once in a while—but low-fat desserts are the best choices.

Now the hosts move on to portion control tips for restaurants, where it is harder to control the amount of food given. First, teens are advised to avoid extra-large meals. Instead, they should order off the lunch menu for smaller portions, choose an appetizer as a meal,

PROGRAM SUMMARY CONTINUED

or split one entrée between two people. Another option is to divide the meal in half before eating and asking the server to put half in a doggie bag. This way, viewers can control their portions and get two meals for the price of one.

Finally, the video reviews the lessons of healthy eating. Viewers are reminded that their stomachs are not very big and that it takes 20 minutes for the brain to register that the stomach is full. The way to estimate portion sizes using a hand is revisited. The hosts then go over plate geometry one more time and reiterate their tips for eating smart at restaurants. By following these simple guidelines, teens will get their diets under control—and feel much better as a result.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Name: _____

Pre/Post Test

1. TRUE or FALSE: Approximately one third of American adults are overweight. _____
2. TRUE or FALSE: Obesity is now the second leading preventable cause of death in the U.S. _____
3. TRUE or FALSE: Obese people have a higher risk for cancer and many other serious illnesses. _____
4. TRUE or FALSE: Only grownups need to worry about obesity. _____
5. TRUE or FALSE: Americans ate less before food companies started super-sizing portions in the 1980s. _____
6. TRUE or FALSE: Restaurants are using bigger plates and cups than they used to. _____
7. TRUE or FALSE: A meal of a burger, fries and a drink can contain 1,100 more calories today than it did 50 years ago. _____
8. TRUE or FALSE: It takes about five minutes for the brain to tell the stomach that it is full. _____
9. TRUE or FALSE: The size of a person's palm is the correct portion of cheese or peanut butter. _____
10. TRUE or FALSE: One way to control portions is to divide your plate into one third meat, one third fruit and one third dessert. _____

Answers to this test appear on the next page.

Name: _____

Answer Key

1. TRUE or FALSE: Approximately one-third of American adults are overweight. *A recent Centers for Disease Control and Prevention study reported that 64 percent of American adults are overweight.* FALSE

2. TRUE or FALSE: Obesity is now the second leading preventable cause of death in the U.S. TRUE

3. TRUE or FALSE: Obese people have a higher risk for cancer and many other serious illnesses. TRUE

4. TRUE or FALSE: Only grownups need to worry about obesity. *There are nearly three times as many overweight teens as there were twenty years ago.* FALSE

5. TRUE or FALSE: Americans ate less before food companies started super-sizing portions in the 1980s. TRUE

6. TRUE or FALSE: Restaurants are using bigger plates and cups than they used to. TRUE

7. TRUE or FALSE: A meal of a burger, fries and a drink can contain 1,100 more calories today than it did 50 years ago. TRUE

8. TRUE or FALSE: It takes about five minutes for the brain to tell the stomach that it is full. *It takes about 20 minutes for the brain to tell the stomach that it's full, so if people eat too quickly, they may eat too much and end up feeling stuffed.* FALSE

9. TRUE or FALSE: The size of a person's palm is the correct portion of cheese or peanut butter. *The thumb is about the size of a portion of cheese or peanut butter.* FALSE

10. TRUE or FALSE: One way to control portions is to divide your plate into one third meat, one third fruit and one third dessert. *One way to control food portions is the "plate fractions" method, in which you divide your plate into three equal sections: one-third for colorful vegetables, one-third for grains and one-third for protein.* FALSE

Name: _____

Are you eating healthfully? Are you getting the nutrients you need and avoiding foods that are high in calories and fat? What do your portions look like? If you want to improve your eating habits, it's a good idea to examine your current diet so you can pinpoint the specific areas that need improvement. Later, after you get into the habit of healthy eating, you'll be able to tell how far you've come.

Step 1:

Fill out the food diary for two days. Write down everything you eat at meals and snacks, and note the size of your portion. You don't have to carry measuring cups around with you—just estimate using some of the shortcuts you learned in the video (as well as the ones that appear below). When you're done, answer the questions in Step 3 on a separate piece of paper.

Be honest when you fill out the diary. It may be tempting to omit unhealthy foods to make your diet look better, but you will get the most out of this activity if you include everything you eat. You should also try your best to eat normally. If you eat only vegetables and whole grains for two days, your diary will look healthy, but you won't be able to analyze your real diet to see where you can improve.

Step 2:

After participating in all the activities, fill out the food diary for one more day. Choose a day that is at least a week after the first day of your last diary. Then answer the questions in Step 4 on a separate sheet of paper.

Shortcuts for Estimating Portion Size

a fist	=	1 cup
a half-fist	=	½ cup
palm of hand (no fingers)	=	portion size of meat or fish (3 ounces)
thumb	=	portion size for cheese, peanut butter (2 tablespoons)
tip of thumb	=	portion size for margarine, butter

This activity is continued on the next page.

Name: _____

	DAY 1	DAY 2
Breakfast Sample: 1 cup cereal <i>½ cup skim milk</i>		
Lunch Sample: ham sandwich <i>1 apple</i> <i>4 Oreos</i> <i>6 oz. chips</i> <i>2 cups apple juice</i>		
Dinner Sample: 2 cups spaghetti <i>2 meatballs</i> <i>1 piece garlic bread</i> <i>20 oz. diet Coke</i>		
Snacks Sample: 1 cup trail mix <i>¾ cup ice cream</i>		

Step 3:

1. How balanced is your diet? Are you eating a variety of foods? From which food group did you eat the most? The least?
2. Compare your portions to the recommended serving sizes from the *USDA Serving Guidelines* fact sheet. How similar are they?
3. How can you improve your diet? What are your personal eating goals?

This activity is continued on the next page.

Name: _____

	DAY 3
<p>Breakfast</p> <p>Sample: 1 cup cereal <i>½ cup skim milk</i></p>	
<p>Lunch</p> <p>Sample: ham sandwich <i>1 apple</i> <i>4 Oreos</i> <i>6 oz. chips</i> <i>2 cups apple juice</i></p>	
<p>Dinner</p> <p>Sample: 2 cups spaghetti <i>2 meatballs</i> <i>1 piece garlic bread</i> <i>20 oz. diet Coke</i></p>	
<p>Snacks</p> <p>Sample: 1 cup trail mix <i>¾ cup ice cream</i></p>	

Step 4:

1. Compare your diaries. How has your diet changed?
2. Are your portions smaller larger, or the same size as they were a week ago?
3. Are you progressing toward your eating goals? Do you have any new goals? Explain.

Name: _____

THE COLOSSAL PORTIONS CASE

Eating healthfully can be challenging, especially when you're not making your meals yourself. It seems that large portions of unhealthy foods are everywhere: at the drive-through, in your favorite restaurant, and probably also in your school cafeteria. How healthy is your cafeteria? For this activity, be a diet detective and get on the case.

Step 1: Find your sleuthing team

Divide your class into five equal groups. Each team will be responsible for analyzing the cafeteria lunch on one school day for a week.

Step 2: Follow the clues

On your assigned day, go to lunch with your team and bring a set of measuring cups and spoons. Buy at least one school lunch and see how much of each item is included on the plate. Compare the portions with the recommended servings from the *USDA Serving Guidelines* fact sheet.

Food Items	Portion Size	Serving Size

Step 3: Interrogate the suspects

Find out who is in charge of planning the cafeteria menu and invite him or her to your class. As a class, prepare a list of questions to ask about the food choices, portions, and healthy eating. Take notes on the answers you receive. Sample questions: *How do you decide what goes on the menu? How does the cost of food ingredients affect your choices? Are there guidelines that you are required to follow? If so, who developed the guidelines?*

Step 4: Prepare a report

With your sleuthing team, write up a brief report on your findings and present it to the class. Gather all five reports and add the findings from your class interrogation. How is your cafeteria doing when it comes to nutrition and portion sizes? Can you think of any suggestions to improve the school menu? You may want to submit your class report and your suggestions to the cafeteria.

Name: _____

Sometimes it's hard to understand just how certain foods affect your body. For example, a snack may have 400 calories, but what does that really mean? Put things in perspective by calculating how many minutes you would have to walk or run in order to burn off the calories in the following foods. Use the *Exercise & Burning Calories* fact sheet. Rates are shown for a person weighing 100, 150, or 200 pounds. Use the weight closest to your own. (Hint: first, figure out how many calories each activity burns per minute). Answer in hours and/or minutes as appropriate, and round to the nearest minute.

1. 21-ounce Coke (275 calories)

How long would you have to WALK to burn it off? _____

How long would you have to RUN? _____

2. McDonald's quarter-pounder with cheese (540 calories)

How long would you have to WALK to burn it off? _____

How long would you have to RUN? _____

3. Medium-size apple (80 calories)

How long would you have to WALK to burn it off? _____

How long would you have to RUN? _____

4. Large slice of cheesecake (430 calories)

How long would you have to WALK to burn it off? _____

How long would you have to RUN? _____

5. Large tomato (40 calories)

How long would you have to WALK to burn it off? _____

How long would you have to RUN? _____

6. Taco Bell taco salad (790 calories)

How long would you have to WALK to burn it off? _____

How long would you have to RUN? _____

When you have finished, please consult the Answer Key on the next page.

Name: _____

Answer Key

1. 21-ounce Coke (275 calories)
 - 100-lb: walk 1 hr 19 min, run 19 min
 - 150-lb: walk 52 min, run 13 min
 - 200-lb: walk 40 min, run 10 min

2. McDonald's quarter pounder with cheese (540 calories)
 - 100-lb: walk 2 hrs 34 min, run 38 min
 - 150-lb: walk 1 hr 41 min, run 25 min
 - 200-lb: walk 1 hr 18 min, run 19 min

3. Medium-size apple (80 calories)
 - 100-lb: walk 23 min, run 6 min
 - 150-lb: walk 15 min, run 4 min
 - 200-lb: walk 12 min, run 3 min

4. Large slice of cheesecake (430 calories)
 - 100-lb: walk 2 hrs 3 min, run 30 min
 - 150-lb: walk 1 hr 21 min, run 20 min
 - 200-lb: walk 1 hr 2 min, run 16 min

5. Large tomato (40 calories)
 - 100-lb: walk 11 min, run 3 min
 - 150-lb: walk 8 min, run 2 min
 - 200-lb: walk 6 min, run 1 min

6. Taco Bell taco salad (790 calories)
 - 100-lb: walk 3 hrs 46 min, run 56 min
 - 150-lb: walk 2 hrs 28 min, run 37 min
 - 200-lb: walk 1 hr 54 min, run 28 min

Name: _____

Have you ever wondered what other cultures think of our American eating habits? How healthy are the latest diets? Find out the answer to these and other health and nutrition-related questions by choosing one of the research topics below. You can find information at your school and local library as well as on the Internet. Write a one-to-two page paper on your findings. Use a *Resource Tracker* (Activity 5b) to collect your information.

Obesity and Your Health

A recent study by the Centers for Disease Control found that obesity is the second leading cause of preventable death, right behind tobacco. Obesity is related to many serious health issues, including diabetes, heart disease, cancer and high blood pressure. Choose one of these health problems and investigate how obesity affects the likelihood of developing it. Describe the ailment. Who is at a high risk? How can it be prevented?

Cultural Comparison

Americans have eating habits that are very different than those of other cultures. People who live in other parts of the world may eat entirely different foods, have larger or smaller portions, and structure their meal times in ways that would seem foreign to us. Choose a country or a culture that interests you and research how that country's people approach food. When do they eat? How often? What size are their portions? Are the people in the culture generally healthy, or are many obese?

Changing Guidelines

The United States Department of Agriculture periodically revises its nutrition guidelines for the public. Research this process: how often does it occur? When was the last revision? What changes have been made to the guidelines over the years? Why does the government decide to make these changes?

Popular Diets

Fad diets come and go. Some of these diets are based on sound knowledge of nutrition, but others may not be as healthy as people think. Research the effectiveness of the Atkins diet, the Zone diet, the South Beach diet, or any other popular diet that you have heard of. How does the diet work? What do nutritionists say about it? Does it help people lose weight? Is the weight loss permanent or temporary? Are there any risks involved?

Body Mass Index

The body mass index (BMI) is a tool nutritionists and doctors use to determine if a person is at a healthy weight. Its standards are different for adults and for people under 20 years old. Investigate this topic: How is it determined? Why are there different formulas for people under 20? Why is the BMI a useful concept?

Name: _____

Nutritional labels on food products hold the answers to many questions about how healthy the food is, but have you ever looked at a label closely? Sometimes a food may seem to be low in calories, fat, and sugar, but a closer inspection of the label reveals a smaller serving size than most people realize. People often think they are eating healthfully when they are actually consuming two or three times the recommended serving—and therefore, two or three times the calories.

Get a better idea of how a serving and a portion are different by comparing them visually. For this activity, you will need a partner. Between the two of you, bring in a box of cereal, a box (or bag) of cookies, a jar of peanut butter, a container of raisins, and a bottle of juice or soda. You will also need several paper plates, a cup or glass, and a set of measuring cups and spoons.

Step 1:

Without looking at the labels, put what you consider to be your normal portion size of cereal onto the plate. This should reflect how much cereal you would actually eat in one sitting on a typical day. Using the measuring cups, determine how much cereal you've poured out. Record the amount in the first column of the table.

Step 2:

Now, look at the serving size on the cereal box label. Measure out this amount using the measuring cups and place it on another plate. Record the serving size in the second column of the table. Compare the two amounts—by how much do your portion size and your serving size differ? Write this number in the third column.

Step 3:

Repeat Steps 1 and 2 above with each food product you brought. When you are done, answer the questions below on a separate sheet of paper.

Questions:

1. How close were your portion sizes to the recommended serving sizes on the nutrition labels? Were your portions usually larger or smaller than the servings?
2. Were you surprised by your findings? Why or why not?
3. Do you think you will pay more attention to serving sizes in the future? Why or why not?

Name: _____

	My Portion	Serving Size	Difference (+ or -)
Cereal			
Cookies			
Peanut butter			
Raisins			
Juice/Soda			
Other:			
Other:			
Other:			
Other:			

Name: _____

Fast-food restaurants have a financial interest in getting you to buy the maximum amount of food possible. After all, the more you buy, the higher their profits—no matter what that means for your health. Advertisers use a variety of methods to get you to load up your tray. Can you uncover some of their tricks? Do ads for fast-food restaurants encourage people to overeat? What tactics do they use to persuade you to buy more food? How effective are these ads?

Investigate these questions by taking a closer look at an ad for a fast-food restaurant. You can use a print ad from a newspaper or magazine, or a TV commercial. If you choose a TV commercial, you may want to record it so you can watch it several times.

Write a short analysis of your ad on a separate sheet of paper. Consider these questions as you write:

- What is the name of the restaurant being advertised?
- Does the ad feature any particular product, such as a new menu item or a certain portion size?
- Does this ad encourage people to overeat? If so, how? If not, do you think it encourages healthy eating?
- Does the ad try to persuade people that larger sizes are a better value?
- How effective is this ad in making you want to buy the product or visit the restaurant? Why do you think so?
- Does the ad give you enough information to make an informed choice about nutritional value? What would you add, delete, or change to give consumers this information?

Name: _____

Did you know that fast food portions weren't always as big as they are today? When most food products first hit the market, they came in much more reasonable portion sizes. However, since the 1980s, portion sizes have been steadily increasing—along with obesity.

Help spread the word about the evolution of portion sizes and what it means for your health. Use what you have learned from the video and some or all of the facts listed below. Think of an original way to educate others about unhealthy portions. Working alone or with a small group, choose one of the following ways to get your message out:

write a song

make a poster

perform a skit

videotape a TV commercial

Be creative and have fun! When you've finished your Portion Evolution activity, share your creation with others around your school! Hang your poster in the cafeteria or perform your skit in another health class. Make sure that your classmates understand what you know about portion sizes and healthy eating!

PORTION FACTS

- Portion sizes first began growing in the 1970s and rose sharply in the 1980s.
- Today's burgers, fries, and sodas are two to five times larger than they were when they first became available.
- 7-Eleven's "Double Gulp" is ten times larger than a portion of Coke when it was first sold.
- When Hershey chocolate bars first came on the market in 1908, they were 0.6 oz. In 2002, they were sold in 1.6 oz., 2.6 oz., 4 oz., 7 oz., and 8 oz. sizes.
- When Nestle Crunch bars first came on the market in 1938, they were 1.6 oz. In 2002, they were sold in 1.6 oz., 2.8 oz., and 5 oz. sizes.
- When Burger King sold fries in 1954, a regular size was 2.6 oz. In 2002, a small size was 2.6 oz., a medium size was 4.1 oz., a large was 5.7 oz., and a king size was 6.9 oz.

This activity is continued on the next page.

Name: _____

- When McDonald's sold fries in 1955, a regular size was 2.4 oz. In 2002, a small size was 2.4 oz., a medium size was 5.3 oz., a large size was 6.3 oz., and a super size was 7.1 oz.
- When Burger King sold soda in 1954, a regular size was 12 oz. and a large size was 16 oz. In 2002, a kiddie size was 12 oz., a small size was 16 oz., a medium size was 22 oz., a large size was 32 oz., and a king size was 42 oz.
- When McDonald's sold soda in 1955, a regular size was 7 oz. In 2002, a child size was 12 oz., a small size was 16 oz., a medium size was 21 oz., a large size was 32 oz., and a super size was 42 oz.
- In 1973, 7-Eleven sold soda in 12 oz. and 20 oz. sizes. In 2002, a "Gulp" was 16 oz., a "Big Gulp" was 32 oz., a "Super Big Gulp" was 44 oz., and a "Double Gulp" was 64 oz.
- In 1916, Coke was sold in a 6.5 oz. size. In 2002, it was available in 8 oz., 12 oz., 20 oz., and 34 oz. sizes.

Sources: Young, Lisa R. and Marion Nestle. "The Contribution of Expanding Portion Sizes to the US Obesity Epidemic," The American Journal of Public Health. February 2002, Vol. 92, no. 2.

"Are Growing Portion Sizes Leading to Expanding Waistlines? Study in Journal of the American Dietetic Association Sizes up Trends," The American Dietetic Association. www.eatright.org/Public/Media/PublicMedia_10372.cfm.

Name: _____

“Eating right” isn’t an idea that only applies to meal times. Even if you eat three balanced, healthy meals a day, you still aren’t following a healthy diet if you also have large portions of salty, sugary, high-calorie snacks. It’s okay to have snacks between meals, and it’s okay to eat sweets once in a while—but you should be careful not to fill up on empty calories that can sabotage your health.

The good news is that snacks can be another way to get the nutrients you need. Instead of thinking of snacks as indulgences, view them as an opportunity to add vegetables, fruits, proteins, and whole grains to your diet. It also helps to think about snacks as small amounts of food to tide you over until your next meal—NOT huge portions.

Remember, it’s always better to take a small portion at first and go back for more if you are still hungry. You’re more likely to overeat if you start out with a large portion, even if you don’t really want all the food.

Think up some ways to snack smarter. First, write down some alternatives for the snacks below. Then, list at least five other snack foods that you like to eat and think of healthier alternatives that you can substitute when you get hungry.

INSTEAD OF...

TRY THIS...

2 cups of ice cream

1 frozen fruit bar

1 cup corn chips

12 oz. peanut M&Ms

1 slice carrot cake

Name: _____

It can be hard to start eating right when you're accustomed to having large portions. Even though you may be trying to be healthy, you may not realize that certain bad eating habits at home can really add up. Do you have any of the following bad habits? Read over the list and put a check mark (✓) next to any bad eating habits that you recognize as your personal bad habits. Then, think up ways to avoid these diet pitfalls. Your tips can be anything, just as long as they help you remember to keep your portion sizes down. Be creative!

- BAD HABIT 1: Eating straight out of the package, box or bag.**

How to break this bad habit:

- BAD HABIT 2: Snacking throughout the day.**

How to break this bad habit:

- BAD HABIT 3: Taking huge helpings at the dinner table.**

How to break this bad habit:

- BAD HABIT 4: Always nibbling while you're doing homework or watching television.**

How to break this bad habit:

- BAD HABIT 5: Eating too fast.**

How to break this bad habit:

Now, compare your ideas to the *Tips for Eating Smart at Home* fact sheet. Did you think of anything that isn't on the fact sheet?

Name: _____

Even if you know how to control your portions at home, you might still be tempted to overeat when you're at a restaurant. Many restaurants serve gigantic portions that could easily feed two or even three adults. Plus, when you add in an appetizer or dessert, you end up with way too much food. People tend to eat more when there is a lot of food in front of them, even if they are not really hungry, so restaurant portions can be a real challenge for a healthy eater.

Imagine you are going out to dinner with some friends who don't have the best eating habits. Think of ways that you can get around the common restaurant portion problems that your friends suggest. What will you say and do to make sure you have a healthy meal?

THEY SAY: "Let's go to that new all-you-can-eat buffet!"

YOU SAY:

THEY SAY: "The largest size is the best value for your money."

YOU SAY:

THEY SAY: "Get another glass of soda! The refills are free."

YOU SAY:

THEY SAY: "It all looks so good! Let's order an appetizer, a side dish, an entrée, *and* dessert."

YOU SAY:

THEY SAY: "I can't believe I ate the entire meal!"

YOU SAY:

Now, compare your ideas to those on the *Tips for Eating Smart at Restaurants* fact sheet. Did you think of anything that isn't on the list of tips?

Name: _____

DESIGN A BALANCED MENU

Does a healthy diet seem boring to you? When you think of eating right, do you have nightmares about lima beans and tofu? Luckily, a balanced diet doesn't mean that you have to force yourself to eat foods you don't like. With so many choices, there are bound to be a lot of different healthy foods that you'll actually enjoy. See for yourself. For this activity, it's your chance to design a healthy menu.

On a separate sheet of paper, write out a meal plan for two days' worth of food. You can include snacks. Make sure you note the portion sizes for each item you eat. You can design your menu any way you like—just make sure you include a variety of healthy foods from each of the food groups. Most importantly, make sure you like all the foods!

When you are deciding what to put on your menu, consider the *USDA Serving Guidelines* fact sheet. Each day, try to eat 8-11 servings of grains, 3-4 servings of fruit, 4-6 servings of vegetables, 5-7 ounces of meats and proteins, and 2-3 servings of dairy products. Keep your fats, oils, and sweets to a minimum.

Sample Menu	
Day One	Day Two
<p><u>Breakfast</u> 1 cup low-fat yogurt ½ cup low-fat granola 1 cup skim milk ½ cup sliced pineapple</p>	<p><u>Breakfast</u> 3 scrambled eggs 1½ oz. cheese 1 cup milk 2 oz. turkey sausage</p>
<p><u>Lunch</u> 2 slices vegetable pizza 1½ cups apple juice 1 cup crackers</p>	<p><u>Lunch</u> 1 veggie burger 2 pieces whole wheat bread 1½ cups orange juice ½ cup baked chips ½ cup green beans</p>
<p><u>Snack</u> 1 cup baby carrots 1 Tbsp low-fat dressing 1 kiwi</p>	<p><u>Snack</u> 1 cup pretzels ½ cup salsa 1 cup grapes</p>
<p><u>Dinner</u> 4 oz. grilled chicken 2 cups spinach salad 1 Tbsp low-fat dressing ½ cup rice 1 cup diet soda</p>	<p><u>Dinner</u> 1 cup spaghetti ½ cup tomato sauce 1½ cups fruit juice</p>
<p><u>Snack</u> 3 chocolate-chip cookies</p>	<p><u>Snack</u> 1 cup hot chocolate</p>

Name: _____

Using what you've learned in the video *Portion Control: Seeing the Healthy Way to Eat*, answer the questions below. Use additional paper if necessary.

1. Did you think that your typical portion sizes were too large before you watched the video? Have you changed your opinion now that you have seen the video? Explain.

2. Do you plan to change your eating habits as a result of what you have learned? If so, how will you do it? If not, why not?

3. What do you think is the main cause of childhood obesity?

4. Why do you think so many people are obese in our culture? What do you think is preventing them from living a healthy lifestyle?

5. Do you think fast-food restaurants deserve some of the blame for obesity in this country? Why or why not?

6. What is the difference between controlling your portion sizes and developing an eating disorder like anorexia or bulimia?

7. What do you think is the best way to prevent children from becoming obese?

Name: _____

GRADE THE VENDING MACHINE

In a perfect world, we'd have time to prepare nutritious meals for ourselves three times a day. However, between classes, volleyball practice and play rehearsal, sometimes we find ourselves relying on vending machines to get us through the day. Is it possible to have a healthy snack from a vending machine?

Unfortunately, vending machines often sell snacks and drinks that are high in sugar, fat and calories. For example, regular soda contains a lot of sugar and hundreds of calories that you may not even notice you are consuming. If you get in the habit of having a soda every day for lunch, those calories really add up. The same goes for most of the cookies and candy bars sold from vending machines.

Step 1:

Choose two of the vending machines at your school—one that sells drinks and one that sells snacks—and analyze their contents by filling out these sheets. If your school does not have vending machines, choose two machines that are located in a place where many young people gather, such as a local community center. Give each vending machine a grade (A through F) according to the number of healthy options offered.

BEVERAGE VENDING MACHINE	
Location of vending machine:	
Items sold (list each):	
Drink sizes sold (in ounces):	
Number of diet sodas sold:	
Does the machine sell fruit-flavored drinks? (list each)	
Does the machine sell natural fruit juice? (list each)	
Does the machine sell water?	
What is the healthiest option sold?	
OVERALL GRADE (A – F)	

Name: _____

You probably know that the expression “couch potato” refers to a person who spends most of his or her time watching TV on the couch, rather than doing something more physically strenuous. Take this quiz to see how much you know about our nation’s couch potato tendencies. Fill in the blanks with what you think is the probable answer. Then check the *Did You Know?* fact sheet to learn the correct answers. You might be surprised!

1. _____ (percentage) of American adults are overweight.
2. One in ____ young people ages 6-19 are overweight.
3. 20 years ago, five percent of American children were overweight. Today, that number has grown to ____ percent.
4. In 1969, 80 percent of children played sports every day. Today, only ____ percent play sports every day.
5. By the time a child reaches age 17, he will have spent ____ percent more time watching TV than being in school.
6. For every additional daily serving of soda a child drinks, her risk of becoming obese rises by ____ percent.
7. The average teenager gets ____ to ____ percent of his daily calories from soda.
8. On days when children eat fast food, they consume an average of ____ more calories than days when they don’t.
9. The average American child eats fast food ____ time(s) every three days.
10. Children are exposed to 40,000 TV commercials each year. Up to ____ percent of them are for food products, the majority of which are unhealthy.
11. For every hour of watching TV a child averages a day, her risk of becoming obese rises by ____ percent.
12. ____ percent of all the vegetables eaten in the United States are French fries.

Name: _____

According to the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute, “Body mass index (BMI) is measure of body fat based on height and weight that applies to both adult men and women.” Your body mass index is a reliable indicator of total body fat, which is related to the risk of disease and death. The score is valid for both men and women but it does have some limits. The limits are:

- It may **overestimate** body fat in athletes and others who have a muscular build.
- It may **underestimate** body fat in older persons and others who have lost muscle mass.

INSTRUCTIONS:

Use the BMI tables on the next two pages to estimate your total body fat. To use the table, find your height in the left-hand column labeled “Height.” Move across until you find your weight (in pounds). The number at the top of the column is the Body Mass Index (BMI) for that height and weight. Note: pounds have been rounded off.

Your BMI score means the following:

- | | | |
|---------------|---|-------------------------|
| Underweight | = | BMI of 18.5 or less |
| Normal weight | = | BMI between 18.5 - 24.9 |
| Overweight | = | BMI between 25 - 29.9 |
| Obesity | = | BMI of 30 or greater |

This activity is continued on the next page.

BMI	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35
Height (inches)	Body Weight (pounds)																
58	91	96	100	105	110	115	119	124	129	134	138	143	148	153	158	162	167
59	94	99	104	109	114	119	124	128	133	138	143	148	153	158	163	168	173
60	97	102	107	112	118	123	128	133	138	143	148	153	158	163	168	174	179
61	100	106	111	116	122	127	132	137	143	148	153	158	164	169	174	180	185
62	104	109	115	120	126	131	136	142	147	153	158	164	169	175	180	186	191
63	107	113	118	124	130	135	141	146	152	158	163	169	175	180	186	191	197
64	110	116	122	128	134	140	145	151	157	163	169	174	180	186	192	197	204
65	114	120	126	132	138	144	150	156	162	168	174	180	186	192	198	204	210
66	118	124	130	136	142	148	155	161	167	173	179	186	192	198	204	210	216
67	121	127	134	140	146	153	159	166	172	178	185	191	198	204	211	217	223
68	125	131	138	144	151	158	164	171	177	184	190	197	203	210	216	223	230
69	128	135	142	149	155	162	169	176	182	189	196	203	209	216	223	230	236
70	132	139	146	153	160	167	174	181	188	195	202	209	216	222	229	236	243
71	136	143	150	157	165	172	179	186	193	200	208	215	222	229	236	243	250
72	140	147	154	162	169	177	184	191	199	206	213	221	228	235	242	250	258
73	144	151	159	166	174	182	189	197	204	212	219	227	235	242	250	257	265
74	148	155	163	171	179	186	194	202	210	218	225	233	241	249	256	264	272
75	152	160	168	176	184	192	200	208	216	224	232	240	248	256	264	272	279
76	156	164	172	180	189	197	205	213	221	230	238	246	254	263	271	279	287

Source: Adapted from *Clinical Guidelines on the Identification, Evaluation, and Treatment of Overweight and Obesity in Adults: The Evidence Report*.

www.nhlbi.nih.gov/guidelines/obesity/bmi_tbl.htm

BMI	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54
Height (inches)	Body Weight (pounds)																		
58	172	177	181	186	191	196	201	205	210	215	220	224	229	234	239	244	248	253	258
59	178	183	188	193	198	203	208	212	217	222	227	232	237	242	247	252	257	262	267
60	184	189	194	199	204	209	215	220	225	230	235	240	245	250	255	261	266	271	276
61	190	195	201	206	211	217	222	227	232	238	243	248	254	259	264	269	275	280	285
62	196	202	207	213	218	224	229	235	240	246	251	256	262	267	273	278	284	289	295
63	203	208	214	220	225	231	237	242	248	254	259	265	270	278	282	287	293	299	304
64	209	215	221	227	232	238	244	250	256	262	267	273	279	285	291	296	302	308	314
65	216	222	228	234	240	246	252	258	264	270	276	282	288	294	300	306	312	318	324
66	223	229	235	241	247	253	260	266	272	278	284	291	297	303	309	315	322	328	334
67	230	236	242	249	255	261	268	274	280	287	293	299	306	312	319	325	331	338	344
68	236	243	249	256	262	269	276	282	289	295	302	308	315	322	328	335	341	348	354
69	243	250	257	263	270	277	284	291	297	304	311	318	324	331	338	345	351	358	365
70	250	257	264	271	278	285	292	299	306	313	320	327	334	341	348	355	362	369	376
71	257	265	272	279	286	293	301	308	315	322	329	338	343	351	358	365	372	379	386
72	265	272	279	287	294	302	309	316	324	331	338	346	353	361	368	375	383	390	397
73	272	280	288	295	302	310	318	325	333	340	348	355	363	371	378	386	393	401	408
74	280	287	295	303	311	319	326	334	342	350	358	365	373	381	389	396	404	412	420
75	287	295	303	311	319	327	335	343	351	359	367	375	383	391	399	407	415	423	431
76	295	304	312	320	328	336	344	353	361	369	377	385	394	402	410	418	426	435	443

Source: Adapted from *Clinical Guidelines on the Identification, Evaluation, and Treatment of Overweight and Obesity in Adults: The Evidence Report*.

www.nhlbi.nih.gov/guidelines/obesity/bmi_tbl.htm

Name: _____

Imagine you are the new head chef of the Plate Geometry Café, where all the meals are served in healthy portions—and proportions. Design your own personalized menu for the café by combining items from the kitchen to make unique meals.

Step 1:

Plan out six new meals for the menu by choosing one item from each section on the next page. You can add your own sauces, dressings and condiments. What combinations would make the tastiest and most interesting meals? After you have chosen the ingredients for your meals, give each one a creative name.

Sample: THE SURFIN' SALAD

Salmon
Wheat roll with margarine
Seaweed greens
Fat-free raspberry vinaigrette dressing

Step 2:

Design your menu. Using separate sheets of paper, write or type out a short description of your meal. Add an illustration for each one by cutting out pictures from magazines or drawing your own. Use the *Sample Plate* fact sheet as a template for making your portions as healthy as possible.

Sample: THE SURFIN' SALAD

Hang ten with this slammin' salad! Grilled Pacific salmon served on a bed of seaweed greens with our tangy fat-free raspberry vinaigrette dressing on the side. Comes with a wheat roll with margarine.

This activity is continued on the next page.

Name: _____

SECTION 1 Vegetables	SECTION 2 Grains	SECTION 3 Proteins
Creamed spinach	Wheat roll	Salmon filet
Candied carrots	Cornbread	Steak
Tomato salsa	Mashed potatoes	Hamburger
Seaweed salad	Oatmeal	Tofu
Radishes	Fettuccine	Black beans
Avocados	Melba toast	Grilled chicken
Cucumber slices	Creamed corn	Cottage cheese
Steamed peppers	Brown rice	Shrimp
Eggplant	Corn tortillas	Omelet
Bean sprouts	Wheat bun	Tuna fish
Squash	Bagel	Sushi rolls
Peas	Macaroni and cheese	Pork tamale
Green beans	Baked chips	Yogurt
Broccoli	Tortilla chips	Hot dog
Artichoke	Couscous	Turkey slices
Cauliflower	Dumplings	Ostrich steak
Portobello mushroom	Matzo balls	Chili con carne
Asparagus	Blueberry muffin	Hummus
Mixed green salad	Buckwheat pancakes	Lobster tails

FACT SHEETS

Name: _____

The United States Department of Agriculture's Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion publishes guidelines to help Americans control their diets. The following amounts reflect the USDA's recommended serving size for each food group, or the right size for a portion.

GRAINS

One serving equals:

- ½ cup of cooked rice, pasta or cooked cereal
- 1 slice bread
- A 1-ounce muffin
- 1 cup of ready-to-eat cereal flakes

FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

One serving equals:

- ½ cup of cut-up raw or cooked fruits or vegetables
- ¾ cup of fruit or vegetable juice
- 1 cup of leafy salad greens

MEAT AND BEANS

One serving equals:

- 2-3 ounces of meat, poultry or fish
- 1 egg
- ½ cup of cooked dry beans or tofu
- 2 tablespoons of peanut butter
- 1/3 cup of nuts
- ¼ cup of seeds

DAIRY

One serving equals:

- 1 cup of milk or yogurt
- 1½ ounces of natural cheese
- 2 ounces of processed cheese

Name: _____

1. **Two-thirds (66 percent)** of American adults are overweight.
2. **One in six** young people ages 6-19 are overweight.
3. 20 years ago, five percent of American children were overweight. Today, that number has grown to **15 percent**.
4. In 1969, 80 percent of children played sports everyday. Today, only **20 percent** do.
5. By the time a child reaches age 17, he will have spent **38 percent** more time watching TV than being in school.
6. For every additional daily serving of soda a child drinks, her risk of becoming obese rises by **60 percent**.
7. The average teenager gets **10-15 percent** of his daily calories from soda.
8. On days when children eat fast food, they consume an average of **187 more calories** than days when they don't.
9. The average American child eats fast food **once every three days**.
10. Children are exposed to 40,000 TV commercials each year. Up to **70 percent** of them are for food products, the majority of which are unhealthy.
11. For every hour of watching TV a child averages a day, her risk of becoming obese rises by **six percent**.
12. **25 percent** of the all vegetables eaten in the United States are French fries.

Source: *Time magazine*, June 7, 2004

Name: _____

FAST FOOD NUTRITION INFORMATION

Fast food restaurants are notorious for their high-fat, high-calorie items. While many restaurants have recently added lighter options like salads to their menus, they still carry some very unhealthy choices. This table lists nutrition information for some popular items at these restaurants. Use it to help you make healthy decisions when you're eating on the go.

	Serving size	Calories	Fat (g)	Saturated fat (g)
McDonald's				
Hamburger	3.7 oz	280	10	4
Cheeseburger	4.2 oz	330	14	6
Big Mac	7.8 oz	600	33	11
Medium fries	4 oz	350	17	3
M&M McFlurry	12.3 oz	630	23	15
Burger King				
Hamburger	121 g	310	13	5
Cheeseburger	133 g	350	17	8
Whopper	291 g	700	42	13
8 Chicken tenders	123 g	340	19	5
Medium Onion rings	91 g	320	16	4
Wendy's				
Classic single hamburger	124 g	300	22	10
Jr. cheeseburger	131 g	320	12	6
Jr. Bacon cheeseburger	165 g	380	19	7
Big Bacon Classic	282 g	580	29	12
Bacon & Cheese potato	380 g	560	25	7
Starbucks				
Caramel Apple Cider with whipped cream	16 oz	410	10	7
Latte with whole milk	16 oz	260	14	9
Mocha Frappuccino with whipped cream	16 oz	420	16	10

Name: _____

FAST FOOD NUTRITION INFORMATION

	Serving size	Calories	Fat (g)	Saturated fat (g)
Arby's				
Arby's Melt with Cheddar	5.2 oz	340	15	5
Grilled Chicken Deluxe	8.7 oz	410	16	3
Beef 'n Cheddar	6.9 oz	480	24	8
Italian Sub	11 oz	780	53	15
Cheddar curly fries	6 oz	460	24	6
Taco Bell				
Beef soft taco with cheese	99.2 g	210	10	4.5
Chicken soft taco with cheese	99.2 g	190	6	2.5
Steak Gordita Supreme	153.1 g	290	13	6
Chicken Chalupa Supreme	153.1 g	370	20	8
Beef Burrito Supreme	248.1 g	440	18	8
Nachos Bell Grande	308.4 g	780	43	13

To view the nutrition information for all items on each restaurant's menu, you can check each website:

McDonald's	www.McDonald's.com
Starbucks	www.starbucks.com
Burger King	www.burgerking.com
Arby's	www.arbys.com
Wendy's	www.wendys.com
Taco Bell	www.tacobell.com

Name: _____

EXERCISE & BURNING CALORIES

Any sort of exercise—from walking to hiking to dancing to ice skating—is bound to burn calories. However, the rate at which you burn calories depends on your weight (among other variables). Here is the approximate number of calories that a person would burn for every hour of activity.

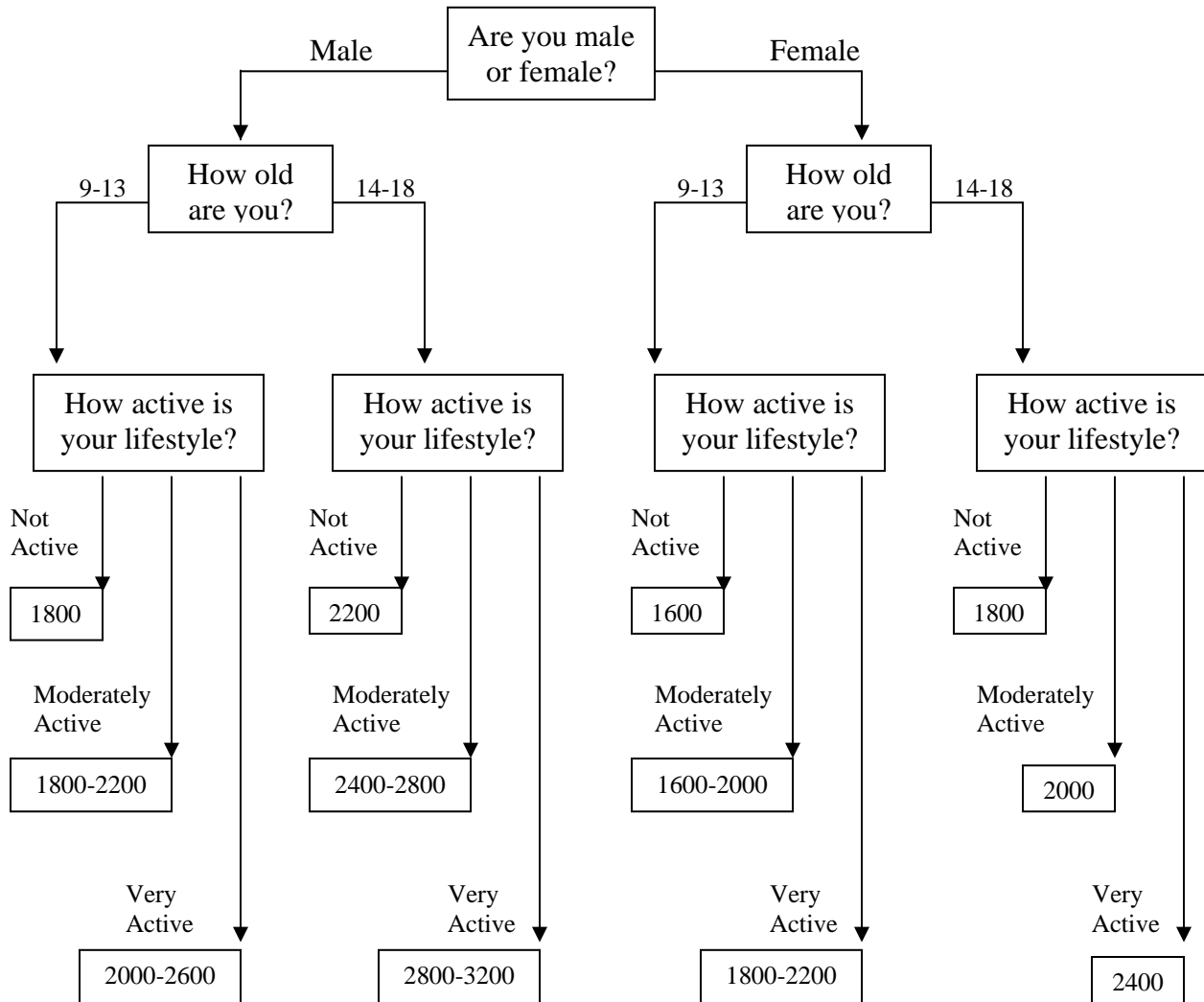
	100-lb. person	150-lb. person	200-lb. person
Walking 3 mph	210	320	416
Jogging 7 mph	610	920	1230
Running 10 mph	850	1280	1664
Swimming 25 yds/min	185	275	358
Biking 12 mph	270	410	534
Tennis	265	400	535
Jumping rope	500	750	1000

Source: The American Heart Association

Name: _____

RECOMMENDED DAILY CALORIE INTAKE

We all have different needs when it comes to calories. The average male needs more calories per day than the average female, and active people need more calories per day than inactive people. How many calories should you get each day? Use this chart to find out.



Source: The Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion

Break it down

Studies show that people eat 25 percent more food from a large container or package than they do from a smaller one. This effect is even worse for snacks like candy or chips—people eat 50 percent more of these treats when they are in a large bag! Instead of munching from an economy-size container, buy food in smaller packages, like individual-size bags of chips. You can also put smaller portions into plastic baggies or take a serving of food out of the container and on to a plate so that you can keep track of how much you're eating.

Out of sight, out of mind

You're more likely to snack throughout the day if food is readily available—so get rid of any bowls of candy or cookies you may have on the table and avoid bringing snacks around in your backpack at school. If you feel like you must have a snack, keep healthy treats like fruit and fresh vegetables where you can see them.

Small portions to start

What's true for snacks is true for meals: if it's in front of you, you're more likely to eat it, even if you're not really hungry. So if you start out with huge helpings at dinner, you'll probably eat more than you want or need. Instead, start with a small portion—you'll likely be just as satisfied. If not, you can always go back for another small portion.

Break the snacking habit

Sometimes we eat not because we're hungry, but because we've grown accustomed to nibbling on something while we study or watch TV. Limit yourself to one activity at a time: if you're doing your homework, make a rule that you can't eat unless you take a break. That way, you can enjoy a snack and then get back to your work without stuffing yourself because you lost track of your eating.

Be a smart social snacker

It can be easy to overeat when you're with friends. Whether you're at a party or just hanging out, you can end up eating too much pizza, popcorn or other not-so-healthy foods. Get back on track by giving yourself options: bring some vegetables and low-fat dip or pretzels to munch on when you know your friends will be eating. You can also overcome the temptation to fill up on junk food by keeping yourself occupied—play games, talk to someone away from the food, or sip water, juice or diet soda.

Lay off the low-fat

Just because a food is marked “low-fat” or “reduced-calorie” doesn't mean you should eat huge amounts of it. Sometimes these foods make up for their reduced fat or calorie counts by adding lots of sugar, which isn't good for you in large amounts. Check the serving sizes on all low-fat or low-calorie foods and choose sensible portions.

TIPS FOR EATING SMART AT RESTAURANTS**Avoid the buffet**

If you're at a restaurant with an all-you-can-eat buffet, order food from the menu instead. If you must order from the buffet, limit yourself. Decide ahead of time how many platefuls you will eat, take small portions, and look over all of your options before you start taking food.

Don't fall for the fast-food "bargain"

It may seem like a good value to buy the large or the extra-large fries or soda because it only costs a few cents more, but what about the value of your health? Always buy the small or medium size; you'll be cutting calories and fat and you will most likely be fully satisfied. Take a look at the Kids' Meal menu, too!

Order water

When a restaurant offers free refills, you may end up drinking a lot of soda. Order water instead and you won't have to worry about drinking too much sugar or too many calories. If you do order soda, choose the sugar-free variety.

Don't go overboard

It's tempting to try several different items from the menu, but think of all the food you eat when you order an appetizer, side dishes, and a dessert to go with your meal. Limit yourself to one extra item per visit, or split an appetizer or a dessert among several people. Also, take a look at the Appetizer section and the Children's Menu choices—the amount of food might be just right for you!

Cut portions in half

Restaurants often give giant portions, and people tend to overeat when they dine out because so much food is put in front of them. Split an entrée with a friend or take half of your food home—you'll be saving money too!

Don't be afraid to ask

Restaurant waiters are usually glad to help you eat healthfully. Ask your server which low-fat or low-calorie items he or she recommends. Ask if you can order a healthier version of a dish (by taking off cheese or bacon or by substituting steamed vegetables for fries). Ask if you can have your salad dressing on the side.

Slow down

It takes several minutes for your stomach to signal to your brain that you are full. Eat slowly and pay attention to your body's hunger cues.

Being overweight or obese, even when you are young, can increase your risk for serious health problems later in life. The good news is that losing just 10-20 pounds can make a big difference for your health. Read on about several diseases that are linked to obesity.

Type II Diabetes

Someone who suffers from Type II diabetes has elevated blood sugar levels, which affect the way that the body deals with insulin. Diabetics either do not produce the insulin they need on their own, or their bodies do not effectively use what insulin they do produce. 50 percent of men and 70 percent of women who have Type II diabetes are obese. Doctors do not know exactly why obesity is linked to the disease, but some speculate that the cells of overweight or obese people are less effective at using sugar, which stresses insulin-producing cells.

Heart Disease

Heart disease refers to the improper functioning of the heart and the circulatory system. It can result in chest pain, heart attacks, or cardiac death. Being obese creates a strain on the heart that makes heart disease more likely—in addition, overweight and obese people are more likely to have higher levels of triglycerides (“blood fats”) and harmful LDL cholesterol in their blood, which are risk factors for heart disease.

High Blood Pressure

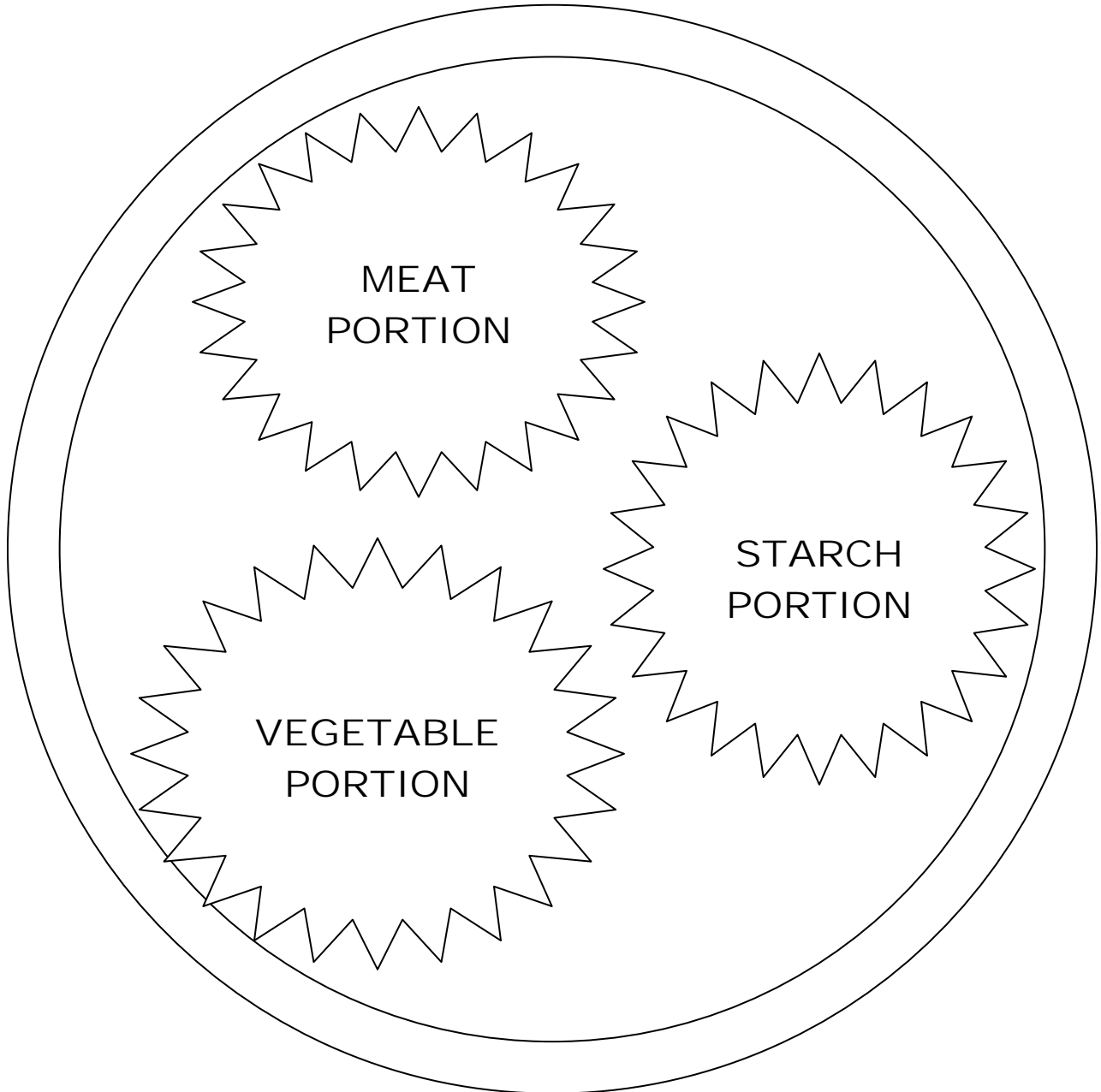
Each time the heart beats, it pumps blood through the arteries, creating pressure as the arteries resist the flow. A healthy person has muscular, elastic arteries that stretch easily to allow the blood to flow, but an overweight or obese person has less flexible arteries that cause blood pressure to rise. Blood pressure is usually expressed using two numbers: the first number, *systolic pressure*, refers to the pressure in the blood vessels during a heart-beat. The second number, *diastolic pressure*, is the pressure when the heart is resting between beats. A normal adult blood pressure is 120/80. High blood pressure can lead to heart failure, a heart attack, stroke or kidney failure.

Cancer

Cancer occurs when cells begin to divide and grow out of control, spreading through the body and interfering with other cells. Being overweight or obese is linked to an elevated risk of cancer of the colon, esophagus, kidney, and uterus. This is partially because the factors that contribute to obesity, such as an unhealthy, high-fat diet and lack of physical exercise, are also risk factors for certain types of cancer. Doctors also hypothesize that being overweight is linked to cancer because fat cells produce a hormone called *estradiol* that promotes rapid cell division—the more divisions, the higher the chances that a genetic error will lead to uncontrolled cell growth.

Name: _____

Take a look at this sample plate to get an idea of how large your portions should appear at meals. It may look like less than what you are accustomed to eating, but try it out and you could find you are just as satisfied with the smaller portions!



Name: _____

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