

**I thought allergies hit hardest in the spring, but I've been sneezing a lot lately. Why?**

"Ragweed, pollen, decaying leaves and plants, increased moisture and a rise in indoor dust mites make fall as big an allergy season as spring," says Jay Portnoy, M.D., section chief of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology at Children's Mercy Hospital in Kansas City, Missouri. Reduce autumn sniffles and sneezes by allergy-proofing your home. Create a designated "mud room" where everyone removes coats and shoes, so less outdoor allergens get inside. Clean mold breeding grounds like kitchens, basements and bathrooms frequently, and use a



**get fit for free**







BEING A COUCH POTATO IS AS HARD ON YOUR HEART AS SMOKING, ACCORDING TO A NEW STUDY FROM THE AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION (AHA). GET YOUR

OCTOBER 1, 2006

# FamilyCircle

**MEASURE FOR MEASURE**

It's no surprise that waistlines have expanded over the past few decades. "The portions we eat today are two to five times larger than they were in the 1970s," says Lisa R. Young, R.D., author of *The Portion Teller* (Morgan Road Books). Keeping an eye on your serving sizes is the easiest way to drop pounds—you don't have to calculate carbs or fat grams, or pass up your favorite foods. Take a look. —Jennifer R. Beck

FOOD	SERVING SIZE	COMPARE WITH
 fleshy, white fish (like flounder or sole)	3 ounces	checkbook
 cold cereal	1 cup	baseball
 pancake	4-inch diameter	CD
 hard cheese (like cheddar or Swiss)	1 ounce	4 dice
 baked potato	5 ounces	computer mouse
 pretzels	1 ounce	tennis ball

**SAVE-YOUR-LIFE advice**

Examining your breasts monthly is a must—more than 70 percent of cancers are first detected this way. Try these tips to make sure you don't miss anything.



- **Mark your calendar.** Check your breasts a week after your period starts, when they're least likely to be swollen or sensitive. For a demonstration, go to [breastcancer.org](http://breastcancer.org) and click on "Breast Self Exam."
- **Pick the perfect place.** A monthly check in the shower isn't enough, says Neil Friedman, M.D., director of the Hoffberger Breast Center at Mercy Medical Center in Baltimore, Maryland. Inspect your breasts visually in a mirror, feel them while lying on your back and examine them while sitting or in the shower (it may be easier to notice changes when the skin is wet).
- **Try a new tool.** The In Touch Breast Self-Exam Glove (\$9, at Bath & Body Works in October) contains liquid that decreases friction between fingers and skin. It makes it easier for you to detect an abnormality, says Dr. Friedman. Check out our *Breast Cancer Report*, page 93.

Oct 1, 2006  
Family Circle