

SOUND BITES

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when they first come to her, many of Young's clients believe they're eating a single serving of cereal — about a cup — when in actuality they're eating at least two or three times that, she writes.

On Young's plan, the proper starch (which includes grains and starchy veggies) portion should be four to six a day. She reminds clients that one serving of cold cereal is 1 cup, a serving of corn is one ear, and a serving of sweet potato or legumes such as chickpeas, lentils or split peas is $\frac{1}{2}$ cup. And yes, you can still have a sandwich, but consider preparing it open-faced, so you're having one serving of starch rather than two.

The healthiest daily allotment of meat or meat alternative is two to three servings. A serving of beef is about 4 ounces, or the size of a deck of cards. Tofu or tempeh can be a

whole cup as a serving. Two or three eggs is also about one serving of protein.

When it comes to fats, she advises two to three servings daily. And a serving is, again, smaller than you think. One serving of avocado is just a quarter of the fruit, and when it comes to nuts, limit yourself to just $\frac{1}{4}$ cup. Dairy also is appropriate in smaller doses; just two to three servings a day. One serving is about the equivalent of a cup of milk, two slices of American cheese or 8 ounces of yogurt.

Once you've mastered portion control, considering the types of food you're eating can increase weight loss. For instance, opt for leaner meat, fish or plant-based

protein more often than fat-rich meats such as bacon or steak. Think of ways to get more fiber — which makes you feel full and aids digestion — into your diet, such as opting for brown rice instead of white, and whole-wheat bread rather than white. Nonstarchy veggies such as Brussels sprouts, carrots and peppers will also satiate you more than starchy ones such as potatoes, butternut squash or corn, which contain more calories and carbs — and less fiber.

But you can't really go wrong as long as you load your plate — at least half of it — with vegetables and fruits, Young says. "When you fill up your plate with veggies, not only are you getting good nutrition, it makes it much easier for you to [visualize] the healthy portion sizes of starch and protein," she says.

Young's portion passion has been a career-long one. In the late '90s, she studied the history of the fast-food industry's portion sizes, and noticed they were getting bigger, from as little as 7 ounces of soda — the only size McDonald's offered when it opened in the '50s — to as much as 30 ounces at the chain today.

"Everyone was fighting about the fats or the carbs, but I was just watching the portions get bigger and bigger," Young says.

Ultimately, she says, unhealthy portion sizes are now culturally ingrained — and she wants to change that.

"I want people to maintain a normal life," she says. "Entirely cutting people off certain foods, or throwing out the good stuff — it's not sustainable."



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Dietitian Lisa Young, Ph.D., says clients can have unlimited fruits and veggies.

Jumpstart your new year with this five-day portion-focused meal plan from nutritionist Lisa Young's new book, "Finally Full, Finally Slim."

Day One



Tamara Beckwith/NY Post (6)

Breakfast: Greek yogurt parfait

Serve 1 cup low-fat Greek yogurt (plain or vanilla) in a bowl or jar and top with a generous handful of pomegranate seeds, half an apple (diced) and a spoonful of slivered almonds or hemp seeds.

Lunch: Black bean burrito bowl with farro

Mix 1 cup of cooked farro with a palm-size portion of black beans, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of chopped bell peppers, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of cherry tomatoes and a big handful of spinach. Top with a hearty scoop of salsa and a tablespoon of shredded, part-skim mozzarella cheese. Toss with a tablespoon of balsamic vinaigrette dressing.

Snack: An apple with 1 to 2 teaspoons of nut butter.

Dinner: Salmon with roasted veggies

Grill 5 ounces of salmon — about the size of two decks of cards. Toss $\frac{3}{4}$ cup each of Brussels sprouts and cauliflower, plus 1 sweet potato cut into $1\frac{1}{2}$ -inch chunks in 1 tablespoon of olive oil. Roast the veggies in a 400-degree oven and top with a dash of salt and pepper.

QUICK TIP

You don't need to get out a scale and measuring cups to make sure you're not overdoing it. Imagining everyday objects can be useful: A serving of fruit or veggies is the size of a baseball. The right amount of cheese would be about four dice. Your portion of fish should be about the size of a checkbook. A meat serving should be about the size of a deck of cards, and the right amount of cereal is about the size of your fist (right).



QUICK TIP

Got that salty urge? Choose your snack wisely. "Three cups of popcorn is one serving, as opposed to not even a quarter of a cup of pretzels," Young says. "Me, I'll pick the volume with the popcorn."

Day Two

Breakfast: Apple-berry oatmeal

Top a $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of steel-cut oats (cooked in low-fat milk or unsweetened milk alternative) with $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of blueberries and half a chopped apple. Top with cinnamon, vanilla extract and a sprinkle of chia seeds.

Lunch: Cauliflower bowl

In $\frac{1}{2}$ tablespoon of olive oil, saute 1 cup of riced cauliflower over high heat. In a separate pan, use another $\frac{1}{2}$ tablespoon of oil to saute a cup of mixed veggies such as snap peas, carrots and broccoli, plus a deck-of-cards-size portion of chicken. Finish with 2 teaspoons of low-sodium soy sauce or teriyaki sauce and serve over cauliflower rice.

Snack: Several cups of air-popped popcorn, or a cup of fruit salad topped with 1 tablespoon of slivered almonds.

Dinner: Stir-fry

Grill 3 to 4 ounces of chicken breast. Saute $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups of asparagus, carrots and broccoli in a tablespoon of olive oil or sesame oil. Add chicken, plus garlic, ginger and low-sodium soy sauce for extra flavor. Serve over a cup of wild rice.