



*Topic of the Month – Food Portion Sizes*

**Why Are We Putting Out the Newsletters?**

**Obesity** is a major concern in the United States. Today, about one in three American kids and teens is overweight or obese, which is almost triple the rate seen in 1963. Adults are no exception; nearly seven in ten U.S. adults are overweight or obese. Obesity has been linked to higher and earlier death rates in adulthood, a concern shared by many health experts. This is mainly because of the heart problems that come with obesity. There are many reasons for the increasing obesity rate, including growing portion sizes, lacking of proper nutrition, eating out more, and moving less.



Luckily, obesity rates can be reduced by making simple changes in our lifestyles. If we start these changes at a young age, it will become more of a natural habit and yield the best results. Science 4-Communities, a 4H club in Mercer County, is working toward helping children around various communities learn more about making better choices that lead to healthier lives.



Each of our newsletters will focus on the topics that contribute to increased unknown eating habits leading to obesity.

**Then and Now**

Pay special attention to portion sizes, which have increased significantly over the past two decades. Restaurant meals of all kinds have gotten larger with an emphasis on getting more food for the money. However, the rise of portion sizes is not limited to restaurants alone. Bags of snack foods or soft drinks in vending machines and the grocery store are offered in larger and larger sizes that contain multiple servings while a 1-ounce bag of snack food or an 8-ounce soft drink, which are the recommended single serving sizes, are very difficult to find. We are surrounded by larger portion sizes at relatively low prices, appealing to the consumer's economic sensibilities. However, the cost to America's health may be higher than most people realize.

[Center for Disease Control](#)

**I Don't Like to Waste Food**

This is not a reason to eat large portions.

- Order a smaller size option, when it's available. Manage larger portions by sharing or taking home part of your meal
- Change shopping habits. Buy single portions of snack foods so you're not tempted by the whole bag or box
- Avoid super sizing. Order a small soda or, even better, drink water

**Mindless Eating**

Many people do not realize how much they eat until the chips bag is empty. The surrounding environment and other factors at the time of eating can make a huge difference. Influences, such as television, act as distractions to the eater; this can lead to overeating as the consumer becomes unaware of how much they are consuming. The next time you think about grabbing a box of cookies and sitting in front of the TV you better think twice!



## "Food Goal" This Month

**Eat smaller amounts-  
Bigger is not better**

## "Health Quiz" of the Month

### French Fries

20 Years Ago



2.4 ounces  
210 calories

Today



??? calories

2.4 ounces of French fries of 20 years ago had 210 calories. How many calories do you think are in today's portion?

610    590    650

Today's 6.9-ounce portion of French fries has **610** calories. This is **400** more calories than a 2.4 oz. portion 20 years ago. – National Heart Lung and Blood Institute

## "Move" of the Month

### Bike or Walk

Try one of the many West Windsor Trails.

**Mercer County Park**, approximately 2500 acres, primarily in West Windsor, offers many sports facilities, including Lake Mercer (used by locals as well as the U.S. Olympic Rowing Team), playgrounds, playing fields, skating center, tennis center, as well as nature/bike trails, paved (accessible by wheelchair) and off-road.

<http://www.bpa.org/resources/west-windsor-trails/>

## Upcoming October 2013

✓ Next newsletter will focus on: **Drinking Less Sugary Drinks**

## Fun Facts

**The #1 source of calories in the American diet is desserts - like cakes and cookies**

[www.choosemyplate.gov](http://www.choosemyplate.gov)

**You have to do water aerobics for 2 hours and 15 minutes to burn off calories from a Large Movie Theatre Popcorn**



**If the Buffet Costs More, You Eat up to 42% More**



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Just & Wansink, *Review of Economics & Statistics*, 2011

<http://foodpsychology.cornell.edu>

The Mindless Eater