



## Unit 5 Portions: Parent Extension

Hi, this is Shanita with the Montgomery County Office of Public Health.

In unit 5 of our 123 a Healthy Me, we introduce kids to portion sizes. Many times, we tend to take large portions of foods we favor and less of the foods that we don't favor as much. On most menus, emphasis is put on the meat but not so much on vegetables.

A balanced meal includes reasonable portions. Think of your plate as being a circle with sections. One section is for the grains like whole grain bread or brown rice. The serving size for this is about the size of your palm, which is about 1 cup for the average adult.

Another section of the plate is for the proteins. Of course, this includes meat but also includes beans, nuts and tofu. We teach the kids that the portion for this section is about the size of the other palm. For adults this is about 4 oz. of meat or the size of a deck of cards.

The last two sections on the plate are for fruits and vegetables. Together they take up half of the plate. We teach the kids that this would equate to the amount that can span across all of our fingers.

Contrary to how most meals are advertised, the fruits and vegetables should be the stars of the show.

Take a look at the handout we have provided and use that as a guide to reinforce the concept of portions to your child. As an activity, trace your child's hands and have them to color the different sections of the hands to represent the four food groups on the plate.

One palm should be colored orange to represent whole grains. The other palm should be colored purple to represent proteins. Together the fingers can be colored red and green to represent the fruits and vegetables.

Cut the hands out, tape to the back of a paper plate and use it as a visual reminder for your child of how to know what portion size is right for them.

An alternative to this activity would be to have your child color their hands using finger paint. Their palms and fingers should be colored in the same pattern as the activity with the cut out hands, representing the four food groups.

Something that you can state to remind your child of portion sizes is this-my hands are the right size for me and your hands are the right size for you.

**Always remember- be healthy, have fun and stay safe!**