



Diabetes  
New Zealand

# Demystifying serving sizes

Our nutritional needs depend on many factors, including age and activity.

Food and nutrition guidelines have been developed by the Ministry of Health for different age groups in the population. These guidelines are recommended for all healthy family members, whether or not they have diabetes. However, your dietitian may adapt this information to suit your individual needs.

The four main food groups are the basis for a healthy diet:

- **Breads and cereals** e.g. bread, rice, pasta, and noodles. These are the most important source of energy for the body and directly affect the blood glucose levels if you have diabetes.
- **Meat and meat alternatives** e.g. lean meats, skinless chicken, eggs, fish, seafood, nuts, dried beans, peas, legumes and seeds.
- **Fruits and vegetables** These are excellent sources of vitamins and minerals and fibre. They can be fresh, frozen or tinned and it's important to aim for a mixture of raw and cooked and to leave the skins on where possible. Aim for a wide range of different coloured vegetables
- **Milk and milk products** These are important sources of calcium to keep the bones and teeth healthy. Choose lower fat milk and milk products such as trim milk and cottage cheese.

The table below summarises the serving sizes as recommended in the food and nutrition guidelines.

Generally a serving size is what can fit into the palm of an individual's hand. The bigger the body, the bigger the hand and therefore the bigger the serving required. This is a daily recommendation so at the end of each day you should have eaten the amount of servings recommended in the table.

To order a copy of the food and nutrition guidelines contact your local public health unit or ask your dietitian or health professional.



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	Fruit	Vegetables	Breads & cereals	Meat & alternatives	Milk & milk products
Preschoolers	2	At least 2	4	At least 1	At least 2-3
School children	2	3	5	At least 1	At least 2-3
Adolescents	2	3	6	1-2	3
Adults	2	3	6	1	2
Elderly	2	3	6	1	2