

Just Right

Restaurants can fight childhood obesity by right-sizing kids' portions

Finding a kids' meal that's not too big and not too small can be a struggle—just ask Goldilocks. Some restaurants follow calorie guidelines for bundled meals (entrée, sides, drink) offered to kids up to age 13, but until now such guidelines didn't exist for single servings. RAND researchers, with an expert panel, developed single serving guidelines to help kids avoid eating too much when eating out.

Guidelines

When restaurants serve *right-sized* portions, kids can choose single serving items to build a healthy meal under 600 calories.

Entrée



300
calories

Side



150
calories*

Milk (unflavored)



130
calories

Mix and match 2 to 3 right-sized servings to stay under 600 calories.

*No calorie limit on fruits and vegetables with no added sugars or sauces.

Healthy meals don't include fries or dessert. If they are served, portions must be small to keep the whole meal within the calorie limit.

Fried Potato



100
calories

Dessert



150
calories

Current Portion Sizes

Portions in most restaurants are too large, pushing their calorie count over the recommended limit.

Entrée



551 calories

2X
guidelines

Entrée



459 calories

1.5X
guidelines

Fried Potato



287 calories

3X
guidelines

Dessert



361 calories

2X
guidelines

Calories Matter

Trimming restaurant portions is important because food prepared away from home accounts for almost one-third of the calories Americans eat.



Restaurants can help lower kids' risk of obesity by adopting these guidelines.



CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
EDUCATION AND THE ARTS
ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT
HEALTH AND HEALTH CARE
INFRASTRUCTURE AND
TRANSPORTATION
INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS
LAW AND BUSINESS
NATIONAL SECURITY
POPULATION AND AGING
PUBLIC SAFETY
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
TERRORISM AND
HOMELAND SECURITY

The RAND Corporation is a nonprofit institution that helps improve policy and decisionmaking through research and analysis.

This electronic document was made available from www.rand.org as a public service of the RAND Corporation.

Support RAND

[Browse Reports & Bookstore](#)

[Make a charitable contribution](#)

For More Information

Visit RAND at www.rand.org

Explore the [RAND Corporation](#)

View [document details](#)

Infographic

RAND infographics are design-focused, visual representations of data and information based on a published, peer-reviewed product or a body of published work.

Limited Electronic Distribution Rights

This document and trademark(s) contained herein are protected by law as indicated in a notice appearing later in this work. This electronic representation of RAND intellectual property is provided for non-commercial use only. Unauthorized posting of RAND electronic documents to a non-RAND website is prohibited. RAND electronic documents are protected under copyright law. Permission is required from RAND to reproduce, or reuse in another form, any of our research documents for commercial use. For information on reprint and linking permissions, please see [RAND Permissions](#).