

PROJECT MEDIA RELEASE

British Nutrition Foundation
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New survey suggests that four in ten GB adults finish everything on their plates, - even if they are full!

The British Nutrition Foundation launches new survey findings alongside unveiling of their updated portion size guides *Your balanced diet – get portion wise!* This is part of work funded by EIT Food, the world's largest food innovation ecosystem, supported by the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT), investigating how the *Your balanced diet* guides can support people in trying to eat more healthily.

The survey found that **41%** of adults say they tend to finish everything on their plate, even if they are full. This was particularly the case for men, **51%** of whom say they clear their plates compared to **31%** of women. **37%** of women say they leave some food on their plates if they feel full before they are finished eating, compared to **24%** of men.

The research also revealed that while the majority of adults (**80%**) say they have portion sizes on their minds at least some of the time when preparing and serving meals, some (**20%**) tend to serve themselves large portions at mealtimes to make sure they don't end up feeling hungry afterwards or serve out portion sizes depending on how they feel at the time (**23%**). Research shows that serving larger portions encourages people to eat more and so can contribute to consuming more calories than needed.

Similarly, when eating snacks that are 'less healthy', such as chocolate or crisps, **36%** let the occasion or their mood / hunger decide on the portions of their treats. Only **12%** of adults mentioned having 'smaller' portions that provide about 100 calories when having less healthy snacks.

Commenting on the survey findings, **Sara Stanner, Science Director, British Nutrition Foundation** said: *"With most UK adults overweight or obese, it's concerning that people may not be controlling the portion sizes of the foods, meals or snacks they eat. A balanced diet is about both what you eat and how much you consume, and understanding sensible portion sizes is a key piece of the puzzle in putting healthy eating into practice".*

These findings come alongside the launch of updated resources providing guidance around portion sizes entitled *Your balanced diet – get portion wise!* by the British Nutrition Foundation. The guides include advice to be used in conjunction with the government's Eatwell Guide (a visual guide to help us select a

healthier and more sustainable diet) on how often to eat foods from the main food groups and practical ways of measuring portion sizes for different foods and snacks.

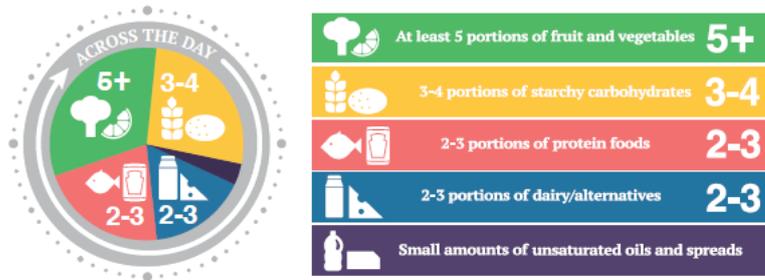


Image: How often to have foods from each of the main food groups from the *Your balanced diet* guides

Part of the work to update the guides included testing them with people in their homes to find out more about their views and behaviours when it comes to the portion sizes of meals they are preparing at home. Researchers talked to adults in 10 households across England (case study available on request) and found that people were less aware of the need to think about portion sizes as part of a balanced diet than messages such as getting your 5 A DAY of fruit and vegetables. The participants used the portion size guides at home and reported on whether they found them useful. Using the portion sizes to get a healthier balance of different types of foods in the diet was the biggest win for participants, as well as having practical measures for portion sizes to help them measure out foods at home.

Stanner continues: “We know from our research that few people have the time to weigh out foods they prepare and serve at home, and so, where possible, our guides use hand measures as a practical way for people to measure portion size. This means that bigger people will generally get bigger portion sizes and vice versa”.

Your balanced diet – get portion wise! includes a simple 1-page poster, a booklet with examples of how to put a balanced diet into practice and a list of suggested portion sizes for adults.

The portion size measures include:

- Fruit – about a handful or more
- Vegetables – about 3 serving spoons or more
- Breakfast cereal – about 3 handfuls
- Dried rice or pasta – about 2 handfuls
- Baked potato – about the size of your fist
- Chicken breast – about the size of your whole hand
- Steak – about the size of your palm
- Dried lentils – about two handfuls
- Nuts and seeds – about the amount you can fit in your palm
- Cheddar cheese – about the size of your two thumbs together
- Yogurt – 1 individual pot or about 4 tablespoons

The new guides are free to download from the British Nutrition Foundation's [website](#) [Updated versions of the guides available online from 10th November]

Notes:

All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc. Total sample size was 2018 adults. Fieldwork was undertaken between 28th - 29th October 2021. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all GB adults (aged 18+).

For more information, please contact:

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About EIT Food



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Your balanced diet – get portion wise is a project under the support of EIT Food. **EIT Food is the world's largest and most dynamic food innovation community. We accelerate innovation to build a future-fit food system that produces healthy and sustainable food for all.**

Supported by the EU, we invest in projects, organisations and individuals that share our goals for a healthy and sustainable food system. We unlock innovation potential in businesses and universities, and create and scale agrifood startups to bring new technologies and products to market. We equip entrepreneurs and professionals with the skills needed to transform the food system and put consumers at the heart of our work, helping build trust by reconnecting them to the origins of their food.

We are one of eight innovation communities established by the European Institute for Innovation & Technology (EIT), an independent EU body set up in 2008 to drive innovation and entrepreneurship across Europe.

Find out more at www.eitfood.eu or follow us via social media: [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), [YouTube](#) and [Instagram](#).

About the British Nutrition Foundation



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The British Nutrition Foundation, a registered charity, delivers impartial, authoritative and evidence-based information on food and nutrition. Its core purpose is translating evidence-based nutrition science in engaging and actionable ways, working with an extensive network of contacts across academia, health care, education, communication and the food chain. A core strength of the Foundation is its governance structure (described in the Articles of Association), which comprises a Board of Trustees, Advisory Committee, Scientific Committee, Editorial Advisory Board, Education Working Groups and a Nominations Committee, on which serve senior/experienced individuals from many walks of life. The composition is deliberately weighted towards the scientific 'academic' community, based in universities and research institutes, and those from education, finance, media, communications and HR backgrounds.

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