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Press Release # 001-12

Monday, January 9, 2012

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Health Department Launches New Ad Campaign Spotighting Increasing Portion Sizes and Their Devastating Consequences

New York City subway posters encourage New Yorkers to cut their portions to reduce their risk of health problems

The Health Department today launched a new hard-hitting ad campaign urging New Yorkers to be more aware of portion sizes - and how they have increased - when choosing what to eat or drink. The quantity of food served in a "medium" or "large" order is significantly greater today than in previous years. In the last 50 years, for example, the serving sizes of sugary drinks quadrupled and french fries nearly tripled. With a few casual selections, a single meal could balloon to contain many more calories than the amount an adult needs for an entire day. This new campaign, along with the City's ongoing requirement that chain restaurants post calorie counts, will continue to provide New Yorkers with the information they need to make healthier choices.

"The portion sizes that are marketed are often much more than humans need," said Health Commissioner Dr. Thomas Farley. "We are warning people about the risks of super-size portions so they can make more informed choices about what they eat. Consuming too many calories can lead to weight gain, which greatly increases the risk of type 2 diabetes. If New Yorkers cut their portions, they can cut their risk of these health problems."

In one of the new posters, available in English and Spanish, a man with type 2 diabetes and an amputated leg sits behind a graphic showing how soda portions have increased over time. "Cut your portions. Cut your risk," the text reads below, providing New Yorkers with a clear strategy for preventing obesity and its health consequences.



While the City has made strides in combating the nationwide trend of growing obesity, the majority of adult New Yorkers (nearly 57%) and two out of every five New York City elementary school children remain overweight or obese and the health consequences are dire, ranging from hypertension to type 2 diabetes. Nearly 10% of New Yorkers have been told they have type 2 diabetes, which can lead to blindness, kidney failure and

amputations. In 2006, nearly 3,000 New Yorkers with diabetes were hospitalized for amputations. Obese children and adolescents also are more likely to become obese adults. Even while young, they are more likely to develop obesity-related conditions such as high cholesterol, high blood pressure, and type 2 diabetes.

Most adults only need to eat 2,000 calories per day, and children need even fewer. But with Americans eating out more often than they did 40 years ago, staying within these recommendations has become more difficult. A beverage at a fast food chain has increased fourfold since 1955, from 7 ounces to 32 ounces. During the same time, french fry portions have more than doubled, from 2.4 ounces to 5.4 ounces. As a result, recent studies show that one-third of New Yorkers eating at chain restaurants consume more than 1,000 calories at lunchtime alone.

A packet of materials containing valuable information on portion control, along with other tips for making healthy choices, is available by calling 311 and asking for the Healthy Eating Packet, which includes:

- ***Counting Calories? Read 'Em Before You Eat 'Em brochure:*** provides information on daily calorie needs and tips for making healthy choices
- ***Are You Pouring on the Pounds? Health Bulletin:*** provides tips on how to cut back on soda, juice and other sugary drinks
- ***Make New York City Your Gym Health Bulletin:*** provides information on the importance of being physically active and gives tips on how to incorporate free or low-cost exercise into daily routines
- ***Eating Out, Eating Well Health Bulletin:*** provides information on making smart choices when eating out
- ***My Plate Planner placemat and magnets:*** provides guidance on creating a healthy and balanced meal for both adults and children

For additional information search for "Eating Healthy" on [NYC.gov](http://nyc.gov) or visit "Eating Healthy NYC" on Facebook or call 311.

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