



## **Tray Accuracy and Portion Control**

### **Objectives:**

- **Understand the importance of tray accuracy/portion control to the resident.**
- **Understand the importance of portion control to the food service operation.**
- **Identify appropriate serving utensils.**

### **Introduction:**

Preparing and serving meal trays is one of the main functions of the dietary department in a facility. Making sure these meal trays are accurate is important for a variety of reasons. The health of a resident can be dependent on serving an accurate tray. Residents needing a mechanically altered diet can be at risk for aspiration if served the wrong texture; residents requiring a specific nutrient restriction can be at risk if served the wrong food. Serving a meal, as specified by the diet order, is just as important as administering medication correctly. Tray accuracy is also important for the food service operation. Following the menu and serving the correct amount of food will ensure that there is adequate food for everyone, keep food costs down, and cut down on waste.

### **Importance of tray accuracy/portion control to the resident:**

- A diet is prescribed for a specific medical condition (eg, diabetic diet or mechanical soft diet).
- Tray errors may affect the treatment of a resident's medical condition.
- Too much or too little food can result in unplanned weight loss or weight gain.
- Tray errors on residents with texture modifications could result in aspiration, pneumonia and/or death.
- Residents will compare what they received to what others receive and notice if it is different.
- Inaccurate trays can result in citations from regulatory agencies.

### **Importance of portion control to the food service operation:**

- Serving too little can result in leftover food.
- Serving too much can result in running out of food.
- Serving too much can result in higher than necessary food costs.
- Inaccurate portions can result in citations from regulatory agencies.



## **NUTRITION SERVICES, INC.**

Registered Dietitian Consulting Group

### **How to assure tray accuracy and correct portion control:**

- Ask for clarification from medical staff if you have any questions about a diet order.
- Read the menu carefully, and provide the portions that are outlined on the menu for each regular and therapeutic diet.
- Use the serving utensil designated by the recipe to serve food items and ensure accurate amounts.
- Read diet cards carefully for diet order, food likes and dislikes, texture modification, and supplemental nutrition.

### **Correct Portioning Tools - Standard Scoop #/Serving Size**

- #4 scoop = 1 cup
- #6 scoop =  $\frac{2}{3}$  cup
- #8 scoop =  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup
- #10 scoop = 3 oz.
- #12 scoop =  $\frac{1}{3}$  cup
- #16 scoop =  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup
- #60 scoop =  $\frac{1}{2}$  oz.

### **Incorrect Portioning Tools - any tool that does not allow for accurate portioning.**

- a. Tongs
- b. Gloved hands
- c. Slotted spoon



## **NUTRITION SERVICES, INC.**

Registered Dietitian Consulting Group

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Position:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

### **Tray Accuracy and Portion Control**

#### **Pre-Test**

1. True or False: Using a slotted spoon to serve food is the most accurate for portion control?
  2. True or False: Poor portion control can affect your food costs?
  3. True or False: An incorrect texture on a tray could result in death?
  4. True or False: Serving too little food can result in weight gain?
  5. True or False: Serving a meal, as specified by the diet order, is just as important as administering medication correctly?
- 

#### **Post-Test**

1. True or False: Using a slotted spoon to serve food is the most accurate for portion control?
2. True or False: Poor portion control can affect your food costs?
3. True or False: An incorrect texture on a tray could result in death?
4. True or False: Serving too little food can result in weight gain?
5. True or False: Serving a meal, as specified by the diet order, is just as important as administering medication correctly?



**NUTRITION SERVICES, INC.**

Registered Dietitian Consulting Group

**ANSWER KEY**

1. False
2. True
3. True
4. False
5. True