

Quiz: RI.6.7

Read the passage. Then answer the questions.

“Food Serving Sizes Getting a Reality Check”

FDA

- 1 The last time you scooped some ice cream for dessert, did you limit yourself to half a cup? If you took more—say, one cup—you’re right in step with most people these days.
- 2 Likewise with a soft drink: Do you drink 8 ounces or the whole 20-ounce bottle?
- 3 Ice cream and soft drinks are just two food products that would be affected by changes in serving size requirements that are included in the proposed updates to the Nutrition Facts label. The goal: to bring serving sizes closer to what people actually eat so that when they look at calories and nutrients on the label, these numbers more closely match what they are consuming.
- 4 The serving sizes listed on the Nutrition Facts label are not recommended serving sizes. By law, serving sizes must be based on how much food people actually consume, and not on what they should eat.
- 5 Jillonne Kevala, Ph.D., supervisory chemist at the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) says, “The fact is, for many foods, we’re eating larger portions than we used to. And the proposed changes to the Nutrition Facts label would reflect that.”
- 6 In some cases, the reference amounts used to set serving sizes would be smaller. Today’s single serving yogurts more often come in 6-ounce containers, versus the previous 8-ounce ones. FDA is proposing a 6-ounce reference amount for yogurt.
- 7 In 1993, when FDA created the Nutrition Facts label, the standards used to determine serving sizes—called the Reference Amounts Customarily Consumed (RACCs)—were based primarily on surveys of food consumption conducted in 1977–1978 and 1987–1988. The RACCs are used by manufacturers to calculate the serving sizes on their packages.
- 8 “We now have much more recent food consumption data, and it’s showing that some serving sizes on food labels should be changed,” says Mary Poos, Ph.D., deputy director of FDA’s Office of Nutrition, Labeling and Dietary Supplements. For example, serving sizes for large muffins may change. People generally consume an entire muffin, and not a half or a third.

How Would Changes In Serving Size Affect You?

- 9 Let’s go back to that ice cream. You may just spoon a cup of ice cream into a dish and assume it’s one serving. It’s not that much, after all. The label may say a single serving is 200 calories, and that’s what you think you’ve eaten.

