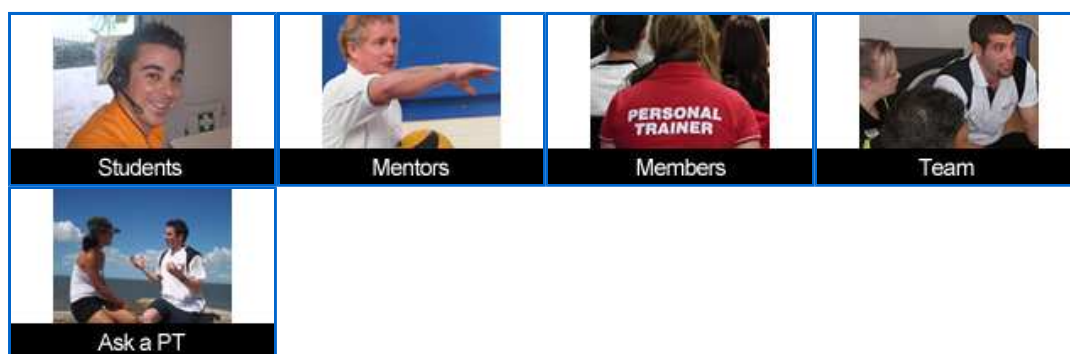


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## [Is answer to obesity to regulate serving size?](#)

The author of a new diet book released in time for the New Year believes the government needs to regulate standard serving sizes on packaged food labels in order to reach the goals outlined by the National Preventative Health Taskforce in the recently released discussion paper “Australia: the healthiest country by 2020”.

Based on current trends, the percentage of Australians who are overweight or obese will have grown to a record 73% in 2025. This includes one-third of our children and three-quarters of our adult population.

The taskforce, established by the federal Minister for Health and Ageing, has a target to halt and reverse the rise in overweight and obesity by 2020. One of the ways they aim to achieve this is by regulating the amount of fat, salt and sugar content in foods.

Dietitian and author of new book Portion Perfection Amanda Clark believes instead of regulating what’s in foods, it would be more effective to regulate serving sizes.

“If you change what’s in the foods people enjoy we might miss out on some real taste sensations. The true problem is there are no standard serving sizes to help us decide how much is right to eat,” said Mrs Clark.

“Serving size labels on food can be very misleading. There really are no criteria for how much is one serve.

Take soft drinks for example. We are being pushed from small 390ml bottles to the larger 600ml bottles. In many food outlets you can’t get anything but the 600ml bottle.

“When you read the nutrition information panel, they are both one serve.

“You can even get 200ml cans of soft drink now which are also said to be one serve.

“We also need measures in place to help us limit these higher calorie foods to occasional treats, by forcing us to actively seek them out so it is more of a conscious decision to buy those foods. Otherwise they leap into our trolleys at the supermarket and into our cars at the service station.”

Amanda Clark believes most people would like to eat the right amount, if only they knew what that was. Her new book Portion Perfection sets the record straight and gives the facts on how much food we should be having. It also lifts the lid on the out-of-control sizing of many of our favourite snacks that have more than doubled in size over the past 20 years, along with our waistlines.

Excessive portion sizes, promotion of energy-dense packaged foods, and passive overeating have left us dazed and

confused about how much we really need to eat, according to Mrs Clark.

“When you know how much is right to eat, you can feel less guilty about eating higher calorie foods occasionally.”

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