

Modern living – unhealthy lifestyle?



Food, nutrition and exercise are crucial to our general health and well being. Making the right choices of foods and drinks and taking regular exercise can protect against coronary heart disease and many common cancers and other diseases such as osteoporosis (brittle bones).

In spite of confusing publicity, there is wide agreement among experts on what is a healthy style of eating. However, many myths and misconceptions about healthy eating remain.

What is a healthy lifestyle?

What it is not about

- Cutting out tasty food
- Avoiding favourite foods
- Having less food
- Going hungry
- Making major changes
- Spending more money on food
- Becoming super fit
- Not enjoying food

What it is about

- Eating more of some items
- Eating a little less of others
- Knowing more about food
- Making small gradual changes
- Altering food shopping patterns
- Modifying cooking and preparation methods
- Enjoying your food
- Enjoying being active

Other Benefits

- Look better and feel better
- Feel fitter and have more energy
- Better weight control
- Improved body shape
- Reduced stress and improved mood



Enjoying a healthy lifestyle

Healthy eating and drinking is the cornerstone of a healthy lifestyle for you and your family.

Some of the information contained in this guide is not suitable for children under five



Key tips

- Enjoy a variety of different foods
- Eat the right amount to be a healthy weight
- Eat plenty of foods rich in starch and fibre
- Eat at least five fruit and vegetable portions a day
- Eat moderate amounts of lean meat and alternatives
- Eat or drink moderate amounts of lower-fat milk and dairy foods
- Eat fatty foods sparingly and choose lower-fat alternatives
- Good dental hygiene reduces tooth decay
- Use less salt at the table and when cooking
- Drink plenty of fluid – 6-10 cups or glasses a day
- Handle food hygienically
- Enjoy being active



Did you know?

- Being active in your daily life and enjoying active leisure is also a crucial part of a healthy lifestyle.



Energy balance – facts about fat



Key tips for weight loss

- To lose weight you need to eat fewer calories
- Fill up on starchy foods, fruit and vegetables
- Eat less sugar and sugary drinks
- Eat less fat and fatty foods
- Go easy on alcohol
- Being physically active helps us keep to a healthy weight



Did you know?

- Fat has over twice as many calories as the same weight of starch or protein.
- Margarine and butter have the same amount of calories and fat
- Fat is not all bad.
- There are some essential fats which are as important to us as vitamins.
- Most people eat far more fat than is needed for health.
- The total amount of fat suggested per day is about 70g for women and 90g for men

Types of fat

The fat we eat is a mixture of three main kinds

Saturates

Mono-unsaturates

Poly-unsaturates

Certain types of fat can raise the level of cholesterol in the blood, increasing the risk of heart disease. These are predominantly saturated fats. Fats that are solid at room temperature, contain the most saturates.

Monounsaturated fats are found in rapeseed oil, olive oil and meat. These have been found to help reduce blood cholesterol.



Other types of fat may help to protect against heart disease. These are a particular type of essential fatty acid called omega 3 polyunsaturates.

Oil rich fish, such as kippers, mackerel, herring and salmon are a good source of these fats. Lamb and beef from animals fed on grass also contain this type of fat.



Food energy is measured in calories. If we have more calories than our body needs it is stored as fat and we put on weight. Being too fat or too thin is not good for our health.

Eat a variety of different foods



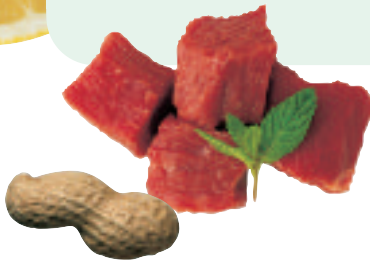
No single food contains all the nutrients we need for health, so try to eat a wide variety of different foods each day. By choosing a variety of foods from the five food groups most people will get all the nutrients their bodies need.



Food Groups

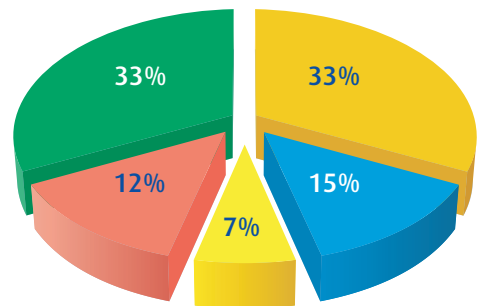
The five food groups are

Fruit & vegetables	
Bread, other cereals & potatoes	
Meat, fish & alternatives	
Milk & dairy foods	
Foods containing fat, foods & drinks containing sugar	

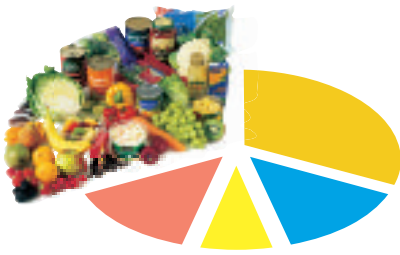


To have a well-balanced and healthy diet select foods you enjoy from each group in the proportions shown.

It is not necessary to achieve this balance at every meal, or even every day. Over the period of a few days your food selection pattern should aim to achieve these proportions.



Using vitamin and mineral supplements is not a replacement for good eating habits. Fruit and vegetables are good sources of vitamins and minerals thought to be protective against cancer, heart disease and the ageing process. Other substances found in plants have been found to have similar protective qualities, but as with the vitamins and minerals these are more effective when obtained from their natural food sources.



Fruit & vegetables

Fruit and vegetables are low in fat and calories. A third of our total food intake should come from this group. This group includes all fresh, frozen, canned and dried fruit, fruit juice and vegetables.

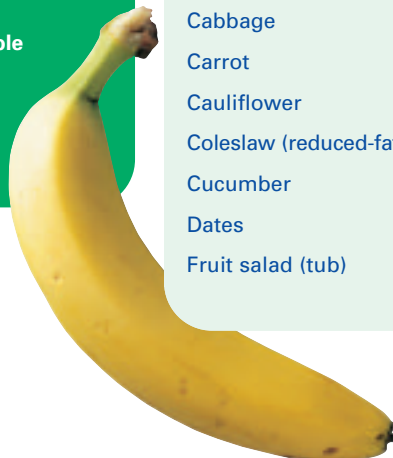


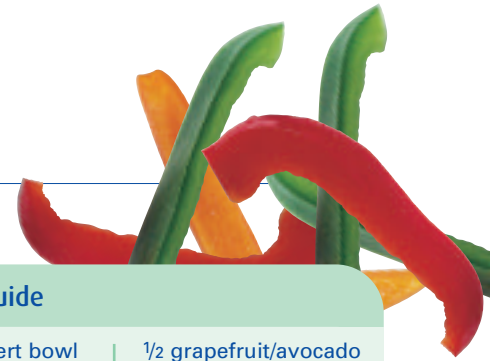
Key tips

- Eat at least five portions of fruit and vegetables a day
- Try to eat some fruit and vegetables at every meal
- Have salads with meals
- Have fresh and dried fruit as snacks and with breakfast cereals
- Have raw vegetables and vegetable sticks as snacks
- Have fruit based desserts

What's pictured in this group?

Apple	Grapes	Strawberries
Apple juice (bottle)	Kiwi	Sweetcorn (canned)
Apricots	Lettuce (small crown)	Tomato sauce (jar)
Banana	Orange juice (carton)	Tomatoes (canned)
Blackberries	Pears	Vegetable selection (pre-prepared)
Broccoli (pre-prepared)	Peas (frozen)	Vegetable soup (canned)
Cabbage	Pineapple (canned in natural juice)	
Carrot	Plums	
Cauliflower	Raisins (box)	
Coleslaw (reduced-fat)	Raspberries	
Cucumber	Rhubarb (canned)	
Dates	Satsumas	
Fruit salad (tub)		





Main nutrients

Vitamin C
Carotenes
Folates
Fibre
Some carbohydrate
Potassium



Cooking tips

- Cook vegetables in as little water as possible or steam
- Cook vegetables for as short a time as possible and serve crisp
- Stir fry mixed vegetables in the minimum amount of oil
- Add plenty of fresh, frozen, canned or dried vegetables to casseroles, stews and mince dishes
- Serve side salads as starters or to accompany hot dishes

Vitamin tips

- Frozen vegetables can contain as many vitamins as fresh
- Fresh fruit and vegetables lose vitamins when stored
- Soaking vegetables in water leaches out the vitamins
- Green leafy vegetables are a good source of folate
- Folate is particularly important for women who are planning a pregnancy

Portions guide

A small/dessert bowl of salad

2 tbsp of raw, cooked, frozen or canned vegetables

1 medium carrot or tomato

A small glass (150ml) of fruit juice

1 medium piece of fruit eg an apple, banana, orange, pear or peach

2-3 tbsp fresh fruit salad, stewed or canned fruit preferably in natural juice

1/2 grapefruit/avocado pear

2 plums or similar sized fruit

6 strawberries

1 cupful or a handful of grapes, cherries and berries

1/2-1 tbsp dried fruit (raisin, apricots etc)

2-3 tbsp peas, beans or lentils

Did you know?

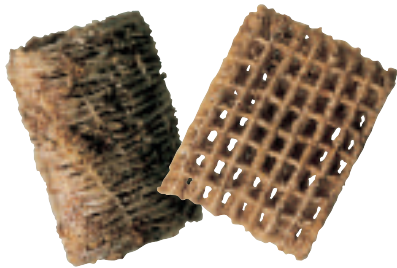
- Fruit juice, beans and pulses can be included as a portion in this group.
- The soluble fibre in fruit and vegetables may help to reduce blood cholesterol
- Potatoes and nuts are not included in this group





Bread, other cereals & potatoes

Starchy foods like bread, pasta, rice, cereals and potatoes should be the main part of most meals and snacks. They should be the main source of energy in our diets. Contrary to popular belief this group of foods are not high in calories. A third of our total food intake should come from this group.



Key tips

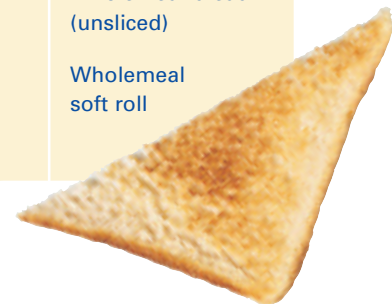
- Eat at least five portions of food from this group a day
- Eat plenty of different breads
- Slice bread thick and spread it thin
- Choose wholegrain varieties of bread and cereals
- Enjoy pasta, rice and noodle dishes with an accompanying bread
- If you have chips opt for thick cut low-fat oven chips

What's pictured in this group?

Branflakes	Porridge oats
Bread mix	Rice
Cornflakes	Ryvita
Digestive biscuits	Spaghetti
French stick	Spaghetti hoops (canned)
Fruit scone	Tagliatelle
Garlic bread (wedges)	Tea cake (plain)
Jacket potato	Thick cut chips
Muesli	Tri-colour pasta twists
New potatoes	Water biscuits
Oat cakes	
Pizza base mix	



Weetabix
White bread (thick slice)
White crusty bread roll
Wholemeal bread (unsliced)
Wholemeal soft roll



Main nutrients

Carbohydrate (starch)
Fibre
Some calcium and iron
Copper
B vitamins
Vitamin E

Cooking tips

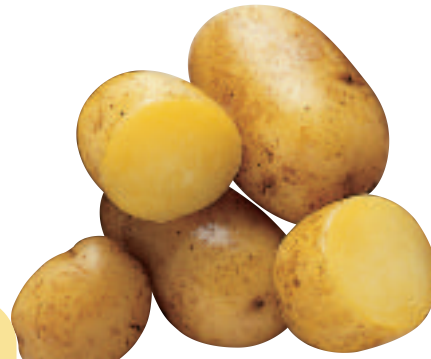
- Potatoes can be microwaved, baked or boiled
- Use potatoes to thicken soups, casseroles, stews or mince dishes
- Noodles, rice and pasta can be boiled or microwaved
- Serve hot or cold as part of a salad
- Allow extra cooking time for brown rice

Portions guide

1 egg-sized potato
1 small pitta or chapatti
1 bagel
3 tbsp breakfast cereal
flakes eg wheatflakes or branflakes
1 wholewheat cereal biscuit
2 tbsp cooked rice, pasta or noodles
2 tbsp of cous cous or elby
2 tbsp uncooked oats or muesli
3 crackers or crispbreads

Did you know?

- These starchy carbohydrate foods need not be high in calories as long as fat or sugar is not added to them.
- Wholegrain varieties have the added benefit of containing dietary fibre and are more filling.
- The insoluble fibre from these starchy foods helps to prevent constipation and reduces the risk of some intestinal disorders.
- The soluble fibre in oats may help reduce blood cholesterol.
- The more active you are the more foods from this group you will need



enjoying a healthy diet is all about getting the balance right

Key tips

- Select a variety of foods from each group in the proportions shown
- Eat at least 5 portions of fruit and vegetables a day
- Eat foods containing fats and sugars sparingly and select lower-fat options where possible
- Use less salt
- Drink plenty of fluid – 6 to 10 cups or glasses a day





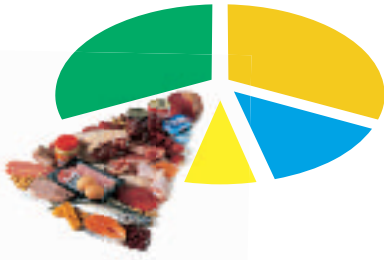
Food groups

Fruit & vegetables	
Bread, other cereals & potatoes	
Meat, fish & alternatives	
Milk & dairy foods	
Foods containing fat, foods & drinks containing sugar	

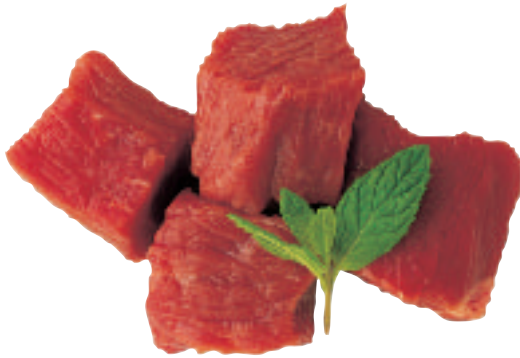
Did you know?

- There are no healthy or unhealthy foods – only healthy or unhealthy diets.
- It is important to enjoy our food and to enjoy being active

This food selection guide is based on The 'Balance of Good Health' with kind permission of the Food Standards Agency.



Meat, fish & alternatives



These are good sources of protein, vitamins and minerals, particularly iron. Pulses such as peas, beans and lentils, and nuts also contain dietary fibre.

The iron found in meat is absorbed well by the body, and meat has the extra advantage of helping with the absorption of iron from vegetables and cereals.

Key tips

- Eat food from this group 2-3 times a day
- Try to have a variety of lean meats (beef, pork and lamb)
- Try to combine meat with vegetables.
- Try to have a variety of poultry (chicken and turkey)
- Try eating fish twice a week
- Try eating oil rich fish such as mackerel, sardines or salmon at least once a week

What's pictured in this group?

Almonds	Chicken breast	Liver pâté (reduced-fat vacuum pack)
Back bacon	Chicken drumsticks	Mackerel
Baked beans (canned)	Chilli con carne (canned)	Peanut butter (jar)
Brazil nuts	Cooked Ham (lean sliced vacuum pack)	Peanuts (in shells)
Beef burgers	Eggs	Pork chops
Beef steak	Fish fingers	Pork sausages
Beef topside	Kidney beans (dried)	Red lentils
Black eyed beans (dried)	Lamb (leg)	Salmon steak
Brazil nuts	Lamb chops	Sardines (canned in tomato sauce)
Butter beans (dried)	Lean cubed lamb (kebab)	Tuna fish (canned)
Cashew nuts		



Main nutrients

Protein
Iron
B vitamins,
especially B12
Vitamin D
Zinc
Magnesium
Selenium
Copper
n 3 fatty acids

Shopping tips

- Buy the leanest meat – there's less waste
- Choose trimmed, lean or extra lean varieties.
- Look out for the easy to prepare options that often come with recipe ideas
- Convenience dishes are a useful standby but can be expensive

Cooking tips

- Cut the visible fat off meats
- Dry fry meats and discard any remaining fat prior to further cooking
- Drain off fats from roast meats
- Skim gravies and sauces to remove any excess fat
- Grill, bake or microwave without adding fat
- Add pulses such as peas, beans and lentils to casseroles, stews and mince dishes
- Pulses and nuts can be added to salads

Hygiene tips

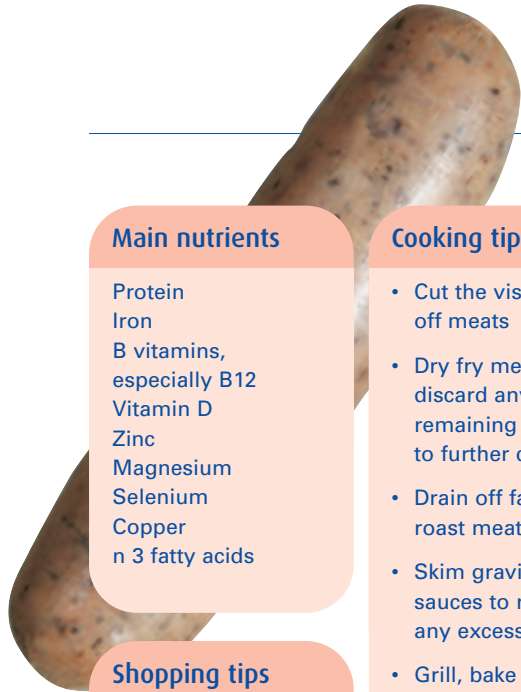
- Separate raw and cooked meats and always store cooked above raw in the refrigerator
- Wash your hands before and after handling any raw or cooked meat, poultry or fish

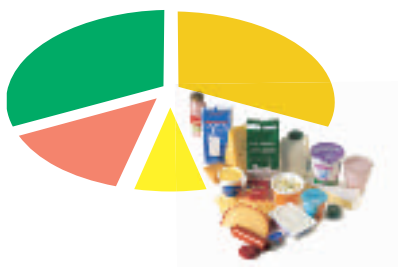
Portions guide

2-4oz(50-100g) lean meat, poultry or oily fish
4-6oz (100-150g) white fish
1-2eggs
3 tbsp peas, beans or lentils (cooked)
2 tbsp peanut butter or nuts

Did you know?

- The fat content of red meat is now lower than ever before
- Red meat is an excellent source of iron and zinc
- Lack of iron can cause anaemia
- Zinc is needed to help wound healing and for fertility
- A lack of iron and zinc is sometimes a feature of the diets of children and young adults
- Red meat is also a useful source of vitamin D and selenium
- Fish, particularly shellfish is also a good source of selenium
- Oil rich fish contains a type of fat which may help reduce the risk of fatal heart disease
- The soluble fibre in beans and lentils may help reduce blood cholesterol





Milk & dairy foods

These are good sources of protein, vitamins and minerals, and provide most of our calcium. This group is particularly important for growing children.



Key tips

- Eat or drink items from this group 3 times a day
- Choose semi-skimmed or skimmed milk
- Choose reduced-fat or lower-fat options where possible
- When having higher-fat options reduce the quantity used

What's pictured in this group?

- | | |
|---|---|
| Cheddar (half-fat grated) | Natural low-fat yogurt (carton) |
| Brie (wedge) | Processed cheese (individual red wrapped) |
| Cheese spread (individual triangle) | Red Leicester (block with herbs) |
| Cottage Cheese (tub with pineapple and herbs) | Semi-skimmed milk (carton, green lid) |
| Custard (individual pot) | Smoked cheese |
| Edam (block) | Soft cheese (tub) |
| Fromage frais (individual pot) | Soft cheese (herb coated) |
| Low-fat fruit yogurt (individual pot) | Soya drink (carton) |
| Low-fat soft cheese (tub) | Strawberry milk shake (glass) |
| Mature Cheddar (wedge) | Yogurt drink (bottle) |





Main nutrients

Calcium
Protein
Vitamin B12
Vitamin B2
Vitamin A and D
Zinc

Portions guide

1/3 pint (200ml)
semi-skimmed milk

Small (6oz, 150g)
pot of yogurt or
fromage frais

1oz (25g) matchbox
size piece of hard
cheese

Small (4oz, 100g)
pot of cottage
cheese or quark

Cooking tips

- Try using lower-fat cheese on toast, in sauces and in cooking
- Try using less of strongly flavoured cheese such as Parmesan or mature Cheddar
- Grate cheese rather than using it in chunks to make it go further
- Try using skimmed or semi-skimmed milk in sauces, milk puddings, custard and other recipes

Did you know?

- A small number of people are allergic to particular foods. The most common food allergies are to wheat, gluten, eggs, fish, soya, milk and nuts
- Foods such as nuts when consumed by a susceptible person can cause a severe reaction called anaphylaxis
- Some foods are relatively easy to exclude from the diet. Other foods need to be replaced with a nutritionally comparable alternative. For example soya milk fortified with calcium can be used by those who cannot tolerate cows' milk.





Foods containing fat, foods & drinks containing sugar



These foods provide energy but may contribute only small amounts of other nutrients. They therefore are not essential to a healthy diet but add extra choice and taste. Most of us consume far more from this group than we actually need. However, for those who are very active, these foods and drinks can be a useful additional source of energy.

Key tips

- Try to eat more starchy carbohydrate foods in place of fatty foods
- View cream, pies, pastry and crisps as occasional treats
- Select a spread you enjoy and use it sparingly
- Frequent consumption of sugary foods and drinks can contribute to dental caries
- Good dental hygiene reduces tooth decay
- Avoid brushing teeth immediately after having fizzy drinks and fruit juice as this can damage tooth enamel
- Try to cut out or reduce sugar in tea and coffee

What's pictured in this group?

Butter (block)	Fizzy drink (can)	Salad dressing (bottle)
Chocolate bar (fruit and nut)	Honey (individual jar)	Sausage roll
Chocolate biscuit (full wrapped)	Ice cream cornet (in wafer cone)	Shortbread (petticoat tail)
Chocolate biscuit (Jaffa Cake)	Iced doughnut (sugar strand topping)	Blackcurrant drink (glass)
Chocolate biscuit (Kitkat)	Jam (individual jar)	Sugar (golden granulated)
Chocolate chip biscuit	Liquorice comfits	Tortilla chips
Chocolate éclair	Margarine (sunflower spread, tub)	Vegetable oil (blended bottle)
Crisps	Mayonnaise (jar)	White chocolate (bar)
Danish pastry (with sultanas)	Olive oil (bottle)	Wine gums
Cream (pot)	Pork pie	
	Salad cream (bottle)	



Main nutrients

Fat
Carbohydrate (sugar)
Some vitamins
Some minerals

Cooking tips

- Use a seed oil or olive oil in small amounts for cooking
- Try using a spray for oils
- Try grilling, baking or microwaving rather than frying
- Always drain or skim any excess fat or blot with a paper towel

Shopping tips

- Select more low-fat foods and reduced-fat alternatives
- Check the label for hidden fats in biscuits, cakes confectionery, and ready-made sauces
- Some spreads now contain stanols or sterols which have been shown to help lower cholesterol

Did you know what the nutritional claims on labels mean?

Reduced-fat = 25% less

Low-fat = no more than 3g per 100g or 100ml

Fat free = no more than 0.15g per 100g or 100ml

Reduced saturated fat = 25% less

Low in saturated fat = no more than 1.5g per 100g or 100ml

Free of saturated fat = no more than 0.1g per 100g or 100ml

Low calorie = no more than 40kcal per 100g or 100ml

Reduced sugar = 25% less

Low sugar = no more than 5g per 100g or 100ml

Sugar free = no more than 0.2g per 100g or 100ml

Reduced salt/sodium = 25% less



Composite foods

Much of the food we eat is in the form of dishes or meals, that have more than one kind of food item in them. For example pizza, curries, pies, lasagne and sandwiches are all made from foods of more than one food group. Many manufactured foods are composite foods. To make healthy choices identify the main food item or ingredient and think about which food group it fits into.



Ham, cheese and mushroom pizza

A ham, cheese and mushroom pizza contains items from the main four food groups.

Dough base – from the bread, other cereals and potato group

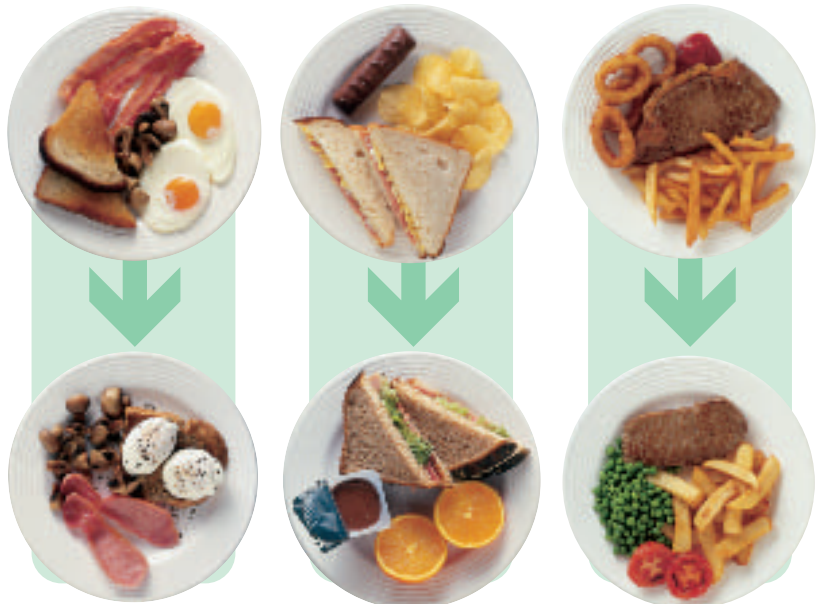
Mushroom and tomato purée – from the fruit and vegetable group

Cheese – from the milk and dairy group

Ham – from the meat, fish and alternatives group

The proportion of mushrooms and tomato, relative to the other ingredients is small. If the pizza was eaten with additional 'fruit and vegetable' foods, such as a mixed salad, and followed by a piece of fresh fruit it would improve the balance of the meal. The addition of bread to a meal also helps improve the balance.

Putting healthy eating into practice



Other considerations



Fluid

The importance of fluid for health is often overlooked. Water is the principal component of the body and needed for all vital functions. However, we do not have to consume fluid as water. It can be taken as preferred; tea, coffee, fruit juice, semi-skimmed milk, or low-sugar soft drinks.

Did you know?

An average adult needs about 1.5 litres (2.5) pints of fluid per day. This is about 6-10 cups, mugs or glasses depending on the size.



- Drink extra before, during and after exercise
- Drink plenty of non alcoholic fluids - 6 to 10 cups or glasses a day

Alcohol

Alcoholic drinks in small amounts can be beneficial to health, but taken in excess they can be very harmful.

Did you know?

Consistently drinking over 4 units per day for men and 3 units per day for women could progressively put your health at risk.



- Try extending alcoholic drinks with low-calorie mixer drinks
- Always eat before drinking
- Try to have alcohol-free days
- Avoid drinking to excess

1 unit of alcohol equals

1 small glass of wine
or 2 glasses of low-alcohol wine

1 small glass sherry

1/2 pint ordinary beer
or cider

1/4 pint strong beer
or cider

1 1/2 pints of low-alcohol beer or lager

1 single measure
of spirit

Salt

Much of the salt in our diet comes from processed foods. Some manufacturers have attempted to reduce the salt used in processing.

Key tips

- Use unsalted snack options
- Use less salt in cooking
- Always taste before adding salt
- Try using herbs, spices, lemon juice, garlic, vinegar or mustard for flavouring

Exercise

Regular exercise can greatly improve health. As well as improving the heart and circulation, it can help keep weight down and reduce the risk of cancer.

Did you know?

Exercise also helps relieve stress, enhance mood and helps us to stay mobile as we age.

- Make small changes to your daily routine such as using stairs instead of the lift, or walking instead of taking the bus
- Try doing moderate regular activity such as brisk walking, cycling, dancing or gardening
- Aim for 30 minutes of moderate activity in one go five times a week. Shorter sessions eg 15 minutes can also be beneficial
- If you haven't exercised for a while then build up slowly to a regular routine

Further information about diet and health can be obtained from:

British Dietetic Association
www.bda.uk.com

British Nutrition Foundation
www.nutrition.org.uk

Health Development Agency
www.hda-online.org.uk

Food Standards Agency
www.foodstandards.gov.uk

healthyliving
www.healthyliving.gov.uk
www.healthylivingscotland.gov.uk

Scottish Community Diet Project
www.dietproject.org.uk

Eating Disorders Association
www.eda.co.uk

Food Allergy Association
www.allergyuk.org

Food Standards Agency Eat Well
www.eatwell.gov.uk
www.eatwell.gov.uk/healthy_diet/

Quality Meat Scotland
www.qmscotland.co.uk

Quality Meat Scotland
www.speciallyselected.co.uk

Tel: 0131 472 4040



- Your local community dietitian – through your health centre or nearest large hospital.
- Your local Health Promotion Unit.

This guide should not be applied to children under five, pregnant or breast feeding women, those under the care of their doctor or those who may have special dietary needs.

The food selection guide in this leaflet is based on 'The Balance of Good Health' with kind permission of the Food Standards Agency.

The nutrition content of this leaflet has been checked by The British Dietetic Association.



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