

## Nutrition & Healthy Eating

Eating a variety of the right foods can improve general wellbeing, reduce the risk of conditions including heart disease, stroke, some cancers, diabetes, and osteoporosis.

<https://www.bda.uk.com/foodfacts/HealthyEating.pdf>

The *Eatwell* Guide shows the different types of foods and drinks we should consume, and in what proportions, to have a healthy, balanced diet.

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/528200/Eatwell\\_guide\\_booklet.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/528200/Eatwell_guide_booklet.pdf)



Source: Public Health England in association with the Welsh government, Food Standards Scotland and the Food Standards Agency in Northern Ireland

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## The Guidelines

1. Eat at least 5 portions of a variety of fruit and vegetables every day, try to include green leafy vegetables. Try to make your plate colourful!
2. Base meals on potatoes, bread, rice, pasta or other starchy carbohydrates

- a. Starchy food should make up over a 1/3 of the food we eat
  - b. Choose wholegrain options (e.g. whole wheat pasta, brown rice) where possible as these are high in fibre
3. Have some dairy or dairy alternatives (e.g. fortified soya or oat based products )
- a. Choose lower fat and sugar options
  - b. These are good sources of protein, vitamins and calcium, which keep our bones strong
4. Eat beans, pulses, fish or eggs, meat and other proteins
- a. Plant protein (e.g. beans, peas, lentils, chickpeas, tofu etc) are a healthy alternative to meat as they are naturally very low in fat & high in fibre, protein, vitamins and minerals
  - b. Animal protein (meat, eggs, fish)
    - Try to eat less meat as it tends to be high in saturated fat, has been associated with an increased risk of premature death and death from heart disease
    - Choose lean meats like chicken and fish. When preparing chicken, remove skin, fat and avoid frying
    - Try to reduce the amount of processed meats in the diet (sausages, bacon) as these have been associated with an increased risk of bowel cancer  
<http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/Goodfood/Pages/red-meat.aspx>
    - You are recommended to eat 2 portions of fish every week, one of which should be oily (e.g. sardines and mackerel) - choose fish based on their sustainability and only chose those which are certified  
[http://www.mcsuk.org/downloads/fisheries/PocketGoodFishGuide\\_2016\\_high.pdf](http://www.mcsuk.org/downloads/fisheries/PocketGoodFishGuide_2016_high.pdf)  
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/blogs/food/2011/02/how-to-buy-sustainable-fish.shtml>
5. Choose unsaturated oils and spreads and eat in small amounts to help reduce 'bad' cholesterol in the blood. Choose oils/spreads made from olive, sunflower or vegetable oils as opposed to butter which can lead to high cholesterol
6. Drink 6-8 cups of fluid a day - ideally water
7. If consuming foods and drinks high in fat, salt or sugar have these less often and in small amounts (e.g. crisps, cakes, sweets)

### **Further information about healthy eating and nutrition**

- [Weight loss advice from the BDA \(British Dietetic Association\)](#)
- [A BMI healthy weight calculator](#)
  - BMI is useful as an indicator for whether you are a healthy weight  
<http://www.nhs.uk/Tools/Pages/Healthyweightcalculator.aspx>
  - However it does have limitations as it does not account for age, gender or muscle mass so should only be used as a guideline
  - In order to lose weight, the calories consumed need to be reduced and also try to increase physical activity levels

- If you feel you would benefit from the support of a group, there are various options open to you:
  1. *Weight Watchers* is free for 12 weeks when referred by your GP  
<https://www.weightwatchers.com/uk/>
  2. *Slimming World* is free for 12 weeks when referred by your GP  
<http://www.slimmingworld.co.uk/>
  3. *More Life* is a specialist weight management programme that is free when referred by your GP  
<http://www.more-life.co.uk/Default.aspx?PageName=oxfordshire>.
- Malnutrition is a major public health issue, approximately 3 million people in the UK are malnourished or at risk of malnutrition – it can affect anyone but is particularly common among older people <https://www.bda.uk.com/foodfacts/MalnutritionFactSheet.pdf>
- In order to maintain strong bones it is important to include calcium-rich foods (dairy, dairy-alternatives, green leafy vegetables) and ensure you are getting enough Vitamin D (can be made in our bodies from exposure to sunlight); eating Vitamin D and calcium rich foods such as oily fish, egg yolks, red meat, fortified breakfast cereals, milk and dairy alternatives regularly. You may need to take a supplement if you do not get enough (safe) sun exposure. If you are concerned about your vitamin D intake discuss this with your GP, Practice Nurse or other health care professional.