



Weight Management 6 Weeks to change your life!

Healthy eating is comprised of a balanced diet rich in fruit and vegetables, whole grains, healthy sources of protein and some fats.

THERE ARE 5 MAIN FOOD GROUPS:

- Fruit and vegetables.
- Starchy carbohydrates such as bread, pasta, potatoes and rice.
- Proteins such as meat, fish, eggs, pulses and beans.
- Dairy and alternatives.
- Oils and spreads.

We need all of these food groups in our diet but in varying amounts. Part of healthy eating is eating the right amount of food to match our energy needs.

FRUIT AND VEGETABLES HAVE MANY HEALTH BENEFITS:

- There are a large variety to choose from and they taste great!
- They provide vitamins and minerals, including folate, vitamin C and potassium.
- They provide dietary fibre, which helps maintain a healthy gut and prevents constipation and other digestive problems.
- They can help reduce the risk of serious health problems, such as heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes, obesity and some cancers.
- They are usually low in fat and calories (if you don't cook them in oil).
- Fruit and vegetables can be fresh, frozen, tinned or dried.

CARBOHYDRATES - BREAD, PASTA, RICE AND OTHER STARCHY FOODS:

- Are a good source of energy.
- Are a good source of fibre, calcium, iron and B vitamins.

Carbohydrates have a bad reputation for being fattening but gram for gram they contain half the calories of fat. Just watch out for the added fats you use when you cook and serve them, this increases the calorie content.

When eating bread, rice or pasta it is best to go for the whole grain varieties and when having potatoes eat the skin for added fibre.

Wholegrain varieties are a good source of fibre. There are 2 sources of fibre- insoluble and soluble fibre.

The body is unable to digest insoluble fibre, this means that it passes through the gut and helps waste products and food move through the gut more easily. Foods that are a good source of insoluble fibre include wholegrain bread, brown rice and brown pasta.

Soluble fibre is partially digested by the body and helps to reduce the amount of cholesterol in the blood. Good sources of soluble fibre include pulses and oats.

MEAT, FISH & ALTERNATIVES:

Meats such as chicken, pork, lamb and beef are all good sources of protein. People who eat a lot of red and processed meats are advised to reduce the amount they currently eat because of the likely link to bowel cancer.

Red meat is a great source of iron and vitamin B12. Some meats are high in saturated fat which can lead to increased bad LDL cholesterol levels. It's important when having meat to go for the leanest option and always trim away any visible fat.

Pulses are another source of protein, fibre, vitamins and minerals. They are low in fat and count towards your 5 a day. A great alternative protein source for non-meat eaters as they are also a good source of iron. If you buy pulses that are tinned, choose the ones that have no added salt or sugar.

Eggs are a very good source of protein, vitamin A, vitamin D, vitamin B2 and iodine. Eggs do contain cholesterol, but the cholesterol in eggs doesn't seem to significantly raise cholesterol levels.

**eat the right amount
of food to match
your energy needs**

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Fish

It is recommended that we eat 2 portions of fish a week with one of these portions being oily fish. Oily fish is a good source of omega 3 fatty acids which are essential for a healthy heart. It is also a good source of vitamin D. Some oily fish contain bones, such as tinned sardines and salmon, these are good sources of phosphorous and calcium. White fish is another low-fat alternative to red and processed meats. Shellfish provide a good source of zinc, copper, iodine and selenium.

Milk and Dairy Products

Milk, cheese and yoghurt are another great source of protein and calcium. The calcium found in dairy foods is especially good for us as the body can absorb it easily.

The fat content of milk is important for young children but for older children and adults it is best to go for low fat options. Cheese can be high in salt and fat. Cheese can be part of a healthy balanced diet, but it is important to keep track of how much you eat. Either go for the low-fat varieties or go for stronger flavours and you won't need as much. If you eat butter, use it sparingly or go for the low-fat spreads.

We all need some fat in our diet, it's another source of energy and provides essential fatty acids which the body cannot make. Fats help the body absorb nutrients such as vitamins A, D, E and K.

Fats

2 main types - saturated and unsaturated fat.

As part of a healthy diet, it is important that we cut down the amount of saturated fat we eat. Trans fats are found naturally in some foods. Hydrogenated vegetable oils may contain trans fats. Like saturated fat, trans fats can cause cholesterol levels to rise and can lead to heart disease.

Eating foods that contain unsaturated fat can be good for you as unsaturated fat helps to lower cholesterol levels. Foods containing unsaturated fat include - oily fish, olive and sunflower oil, nuts and seeds and avocados.

Sugar

Sugar can occur naturally in some foods, such as fruits and milk but many foods have sugars added to them, such as biscuits, cakes, fizzy drinks and juice drinks. These foods often contain many calories but are low in other nutrients, they can also cause tooth decay.

The sugar that naturally occurs in foods is less likely to cause tooth decay as these sugars are more complex sugars contained in the structure of the fruit. If the fruit is blended or juiced the sugars are then released and these then can become harmful to teeth. Fruit juice can still be a healthy option, but it is best to drink it along with a meal.

Vitamins

It is important to eat a varied, balanced diet to get all the vitamins and minerals your body needs. There are 2 types of vitamins - water-soluble and fat-soluble vitamins.

Water-soluble vitamins are the B vitamins, vitamin C and folic acid. They are found mainly in vegetables, fruits and grains. They are not stored in the body; this is why it is important to consume these types of foods frequently.

Water-soluble vitamins are easily destroyed by air and heat. They are easily lost in water, so using boiling as a cooking method is not the best option. It is better to grill or steam foods rather than boil them to preserve more vitamins.

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NOTES

Fat-soluble vitamins include vitamin A, D, E and K. These vitamins are found mainly in oily fish, butter, liver, dairy products and vegetable oils.

Fat-soluble vitamins are stored in the body in the fatty and liver tissues.

Consuming more of these vitamins than our body needs can be harmful.

Minerals

Found in foods such as - fish, meat, vegetables, fruits, nuts, cereals, milk and dairy products. The three main reasons we need minerals include:

- Converting food into energy
- Building strong teeth and bones.
- Controlling the body's fluid balance inside and outside of the cells.

Our body requires minerals to function properly, especially essential minerals, such as iron and calcium.

We also need trace elements to function well. These are found in a variety of foods and are only needed in very small amounts, for example, fluoride and iodine.