



The Eatwell Guide to a healthy, balanced diet

The Eatwell Guide provides advice on what and how much to eat in order to maintain a healthy diet. Aim to achieve balance over the course of a day, or even a week, to feel the benefits.



Drink plenty of fluids: aim for 6-8 glasses a day

Water, low-fat milk and reduced sugar or sugar-free drinks including tea and coffee all count towards your daily fluid intake. Fruit juice and smoothies also count but they contain free sugars that contribute to tooth decay, so these drinks should be limited to 150ml per day.



Eat five portions or more of a variety of fruit and vegetables

Fruit and vegetables, whether fresh, frozen, tinned, dried or juiced, should make up a third of what we eat every day. They are an important source of vitamins, minerals and fibre.

A third of your food should be carbohydrates

Starchy foods such as potatoes, bread, rice and pasta are a good energy supply and the main source of a range of nutrients in our diet.

Eating the wholegrain option as often as possible is a great way to slow the release of energy from these foods, while also increasing your fibre intake. Choose wholewheat pasta and brown rice, or simply leave skins on potatoes. Remember, there are also higher-fibre versions of white bread and pasta available too.

Eat small amounts of unsaturated oils and spreads

Unsaturated fats are healthier fats that mainly come from plants, such as nuts and seeds. They include vegetable, rapeseed, olive and sunflower oils. Unlike saturated fats, they do not raise blood cholesterol.

However, all types of fat are high in calories and should be eaten sparingly.

Include an important source of calcium in your daily diet

Having a daily intake of calcium in the form of milk, cheese, yogurt or fromage frais is important for bone health. It is also a good source of protein and some vitamins. Try to go for low fat and low sugar products where possible, like skimmed milk, reduced-fat cheese or plain, low-fat yoghurt. Dairy alternatives such as almond and soya milk are also available.

Put some protein on your plate

Beans, pulses, fish, eggs and meat are good sources of protein, vitamins and minerals. Aim for at least two portions of fish every week – one of which should be oily, such as salmon or mackerel. Pulses such as beans, peas and lentils are good alternatives to meat because they're lower in fat and higher in fibre and protein, too. Choose lean cuts of meat and mince and eat less red and processed meat like bacon, ham and sausages.

Restrict foods that are high in fat, salt and sugar

Food such as chocolate, cakes, biscuits, sugary soft drinks and ice cream are not needed in the diet.

Aim to eat them as an infrequent treat and in small amounts.

Adapted from the Eatwell Guide, www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-eatwell-guide

