

nationalgrid

**Nutrition
on the go**

Healthy eating guide



Healthy
by Choice

Contents

| | |
|--|-----------|
| What is healthy eating? | 01 |
| Macronutrients | 03 |
| Micronutrients | 05 |
| A balanced plate of food | 06 |
| Nutrition on the move | 08 |
| Fast food – the last resort | 10 |
| Work and health | 12 |
| The practicalities | 13 |
| 7 a day | 14 |
| Nutrition and digestion | 15 |
| Eating at work | 16 |
| Healthy plate guide – how to eat your PPE | 17 |

Disclaimer

While the information contained within this booklet has been sourced from credible sources it does not constitute medical advice. Any specific nutritional issue should be discussed with your GP or a registered dietitian.

What is healthy eating?

We eat food to create energy in our body so that we are able to get through the day. However, we tend to forget that we eat food to take on board the nutrients that are absolutely vital to the correct functioning of our body.

It is important to be aware of the 3 main macronutrients and over 17 different micro-nutrients so that we can include these in our daily food choices.

Macronutrients

These include carbohydrate, protein and fat. We should aim to eat complex carbohydrates, a mix of animal and/or plant protein and healthy fats with each meal.

Micronutrients

These are known as vitamins, minerals and phytochemicals (plant chemicals) which are vital in energy production. These nutrients are key in preventing disease and supporting the correct functioning of all areas of the body.

The good news

If we choose unprocessed, wholefoods (listed on the following pages) we will get a healthy dose of vitamins and minerals throughout our day. Studies suggest that eating plenty of wholefoods will dramatically cut our risk of most chronic diseases including cancer, diabetes and heart disease.

Bad news

If we choose processed food products containing a long ingredients list, we will miss out the crucial nutrients that help keep us safe from disease and make us feel full of vitality.



Tip:

Read the ingredients list on your food. Avoid foods with lots of chemicals and words you don't understand.

What is healthy eating?

Hydration

Caffeinated drinks and alcohol are dehydrating. Water is the best way to hydrate your body but you can also get fluids through fruit juices, sparkling or flavoured waters and tea. Ideally we should be consuming 8–10 glasses of water a day (not easy though if you are on the road and have limited toilet access!). Signs of dehydration can be: thirst, tiredness, fatigue, lack of concentration, dizziness – not good when you are on the road.

Good hydration can help prevent and treat many ailments such as: heart disease, diabetes, constipation, bad skin, low energy.



Tip:

Try to take a pint of water to bed with you at night and drink it as soon as you wake up.

Macronutrients

Carbohydrates

Not just fuel, carbohydrates include a wide range of foods that are vital for brain function, cellular health and digestion. This is a large food group containing

vegetables, salads, fruits, beans, pulses and grains. Vegetables, salads and fruit are our best source of nutrients and should dominate the human diet.

Healthy carbohydrates

| |
|--------------|
| Vegetables |
| Sweet potato |
| Salads |
| Fruit |
| Oats |
| Brown rice |
| Beans |
| Pulses |

Nutrient-poor carbohydrates

| |
|---|
| Cane sugar |
| White rice, pasta and bread |
| Crisps and crackers |
| Processed cereal – Rice Krispies, Frosties etc... |
| Cereal bars high in sugar |
| Cakes and biscuits |
| Jelly and jam |
| Soft drinks |

Protein

Vital in making, repairing and transporting cells. We build our immune defence from

proteins and they support chemical reactions in the body. Proteins are split into animal and plant sources.

Animal protein

| |
|---------------------------------------|
| Meat – chicken, beef, turkey |
| Fish – salmon, mackerel, cod etc. |
| Shellfish – prawns, mussels etc. |
| Yoghurt – particularly Greek strained |
| Cheese |
| Eggs |

Plant protein

| |
|---|
| Beans – butterbean, cannellini, kidney etc. |
| Nuts – almonds, walnuts, brazils etc. |
| Seeds – flaxseed, pumpkin, sunflower etc. |
| Chickpeas |
| Lentils |
| Quinoa |



Tip:
Beans and pulses are known to lower bad cholesterol.

Macronutrients

Fats

Contrary to popular belief, fats are good! Healthy fats are required for fertility, brain function, organ protection and energy. There are also some fats that are classed as essential because we cannot make them in our bodies, yet they are critical to our health. We must get the essential fats from our diet. These include Omega 3 and 6 oils.

Healthy fats are found in oily fish like salmon, mackerel and sardines. We also find them in great snack foods like nuts and seeds. Other excellent sources of healthy fats include olive oil, avocado and coconut.

Healthy fats have a function in our body and unless we overeat them, they will not get laid down as fat in the body like the fat in cakes and pastry! Fats to avoid are cheap vegetable oils, trans fats (fats that have been heated to high temperatures or oils that have been solidified as in margarine) and processed foods containing high fat.

Healthy fats

| |
|--|
| Oily fish like salmon, sardines and mackerel (Omega 3) |
| Flaxseed or linseed (Omega 3) |
| Nuts (Particularly walnuts – Omega 3) |
| Seeds (Particularly pumpkin seeds – Omega 3) |
| Olives and olive oil, egg yolks |
| Avocado |
| Coconut |
| Organic butter (grass-fed cows e.g. Kerrygold) |
| Fats from grass fed animals/dairy products |

Unhealthy fats

| |
|--|
| Margarine |
| Vegetable oil particularly heated to high temperatures |
| Cakes, biscuits, pastries |
| Crisps |
| Doughnuts |
| Chips |
| Batter |
| Confectionery |
| Fat in processed meats |
| Pies |



Micronutrient table

| Nutrient | Main function | Best food sources |
|---|--|---|
| Vitamin A | Healthy immune barriers and epithelial tissue, growth, reproduction, bone and red blood cell formation, vision | Foods high in beta carotene, fortified foods, liver |
| Beta carotene (as mixed carotenoids) | Antioxidant, source of vitamin A, immune booster, possible cancer prevention, vision | Orange, yellow, red and green vegetables and fruits |
| Vitamin D | Calcium metabolism, bone mineralisation, possible cancer prevention | Fortified milk, fatty fish like mackerel |
| Vitamin E | Antioxidant, anticoagulant, protection from heart disease, possible cancer prevention | Wheat germ, vegetable oils, nuts |
| Vitamin K | Bone mineralization, blood clotting | Green leafy vegetables |
| Vitamin C | Antioxidant, immunity, antiviral in test-tubes, cancer prevention, increases iron absorption | Fruits and vegetables, especially peppers, greens and citrus fruits |
| Thiamine (B1) | Energy metabolism, mood, nervous system | Whole grains, brown rice, fortified foods, beans, pork, oysters |
| Riboflavin (B2) | Energy metabolism, antioxidant, possible migraine prevention | Dairy products, leafy greens, oysters |
| Niacin (B3) (nicotinic acid) | Energy metabolism, lowers LDL cholesterol and triglycerides, raises HDL cholesterol | Poultry, red meat, fish, legumes, peanut butter, nuts |
| Vitamin B6 | Protein metabolism, immunity, neurotransmitter synthesis (e.g. serotonin and dopamine), treats peripheral neuropathy and PMS | Meat, fish, poultry, eggs, potatoes, fortified cereals, peanuts, soybeans |
| Folate | Cell division, prevents neural tube defects and perhaps other birth defects, lowers homocysteine, possible cancer prevention | Leafy greens, legumes, oranges, broccoli, cauliflower |
| Vitamin B12 (cobalamin) | Cell division, amino acid metabolism, nervous system, mental function | Fish, shellfish, meat, fortified products |
| Calcium | Bone mineralisation, muscle contraction | Dairy, beans, pulses, broccoli, almonds, greens, fortified foods, fish bones (tinned salmon/sardines) |
| Magnesium | Bone mineralisation, active in more than 300 chemical reactions in the body | Whole grains, nuts, green vegetables, beans and pulses |
| Iron | Makes haemoglobin which carries oxygen, makes energy in the mitochondria | Meat, beans, pulses, tofu, leafy greens, breakfast cereals |
| Zinc | Growth, immunity, wound healing, taste, sperm production, antioxidant, prostate health | Nuts, meat, poultry, fish and oysters |
| Selenium | Antioxidant, immunity, possible cancer prevention, viral infections | Whole grains from selenium-rich soils, poultry, meat, dairy |

A balanced plate of food

Hit all three macronutrient bases by trying the following meal ideas. Eating in this way will nourish your body and make you feel more sustained because you are taking on board the right combination of nutrient-rich fuel:

Breakfast

- Natural yoghurt with seeds/nuts and fruit.
- Porridge with seeds/nuts and fruit.
- A homemade smoothie or juice including fruit, veg and milk/yoghurt.
- Cereal – Make sure it is wholegrain and low in sugar. 50g of Weetabix contains 2g of sugar whereas Frosties contain 19g! Add nuts and seeds to your cereal to get your protein and healthy fats.
- Beans – Choose low salt/sugar or try cannellini beans with nothing added and create your own flavours by adding herbs, spices and a little olive oil.
- Eggs – An omelette takes minutes to make. Add spinach, mushrooms or tomato for some extra vitamins and minerals.
- Unfortunately we tend to think of breakfast as cereal or toast which, if eaten alone, is not the best start to the day as it is predominantly simple sugars. There is nothing stopping you eating healthy leftovers from the night before, soup or vegetables for breakfast – many other food cultures do!



Tip:

Invest in a blender so you can create super healthy immune system supporting juices like apple, blueberry, carrot and ginger.

Snacks

Ideally we want to rest our digestive system by eating three substantial meals per day. However, if you have a very active job (or you don't eat enough at breakfast or lunch!) you may need to snack. Choose balanced snacks that will stabilise your blood sugar.

- A handful of nuts and/or seeds.
- Rice cake/oat cake/Ryvita with almond/hazelnut butter or hummus or cottage cheese or half a banana.
- Plain yoghurt with fruit and nuts.
- Vegetable sticks (carrots, cucumber, peppers, celery) and hummus/yoghurt dip/salsa.

Lunch

Soup – Choose one packed full of vegetables and protein to sustain your energy properly. For example vegetable and bean or chicken broth.

Salads – Unfairly seen as low in energy, a decent salad can sustain even the most active person. Choose one that contains quinoa, nuts, seeds, roasted veg, beans, meat and healthy fats like avocado. Be careful of sugary dressings that will soon make you feel hungry again.

Sandwiches – Opt for wholegrain, brown pitta bread, wraps and sourdough as healthier options. Choose sandwiches with meat, fish, eggs, plus salads. Sandwiches don't really allow you to eat enough nutrients because there's only so much you can fit in a sandwich!



Tip:

So try to eat extra veg like cherry tomatoes or carrot sticks and hummus alongside your sandwich.

Nutrition on the move

Meal deals

Choose wisely, avoid the 'meal deal' and special offers that include a fizzy drink and a bag of crisps. These products are high in fat and sugar and are of little nutritional value.

Choices

Ignore the 'confectionery' aisle... again these foods will undoubtedly be high in fat and sugar. Look at the content of your sandwich choice; limit those high in mayonnaise, cheese, bacon (high in saturated fats), also choose wholemeal bread in preference to white bread (wholemeal bread will keep you fuller for longer and is far more nutritious).

Service Stations

Outlets are getting the message that customers want a healthier option, some are now offering a good selection of fruit and prepared salads. If there is a Marks and Spencer or Waitrose outlet, there will be some great choices: nutty super wholefood salad; pasta salad with spinach and pine nuts; carrots and hummus; chicken fajita wrap; Mexican three bean wrap; falafel and vine leaves...



Fast food

If you have a limited choice of maybe McDonald's or Burger King, try to choose the healthiest option. Standard burgers are unlikely to fill you up and keep you sustained, so a choice of a large salad, such as McDonald's grilled chicken salad, will be a healthier choice, but watch the salad dressing – which is high in fat. Burger King's sweet chilli chicken wrap is another healthier alternative to a burger.



Tip:
Buy nuts and fresh fruit as a great healthy snack.



Fast food – this should be a last resort!...

| Swap this | For this |
|--|------------------------------------|
| KFC – original recipe meal | Chicken wrap |
| McDonald's – Big Mac meal | Grilled chicken salad |
| Starbucks – Toasted club sandwich | Chicken and tomato sandwich |
| Burger King – Whopper meal with cheese | Chilli chicken wrap |
| Subway – BMT sandwich | Veggie Delite |



...the benefits of this healthy swap are

| Info | Cuts out |
|---|---------------------------|
| Grilled chicken rather than fried will reduce your intake of trans fats | 30g fat 546 calories |
| Cut the dressing and opt for vinegar. Cutting out bread reduces your intake of processed carbohydrate. | 22g fat 375 calories |
| The lycopene nutrient found in tomatoes lowers 'bad' LDL cholesterol | 11.8g fat 324 calories |
| Ask for extra salad in your wrap to boost fibre intake | 67g fat 971 calories |
| Chilli can speed up metabolism and opting for a low sugar bread will reduce processed carbohydrate content. | 18.7g fat 229 calories |



Work and health

It is important to remember that lifestyle choices (nutrition, smoking, alcohol and activity levels) have the biggest influence on our health. Make sure your food choices are healthy to support your day-to-day wellbeing.

Cardiovascular disease is the biggest killer in the UK. The British Heart Foundation (BHF) has published guideline daily amounts (GDAs) to try to help people understand and monitor their own daily intake of fat, saturated fat,

salt and kcal. Regular over-consumption, particularly of processed foods, can increase an individual's risk of cardiovascular disease through weight gain, increased blood pressure and increased cholesterol.

Balancing work and a healthy lifestyle can be challenging. Eating healthily requires the right tools, information and planning – the same ingredients as in a successful work project...

Kcal

Men – 2,500

Women – 2,000

(for weight loss: 1,500–1,800 kcal per day)

Salt

Men – 6g

Women – 6g

(above 6g can increase blood pressure)

Fat (Total)

Men – 95g

Women – 70g

Sugar

Men – 120g

Women – 90g

(higher sugar intake is linked to energy fluctuations and weight gain)

Saturated Fat

Men – 30g

Women – 20g

(high fat intake linked to high cholesterol)

The practicalities

Planning

You will have far more control over your food choices and the nutrient quality of your food if you are preparing and providing your own food for the day... and undoubtedly save money.



Portable

There are amazing and versatile 'carriers of food' available these days: Tupperware boxes, flasks, cool bags, thermos containers...

Leftovers

When you are preparing your dinner, cook another portion and take this to work the next day for your lunch; salads with pasta and chicken/brown rice and tuna/quinoa and chickpeas/boiled eggs.

Batch cook

Prepare soup in batches and freeze. Take a portion out the night before, heat in the morning and take in a flask for lunch. Alternatively, heat a prepared carton of soup/tin in the morning.

Variety

Sandwiches can be made in the morning or the night before and stored in sealed bags or a Tupperware box. Try to incorporate as many ingredients as possible, increasing the variety of nutrients you are obtaining.

Utensils

Be prepared... remember to pack any knives/spoons that are required to prepare/eat your meals, e.g. a knife for spreading cottage cheese on Ryvitas; a spoon for eating soup.



Tip:

Boiled eggs are one of the best portable health foods to take with you if you have a very mobile job.

7 a day

People who eat seven or more portions of vegetables, salad and fruit a day have a 33% reduced risk of death from chronic disease than people who eat one portion.

What counts as a portion?

A general guide is that a portion of fruit or vegetables is roughly a handful, which is around 80 grams in weight.

Remember that vitamins C, B6 and B12 are water soluble, which means they are not stored in the body, therefore these need to be eaten regularly. The best way to keep as much of the water-soluble vitamins as possible is to steam or grill, rather than boil.

Green vegetables



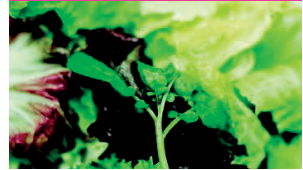
3 heaped tablespoons e.g. peas

Root vegetables



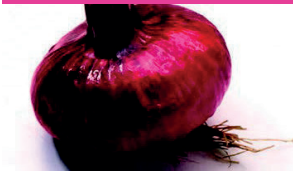
3 heaped tablespoons e.g. diced carrots

Green vegetables



1 cereal bowl e.g. mixed salads

Medium-sized vegetables



1 whole vegetable

Small vegetables



3 handfuls e.g. sliced mushrooms

Large fruits



1 slice e.g. melon

Medium-sized fruits



1 whole fruit e.g. an apple

Small fruits



2 whole fruits e.g. avocados

Berry fruits



2 handfuls e.g. raspberries

Nutrition and digestion

Digestive problems are more common in shift workers due to disruption of the body clock and poor diet. Plan your meals to help you stay alert at work and to relax/sleep when you need to rest.

When at work

- Choose foods that you find easy to ingest like soup, rice, salad, smoothies or juices and fruit.
 - Choose foods that are easy to digest such as pasta, rice, bread, salad, fruit, vegetables and milk products.
 - Avoid fatty, spicy and/or heavy meals as these are more difficult to digest.
- Drink plenty of fluids as dehydration can contribute to indigestion.
 - Try to eat away from your desk in a quiet environment – chew your food thoroughly.
 - Eating while distracted or stressed may contribute to poor digestion and symptoms can include bloating, burping and indigestion.
 - Mental or physical stimulation will impair digestion as blood flow will be diverted away from the stomach so try not to eat on the run.



Eating at work

Work can often involve preparing food at work with limited facilities, so consider the following simple modifications to make your food choices more healthy:

Breakfasts

| Less healthy choices | Good healthy alternatives |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Granola (sugary muesli cereal) | Alpen no added sugar muesli |
| Bitesize chocolate Weetabix | Large Weetabix with fresh/canned fruit |
| Rice Krispies | Large size Shredded Wheat with fresh/canned fruit (natural juices) |
| Sausage sandwich | Boiled, poached or scrambled eggs, lean bacon (cut the fat off) on wholemeal toast |
| White toast or bagel with jam | Wholemeal toast or bagel with low-sugar jam |
| Frosties with full fat milk | Natural low-fat yoghurt with fresh/canned fruit (natural juices) |

Sandwiches

- Opt for wholegrain, brown pitta bread, wraps and sourdough as healthier options.
- Choose healthier sandwiches such as lean meats (this includes ham, beef, turkey and chicken without the skin), tuna, smoked mackerel, hard-boiled egg, and cheeses such as Edam, Emmental, Gruyère, mozzarella and low-fat cream cheese.
- Go for a sandwich that contains salad. Add or ask for extra, if possible.
- If the sandwich is home-made try having it without butter, spread, mayonnaise or other dressing especially if the bread is moist, or just have a small amount.

Hot food

- Baked potatoes are a good lunchtime choice. Healthy fillings include beans, chilli, sliced meat, cottage cheese and ratatouille. Try to avoid ready-mixed fillings that contain lots of mayonnaise, because these can be high in fat.
- Try soup with chunky vegetables. Soups can also help count towards your 7 a day and to make it a filling and balanced meal include one with protein such as beans or meat.
- Pasta is another popular option, opt for wholemeal pasta where possible. Avoid dishes served with a creamy or cheesy sauce. Tomato or vegetable-based sauces are a healthier choice and the vegetables will count towards your daily portions of fruit and vegetables.

Healthy plate guide – how to eat your PPE!

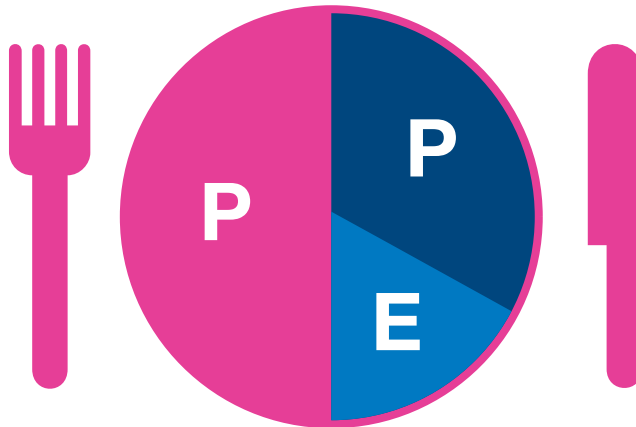
Use the plate below as a rough guide to the types of food that make up a healthy plate. This combination will support your energy and vital bodily functions.

Plants

Vegetables, salads, fruit, beans, pulses and wholegrain.

Protein

Meat, fish, eggs, beans, pulses, dairy, nuts and seeds.



Essential/healthy fats

Nuts, seeds, oily fish (salmon, mackerel, sardines), olive oil, avocado.

The power is on your plate

| Food diary | Day 1 | Day 2 | Day 3 | Day 4 | Day 5 | Day 6 | Day 7 |
|---|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Morning | | | | | | | |
| Mid-morning | | | | | | | |
| Midday | | | | | | | |
| Mid-afternoon | | | | | | | |
| Early evening | | | | | | | |
| Evening | | | | | | | |
| Drinks | | | | | | | |
| Energy (1-10) 1 - worst 10 - best | | | | | | | |
| Mood (1-10) | | | | | | | |
| Exercise? | | | | | | | |