



Healthy eating guide - Special Challenge 2010

Your entry should demonstrate that you have considered current healthy eating guidelines. The UK healthy eating model, *The eatwell plate*, shows the types, amounts and proportions of foods we should eat to stay healthy. *The eatwell plate* is accompanied by the *Eight tips for eating well*.



Fruits and vegetables



Eating at least five portions of fruit and vegetables every day is recommended for health. All fruits and vegetables count except for potatoes. Fruits and vegetables do not need to be fresh or raw; canned, dried, frozen, juices or cooked in soups and stews are just as good and all count towards 5-A-DAY.

Fruits and vegetables are low in fat and high in fibre, so help to provide us with a range of important nutrients without exceeding our energy requirements. We need fibre in our diet to help us maintain a healthy gut.

They also contain vitamins and minerals – the main ones being vitamin C, vitamin A and folate. Some fruit and vegetables are higher in certain vitamins and minerals than others e.g. bananas are high in potassium, where as dried apricots are high in iron. This is why it is important to eat a range of fruit and vegetables rather than having the same ones all the time – a good saying to remember is 'eat a rainbow!'

Fruit and vegetables also contain substances known as antioxidants which help protect against diseases such as cancer and heart disease.





Bread, rice, potatoes, pasta and other starchy foods

Foods from this group should make up a third of the food we eat and be included at each meal. They provide us with energy in the form of starchy carbohydrates. Eating more starchy foods such as bread, potatoes, rice and pasta helps to reduce the amount of fat and increase the amount of fibre in the diet. Wholemeal and wholegrain versions should be included as well as white or refined versions to improve fibre intake, which keeps the gut healthy.



Potatoes, yams, plantains and sweet potato fall into this group, rather than the *Fruit and vegetable* group, because they contain starchy carbohydrates.

Milk and dairy foods

These foods provide calcium and are very important for keeping bones healthy. These foods should be eaten in moderate amounts every day.



Lower fat versions should be encouraged as much as possible, such as semi-skimmed milk, low fat yogurt and reduced fat cheese.

Meat, fish, eggs, beans and other non-dairy sources of protein

These foods provide protein for growth and development and minerals such as iron, zinc and magnesium and also B vitamins. Leaner cuts of meat and lower fat versions of these foods should be included. Visible fat and skin should be trimmed from meat and poultry, and cooking methods should be used that do not add fat, e.g. grilling, baking, steaming or poaching instead of frying. This helps to reduce the amount of saturated fat in the diet.

It is recommended that fish is included in the diet at least twice a week and that at least one of these is an oily fish, e.g. salmon, trout, mackerel or sardines.

Other sources of non-dairy protein include nuts, tofu, mycoprotein, textured vegetable protein (TVP), beans such as kidney beans and canned baked beans, and pulses such as lentils.





Foods and drinks high in fat and/or sugar

These foods should be eaten in small amounts. Some of these foods, such as oils and spreads, are typically eaten every day, so they should be used sparingly and lower fat alternatives should be used where possible. Other foods, such as cakes and biscuits, should not be eaten too frequently. Food and drinks containing sugar should be eaten as part of meals, rather than between meals.



The Eight tips for eating well

The *eatwell plate* comes with *Eight tips for eating well*. They are as follows:

1. Base your meals on starchy foods.
2. Eat lots of fruit and vegetables.
3. Eat more fish – including a portion of oily fish each week.
4. Cut down on saturated fat and sugar.
5. Try to eat less salt – no more than 6g a day for adults*
6. Get active and try to be a healthy weight.
7. Drink plenty of water.
8. Don't skip breakfast.

For more information, go to: www.eatwell.gov.uk

*More information about the daily recommended maximum of salt for children, can be found on the website above.

