

Embec Care Ltd The Wise Choice Fact sheet



Eating healthily doesn't have to be complicated or boring! In fact, it's about making sure you have plenty of variety.

It's about not eating too much of some things – like calories, saturated fat, sugar and salt – while getting enough of others – like fibre and anti-oxidant vitamins and minerals.

Drinks

Water makes up over 60% of our body weight, and it's important to keep hydrated to maintain this. You should aim to drink 6-8 glasses of liquid like water, juice, milk or fruit squash a day. It's best to avoid too many fizzy drinks as they contain a lot of sugar and calories, which can result in tooth decay and weight gain when consumed excessively.

The five main food groups

There are five main food groups (see below) that we all need to eat to maintain a balanced diet, but it can sometimes be confusing how much of each we are supposed to have.

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1. Fruit and vegetables
2. Starchy foods
3. Meat, poultry, fish, eggs, beans, lentils and nuts
4. Milk and dairy foods
5. Fat, sugar and salt

The eatwell plate can help you.

Here are some facts and tips to help you turn healthy eating advice into enjoyable meals and snacks:

1. Fruit and vegetables

Fruit and vegetables are full of minerals, fibre, and antioxidant vitamins that help our bodies to work efficiently and support our immune systems to keep us healthy. They can be fresh, frozen, dried, canned or juiced and should make up about a third of our diet. Many of us don't eat enough fruit and vegetables, and it can be hard to know how much a 'portion' actually is. Here are a few simple suggestions, which count as one portion each:

One portion is:

- **Breakfast** – a glass of juice **or** a heaped tablespoon of dried fruit **or** a banana with your cereal.
- **Snacks** – an apple **or** a handful of grapes **or** a pear.
- **Lunch** – a side salad **or** a tomato and lettuce in a sandwich **or** three heaped tablespoons of baked beans.
- **Dinner** – three heaped tablespoons of vegetables like peas **or** carrots **or** sweetcorn. You should aim to eat 5 portions a day Remember each portion must be different, and try to choose foods of different colours to help you get the range of vitamins you need.

2. Starchy foods

Foods like bread, chapattis, pitta bread, breakfast cereals, potatoes, rice, noodles and pasta are all starchy foods, which should make up a third of our diet. Wholegrain or wholemeal options contain more fibre which helps us feel full for longer and helps prevent constipation. Starchy foods are a good source of energy, calcium, iron and B vitamins and we should aim to have a serving with every meal. Why not try:

- **Breakfast** – wholegrain cereal **or** porridge **or** wholemeal toast with cut up banana **or** dried fruit.
- **Lunch** – a sandwich **or** brown rice **or** pasta salad
- **Dinner** – stews, casseroles **or** curries with potatoes **or** couscous **or** pasta **or** rice

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One portion is:

- 2 tablespoons of cooked pasta, rice or noodles
- an egg-sized potato
- three tablespoons of cereal

3. Meat, poultry, fish, eggs, beans, lentils and nuts

All of these are a great source of protein, with beans, lentils and nuts being key protein sources for vegetarians. Try to choose lean cuts of meat and remove the skin from poultry before you cook it. This helps to keep your total fat and saturated fat intake in check.

It's recommended that we include a portion of these foods with two of our daily meals, and eat fish once or twice a week. Oily fish like mackerel, salmon, sardines or fresh tuna are particularly good for you, as they contain omega 3 which helps prevent heart disease.

One portion is:

- Fish: 140g
- Meat: 80g (about the size of a pack of cards)
- Beans/pulses: 2-3 heaped tablespoons

4. Milk and dairy foods

These foods are rich in calcium and nutrients that help to keep bones and teeth healthy and strong. Better to choose low-fat dairy options – weight for weight they have less fat and calories, but slightly more calcium, and other important nutrients than full fat products.

Did you know: A pint of whole milk contains 22.8g fat whereas a pint of semi-skimmed has 10.2g?

You should try and have three portions a day.

One portion is:

- A glass of milk (200ml)
- 150g pot of low fat yoghurt
- 30g of cheese (matchbox size)