

recipe

FOR LIFE

Healthy Lifestyle

Information to help you eat well and be well

8

Easy to make
Recipes

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Eating healthily doesn't mean cutting out all your favourite foods, it's just about getting the balance right.

If you add a bit of variety by changing what you usually eat, you'll also get lots of opportunity to experiment.

Remember, healthy eating can be tasty and exciting.



Try to eat:

- ▶ **Plenty** of fruit and vegetables
- ▶ **Plenty** of bread, rice, potatoes, pasta and other starchy foods – choose wholegrain varieties whenever you can
- ▶ **Some** milk and dairy foods
- ▶ **Some** meat, fish, eggs, beans and other non-dairy sources of protein
- ▶ Just a **small amount** of foods and drinks high in fat and/or sugar

**TOP
TIPS**

Healthy Balance



Eating a varied and balanced diet is important for everyone. It helps to make eating more enjoyable and will help you stay healthy and active. The key to achieving a well balanced and healthy diet is to choose a variety of foods from each of the 5 groups and in the right proportions. The Eatwell Plate shows how much of your food should come from each of the 5 food groups: this includes everything you eat during the day, including snacks.

You don't need to get the balance exactly right at every meal. But try to get it right over a whole day or week, and try to choose options that are lower in fat, salt and sugar whenever you can. Try not to skip breakfast as it can help give us the energy we need to start the day, as well as some of the vitamins and minerals we need for good health. Missing breakfast tends to make us snack by mid-morning and we often reach for foods that are high in sugar or fat.

The Eatwell Plate

Fruit and vegetables

Bread, rice, potatoes pasta and other starchy foods

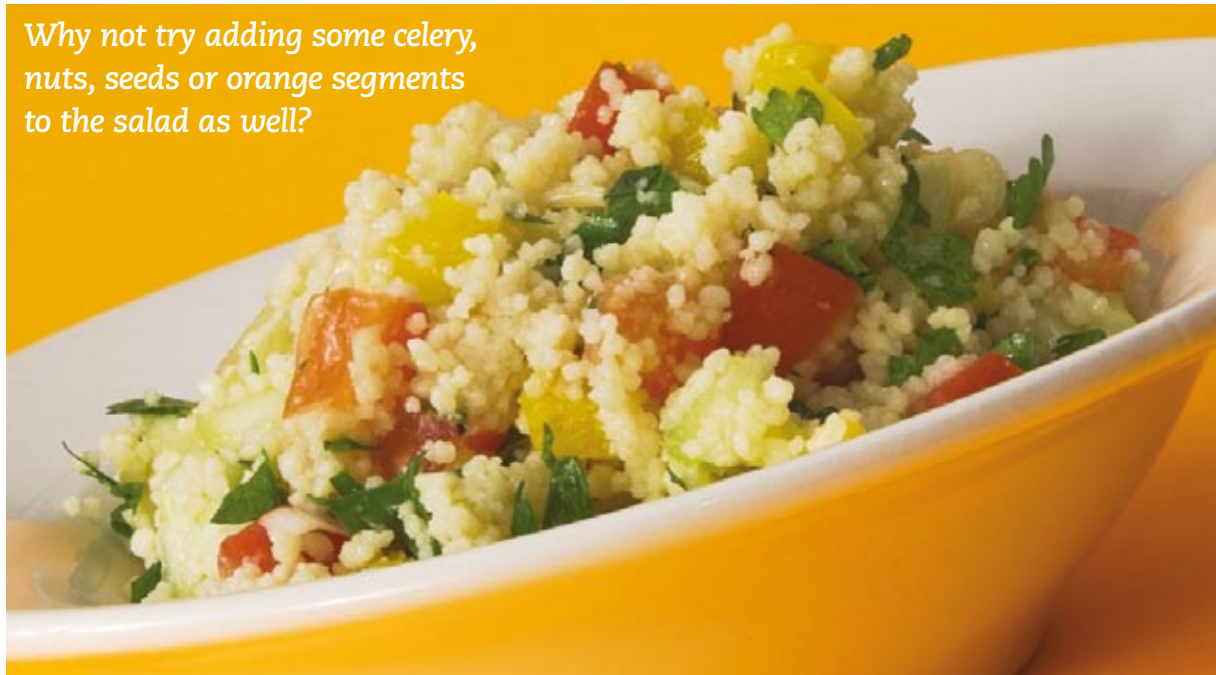


Meat, fish, eggs, beans and other non-dairy sources of protein

Foods and drinks high in fat and/or sugar

Milk and dairy foods

Why not try adding some celery, nuts, seeds or orange segments to the salad as well?



Couscous Salad

Serves 4

recipe

Ingredients

250ml (9 fluid oz) boiling water
10ml (1 dessert spoon) lemon juice
250g (9 oz) plain couscous
1 medium red onion, finely chopped
1 yellow pepper, chopped
1 red pepper, chopped
1 small cucumber or courgette, chopped
2 medium tomatoes, chopped
50g (2 oz) Feta cheese, chopped
Ground black pepper to taste
Basil leaves to garnish (optional)

Method

1. Put the couscous in a large bowl and pour the boiling water and lemon juice over it.
2. Mix with a fork, cover and leave to stand for 5 minutes.
3. Add all the vegetables and black pepper to the couscous and stir.
4. Add the feta cheese and basil leaves.

Serve with grilled chicken or fish for an easy and nutritious meal.

Five A Day

TOP
TIPS

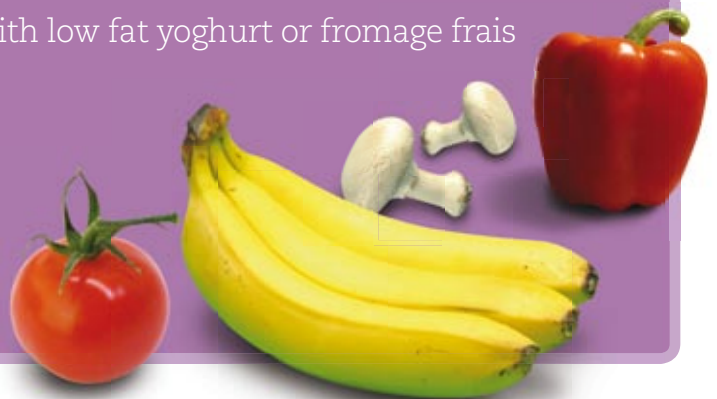
Most of us still aren't eating enough fruit and veg. You can choose from fresh, frozen, tinned, dried or juiced, but remember potatoes count as a starchy food, not as a portion of fruit and veg.

Fruit and veg should make up about a third of the food you eat so try to eat at least 5 portions of a variety of fruit and veg every day. 100% fruit and veg juices count as one portion no matter how much you drink.

Smoothies also count towards your 5-a-day if they contain all the edible pulped fruit and veg.

Tips on easy ways to eat more fruit and vegetables:

- Have a chopped banana on your cereal at breakfast time.
- Try sticks of vegetables as a snack: carrot, peppers and celery are ideal.
- Add frozen peas into a stew or casserole for an extra portion.
- Add extra vegetables like mushrooms or sweetcorn to a plain cheese and tomato pizza.
- Eat a bowl of salad with a pasta meal.
- Have some fruit topped with low fat yoghurt or fromage frais as a pudding.



Hearty Vegetable Soup

Serves 4-6

recipe



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TIPS

This recipe uses fresh, canned and frozen vegetables - they all count towards your 5-a-day.

Ingredients

10ml (1 dessert spoon) vegetable oil
1 medium onion, chopped
2 small carrots, chopped
3 sticks of celery, chopped
400g (14 oz) can chopped tomatoes
50g (2oz) green beans (fresh or frozen)
25 ml (1½ tablespoons) tomato puree
1 leek, sliced
75g (3oz) frozen peas
50g (2oz) dried pasta
1 litre (1¾ pints) water
7g (1½ teaspoons) dried mixed herbs
Pepper to taste

Method

1. Heat the oil in a large pan, then add the onions, carrots, leeks and celery. Lower the heat, cover and cook gently for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally.
2. Add the can of tomatoes, water, tomato puree, beans and frozen peas. Bring to the boil and then add the pasta, herbs and pepper.
3. Reduce the heat and simmer for 15 minutes or until the pasta is cooked, stirring frequently to make sure the pasta doesn't stick.

Serve with a thick slice of wholemeal bread.

Easy Leek & Potato Soup

Serves 3-4

recipe

Ingredients

3 large leeks, chopped into bite sized pieces

5 medium potatoes, chopped into bite sized pieces

1.2 litres (2 pints) low-salt vegetable stock

Ground black pepper, to taste

Method

1. Put all the vegetables into a large saucepan with the stock, cover and bring to the boil.
2. Reduce the heat, season with pepper and simmer for 30 minutes.
3. Serve hot with a slice of thick wholemeal bread.

Shop bought soups can be high in salt so why not use this recipe to make your own instead?



Salt

About three quarters of the salt we eat is 'hidden' in processed foods, so try to check the labels before you buy and choose products lower in salt or those that say 'no added salt'. Also, try not to add salt to your food when cooking and at the table - most of us do it from habit so taste it first.





Vegetarian Option

For Sheperdess Pie: a vegetarian option - substitute 200g (7oz) can baked beans and 110g (4oz) pre-soaked red lentils for the beef or lamb, and add to the recipe at stage 4.

Vegetarians should be able to get all the nutrients they need by eating a balanced diet but need to make sure they're getting enough nutrients, especially protein, iron and selenium, which can sometimes be lacking in a meat-free diet.

Shepherd's Pie

Serves 3-4

recipe

Ingredients

250g (9oz) lean minced beef or lamb
10ml (1 dessert spoon) vegetable oil
1 medium onion, chopped
1 medium carrot, diced
25g (1oz) frozen peas
150ml (¼ pint) low-salt vegetable stock
200g (7 oz) can chopped tomatoes
500g (1lb 2 oz) potatoes, chopped
50ml (2 fluid oz) semi skimmed milk
5g (1 teaspoon) dried mixed herbs
Ground black pepper

Method

1. Preheat the oven to 200°C or gas mark 6.
2. Heat the oil in a frying pan, add the onion and cook gently for 5 minutes.
3. Add the minced beef or lamb, breaking up any lumps and cook until it browns.
4. Add the stock, herbs, pepper, carrots and canned tomatoes.
5. Simmer gently for 20 minutes, stirring occasionally, then add the peas.

6. While the meat filling is cooking, boil the potatoes for 15 minutes or until tender.
7. Drain the potatoes and add the milk. Mash until smooth and creamy.
8. Allow the cooked meat to settle and then skim away any excess fat from the surface with a spoon.
9. Put the meat filling into a baking dish, and top with the mashed potato.
10. Bake until golden brown.

Reduce Fat

Try to avoid using economy mince as, although cheaper, it can be much higher in fat. To reduce the cost try using a smaller amount of lean mince and add in a tin of baked beans or any other beans of your choice.

Calcium

You could use skimmed milk instead of semi-skimmed milk when making mashed potato to reduce the fat content without reducing the calcium content. Calcium helps to keep your bones strong and healthy and, as well as milk and dairy products, can be found in green leafy vegetables (such as broccoli, cabbage and okra, but not spinach), soya beans, tofu, nuts, bread and anything made with fortified flour, and canned fish where you eat the bones, such as sardines and pilchards.

Iron

Meat, beans and lentils are all good sources of Iron. To help the body absorb iron we should try to have vitamin C in the same meal, so Shepherd's Pie is great because you get some vitamin C from the potatoes. To further boost your vitamin C have some broccoli with your meal.

Protein

Other than meat, good sources of protein include pulses (such as lentils and beans), nuts and seeds, quinoa, eggs, soya and soya products such as Quorn™, wheat proteins such as cereals, bread, rice and maize, and milk and dairy products.



TOP
TIPS

Sausage Casserole

Serves 2-3

recipe

Ingredients

1 medium onion, chopped
2 medium carrots, chopped
1 medium parsnip or
½ small swede, chopped
100g (4 oz) frozen peas
2 medium potatoes, chopped
200g (7 oz) can butter beans, rinsed
& drained
4 good quality pork sausages
400g (14 oz) can chopped tomatoes
200 ml (7 fluid oz) low-salt vegetable
stock
1 small clove garlic, peeled and
chopped
7g (1½ teaspoons) dried mixed herbs
Dash of Worcestershire sauce
10ml (1 dessert spoon) vegetable oil
Freshly ground black pepper

Method

1. Heat the oil in a large saucepan, add the sausages and fry them over a medium heat for about 8 minutes until the sausages are golden brown.
2. Remove the sausages from the saucepan and set aside.
3. Add the tomatoes and stock to the saucepan and cook over a moderate heat until simmering.
4. Keeping the sausages and butter beans to one side, add the remaining ingredients to the saucepan and stir well. Cover the saucepan with a lid and simmer gently for 12 minutes.
5. Cut the sausages into large chunks & add them and the butter beans to the saucepan.
6. Reduce the heat and cook gently for 10 minutes or until the sausages are cooked through.



Money Saver

A good way to save money is to cook batches of dishes such as casserole, stew, chilli, or curry and freeze them in handy portion sizes.

Food Safety

When you cook a batch or save leftovers, it's important to cool the food quickly (in one to two hours), then freeze it in sealed labelled containers. Don't put hot food straight in the fridge and keep the fridge temperature at between 0 and 5°C. Always make sure you reheat food until it's piping hot all the way through and only reheat a portion of food once. Make sure you wash your hands thoroughly before handling food, after handling raw foods and before touching ready to eat food. To help stop bacteria from spreading don't let raw meat or poultry touch other foods and always cover raw meat and store it on the bottom shelf of the fridge where it can't touch, or drip onto other foods.



Savoury Rice

Serves 2

recipe

Ingredients

175g (6oz) long grain brown rice
570ml (1 pint) low-salt vegetable stock
10ml (1 dessert spoon) vegetable oil
1 medium onion, chopped
25g (1oz) peas
25g (1oz) mushrooms, sliced
25g (1oz) baby sweetcorn
3g (½ teaspoon) curry powder
1 medium tomato, chopped

Method

1. Heat the oil and fry the onions in it for 3 minutes.
2. Add the mushrooms and cook for a further 2 minutes.
3. Stir in the rice, then add $\frac{3}{4}$ of the stock, peas, sweetcorn and curry powder.
4. Simmer for 15 minutes, or until the rice is tender, adding the remainder of the stock during cooking if required.
5. Place the rice in a bowl and sprinkle the tomato on top.

Serve straight away.



Super Starch

Starchy foods should make up about a third of the food we eat. Rice is a good source of starchy carbohydrate and brown rice provides more fibre than white.

Bread, pasta, cereals and potatoes are also good examples of foods rich in starch and fibre.

As well as being low in fat, starchy foods are a good source of energy and the main source of a range of nutrients in our diet such as iron

and B vitamins. Some people think starchy foods are fattening, but they contain less than half the calories of fat.

You just need to watch out for the added fats used when cooking and serving, because this is what increases the calorie content.

Try to choose wholegrain or wholemeal varieties whenever you can.



Fantastic Fibre

Make sure you are eating plenty of fibre as it is important for your heart and digestion. Wholegrain bread, brown rice, pasta and oats are all fibre-rich foods making them a very healthy choice, so try to include a variety of them in your diet.

Don't be tempted to buy raw bran and sprinkle it on your food to increase your fibre consumption as this may prevent you absorbing some important minerals. Instead, try having more beans, peas, lentils and fruit and vegetables as they are also good sources of fibre.

Chicken & Vegetable Curry

Serves 2-3

recipe

Ingredients

20ml (2 dessert spoons) vegetable oil
1 medium onion, sliced
1 clove of garlic, crushed
15ml (1 tablespoon) curry paste
15ml (1 tablespoon) tomato puree
15ml (1 tablespoon) plain flour
275ml (½ pint) low-salt vegetable or chicken stock
75g (3oz) mushrooms, sliced
1 green pepper, sliced
1 medium courgette, chopped
75g (3oz) cauliflower florets cut into small pieces
2 cooked skinless chicken breasts, sliced

Method

1. Heat the oil in a saucepan. Gently fry the onion and garlic for 2 - 3 minutes until soft.
2. Add the remaining vegetables and cook for 5 - 7 minutes stirring regularly.
3. Add the curry paste and tomato puree to the vegetables and stir well.
4. Cook for 1 minute, then add the flour and stir well.
5. Pour in the stock gradually and bring the sauce to the boil.
6. Reduce the heat, add the cooked chicken and simmer for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally.
7. Serve with rice or a jacket potato.



Vegetarian Option

Use soya or Quorn™ pieces instead of the chicken, to make a vegetarian meal. Using frozen or canned vegetables, and substituting a 400g (14oz) can of chickpeas instead of the meat, can also help to keep the cost down.

Healthy Recipes

TOP
TIPS

We can reduce our chances of developing heart disease by eating a diet that is high in fruit and vegetables, high in fibre, and low in salt and fat, particularly saturated fat. Eating a healthy diet and being physically active can help to lower cholesterol levels in the blood or stop our cholesterol levels becoming high in the first place. This is important because having high cholesterol levels increases the chances of developing heart disease. Some foods actually contain cholesterol but this has much less effect on the level of cholesterol in our blood than the amount of saturated fat we eat.

Just by making small changes to recipes can make a lot of difference to the calorie and fat content of a dish. Try these tips below to help make your meals healthier:

- Grill, stew or poach instead of frying, or dry-fry using a non-stick pan.
- Steam or boil vegetables instead of roasting.
- Try using less saturated fat such as butter or margarine than the recipe recommends or use a spray oil where the recipe allows.
- Trim off all the visible fat or remove skin on meat before cooking.
- Skim fat off soups, stocks and casseroles.
- Replace cream or substitute half of the recipe amount with a lighter alternative such as low fat natural yoghurt or fromage frais.
- Choose low fat cheese instead of the full fat version or use a much smaller quantity of a stronger cheese to flavour sauces.
- Use lemon juice, vinegar or natural yoghurt instead of mayonnaise or French dressing, or choose a low-fat alternative.



Fish Cakes

Makes 4 Fish Cakes

recipe

Ingredients

180g (6 oz) can pink salmon, drained and flaked

300g (10 oz) potatoes, boiled and mashed

2 spring onions, finely chopped

2 tablespoons (60ml) fresh parsley, finely chopped

1 tablespoon (15ml) natural yoghurt

50g (2 oz) fresh wholemeal breadcrumbs

1 egg, beaten

Black pepper to taste



Method

1. Heat the oven to 200°C or gas mark 6.
2. Place the mashed potato in a mixing bowl. Add the salmon, spring onions, chopped parsley, yoghurt, pepper and a third of the breadcrumbs and mix well.
3. Place the remaining breadcrumbs in a separate bowl.
4. Divide the fish and potato mixture into four. Shape into rounds.
5. Coat each one in egg and then the breadcrumbs.
6. Place on a lightly greased baking tray and bake for 15 minutes.

Serve immediately with a side salad or fresh veg.

Fabulous Fish

This recipe can easily be made with fresh, frozen or canned fish. If using white fish, try to substitute half the quantity with some canned salmon or other oily fish such as mackerel or sardines, as oily fish is rich in omega 3 fatty acids which are good for heart health.

Making Healthier Choices

If we want to eat a healthy diet, one of the key things we should be doing is trying to cut down on fat (especially saturated fat), salt and added sugars. Food products with traffic light labels on the front of the pack show you at-a-glance if the food you are thinking about buying has high, medium or low amounts of these, helping you get a better balance.

Processed foods like ready meals, sausages, sandwiches and breakfast cereals can be high in fat, salt and sugars so look out for traffic light labels on the packaging.

Making the healthy choice isn't always easy – sometimes there seems to be so much to remember. But with traffic light colours you just need to go for as many greens as you can and avoid choosing too many reds. This way you'll know you'll be making a healthier choice.

Traffic Light Labels

Remember that the amount you eat of a particular food affects how much fat, sugars and salt you will get from it.



	Fat	Saturates	Sugars	Salt
HIGH per 100g	Over 20g	Over 5g	Over 15g	Over 1.5g
MEDIUM per 100g	Between 3g and 20g	Between 1.5g and 5g	Between 5g and 15g	Between 0.3g and 1.5g
LOW per 100g	3g and below	1.5g and below	5g and below	0.3g and below



Healthy Eating, Healthy Living

As we age, we might not feel like eating as much as we used to. But this isn't something to worry about, it's completely natural and is how the body adapts to becoming less active. You may find it easier having smaller meals more often, with nutritious snacks in between.

If you are eating less because you're finding it more difficult to buy or prepare food, then remember that a healthy, nutritious, balanced meal can be made using tinned, chilled and frozen ready-prepared ingredients. It's a good idea to stock your store cupboard or freezer with a few essentials to make this easier.

Stocking Up Your Store Cupboard

- Think about buying packets of instant mashed potato – still a good source of vitamin C - or tins of potatoes, as they will last much longer than fresh and are still nutritious.
- Dried pasta and rice have a very long shelf life, are cheap and convenient and are good to eat with jar and packet sauces. Packet and tinned pasta and sauce are also a good choice.
- Breakfast cereals and porridge oats make an excellent start to the day, and are especially warming when made with warm milk.
- Crackers, oatcakes and other plain biscuits are handy to have in the cupboard for when you fancy a snack.

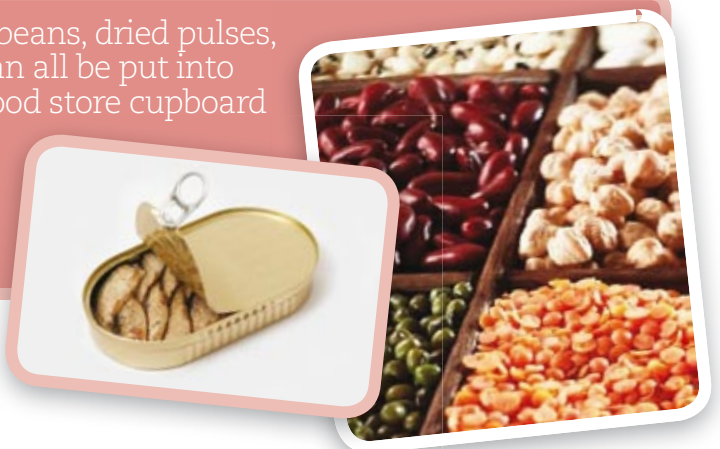


- Try stocking up on tinned fruit and veg in natural juices with no added salt and sugar where possible. Drain tinned veg well and rinse under running water to reduce the salt levels, as too much salt can increase your blood pressure.
- Keep dried fruit in a cool and dry place – you only need one tablespoon to count as one of your five portions a day and they can be delicious sprinkled on breakfast cereals, in milk puddings or as a quick tasty snack.
- Long-life fruit juice will keep in the cupboard until opened.



- A good alternative to fresh milk is UHT milk which can be stored in the cupboard for about 6 months, but do remember to treat as fresh once opened. Powdered milks are also handy, and are light to carry home from the shops.
- Other dairy foods that keep well are long-life yoghurts that have a shelf life of at least 2 weeks, and other desserts like packet custard, instant whip or tinned rice pudding.

- Canned kidney and butter beans, dried pulses, like lentils and split peas can all be put into soups and stews and are good store cupboard sources of protein.
- Keep some cans of fish like tuna, sardines or pilchards.



- You can also stock up on frozen foods like fish in sauce or fish fingers and ready prepared meals and pizza, but remember to add extra vegetables, bread or potatoes to make them more nutritious and filling, and be aware of how much salt and fat they contain by reading the label.

Thank You!

FSA Wales would like to thank the National Federation of Women's Institute for allowing us to use and/or adapt some of their Let's Cook! recipes.



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For more information and advice visit the Food Standard Agency's websites:

eatwell.gov.uk
food.gov.uk
salt.gov.uk

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