

the good life

Heart of the matter

Find out more
ways to a
healthy
heart

**Getting the
balance right**
Taking a close
look at what
you eat

Strong bones
Get plenty of
Vitamin D

>> inside: Great tips on feeling healthy
and enjoying life to the max!

eatwell
eatwell.gov.uk

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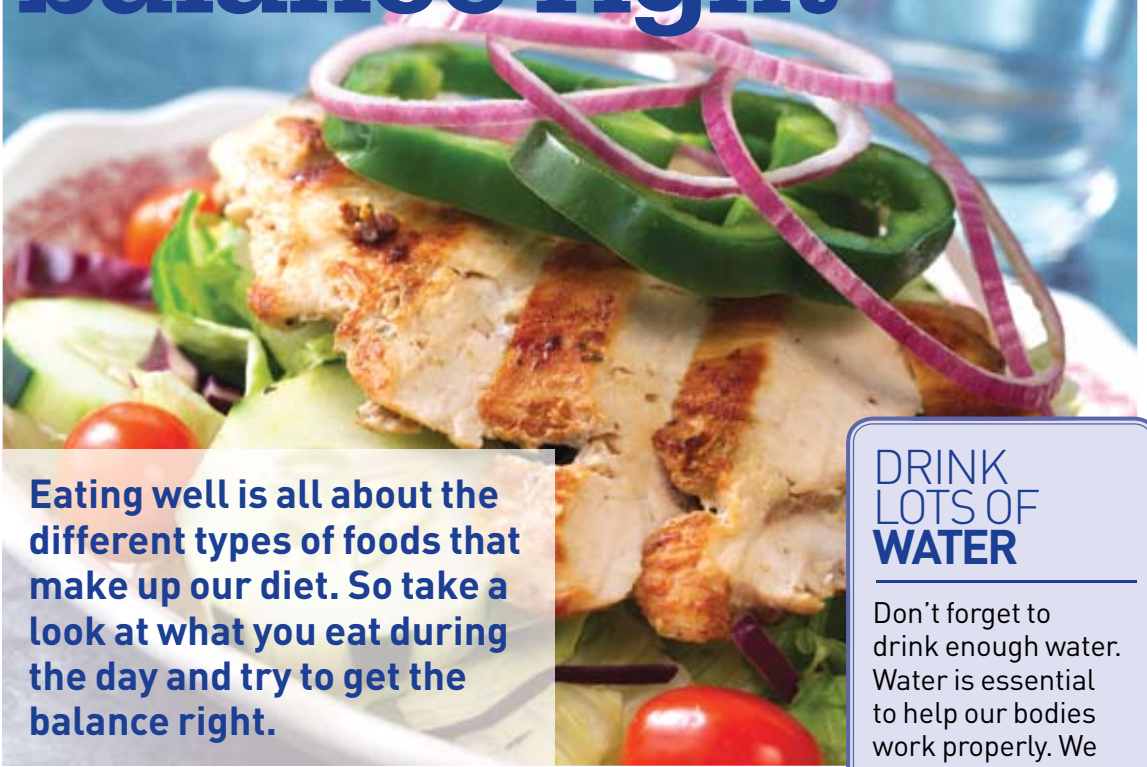
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Eating well is a great investment in your well-being. A balanced diet is essential to give your body what it needs to be healthy.

So to help you get the best out of life, eat well!

Getting the balance right



Eating well is all about the different types of foods that make up our diet. So take a look at what you eat during the day and try to get the balance right.

DRINK LOTS OF WATER

Don't forget to drink enough water. Water is essential to help our bodies work properly. We also need to drink enough fluids to prevent constipation.

Aim to drink about 6 to 8 glasses (1.2 litres) of water, or other fluids, every day to stop you getting dehydrated.

When the weather is warm or when we get active, our bodies need more than this.



A balanced diet includes:

- plenty of fruit and vegetables
- plenty of bread, rice, potatoes, pasta and other starchy foods
- 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

Heart of the matter

A healthy heart is vital for a healthy body. You can help to protect your heart by doing these things:

- Eat plenty of fruit and veg
- Eat plenty of fibre
- Cut down on salt
- Cut down on fat and go for unsaturated fat instead of saturated
- Eat oily fish
- Avoid drinking too much alcohol
- Try to be a healthy weight
- Be more active



TOP TIPS
FOR A
HEALTHY
HEART





Eat plenty of fruit and veg

Fruit and veg are good sources of many of the vitamins and minerals that we need to help us feel our best. And people who eat lots of fruit and veg are less likely to develop diseases such as coronary heart disease and some types of cancer.

That's why we should all be eating at least five portions of fruit and veg each day.

There are lots of different types to choose from. It's a good idea to eat as wide a variety as possible, to give you a selection of different vitamins and minerals.



That means:

- 1 apple, banana or orange
- 2 small fruit such as plums, satsumas, apricots
- 3 heaped tablespoons of vegetables (fresh, frozen or tinned)
- 1 heaped tablespoon of dried fruit
- 1 glass of fruit juice (150ml) – juice only counts as a maximum of one portion a day



Eat plenty of fibre

Giving your fibre a boost could be good for your heart, as well as your digestion. But most people in the UK don't eat enough fibre. To eat more fibre, try these things:

- Choose wholegrain or brown types of starchy foods, such as wholegrain bread, wholegrain breakfast cereals, brown rice and wholemeal pasta.
- Eat more vegetables, dried fruit and pulses (such as beans and lentils).



SNACK SUGGESTIONS

Sardines + toast

For a super-quick lunch, serve tinned sardines on wholemeal toast. Use a low-fat spread on the toast. This snack contains omega 3 fatty acids.

Yoghurt delight

Mix up some low-fat yoghurt with puréed strawberries, raspberries or blueberries to make a delicious and healthy dessert. This snack contains calcium and counts towards your daily fruit and veg portions.



Cut down on salt

Cutting down on salt can help to reduce blood pressure, especially as part of a healthy diet including plenty of fruit and veg.

Having high blood pressure increases the risk of heart disease and stroke. So adults should eat no more than 6g of salt a day.

See salt.gov.uk for more information on salt.

Here are some tips for cutting down on salt:

- Check food labels before you buy and choose those containing less salt.
- Choose tinned vegetables, pulses and fish that say 'no added salt'.
- Get out of the habit of adding salt to your food. Try to remember to taste it first.
- Cut down on salty snacks such as crisps and nuts, and heavily salted foods such as bacon, cheese, pickles and smoked fish.
- Use herbs, spices, chilli and lemon to add flavour to cooking instead of salt.





Cut down on fat and go for unsaturated fat instead of saturated

There are two main types of fat:

- saturated fat
- unsaturated fat

Eating foods that are high in saturated fat can raise cholesterol levels in the blood and having high cholesterol increases the chances of developing heart disease. So eating less saturated fat can help protect your heart.

Having unsaturated fat instead of saturated fat can help lower cholesterol levels in your blood. So try to choose foods that are high in unsaturated fats, including:

- oily fish
- avocados
- vegetable oil and sunflower, olive, corn, walnut and rapeseed oils (and spreads containing these)

Here are some tips for cutting down on saturated fat:

- Choose lean cuts of meat instead of fatty cuts, sausages or pies.
- Choose lower-fat milk and dairy products, or eat just a small amount of high-fat foods such as cheese (or have them less often).
- Use a low-fat spread instead of butter.
- Cook with vegetable or olive oil instead of butter or ghee.
- Watch out for creamy sauces.
- Try not to eat too many cakes and biscuits.



WHAT IS HYDROGENATED FAT?

Hydrogenated vegetable oil, sometimes called hydrogenated fat, is a type of fat used in some types of processed foods.

Hydrogenated vegetable oil can contain another type of fat called trans fats. Eating foods containing trans fats could raise cholesterol levels.

Hydrogenated and trans fats are often found in these types of foods:

- biscuits and cakes
- fast food

- pastry
- some margarines

These types of foods are often high in saturated fat, sugar and salt too, so if you're trying to eat a healthy diet it's a good idea not to eat too much of them.

Most people in the UK eat a lot more saturated fat than trans fats, so don't forget that it's important to keep an eye on your intake of saturated fat.



SNACK SUGGESTION

Houmous and veg sticks

Chop carrots, celery and cucumber into sticks to dip into houmous. Try to choose reduced-fat houmous when you can. This snack counts towards your daily fruit and veg portions.



Eat oily fish

Oily fish (such as salmon, mackerel, trout and sardines) are rich in omega 3 fatty acids, which can help keep our hearts healthy. Aim to eat at least two portions of fish a week, including a portion of oily fish.

But try to avoid having more than four portions of oily fish a week.

There are different limits for girls, women who might have a baby and women who are pregnant or breastfeeding. See eatwell.gov.uk/fish for more information.



CUTTING DOWN ON FAT CAN HELP YOU TO EAT A HEALTHY
BALANCED DIET AND CONTROL YOUR WEIGHT



Avoid drinking too much alcohol



Women can drink up to 2 to 3 units of alcohol a day and men up to 3 to 4 units a day, without significant risk to their health.

A unit is half a pint of standard strength (3 to 5% ABV) beer, lager or cider, or a pub measure of spirit. A glass of wine is about 2 units.

There is evidence to suggest that having between 1 and 2 units of alcohol a day can help protect against coronary heart disease for men over 40 and women after the menopause. But heavy drinking can lead to a wide range of health problems, including cancer, liver disease, stroke and high blood pressure. It can also affect mental health.



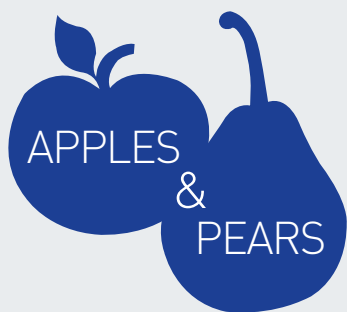
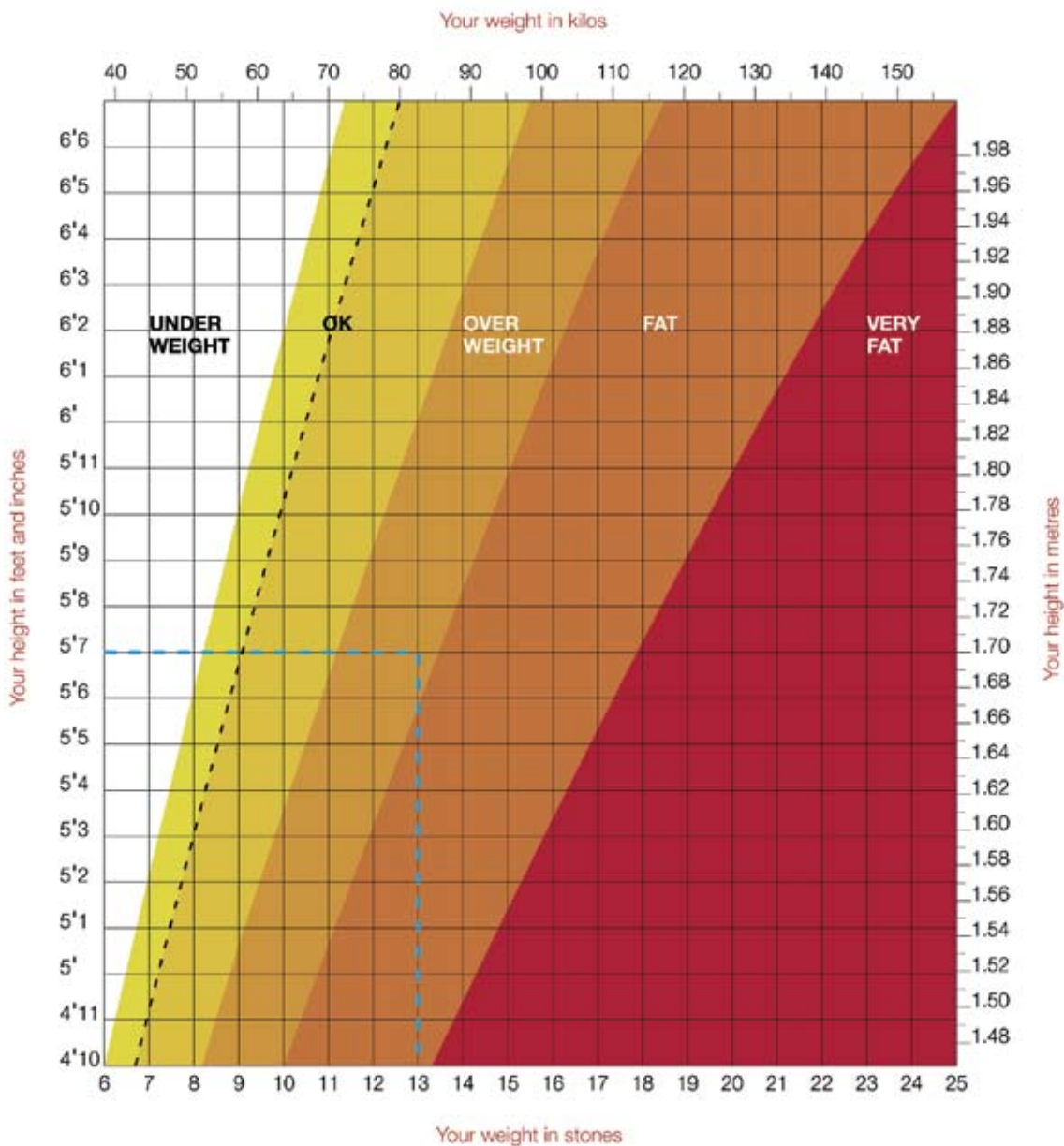
Try to be a healthy weight

Being a healthy weight is an important part of protecting our health. So it's not good for you to be overweight or underweight. It's easy for weight to creep on, or drop off, without you really noticing. So it's a good idea to check if your weight is within the healthy range, using the chart opposite.

Remember, whether you want to lose weight, gain weight, or just stay the same, it's very important to eat regularly and eat a variety of types of food.

If you're worried about your weight, ask your GP or a dietitian for advice.





Of course, people come in different shapes and sizes. The two main shapes are 'apples' and 'pears'. Someone with an apple shape tends to put on weight around their middle. Someone with a pear shape tends to put on weight around their thighs and bottom.

Being overweight is not good for your health, whatever your shape. But if you are apple shaped, then it's particularly important to keep an eye on your weight. This is because having too much fat around your middle increases the risk of developing heart disease and diabetes.



Be more active

As well as protecting our hearts, being active is a great way of using up extra calories, and helps control our weight.

But this doesn't mean you have to join a gym – just try to get active every day and build up the amount you do. Even small changes can help, such as taking the stairs instead of the lift, walking to the shops instead of driving, or getting off the bus one stop earlier.

Walking is a great way to be more active – fit in as much as you can into your daily routine and try to walk at a good pace. Or make time for another type of activity you really enjoy, for example swimming, dancing or gardening.

IRON

It's important to eat plenty of iron-rich foods to help keep up your body's store of iron. The best source of iron is red meat. It can also be found in pulses (such as peas, beans and lentils), oily fish such as sardines, bread, green vegetables and fortified breakfast cereals.

Strong bones



What you eat can make a difference to the health of your bones. So to help keep your bones strong and help protect against osteoporosis, you can do the following things.

Eat calcium-rich foods

Make sure you eat foods that are rich in calcium, such as:

- milk, cheese, yoghurt
- green leafy vegetables (such as broccoli, cabbage and okra, but not spinach)
- bread and fortified breakfast cereals
- fish where you eat the bones, such as sardines and pilchards
- nuts
- soya beans, tofu, soya drinks with added calcium

Get plenty of vitamin D

Vitamin D is essential for healthy bones. We get most of our vitamin D from the effect of summer sunlight on our skin, but vitamin D is also found in oily fish, eggs and foods with added vitamins such as some breakfast cereals, bread and spreads.

Older people should consider taking a daily 10 microgram (mcg) vitamin D supplement.

If you think you may be at risk of developing osteoporosis, ask your GP for advice.



Eat dark green veg

Dark green veg (such as broccoli, spinach and Brussels sprouts) contain vitamin K, which is important for building calcium into our bones. Try to eat at least five portions of a variety of fruit and veg every day.

Try to be a healthy weight

It's not good for our health to be overweight or underweight. Being underweight increases the risk of osteoporosis.

Take a walk

'Weight-bearing' exercise (such as walking, dancing and playing tennis) helps keep your bones strong. So try to fit in some of this type of exercise regularly.

Don't have too much vitamin A

Having too much vitamin A (more than 1.5mg of vitamin A a day, from food and/or supplements) might increase the risk of bone fracture.

Liver is a rich source of vitamin A, so you should avoid eating liver or liver products such as pâté more than once a week, or you could eat smaller portions. If you do eat liver once a week, you should avoid taking any supplements containing vitamin A or fish liver oils (which contain high levels of vitamin A).



Safety first



Top tips for good food hygiene

- Always wash your hands before preparing food.
- Keep raw meat, poultry and eggs away from other foods.
- Always clean work surfaces, chopping boards and knives thoroughly after they have been touched by raw meat or poultry – and before using them with other foods.
- Follow the storage instructions on food labels, for example 'keep refrigerated' or 'eat within 3 days of opening'.
- Don't eat food after its 'use by' date.
- Cool leftovers as quickly as possible and put them in the fridge.
- Keep pets off work surfaces.



DON'T FORGET TO TAKE CARE WITH FOOD, TO MAKE SURE IT'S SAFE TO EAT.

For more information and advice about food,
visit the Food Standards Agency's websites:

eatwell.gov.uk

food.gov.uk

salt.gov.uk

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