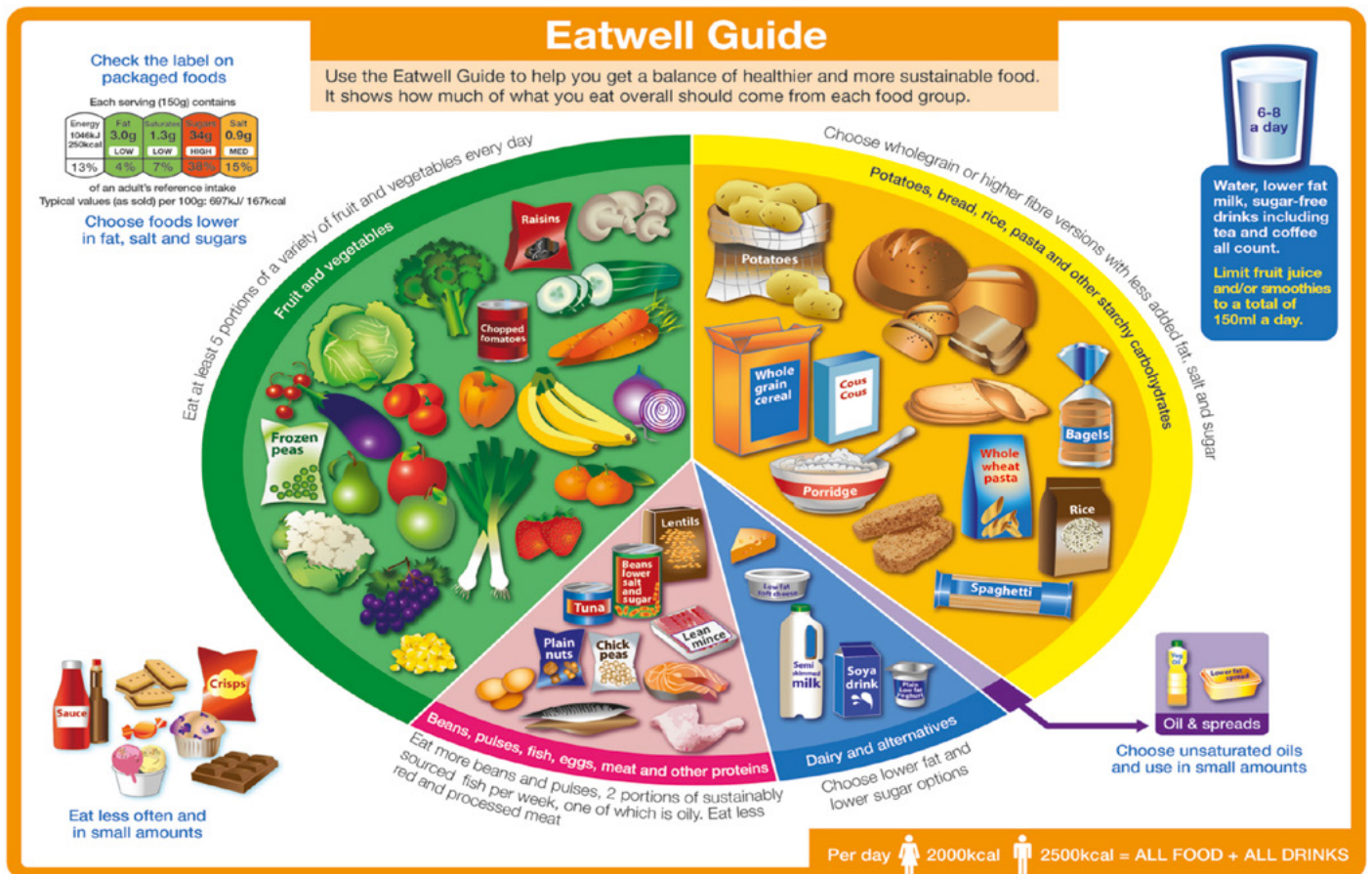


# Eating Well - Advice for patients and carers

- You have been given this leaflet to help you eat well and keep as healthy as possible
- Eating a balanced diet is essential to provide your body with all the nutrients it needs. A healthy, balanced diet will help to keep you in good health and can help you feel your best
- The Eatwell guide below gives you more information about what to eat to ensure you are getting a balanced diet



## To have a healthy, balanced diet we should try to:

### Eat plenty of fruit and vegetables – aim for at least 5 portions a day

- Fruit and vegetables contain essential vitamins and minerals to boost your immune system and are a good source of fibre, which can help maintain a healthy gut. Try to eat a variety of different fruit and vegetables (including different colours)
- Fruit and vegetables can be fresh, frozen, canned - they all count!

### Include a starchy food at each meal

- These foods provide you with energy
- Starchy foods include potatoes, bread, pasta, rice, cereals
- Try to choose wholegrain versions where possible

## **Include a portion of dairy foods or a calcium-enriched dairy alternative in your diet 3 times a day**

- These foods help to keep your bones strong
- Dairy foods include cheese, milk, yogurt, fromage frais
- Choose lower fat and lower sugar options
- Non-dairy alternatives such as soya drinks, almond milk are also available, look for the ones with added calcium
- Non-dairy foods providing the same important nutrients (e.g. calcium) include leafy green vegetables, beans (e.g. kidney beans), chickpeas (e.g. hummus), nuts (e.g. almonds) seeds (e.g. sesame), fruit (e.g. oranges, dried figs) and seafood (e.g. canned salmon, sardines if the soft bones are consumed)

## **Include a variety of protein sources in your diet**

- These foods are important for healthy strong muscles and immunity
- There are many foods that provide us with protein including meat, fish, eggs, tofu, beans, lentils, nuts, milk and yogurt
- You should try to include 2 portions of fish every week, one of which should be oily fish (e.g. mackerel, salmon, fresh tuna, sardines)

## **Cut back on high energy foods**

- High energy foods are the ones to think about avoiding if you are trying to reduce your weight or avoid weight gain
- They tend to contain a lot of calories but may not provide many of the important nutrients for your body
- High energy foods are those that are high in fat (e.g. chips, fried foods, meat pies), high in sugar (e.g. fizzy drinks, sweets), or high in both sugar and fat (e.g. chocolate, cream cakes)
- Choose unsaturated oils e.g. extra Virgin olive oil and spreads and eat in small amounts

## **Drink 6 to 8 cups/glasses of fluid per day**

- Have regular drinks throughout the day to help you stay hydrated
- We should aim to drink 6 to 8 glasses of fluid each day; water, low fat milk, fruit juices, sugar free drinks, tea and coffee all count
- Fruit juice contains a lot of sugar and so should be limited to a glass (150ml) per day

## **Take regular exercise**

- Exercise can reduce your risk of major illnesses, keep muscles strong and can keep you agile
- It can also boost self-esteem, mood, sleep quality and energy levels, as well as reducing your risk of stress and depression
- Adults should try to be active daily and aim for at least 150 minutes of physical activity over a week through a variety of activities – choose those you enjoy – brisk walking, dancing, cycling, exercise classes, swimming
- Try to make activity part of your everyday life, for example walk or cycle instead of using the car. The more you do, the better
- More information can be found at <https://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/fitness> and <https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/apps>
- Think about your weight. It is important that you maintain a healthy weight. Being overweight or being underweight is not good for your overall health
- If you are very overweight seek advice from your GP who will be able to give you some guidance on diet and exercise or go to [www.nhs.uk/Livewell/loseweight](http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/loseweight) for further information
- If you have lost your appetite, are having difficulty eating or are losing weight unintentionally or if you don't weigh yourself but have noticed your clothes or rings are looser than they used to be, you may be at risk of under-nutrition, also known as malnutrition. Speak to your GP about your concerns particularly if you have a long term condition such as COPD, are frail, elderly, have cancer or have been treated for cancer in the past. Further information and help can be found at <https://www.malnutritionselfscreening.org>

**More information can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-eatwell-guide>**

This leaflet includes advice on eating a balanced diet. If you have a medical condition, food allergies or issues with swallowing for which you have received special dietary advice the information in this leaflet may not be right for you. Please speak to your healthcare professional.

2021 (to be reviewed 2024) For further information on malnutrition please visit: <https://www.malnutritionpathway.co.uk>

Developed by a multi-professional group of healthcare professionals

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