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# Cyrenians Good Food

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Cooking Up a Better Future



Cyrenians

# Foreword

FareShare supplied 396 tonnes of food to over 40 Community Members last year. Although the main focus is on supplying Members for their provision of community meals, last year we provided 230 emergency food boxes to individuals and families, but only where we were assured that this helped as part of ongoing case work. (Requests have quadrupled in the last six months.)

It's a brilliant service: "A triumph of common sense," as Sir Tom Farmer called it on one of his visits. Charities for the homeless have some decent fare to put in front of folk, as well as help and advice from our food team. A large quantity of food is diverted from landfill. And dozens of people who were homeless are helping run the warehouse and delivery vans; helping their recovery while helping others and taking the first steps on the journey to employment. To that we add cookery classes. From Day One – back in the year 2000 – we've been determined that the Programme is a "hand-up, not just a hand out". We want to see food used to bring people together and move forward in their lives.

Cyrenians is currently planning a major scale up of our FareShare activity in Scotland in sourcing and distributing donated surplus food for community meal services. The issue for us is how to deliver that to a wider constituency of people in need – not just the homeless – in an acceptable and progressive manner that does not create dependency and which helps people forward in their lives.

By delivering exclusively through signed-up Community Members we can ensure that people

receive food as part of a package of help: including benefit checks, advocacy and personal support. We also integrate the offer of accredited learning and training, plus cookery groups – over 200 classes last year – and opportunities for people to help and benefit from participating in every aspect of the activity. Over 70 people a year benefit as trainees, with many moving into employment.

As a community food sector, can we meet the pressing need in a way that takes us to a better place? Are there opportunities here? Rather than regressing to the food banks and soup kitchens of the past, can we create new pragmatic solutions that recognise the economic realities of the day and promote dignity, community and opportunities for customers to progress beyond their need for help?



Des Ryan  
CEO – Cyrenians

**“What I like about Cyrenians is that its work can be measured – you can see exactly what is happening.**

**We all know there are a lot of unfortunate people in this city, but there are a lot of good things going on too. This charity is one of them.”**

**Sir Tom Farmer CBE KCSG**

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It is our hope that the work of the Cyrenians Good Food Programme will continue to succeed in inspiring people to use food to improve lives. This handbook was initially produced in response to the many enquires received about the innovative work of the Cyrenians Good Food Programme. This edition includes information, for organisations working in the field of social exclusion, to help support individuals in choosing a healthier diet. This is by no means a full nutritional self-help book and any particular health or nutritional concerns should always be referred to a professional.

The handbook does not include advice on nutrition for the very young (under 5s) or the elderly (over 75s), both of which groups have specific nutritional needs. We have not included details of the nutritional requirements for specific medical ailments, although there are guidance notes on some common health issues that concern us in Scotland.

# Cyrenians Social Enterprise

Cyrenians produces life changing help for hundreds of people a year and leads the way in good environmental practice through running commercially robust and sustainable social businesses.

## Good Food FareShare and Food Wise

- Serving community groups with more than £1m a year's worth of quality checked surplus food.
- Work training and support into jobs.
- Placements and supported volunteering for people recovering from tough times.
- Serving the community with over 200 cookery classes a year.
- REHIS (Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland) accredited training and consultancy for community groups using food to improve lives.
- Community Volunteering.

## Cyrenians Organic Farm

- Growing and selling premium organic produce to local markets.
- Placements for homeless young people and others.
- Traineeships and support into jobs.
- Community Volunteering.
- Working with Business Programme.
- Community learning programme.

## NHS Community Gardens

- Mobilising the local community in setting up and running productive sustainable gardens on spare land by their local hospital.
- Involving patients, out-patients and carers, local schools, health and interest groups and anyone living near-by to grow together as a community.
- Community Volunteering.
- Work placements and traineeships with support into jobs.
- Working with Business Programme.

## CORE (Cyrenians Organic Recycling Enterprise)

- Scotland's leading commercial food segregation and collection service.
- Pioneering diversion of food waste from landfill to renewable energy.
- Operating in partnership with MITIE the strategic outsourcing and energy-services company.
- Industry specific training and work placements.

We are passionate about the people we help and delivering an efficient and cost effective service to our customers.

Our Enterprise to Employment project works with our trainees supporting them on the journey to a settled lifestyle. Last year 50 people secured employment and in addition we provided placements with health, personal development and employability outcomes for 30 people.

For further information about our initiatives, costs, services or training opportunities please do not hesitate to contact us.

**Carol-Anne Alcorn**  
Head of Enterprise

**“Your organisation has given more to me than I have ever given and I am your biggest fan. Just what you all have kept out of the landfill over the years is enough on its own to celebrate but that is just the beginning of the good work accomplished there.”**

**Lesley – Assistant Cooking Tutor**

# Section 1

# What's cooking?

# Cyrenians Good Food cooking classes

The first pilot cooking classes were delivered in 2001 as a result of identifying that many individuals living on the margins of our communities were living on an unhealthy diet. Since then the cooking classes have been continuously developed by the Cyrenians Good Food Team to help people to learn basic cooking skills and improve their diet. The classes are delivered within a supported environment taking into account the needs of the individual. There is a maximum of four in a class and two cooking tutors to give help and encouragement.

Participants attend a cooking class each week for eight weeks. The classes are for approximately two hours and each week the participants prepare a simple two course meal. Each person makes their own dishes from scratch with help and guidance where needed. We usually start with something basic like a soup and simple pudding. This allows us to then assess the level of the participant's ability for the following session. We often find it a good idea to demonstrate such things as washing and slicing a leek, using a potato peeler, cutting an onion, how to measure or weigh ingredients as not everyone knows how to do this. In addition to easy to follow recipes, verbal instructions are clear and simple to help understanding as well as provide an alternative option as not everyone is comfortable or able to read recipes.

At the end of the cooking session the table is laid and the group sits down to share and enjoy the results. We have found that sitting down to eat the meal is an integral and valuable part of the cooking session. This is the time to swap notes on dishes, try each others', talk about the following week's menu, and discuss hygiene, food budgeting or simply share time and stories. For many people this time at the table is as valuable as the cooking skills they have acquired.

Many participants are not familiar with certain foods and making changes to eating habits and behaviours and introducing healthier options is not always easy. People can be encouraged to incorporate vegetables into their cooking, reduce the amount of salt added, try alternative cooking methods and as a result shown how making simple changes can make a real difference.

We have evidenced that individuals attending the classes not only learn to cook simple nutritious meals but also increase their skills and confidence. By providing a positive social experience, learning about healthy balanced diets, practising do-able recipes, and budget planning it can improve self-esteem and make a contribution to a more positive future.

The classes are held every Tuesday and Wednesday throughout the year at the Cyrenians Good Food Depot, and people can join as and when a space becomes available. The classes are free and all ingredients are provided. After attending eight weeks, participants receive a certificate and recipe booklet. Follow on options are available for those interested in continuing by joining a six-week advanced cooking class or coming along to our once a month Italian cooking class.

Many of those taking part in the classes initially find it difficult to make the commitment to attend regularly or feel fearful about coming into a new situation. However, we find that the casual and low key atmosphere in our busy working kitchen to be the best approach. Other volunteers and staff working in the depot come in to make coffee, try the dishes and add to the general camaraderie. Our cooking tutors are well used to working with people with complex needs and offer sympathetic and relevant support. Participants very quickly relax and feel comfortable and many want to continue with classes after their eight weeks.

If you have a client who may be interested please get in touch for an application form, found on the Good Food website [www.cyreniansgoodfood.org.uk](http://www.cyreniansgoodfood.org.uk). Your client's name will be added to the waiting list and when a space becomes available we will arrange for you to come in with your client for a chat about the classes and set up a suitable start date.

We have also worked directly in many hostels and centres delivering classes as part of our jointly accredited REHIS/Cyrenians Good Food Good Health course. This is a comprehensive course, training organisations to skill up people to implement and sustain their own cooking class programmes. Further information is available on the Good Food website [www.cyreniansgoodfood.org.uk](http://www.cyreniansgoodfood.org.uk).

**“The participant made every recipe at home, cooked for his mum, and bought new dishes. He took the food home and changed his entire way of eating – it opened a new interest in life.”**

**Cooking Tutor**

# Case study – cooking class

Susan arrived at the Wednesday cooking classes with her Support Worker. She was extremely quiet and unable to look at anyone. She spoke when I spoke to her but with her head down and no eye contact.

Susan came back to her second class and by the third decided she did not need her Support Worker and started to tell me about the new house she was hoping to secure. Her confidence was very low and she apologised for everything and constantly thought her dish didn't look as good as the others. However, one of the class members started to chat to her and tell her that her food was great. Her new friend slightly burnt something one week and this demonstrated to her that we can all make mistakes. This was a great step forward and she told her Support Worker that she had made her first friend in 10 years. As the weeks progressed Susan opened up and started to smile and discuss the fact that she had been bullied in the past and that she was always feeling frightened.

However, as the weeks progressed her confidence was growing and by week five Susan shared the good news that she would soon be moving into her new home. She became friends with people on the course and started to believe in her cooking skills. The real Susan was emerging after many years and we were seeing a really sweet and funny person. After graduating from the 8-week set of classes she went on to do the Advanced Cooking Class. She is considering volunteering and I feel sure that the combination of the cooking course and the prospect of a new house really did start to turn Susan's life around.

**Written by Carina,  
Cooking Tutor**

**“Tuesday mornings are one of the highlights of my week – getting to know the participants, hearing their stories when they want to share them, and seeing each one develop, learn new skills and hopefully have a sense of fun and laughter along the way is very special”.**

**Elaine – Cooking Tutor**

# Case study – cooking class

Amy was very isolated and only went to her local shops for groceries. However, she has since started shopping at her local supermarket and has built confidence through her involvement in Cyrenians Good Food cooking classes which she has found to be motivating and enjoyable.

Amy set a high priority on developing her health and wellbeing when she first planned her support. She has followed through with her plans and attends Pilton Community Health Projects Health Walks as recommended by her CPN. She was recently allocated a Key Worker from Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service and has a volunteer befriender and meets with her regularly and this has helped her to reduce the level of social isolation she experiences. Amy is eating better as she places more priority on what she eats. Her self-esteem has also improved. She talks about her experience of attending cooking class with enthusiasm and clearly finds cooking motivating and enjoyable. She wanted to develop her skills and knowledge in relation to cooking simple healthy meals and the course has helped her to do this in a structured way. Amy had mentioned cooking a seafood dish prior to enrolling and has since cooked many different meals including puddings.

Amy was anxious about attending Good Food Cooking class unaccompanied and I agreed to go along with her to the first class. She has attended all the other classes independently and said she feels that making the effort is worthwhile even though she sometimes experiences difficulties with her anxiety. She is aware that she will achieve something by attending e.g. cooking a meal, interacting with the other group members and travelling to and from her classes via public transport. She didn't go much further than her local shops prior to engaging with Cyrenians Homeless Prevention Service unless she absolutely had to, so she has travelled a long way in her journey to recovery.

I supported Amy to attend a meeting with Nadia who met with her to discuss what the cooking class is about. She was also shown around the Depot and introduced to everyone who made her feel welcome. She understood the commitment she was making prior to signing up for the classes.

Amy is now doing the Advanced 6-week cooking class and is doing very well.

**Written by Amy's Key Worker**

**“I have watched the guys learn,  
grow in aptitude, skill, confidence  
and indeed in a social aspect,  
enthusiasm has grown each week.  
Multiple benefit.”**

**Good Food Good Health  
Course Participant**



# Running a cooking class – checklist

There are many considerations that need to be weighed up before running a cooking class. Below is a checklist of some of the most important things you may want to consider before setting up, especially if you don't have your own premises in which to deliver cooking sessions:

- Have you undergone an Elementary Food Hygiene course? Contact us for details of classes at our Good Food depot (tel. 0131 554 3900). Alternatively the Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland has a list of centres registered to present the course – see Useful Contacts. We also deliver a half day Refresher Hygiene course for those who already have the full certificate but need it renewed (after three to five years).
- Find your premises. How big is the kitchen and how many people can be in it at any one time?
- Is there Public Liability Insurance in place? This is particularly important if the food is being offered to other people in addition to people participating in classes.
- Carry out a Risk Assessment and ensure that this is documented.
- What is the fire procedure; where are the fire exits?
- Is there a first aid kit (with blue plasters)?
- Is there emergency phone cover?
- Will there be a member of staff on the premises in case of emergency?
- Are there toilets that you and participants can use?
- When recruiting for cooking sessions, make sure the clients and their support workers are fully informed; if you can, involve the support workers by asking them to 'buddy' their clients into getting to the class, inviting them to the final meal, asking them for feedback.
- Will the kitchen be left in a tidy and clean condition for you?
- Check what equipment there is and whether it all works properly.
- Will you need an extra cooker e.g. portable Baby Belling?
- Are there enough pots and pans, dishes and utensils for the cooking class or will you need to bring some?
- Is there an adequate hot water supply for washing up?
- Do you have a budget to purchase additional equipment if required?
- Is there somewhere for people to wash their hands and are disposable towels available?
- Is there a supply of soap, antibacterial spray, washing up liquid?
- Are tea towels available and if so how will these be washed and dried after each class?
- Who will supply the ingredients and is there a basic store cupboard (e.g. flour, oil, stock cubes) available for your use?
- If you are going to eat the meal is there somewhere to sit and eat it and enough crockery for everyone to share the meal at the same time?
- If you are allowing your clients to take their food away with them, do you have suitable containers and will they ensure its safe use (e.g. refrigeration if not eating immediately, reheating to correct temperature)?
- How will you make your class aware of basic hygiene and food safety requirements for a group working together?
- Think about how to 'evaluate' your classes – you could use an evaluation of feedback form at the end of each day or the whole course.
- Who will make sure the kitchen is left as clean as it was found?
- Give out rewards at the end of your course – a certificate, a recipe book or some store cupboard goodies.

# Equipment for cooking classes

It is essential to keep the equipment you use reasonably basic as not everyone will have these items at home. It is useful to have a couple of hand blenders for such things as creaming soup, however, a potato masher can be used instead, or the soup can be just as good without being blended. Likewise it is useful to have an electric hand whisk but definitely not essential.

Reasonable quality stainless steel saucepans are a good investment as they will last much longer than non-stick and are more readily cleanable with a scourer if they get burnt. They are not always as cheap but you can often get good deals if you shop around.

## **For a class of four:**

- 4 x 16cm or 17cm saucepans and lids
- 4 x 18cm or 20cm saucepans and lids
- 4 non-stick frying pans
- 4 melamine chopping boards
- 4 general purpose vegetable knives
- 2 larger knives (8½")
- 4 wooden spoons (at least)
- 4 baking trays
- 4 small ceramic ovenproof dishes (for crumble/trifle/macaroni cheese/shepherd's pie etc.)
- 4 potato peelers
- 4 plastic fish slices (for use in frying pans)
- 4 soup ladles
- 4 small plastic mixing bowls

- 4 larger mixing bowls
- 4 serving spoons
- 4 loaf tins (if making cakes)
- 2 colanders
- 2 cheese graters
- 2 potato mashers
- 2 balloon whisks
- 1 tin opener
- 2 measuring jugs (1 litre)
- 1 lemon squeezer
- 1 or 2 sets of scales (for small quantities)
- 2 electric blenders
- 2 handheld electric whisks
- 1 grinding pepper mill
- 4 aprons (plus one for yourself and any helpers)

## **Also useful:**

- Greaseproof paper
- Silver foil
- Cling film
- Garlic press
- Tubs or foil dishes for taking leftovers home
- Oven gloves
- Tea towels

**Make sure that there is a good supply of washing up liquid, paper towels and hand washing soap.**

# Store cupboard ingredients

The following is a list of the sort of ingredients it is handy to have in your store cupboard when you are starting out. Many of these ingredients are those used in the our recipes. You can add to the list over time as you discover what you use most and other ingredients that you like:

Plain flour  
Self-raising flour  
Raisins  
Soft brown sugar  
Long grain rice  
Macaroni pasta  
Spaghetti pasta  
Pure vegetable oil  
Olive oil  
Salt  
Black pepper  
Curry powder  
Chilli powder  
Vegetable stock cubes  
Chicken stock cubes  
Beef stock cubes  
Mixed herbs  
Ground cinnamon  
Tin of kidney beans  
Tin of sweetcorn  
Dried lentils  
Tomato paste  
Several tins of chopped tomatoes  
Tin of fruit cocktail in juice  
Tin of pineapple slices  
Tin of tuna  
Tin of custard powder

Other things that you will need to think about are ingredients that you will keep in the fridge such as margarine, butter, cheese and milk. If you are buying margarine for cooking, read the label on the side of the packet, to check that it is suitable for cooking. Some of the low-fat varieties in particular are not suitable.

Remember to have a supply of washing up liquid, handwashing soap, a washing up brush, cloths for wiping and drying dishes, a separate towel or paper towels for your hands and plastic storage containers with lids to store leftover food.

# Hygiene

- Follow the golden rule – ‘clean as you go’.
- Always wash your hands with soap and water before preparing a meal, after preparing meat and vegetables, after visiting the toilet and after touching pets, dirty nappies or the dustbin. If preparing food for other people wash your hands after touching your mouth or nose, or scratching – you could be passing on your germs (bacteria or viruses). To wash correctly:
  - use warm water and get up a good lather with the soap
  - lather your hands and lower wrists all over, not forgetting the backs of your hands, round your thumbs and between your fingers and nails
  - wash for 20–30 seconds – this is longer than you think
  - rinse thoroughly – this washes away the bacteria with the soap
  - dry thoroughly on a disposable or clean towel – bacteria love warm damp places such as hands so drying them is important
  - use a pedal or open bin for paper towels so that you don’t need to touch it (alternatively turn off the tap with the paper towel that you have used)

## **NB Handwashing is the single most important thing that can help stop the spread of food poisoning.**

- If you have a cut cover it with a waterproof plaster (blue is usually used).
- Make sure the work surface is clean before you start.
- Wash fruit and vegetables before preparing.
- If keeping leftovers, cool as quickly as possible before refrigerating or freezing.
- Keep food covered wherever possible to stop objects falling in or dripping in.
- Change tea towels, dish cloths and hand towels regularly.

- Empty the bin regularly.
- Wash your chopping board thoroughly in hot soapy water especially after chopping meat.
- Do not prepare food for other people if you are vomiting or have diarrhoea.
- Do not sneeze or cough over food.
- Always use a clean spoon for tasting especially if you are cooking for others.
- Keep pets off counter tops and away from food – they carry bacteria.
- Wash up properly in hot soapy water and wash down surfaces with a clean cloth.

## **Careful cooking**

- Meat, meat products, fish and poultry need special care as they cause most food poisoning outbreaks.
- Cook meat and poultry thoroughly. To test if it is cooked thoroughly stick a long sharp knife into the centre of the meat – if the juices run clear it is cooked, if the juices are pink it needs more cooking.
- Always defrost meat or poultry completely before beginning to cook.
- Once a product is thawed never re-freeze unless you cook it first.
- Be careful with rice; always refrigerate any leftovers as quickly as possible and if reheating do so thoroughly and only reheat once.
- If reheating previously cooked food, make sure it is piping hot right through.
- Never reheat previously cooked food more than once.

# Bacteria & viruses

## Bacteria

Bacteria are present almost everywhere in the environment as well as in and on animals and people. Many of these are perfectly harmless and some are very useful and necessary, such as the ones that live in our digestive tract and aid digestion.

However, some bacteria are harmful and can cause food poisoning. These are the ones that you want to guard against when preparing food. They are so small that you can't see, taste or smell if they are present.

Ways to guard against food poisoning:

- **Refrigeration** – most bacteria don't like the cold and won't multiply in a refrigerator. Your fridge temperature should be between 1°C and 4°C.
- **Freezing** – Bacteria won't multiply in a freezer (-18°C). However be careful when you bring food out of the freezer as the bacteria can start multiplying again.
- **Cooking** – bacteria are killed by heat so thorough cooking is important; the temperature in the middle of food should reach at least 75°C.
- **Room temperature** – bacteria love room temperature so don't leave risky food, such as ready meals, dairy, meat and fish, egg products, sandwiches etc. at room temperature for any length of time.
- **Cleanliness** – it is important to keep your kitchen, cooking utensils, cloths and hands clean so that bacteria are kept to a minimum and aren't transferred from food surfaces, hands or utensils onto food.
- **Stock control** – remember the rule 'First In First Out' – try to use the food you bought first before your new supplies. Do not eat food past its '**use by**' date as there is a risk that it will carry food poisoning bacteria. The '**best before**' date is generally on foods with a longer life and is a guidance to ensure the quality is still high – it is not necessarily harmful to eat food past its 'best before' date. One exception are eggs, which can be kept until the best before date is reached, but because they may contain harmful bacteria they should not be used after the best before date.
- **Reheating** – if you reheat food only do so once and make sure you get it piping hot to kill any bacteria that may have managed to survive.
- **Storage** – always refrigerate or freeze food as soon as possible after shopping before its temperature rises.
- **Leftovers** – if you are keeping leftovers, cool them down as quickly as possible (1½ hours) and then refrigerate.

## Viruses

Some viruses can also be transmitted through food and cause food poisoning. They spread much the same way as bacteria and although they don't multiply on the food (they multiply in the living cells of their host) they can survive on it for a long time. They are generally easy to destroy by cooking food thoroughly.

**Remember that you can't see, smell or taste food poisoning bacteria or viruses, which is why it is important to follow good practice to guard against the risk of harmful bacteria and viruses contaminating food.**

# Correct use of refrigerators

Most of the common food poisoning bacteria do not multiply at temperatures below 5°C, therefore the best temperature for your fridge is between 1°C and 4°C. A thermometer should be used to check the temperature regularly – the dial in the refrigerator does NOT tell the temperature.

Refrigerators should be placed in well-ventilated areas away from heat sources and bright sunshine.

Clean them weekly using a clean damp cloth or a teaspoon of bicarbonate of soda dissolved in a little water. Wipe up spillages immediately.

Remove dust on external evaporator coils and air ducts to maintain performance.

Don't overload your fridge or place food directly in front of the cooling unit – it will not work as effectively.

Do not place hot food directly into the fridge; this will raise the temperature of the inside of the fridge and risk damaging food already being stored.

Joints of meat for cooking should be kept below 2½ kg (6lbs) so that they can cool, preferably within 1½ hours before being refrigerated.

**Always keep raw food apart from high-risk food.**

**High-risk food** is food which is ready-to-eat and does not require any further cooking. In some cases separate fridges are used for raw food and high-risk food. If you are using one fridge, always place high-risk food on a shelf **above** raw food so that there is no risk of raw food dripping or falling on to high-risk food.

Always cover food to reduce the risk of things falling on to it or the food drying out or absorbing odours.

Open the fridge door only for the minimum amount of time to avoid the internal temperature from rising.

Regular maintenance and defrosting (where not automatic) should be carried out and door seals checked.

Remember to check dates of products and rotate stock.

Do not store open cans of food in the refrigerator; acid foods in particular can attack the internal surface of the can and cause poisoning. Empty the can into another container for storing.

Food which experiences a significant increase in temperature (above 8°C) for excessive time, due to a power cut or breakdown, should be destroyed.

# Section 2

# Health issues

# Poor health in communities

Poor health is particularly prevalent amongst people who have experienced homelessness and from other vulnerable backgrounds, with one problem often exacerbating the other. Within this sector of the population there is a greater risk of morbidity, malnutrition, and premature death than the population at large. Basic necessities which many take for granted, such as a hot meal, access to basic medical care, shelter and washing facilities are not always readily available and this makes people much more susceptible to ill health. These problems are often coupled with addiction and mental health problems, which in themselves can make a person much more vulnerable to illness. To compound the problems, homeless people are also much less likely to have access to a GP than the rest of the population.

Poor living conditions make people more susceptible to:

- respiratory problems
- ear and skin disorders
- gastrointestinal diseases
- circulation problems
- musculoskeletal problems
- dental problems
- nutritional conditions (malnutrition)
- vision problems
- sexually transmitted diseases
- exposure related problems

Homeless and vulnerable people often also have addiction issues. These can have the following effects:

Substance:	Effect on health:
Alcohol	Liver cancer; liver damage and cirrhosis. Difficulty in adsorbing nutrients from food; digestive problems; neurological problems; muscle disease and skin problems; high blood pressure; heart failure and obesity.
Drugs	Gum and teeth problems; sleep problems; mood swings; anxiety; depression.
Nicotine	High blood pressure, heart disease, cancer.
Caffeine	Difficulty in sleeping, irritability, nervousness and headaches.

Lack of access to or knowledge about good, healthy food can make the problems worse. Lack of facilities or basic skills required to cook a meal from scratch or to know what ingredients to buy often lead people to rely on pre-prepared or takeaway food.

Many people from the more vulnerable sections of our communities will not have the confidence to seek the help they need, either medical or professional.

There are major links between diet and health problems such as obesity, diabetes, heart disease and stroke as well as certain cancers.



# Heart disease and stroke

There are a variety of risk factors associated with developing heart disease and stroke some of which are associated with lifestyle factors. Common causes are:

**High Blood Pressure** – this can damage your blood vessels if left untreated and increases the risk of heart disease and stroke.

**Cholesterol** – there are two types of cholesterol, HDL and LDL. High levels of one of the types, LDL cholesterol, can make your arteries narrower and increase the risk of heart disease and stroke.

There are some diet related ways to help reduce the risk of developing high blood pressure or high levels of LDL cholesterol:

**Maintain a healthy weight** – if you are overweight you increase your risk of developing high blood pressure as well as other health problems. It has been shown that high blood pressure is 50% more common in individuals who are overweight compared to those of a healthy weight.

**Reduce your salt intake** – it is recommended that adults consume no more than 6g in total per day, the equivalent of a teaspoon. This includes 'hidden' salt in the processed foods that you might buy as well as the salt you add at mealtimes.

**Limit the amount of fat in your diet** – too much of any type of fat in your diet can cause weight gain which increases the risk of developing high blood pressure. Saturated and trans fats in particular can increase levels of LDL cholesterol, a risk factor in the development of heart disease (see Cholesterol for more information).

**Eat at least five portions of fruit and vegetables a day** – fruit and vegetables contain antioxidants which help to fight disease and help prevent the build up of cholesterol in the arteries.

**Eat at least one serving of oily-rich fish a week** such as salmon, mackerel, pilchards or fresh tuna which helps to increase the level of the protective HDL cholesterol. They also help to protect the heart by making the blood less sticky and likely to clot, lowering blood pressure and improving blood flow to the heart.

**Increase the amount of starchy food and fibre in your diet** – bread, preferably wholemeal, wholegrain cereals, pasta, rice and potatoes should be included as part of a healthy diet. Foods containing soluble fibre, such as oats, beans, lentils and fruit and vegetables, can also help in reducing LDL cholesterol levels, encouraging the body to excrete cholesterol before it can be absorbed into the blood stream.

**Cut out smoking** – smoking can cause your arteries to narrow and therefore increase your blood pressure.

**Limit your alcohol intake** – alcohol can raise your blood pressure.

**Take regular exercise** – regular exercise is an excellent way of reducing your blood pressure, as well as cholesterol levels.

# Cholesterol

Cholesterol is a sticky wax-like substance that circulates in the blood.

## There are two types of cholesterol:

- Low-density lipoprotein (LDL), the bad type of cholesterol.
- High-density lipoprotein cholesterol (HDL) which is the good, protective type of cholesterol.

Too much saturated fat in the diet can increase the bad cholesterol levels in the blood. High cholesterol levels in the blood increases the chance of developing heart disease. Eating a healthy balanced diet and being physically active can help keep your cholesterol levels low.

It is the amount of saturated fat we eat that affects our cholesterol levels most. Therefore the most important thing to do is cut down on saturated fat.

## Foods high in saturated fat:

- Meat pies.
- Sausages and fatty cuts of meat.
- Butter or ghee.
- Lard.
- Cream and crème fraîche.
- Hard cheese.
- Cakes and biscuits.
- Coconut or palm oil (or foods containing these).

Trans/hydrogenated fats also can raise cholesterol levels, these are found in:

- Biscuits and cakes.
- Fast food.
- Pastry.
- Some margarines and spreads.

## Suggestions to help in lowering your cholesterol levels:

- Eat less of the foods containing saturated fats (see above).
- Steam, poach, boil or grill your food instead of frying or roasting.
- Eat more fruit and vegetables.
- Eat more fibre – wholemeal bread, oats, porridge, beans, peas, lentils, fruit and vegetables.
- Choose lean cuts of meat.
- Drink semi-skimmed (green top) or skimmed milk (red top) instead of whole milk (blue top).
- Cut down on the amount of butter or spreads or mayonnaise you have in sandwiches or add to potatoes etc.
- When cooking use vegetable oil such as sunflower or rapeseed or olive oil instead of lard or butter.
- Keep physically active – for example a brisk walk every day (aim for a minimum of 30 minutes at least five times per week).

# Mental health and diet

Mental wellbeing is an important and integral part of overall health. Most people know that the foods that they eat can affect their physical health, what is less well known is that food is intimately linked with the way we think, feel and act. It is believed that nutrition has an important role to play in maintaining a healthy mind as well as a healthy body. What we eat is therefore an important factor in helping to protect good mental health and improve mood. Here are a few guidelines which can be followed:

- Eat regular meals – your brain needs glucose, or blood sugar, to function efficiently so if blood sugar levels are uneven your mood may be affected leaving you irritable, unable to concentrate, tired and depressed.
- Eat starchy foods – these tend to be digested slowly and therefore help prevent fluctuation of sugar levels, e.g. oats, rice, bread, potatoes, pasta.
- Eat less refined foods (white sugar, white bread, pasta, pastries, sugary drinks etc.) – they use up B vitamins which are good for mood.
- Drink six to eight glasses of water per day to stay hydrated. Dehydration affects your ability to think clearly and to concentrate.
- Eat a balanced diet (follow the guidelines of the eatwell plate) including a variety of foods which helps the body get the vitamins and minerals it needs.
- Eat at least five portions of fruit or vegetables per day (they are packed with the vital vitamins and minerals essential for a healthy mind, such as the B vitamins and antioxidants). A portion is about a handful.
- Eat breakfast which helps to prevent a mid morning dip in mood and energy and to keep blood sugar levels balanced. Good mood breakfasts include porridge, wholegrain cereals, live yoghurt with fresh/dried fruit, nuts, seeds, wholemeal toast and sugar free jam.
- Limit caffeine – this affects blood sugar levels. Although caffeine increases mental alertness and concentration in the short term, too much has been found to be associated with anxiety, cravings, depression, emotional instability, insomnia, mood swings and nervousness.
- Limit alcohol – this affects blood sugar levels.
- Boost serotonin levels by including protein containing foods e.g. meat, fish, beans, eggs, nuts, seeds. These foods contain the building blocks for brain chemicals that influence how you think and feel. Eating protein also helps control fluctuating blood sugar levels. Exercise, sunlight and reducing stress also helps boost serotonin in the brain.
- Avoid 'oxidants' such as fried and burnt foods.
- Eat foods which contain Omega-3 fatty acids which work well at stabilising mood and are known for their antidepressant effect. These foods include oily fish such as salmon, mackerel, linseeds (flax), hempseeds, rapeseed oil, wholegrain cereals and dark green leafy vegetables.
- Maintain a healthy gut. Wholegrain foods, beans, peas, lentils, fruit and vegetables all contain fibre which aids digestion and contributes to happier emotions.
- Check with a health professional if you suspect you have food intolerance. Food intolerance can contribute to a wide variety of unpleasant or uncomfortable feelings. Common culprits include wheat, dairy and yeast.
- Check food labels to avoid unnecessary food additives that can affect how you feel. Many people find they feel better if they avoid artificial colourings, preservatives, sweeteners and flavour enhancers.

# Obesity

When someone is obese, it means they have put on weight to the point that it could seriously endanger their health. Obesity can decrease lifespan and can be a risk factor for type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, heart disease and stroke and some cancers. Obesity can also contribute to other health problems such as gallstones, osteoarthritis, high blood pressure and complications during pregnancy.

Obesity is caused by an energy imbalance whereby the energy input from eating too many calories has exceeded energy output by not doing enough physical activity. The extra energy from food is converted and stored in the body as fat.

To maintain a healthy weight it is important to follow a balanced diet. This means eating a combination of foods from the different food groups (see the eatwell plate and A Healthy and Nutritious Diet). Many people think that starchy carbohydrate food is responsible for weight gain (e.g. bread, pasta, potatoes, rice) but it is the fat in the fillings, sauces and spreads that are more likely to be fattening. Lots of sugary foods and drinks also cause weight gain with very little nutritional benefit to the body.

If you want to lose weight, it is important not to go on a 'crash diet' but to change how you eat and organise a new diet that you can keep to all the time, not just when you are trying to lose weight. Simple changes can make a big difference and small changes are often better than big changes because they are easier to maintain. Set yourself small achievable goals and once you have achieved one goal and it has become a habit move on to your next goal. In that way you'll build up long-term permanent change.

You could try:

- eating smaller portions
- not missing meals
- increasing physical activity e.g. going for walks, swimming, gardening
- trimming the fat off meat
- choosing low-fat varieties of dairy and other products
- increasing your intake of starchy foods (bread, pasta, potatoes, rice)
- eating less of sugary foods and drinks
- increasing your intake of a variety of fruits and vegetables
- having fruit or vegetables as snacks

By being realistic and aiming to lose weight gradually, it is more likely to stay off! Losing even a small amount of weight can bring real health benefits and reduce the health risks associated with obesity.

## Physical activity

Physical activity has benefits not only for controlling body weight over the long term, but also in controlling appetite. It also has beneficial effects on the heart and blood that help to prevent heart disease. Any physical activity is better than none at all and the more you do, the greater the benefits to your health.

# Diabetes

Diabetes is a condition where the amount of glucose in your blood is too high because the body cannot use it properly. This is because your pancreas does not produce any insulin, or not enough. Insulin is the hormone produced by the pancreas that allows glucose to enter the body's cells, where it is used for energy. If you have diabetes, your body cannot make proper use of this glucose so it builds up in the blood and the condition needs to be controlled. Diabetes is the UK's biggest cause of heart disease after smoking.

## Types of diabetes

There are two types of diabetes, Type 1 and Type 2.

Type 1 diabetes develops when:

- the beta cells in the pancreas stop making insulin

80% of those with Type 2 diabetes are overweight.

It develops because:

- the pancreas does not make enough insulin for your body's needs, or
- cells in the body do not use insulin properly. This is called 'insulin resistance'. This means cells in your body become resistant to normal levels of insulin so you need more insulin than you normally make to keep the blood glucose level down, or
- a combination of the above

## Treatment

Type 1 diabetes is normally treated with insulin injections. Type 1 diabetics should see a health professional to help to understand the balance between the carbohydrate they eat (from which glucose is derived) and their insulin dose.

Type 2 diabetes can be controlled or prevented through some lifestyle changes:

- control your weight and try not to be overweight. Set yourself a series of achievable goals based on a gradual weight loss of ½–1 kilogram (1–2 lbs) a week, that way it is more likely to stay off
- eat three meals a day including breakfast and include some starchy carbohydrate foods with each meal
- watch the portion sizes of your meals
- eat a healthy, balanced diet
- aim for at least five portions of different fruits or vegetables a day
- eat oily fish such as mackerel, sardines or salmon twice a week
- reduce your intake of sugary foods and drinks
- eat fewer fatty foods especially those containing saturated fats
- limit salt and salty foods
- keep active – aim for 30 minutes of exercise at least five days per week
- limit your alcohol intake to within the recommended guidelines

The use of oral drugs to reduce blood glucose levels may be required for people with Type 2 diabetes.

# Alcohol and diet

Alcohol consumed in moderation is not necessarily bad for you and there have been some studies to suggest that red wine in particular can have a beneficial effect if drunk in moderation. However, drinking too much can cause problems and drinking more than the recommended limits can cause long-term damage to your body, including liver cirrhosis in extreme cases. After smoking, alcohol is the most common addiction problem in the UK and more people die each year from alcohol misuse than illegal drug misuse.

Stomach ulcers, fertility problems, inability to absorb minerals and vitamins from food are also associated with excessive alcohol consumption, as well as an increase in the risk of developing certain cancers. Binge drinking can also increase blood pressure which is a risk factor for a heart attack.

As well as this, alcohol is high in calories and of little or no nutritional value and therefore can easily contribute to weight gain.

It is recommended by the Government that you should not drink more than:

- 21 units of alcohol/week if you are male (or 3 to 4 units per/day)
- 14 units of alcohol/week if you are female (or 2 to 3 units per/day)

One unit of alcohol equals 8g of alcohol and is equivalent to:

- A small glass of wine (175 ml). (Watch out for extra large glass sizes – a large wine glass can be double a traditional measure)
- ½ pint of standard strength beer/lager/cider. (Watch out for the strength of drinks, beer and wines can be stronger than you expect)
- One 25ml measure of spirits

Try to have at least two alcohol free days per week.

The diet of a chronic alcoholic is characteristically poor and nutritionally an excessive consumption of alcohol can:

- lead to deficiencies, e.g. antioxidants which protect against cancer
- lead to thiamine (B1) deficiency which can in its worst form put you at risk of Wernicke-Korsakoff Syndrome
- impair your immune system
- cause mal-absorption of nutrients resulting in malnourishment

Many countries supplement their bread with thiamine. Thiamine can be found naturally in:

- Pork
- Most vegetables
- Peanuts
- Bran
- Milk
- Dried yeast
- Oatmeal
- Fortified breakfast cereal

# Infectious diseases

It is important to follow good hygiene practice at all times in order to reduce the risk of someone passing on an illness that they are either suffering from or one that they might be carrying that they don't know about. A person can in some cases be a carrier without showing symptoms.

Some of the more common infectious diseases:

**Common cold and flu** – both are caused by a virus and are very contagious. There are many different viruses. Cold viruses tend to last a short time and flu viruses a little longer. When suffering from a cold or the flu, it is best not to attend a cooking class because it can be passed on very easily through particles in the air, after sneezing or coughing, and through hand contact or utensils and sharing food.

**Sickness and diarrhoea** – can be caused by eating food contaminated by micro-organisms, such as bacteria or viruses. Most sickness and diarrhoea is highly contagious and you should definitely NOT come to a cooking class if suffering. It is easily spread from contact with an infected person especially if good hygiene is not followed. It can also be spread by touching door handles, taps and hands of an infected person.

**Hepatitis C** – Hepatitis C is caused by a virus that leads to inflammation of the liver. It is usually transmitted through blood to blood contact and often through the sharing of needles when injecting drugs. Many people who have Hepatitis C are unaware that they have it as it can take years for symptoms to appear. Although it can be passed on through sharing toothbrushes and razors, or sexually transmitted, it can NOT be passed on by holding hands, sharing cups, sneezing, kissing, shaking hands, sharing utensils or drinking glasses. People with blood-borne infections are not a food safety hazard as long as they are in good health and take the usual hygiene precautions.

**HIV/AIDS** – HIV is caused by a virus that can lead over time to AIDS. It is estimated that in the UK one in three people who have HIV do not know they have it because it can be carried for several years without any symptoms. The virus is passed on through body fluids, and is usually transmitted through unprotected sex or contaminated needles. It is NOT passed on through touching, being sneezed on, kissing, toilet seats, shaking hands, sharing towels, door knobs, cutlery or food. People with blood-borne infections are not a food safety hazard as long as they are in good health and take the usual hygiene precautions.

**There are many other infectious diseases and it is important always to follow good hygiene practice when preparing food.**

# Allergies and intolerances

The medical term for a food allergy or intolerance is food hypersensitivity and this describes a range of adverse reactions to food, including allergies, digestive enzyme deficiencies (e.g. not producing enough of the right enzyme in the body to break down a particular food) and the effects of some medications.

A true food allergy always involves the body's immune system reacting to a particular food. The reaction is frequently immediate but can be slow onset. The severest reaction is known as anaphylactic shock and can be fatal. Often only minute quantities of the allergen (food causing the allergic reaction) need to be present. Other symptoms include eczema, asthma, rhinitis and conjunctivitis.

Other food intolerances don't involve the immune system and are often caused by the body's inability to digest a certain food. Reactions tend to occur hours or days after eating the food. Examples are asthma and wheezing (may be associated with milk); rhinitis (a continual runny nose); eczema (may also be associated with milk); coeliac disease (associated with gluten found in wheat, barley and rye); diarrhoea (due to irritation of the intestine); migraines and headaches (possibly linked to chocolate or cheese); hyperactivity or ADHD (may be linked to food colours); itching at the back of the throat (may be linked to raw potatoes); rheumatoid arthritis; and skin rashes (may be linked to food additives). The most common intolerance is milk, or lactose, intolerance when the body doesn't produce enough lactase to digest the milk.

It is estimated that 1–2% of the adult population, and 5–8% of children, are affected by adverse reactions to food (food hypersensitivity). Approximately 20% of the adult population BELIEVE they have an allergy or intolerance.

The only medically proven ways to get tested for a true allergy is by having a special blood test, a skin prick or a patch test. There are many other tests available but these are not regarded by conventional medicine as being effective and they often cost a lot of money. If you suspect you may have an allergy, it is best to speak to your GP for professional advice. If you or especially your child does prove to have an allergy it is important to get dietary advice as well.

If you suspect someone has a more general food intolerance as opposed to a true allergy, suggest keeping a 'food and symptom' diary which may help identify a suspect food. Bear in mind that cutting out any food may upset the balance of the diet.

Common foods that can cause an allergic reaction and which now must be labelled on pre-packaged foods sold within the EU:

- Cow's milk
- Peanuts
- Tree nuts
- Eggs
- Soy
- Shellfish
- Fish
- Gluten containing cereals (wheat, rye, barley, oats)

Less common foods are sesame, mustard, celery, sulphites, molluscs and lupin.



# Let's get physical...

## Why is physical activity important?

Regular physical activity of at least moderate intensity provides general health benefits across a range of diseases and across all ages. In particular, there is strong evidence that the greatest health benefits happen when the least active people become moderately active. Some of the health benefits of physical activity are:

- Physical activity reduces the risk of coronary heart disease and stroke.
- Physical activity is an effective treatment for peripheral vascular disease and high blood pressure.
- Active people have up to a 50% lower risk of developing type 2 diabetes compared to inactive people. Also, for those who have already developed type 2 diabetes, the risk of premature death is much lower for active and fit patients than for inactive and unfit patients.
- Physical activity promotes strength, co-ordination and balance. This is particularly important for older people, in reducing their risk of falls and helping them to maintain their capacity to carry out common activities of daily living. As a result, physical activity can help older people sustain an independent lifestyle for longer.
- Physical activity is associated with a reduction in the overall risk of cancer. In particular, there is a reduced risk of colon cancer and, among post-menopausal women, breast cancer.
- Physically active employees have fewer days' sick leave, lower staff turnover and fewer industrial injuries.
- Physical activity may help to reduce symptoms of stress, anxiety and depression.

## How much physical activity should I do?

Physical activity is movement of the body that uses energy. There are many different types of physical activity, including exercise, sport, play, dance and active living such as walking, housework and gardening.

The widely accepted health messages are now:

- Adults should accumulate/build up at least 30 minutes of moderate activity on most days of the week (five or more).
- Children should accumulate/build up at least one hour of moderate activity on most days of the week (five or more).

Moderate activity is considered to be the equivalent of brisk walking.

## Where can I get started?

For more information on how you can get active, stay active and achieve more please see the following links

[www.edinburghleisure.co.uk](http://www.edinburghleisure.co.uk)

[www.edinburgh.gov.uk/actcity](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/actcity)

## Choose a variety of activities and ones you enjoy

## It's never too late to start

**Remember – you feel better after you have been active**

# Section 3

# Healthy eating

# A healthy and nutritious diet

## The eatwell plate



The eatwell plate shows the different types of food we need to eat and in what proportions in order to have a well balanced and healthy diet.

It's a good idea to try to get this balance right every day, even if we don't do it at every meal. It is often easier to get the balance right over a longer period, say a week.

We are all individuals and have different energy needs according to a number of factors, for example our age, gender, our state of health and level of activity. Eating healthily is about eating the right amount of food for our energy needs. Energy is measured in calories and if we eat more calories (energy) than we need we will gain weight. Conversely if we eat less calories than we need we will lose weight. To maintain a healthy weight it is important to balance the calories we eat with the energy we are using for daily activity. Generally men have larger muscles, are heavier and require more calories than women. Pregnant and breast feeding women need extra food and young people and babies likewise have special energy requirements, as do people with an illness or who are convalescing. Older people have less muscle and can become less active so need less energy than someone younger.

The eatwell plate applies to most people, whether a healthy weight or overweight, whether a meat eater or vegetarian, and irrespective of ethnic origin. However, children under the age of two have different nutritional needs. Between the ages of two and five, children should gradually move to eating the same foods as the rest of the family, in the proportions shown on the eatwell plate. Anyone with special dietary requirements

or medical needs should check with a registered dietitian whether the eatwell plate applies to them.

In Scotland we are known to have a poor diet which can lead to poor health and increase health risks as well as contribute to becoming overweight or obese or lead to underweight or malnutrition.

The eatwell plate is an easy guide to the quantities of each food group we should include in our diet. There are five main food groups and it is recommended that we should try to eat:

### Plenty of bread, rice, cereals, potatoes, pasta and other starchy foods

This includes all types of bread, oats, barley, maize, wheat (and foods made from these such as breakfast cereals). They provide energy, some protein, calcium, iron and B vitamins. A good source of starchy carbohydrate, it is recommended that half of our total energy should come from carbohydrate and one third of a meal should consist of starchy foods. Examples include porridge, jacket potato, pizza, noodles, chapattis, couscous, sweet potatoes, oatcakes or a scone. Choose wholegrain and wholemeal varieties where possible as they are higher in fibre.

### Plenty of fruits and vegetables

One third of our diet should come from this group and we should be eating **at least five** portions of a variety of fruit and vegetables every day. This could be fresh, frozen, tinned or dried. They provide vitamins, particularly vitamin C, minerals and antioxidants which help protect our body from disease. They also provide dietary fibre and can regulate cholesterol levels. Any small increase in the amount eaten can contribute to improving overall health.

### Some meat, fish, eggs, beans and other sources of protein

Examples include beef, lamb, pork, chicken, turkey, fish (white, oily, tinned) and eggs as well as nuts, beans and pulses (e.g. kidney beans, lentils, baked beans), soya and Quorn. Foods from this group provide protein which is important for growth and repair and the production of hormones. These foods also provide iron, B vitamins (especially B12), zinc and magnesium. Vitamin C helps in the absorption of iron.

# A healthy and nutritious diet

## Some milk and dairy foods

This includes milk, cheese, yoghurt, fromage frais and calcium enriched soya milk. These foods provide calcium, protein, vitamins A and D and vitamin B12 (not butter or cream) and are important for growing children. Calcium is essential for strong bones and teeth and particularly valuable in later life to reduce the risk of osteoporosis (brittle bone disease) for post menopausal women. Vitamin D helps in the absorption of calcium. Dairy products can be high in fat so it is important to eat them in moderation. Try low fat or reduced fat options such as semi-skimmed milk (green top).

## Only a small amount of foods and drinks high in fat and/or sugar

This group includes margarine, butter, spreading fats and cooking oils, fried foods (chips, crisps) and food high in fat such as cream, pastry, and mayonnaise.

This group also includes sweets, chocolate, cakes, biscuits, jams, sugar, honey sugary and fizzy drinks. All foods in this group provide 'empty' calories – calories that provide no protein, fibre, vitamins or minerals, so they are calories that most of us could do without. Sugar and sugary foods also increase the risk of tooth decay especially when eaten between meals.

It is how much food we eat from each group which is important. Most of our food should come from the two biggest groups, the **starchy carbohydrates** (one third) and **fruits/vegetables** (one third). A smaller proportion should come from the protein and dairy groups and an even smaller proportion from the foods high in fat and/or sugar. If you have already had a chocolate bar for one snack in the day, try to have some fruit for the next.

Using this model and eating a variety of foods should ensure we get enough vitamins and minerals and other important nutrients to keep the body healthy and active, the mind alert, and to help protect against disease.

Evidence has shown that most of us in Scotland eat too few foods from the two main groups, and far too much from the other groups. On the menu planning pages we hope that you will find some useful suggestions and tips. Remember that a small change is better than no change. A small change is also much easier to make than a radical change and is much more likely to last.

## Ideas to get your '5 a day' fruit and vegetables

- Drink a small glass of unsweetened orange juice at breakfast (counts as one portion only, no matter how many glasses you have).
- Eat fresh fruit instead of biscuits as a snack.
- Add tomato, cucumber, and lettuce to a sandwich.
- Include vegetables with your evening meal – if you haven't got fresh, use tinned or frozen, these still count.
- Add sliced onions, carrots, peppers or a tin of tomatoes if you are cooking mince or casseroles.
- Chop vegetables into fingers and use for snacks.
- Eat a handful of raisins or dried apricots.
- Add extra chopped vegetables to a pot of homemade soup.
- Eat a variety of different colours of fruit and vegetables each day e.g. carrots, cabbage, raspberries, bananas.
- Although a good source of starchy carbohydrate, potatoes do **not** count as one of your 5 a day.

# A healthy and nutritious diet

Fruit/Vegetables (fresh/tinned/frozen)	1 portion
Broccoli, cabbage, carrots, mushrooms, tomatoes, parsnips, peas, swede, sweetcorn	2–3 tablespoons
Green salad or vegetable soup	1 bowl
Very large fruits – melon, fresh pineapple	1 large slice or 2–3 rings pineapple
Large fruits – apple, banana, orange	1 fruit
Medium fruits – apricots, kiwi fruit, plum, satsuma	2 fruits
Small fruits – blackberries, strawberries, cherries, grapes	2–3 tablespoons
Dried fruit	1 tablespoon
Unsweetened fruit juice	1 small glass

## Fluid

Drink at least eight glasses (about 2 litres) of fluid a day. Water is the best drink to have, other drinks can be high in sugar (fizzy drinks, juices). Drinks with caffeine are suitable in moderation and tea and coffee can be enjoyed though again be aware of the added sugar. Fluid intake should be increased in hot weather or after exercise. Don't wait until you are thirsty to drink, you will already have started to become dehydrated by this time.

## Salt

Salt is a mix of sodium and chloride and it is the sodium in salt that has a negative effect on our health. In 6g of salt there is 2.4g of sodium. It is recommended that our daily amount of salt is no more than 6g per day (approximately a teaspoon).

Most people eat too much salt. This can raise blood pressure, which increases the risk of heart disease and stroke. 75% of the salt we eat is already in the food we buy, in particular in processed foods. Many people think that food has no flavour without salt. Research has shown that our taste buds get accustomed to high levels of salt, which not only results in us wanting more salt as our taste receptors don't detect small amounts anymore, but also leads to other subtle flavours being masked.

Foods which can be high in salt and therefore should be limited include:

- Baked beans
- Marmite/yeast extract
- Cheese
- Cooking and pasta sauces
- Crisps
- Pizza
- Ready meals
- Soup (tinned/packet)
- Chips (if salt added)
- Sausages
- Gravy granules
- Salted and dry roasted nuts
- Bacon/ham
- Pickles
- Tomato ketchup, mayonnaise and other sauces

Here are some simple ways to cut down on salt intake:

- Try not to add salt during cooking – often salt is added out of habit.
- Go easy with ketchup, soy sauce, mustard, pickles and mayonnaise – these can all be high in salt.
- Don't be tempted to add salt at the table, it could be it is not needed e.g. salt is already in a stock cube used in making soup.
- Cook meals from scratch – use herbs, garlic, spices, ginger and lemon to add flavour.
- Look at food labels to understand what contains a lot, or a little salt and choose products that are lower in salt.

### What is a lot of salt?

1.5g salt or more per 100g  
(0.5g sodium or more per 100g)

### What is a little salt?

0.3g salt or less per 100g  
(0.1g sodium or less per 100g)

# A healthy and nutritious diet

## Fats

The fat in our diet affects our cholesterol levels which can increase the risk of heart disease and stroke. Also too much fat can lead to weight gain.

There are three main types of fat:

- saturated fat
- trans fat (also known as hydrogenated fat/vegetable oil)
- unsaturated fat

It is the saturated fats and trans fats that can be harmful and should be limited in our diet.

Unsaturated fat can help to lower cholesterol levels. There are two types of unsaturated fats, monounsaturated fats and polyunsaturated fats. It is good to eat some of these fats as they contain important nutrients. However, intakes of unsaturated fat should still be eaten in moderation in order not to cause weight gain.

Omega-3 fats are a group of unsaturated fats called 'essential fatty acids' particularly found in oily fish. The omega-3 fats in oily fish help our heart beat more regularly and prevent blood from clotting. We should try to eat at least two portions of fish a week, one of which should be an oily fish. Examples of oily fish include salmon, mackerel, sardines, pilchards, herring and fresh tuna (not tinned).

## Foods containing saturated or trans fats

- Fat on meats
- Fatty meat products
- Full fat dairy products (cheese, yoghurt, milk, cream, ice cream)
- Pies and pastries
- Crisps
- Chips
- Baked goods (biscuits, cakes, doughnuts)
- Chocolate
- Fried foods
- Lard, suet
- Fast food, processed food and ready meals

## Foods containing unsaturated fats

- Olive oil
- Rapeseed oil
- Sunflower oil
- Groundnut oil
- Corn oil
- Sunflower or olive oil spreads
- Avocados
- Oily fish (salmon, mackerel, pilchards, sardines, fresh tuna, herring)
- Nuts (avoid salted varieties)
- Flax and linseed oil

Here are some simple ways to cut down on fat:

- Choose lean meat or poultry. Cut the fat off meat and the skin off chicken.
- Switch to skimmed or semi-skimmed milk instead of full fat – there's just as much calcium but a lot less fat. Use low fat yoghurt instead of cream.
- Go easy on hard cheeses like cheddar. Some soft cheeses such as cottage cheese, feta and brie may be lower in fat. Grate cheese rather than cut a chunk off a block.
- Cut down on chips. However eat chunky chips rather than skinny ones, they're a lot less fatty.
- Avoid frying food. Steam, microwave, boil or poach instead. Or grill, stir fry, bake or dry roast. Use a non stick pan or use no more than 1 teaspoon of oil. Cook mince without oil.
- Cut down on crisps, pies, cakes, ice cream, biscuits, and chocolates. Snack on crunchy vegetables, houmous, fruit, nuts or yoghurt.
- Use less butter or margarine on bread – spread only one side of a sandwich. Go easy on the mayonnaise. If the filling is moist don't use spread.
- Check food labels and choose low or reduced fat varieties where possible.

## What is a lot of fat?

20g or more per 100g

5g saturates or more per 100g

## What is a little fat?

3g fat or less per 100g

1g saturates or less per 100g

# A healthy and nutritious diet

## Sugar

We don't have to give up sugar altogether, we should just try not to eat too much of it too often.

We can add some sugar to our drinks, deserts and cooking. But a much bigger source of added sugar is 'hidden' in processed foods that we buy such as sweets, cakes, jam, puddings, biscuits, pastries, ice cream, chocolate, sugar coated cereals, even some savoury snacks, sauces and ready meals.

A big source is often soft and fizzy drinks. There could be 10 teaspoons of sugar in a single can of juice!

Added sugar is usually empty calories, that is, it just adds calories without any nutrients. No vitamins, no minerals, no protein, no fibre, just calories. And if we take in more calories than we burn up then we put on weight. Eating sugar also adds risk of tooth decay.

Useful tips:

- Eat natural – if you want something sweet, an energy boost and one that contains loads of really useful nutrients, eat fresh fruit.
- Cut down, cut out or gradually reduce the amount of sugar you add to your food and hot drinks and in cooking. Train your taste buds.
- Go small – avoid jumbo deals such as chocolate bars and biscuits.
- Protect your teeth – sugary foods are best eaten with meals when most saliva is produced. Drink water at the meal time. Brush teeth.
- Check labels. Remember ingredients are listed by weight so the higher up the start of the ingredients list, the more the food or drink is high in sugar. Sugar may be sucrose, glucose, fructose, lactose, dextrose, maltose, Demerara brown sugar, invert sugar, honey, molasses, treacle, syrup.

Notes on food labels and what they mean:

- 'No added sugars' – however may contain artificial sweeteners.
- 'Unsweetened' – no sugar or sweetener added.
- 'Reduced sugar' must be 25% less sugar than regular product.
- 'Low sugar' is 5g or less of added sugar in 100g of product. If there is 15g or more per 100g that's a lot.

## Vegetarianism

There are many different varieties of vegetarianism. There are vegetarians who eat white meat and fish, ones that eat no meat or poultry but eat fish, or ones that eat no meat, poultry or fish. Vegans eat no animal products at all including eggs, milk, cheese and other dairy items. Many cultures in the world are predominantly vegetarian.

Meat is a great source of protein, iron and zinc so vegetarians need these important nutrients from other sources.

Protein – found in lentils, beans, chickpeas, soya products such as tofu, seeds and nuts, eggs. It is a good idea to eat these combined with grain products, such as wheat (bread, pasta) and oats (oatcakes, porridge), to get the full benefit of high quality protein e.g. eat a slice of wholemeal bread with lentil soup or chickpea curry.

Iron – found in wholegrains, leafy green vegetables and fortified breakfast cereals. Eat plenty of fruit and vegetables rich in vitamin C (oranges, berries, melon, red peppers, tomatoes) to help the absorption of iron from non-meat sources e.g. a glass of orange juice with a bowl of breakfast cereal. Avoid drinking tea or coffee with a meal because these make it harder for the body to absorb iron. It's best to wait at least half an hour after eating before you have a tea or coffee.

Zinc – found in dairy products, eggs, lentils, beans, nuts, seeds (especially pumpkin seeds), green vegetables, wholegrain cereals and fortified breakfast cereals.

Selenium – contributes to the functioning of our immune system. Meat, fish and nuts are the best sources of selenium, so a strict vegetarian should ensure eating enough nuts.

**Vegans** will need to source calcium from non-dairy products: try calcium fortified soy milk, tofu, bread, dried fruit, green leafy vegetables, nuts and sesame seeds. Vegans may also lack vitamin D, however, a good source is from the action of sunlight on skin or can be found in fortified breakfast cereals and spreads. Other vitamins which a vegan may be low in are vitamins B2 and B12 which primarily come from animal-derived foods, however they can also be found in fortified cereals, soya products and yeast extract. Alternatively a non-animal derived supplement can be taken. Vegans should also take a small quantity of iodised salt or seaweed as a source of the mineral iodine.

# A healthy and nutritious diet

## Cooking methods

Healthy food can be made less healthy by the way it is cooked or prepared.

Some methods are better for retaining the nutrients in fruit and vegetables.

Here are some suggestions:

- Avoid peeling and chopping fruit and vegetables too far in advance of using – consider not peeling at all and leave the skin on e.g. on fruit and potatoes.
- Care should be taken when boiling vegetables so as not to boil away all the good nutrients. Vegetables should be cooked quickly in a small amount of water and eaten as soon as cooked. Some vitamins (B & C) can be destroyed by overcooking and keeping warm for long periods.
- Avoid adding salt or bicarbonate of soda to the cooking liquid.
- Use the water that vegetables have been cooked in for making stocks and soups.
- Steam or microwave.
- Some people think starchy foods are fattening, e.g. potatoes, pasta. Avoid recipes with a heavy cream sauce which will add to the fat content.
- Minimise storage times, buy small amounts of fresh fruit and vegetables and store in a fridge or use frozen.
- Grilling is ok, however avoid adding fat or oil.
- Avoid frying foods.

## A summary of our tips on healthy eating

- Eat some fruit every day.
- Eat salads or vegetables with your main meal
- Eat plenty of rice, pasta and potatoes – make sure you do not add too much butter, cheese, cream etc.
- Eat fish two or three times a week, especially sardines, mackerel, salmon and herring which are rich in healthy oils (this can be fresh, tinned or frozen).
- Drink ½ pint of milk per day (semi-skimmed/green top or skimmed/red top) or eat a low fat yoghurt.
- Avoid eating too many processed meat products (bacon, ham, sausages, salami, corned beef) – they are often full of salt and additives.
- Avoid adding salt to your meal at the table and eat fewer salted and processed foods (chips, crisps, carry-outs, ready meals).
- Cut down on the salt you add to your cooking.
- Keep cakes, biscuits, sweets, ice cream and fizzy drinks for special occasions. This will help control your fat and sugar intake.
- Drink plenty of liquid (six to eight glasses or mugs a day) preferably water. Try to avoid sugary soft and fizzy drinks that are high in added sugars and can be high in calories and bad for teeth.
- Limit the amount of alcohol you drink and especially do not binge drink.
- Eat more home-cooked food.
- Always eat breakfast; it provides some of the vitamins and minerals needed for good health and enhances mental performance and mood.
- Get active and try to take some exercise every day.
- Watch portion size.
- Plan meals ahead.

**“I loved my cooking and learned a lot and told all the lads to go on it and learn”**

**Cooking Participant**



# Meal planning

It is often a good idea to sit down at the start of the week and make a rough menu plan for the upcoming days, or if you can, the upcoming week. Doing so can make it easier to incorporate the tips and advice that are given for healthy eating, resulting in a more balanced diet. It can also be useful to plan meals with regard to budgeting. Knowing what you are going to eat throughout the week lets you know what you need to buy at the shops. This can help you to prevent over spending.

People who are very busy often consider it difficult to find the time to decide what they are going to eat, buy it and cook it. This means they often end up opting for convenience meals or take away. Planning ahead can make it easier to find the time to prepare healthier, home-cooked meals.

When we are planning what we are going to eat we should aim for three meals per day (breakfast, lunch and dinner). We should also plan for a couple of healthy snacks each day so if we get hungry between meals we are not tempted to snack on foods that are high in fat and sugar. Having healthy snacks is a good way to keep our blood sugar levels up in between meals. If blood sugar levels drop we can find ourselves having difficulties in concentrating and feeling tired, irritable and lethargic.

## Breakfast

Breakfast is a very important meal. It not only provides us with energy throughout the day but also helps us to maintain a healthy weight by stopping us snacking on unhealthy foods through the day.

Some healthy breakfast ideas:

- Porridge made with semi-skimmed milk.
- Wholegrain cereal with semi-skimmed milk.
- Boiled or poached egg with wholegrain bread.

Porridge is really cheap and easy to make. It is also perfect to add one of your 5 a-day to e.g. banana, raisins, and berries.

Wholemeal and wholegrain options are the best choice as they release their energy slowly.

- Grilled mushrooms and tomatoes on toast. You could also add beans and grilled bacon.
- Remember to have something to drink at breakfast time (e.g. unsweetened juice, milk, tea, coffee, water).

## Lunch

Eating a healthy lunch is important to avoid an afternoon slump in energy. What you eat for lunch may depend on how active you are going to be in the afternoon and what time you plan to have dinner.

Some good options are:

- Soup with wholemeal roll and piece of fruit.
- Salad with fish or chicken and low fat yoghurt.
- Sandwich or wraps (wholemeal) with filling. e.g. chicken or tuna with salad.
- Pasta or rice salad and fruit salad.
- Remember to drink water.

Lunch time is a good opportunity to add some veggies to your diet. They can be added to wraps, soups and sandwiches.

Leftovers from your dinner the night before can make a very tasty lunch and it prevents food waste.

## Dinner

What you have for your evening meal will often depend on what you have had for lunch. If you have only had a sandwich or salad try to have a proper cooked (preferable homemade) meal.

Try not to over eat in the evening as if you are relaxing at night time the energy may not all be used up and this can result in weight gain

Some good ideas are:

- Cooked meat or fish with potatoes or rice and vegetables.
- Pasta with a tomato sauce, cheese and Salad.
- Noodles with stir-fry vegetables and chicken or fish.
- Fruit or a fruit pudding for dessert.
- Remember to drink water.

# Meal planning

## Meal Planning Checklist

Decide on a budget that you are able to spend on food.

Check your store cupboard to see what ingredients you may already have.

Consider your schedule throughout the week. If you are very busy one evening you will need a meal that is quick to make.

Base your meals around the eatwell plate.

Include fruit and vegetables in every meal. This should add up to at least five portions throughout the day.

Limit the amount of fatty and sugary food in your diet. However, do allow yourself a treat every now and then.

Remember to use leftovers, if you have any, to reduce the amount of food you waste.

Plan for healthy snacks in case you get hungry between meals.

Drink plenty of fluids throughout the day. Water is best but tea, coffee and juice all count. Try to reduce number of sugary and fizzy drinks.

**“Course tuition and whole atmosphere was superb. We were made to feel like human beings and not just numbers.”**

**Cooking Participant**

# Budgeting

People often think it is difficult to eat a healthy, balanced diet when they have a budget to stick to. However, with some careful planning and small changes it is possible to make your money stretch further and make healthier choices at the same time.

## Here are some helpful hints:

### Know your budget

Just like bills and other items, food shopping has to be allowed for in your budget. It is a good idea to work out what you can afford to spend on food each week and put this aside whenever you get paid. With this planning you will always know you have money for food.

### Stick to your budget

When you are food shopping it is a good idea to add the items up as you go along (easily done on a mobile phone). Get the necessities first and if you have any money left over you can treat yourself to some luxuries. If you go over your budget, you can take out some of the items that are not necessities. This way you will have no nasty surprises when you get to the check-out.

### Plan your meals

Planning a rough menu for meals for the week will help you budget. Supermarkets often provide a leaflet of what is going to be on offer the upcoming week. Using these to help plan your meals means you can incorporate what is on offer. Also consider using an ingredient that can be used in a number of meals. This way what you don't use won't go to waste. For example mince can be used one night to make a pot of chilli and the next to make burgers.

### Make a shopping list

Making a list before you go to the shops to prevent making impulse buys. Also avoid going food shopping when you are hungry as you may be tempted to buy more than you need.

### Check your cupboards

It is useful to keep a well stocked store cupboard of ingredients that are often used in a number of recipes. Look in your cupboards before you go to the shops. You may already have certain ingredients that are needed for what you are cooking through the week. When a store cupboard ingredient runs out, write it on your list so you remember to get it next time you are shopping.

### Watch out for special offers

Often the offers shops and supermarkets have are very useful, but sometimes they can trick you into thinking you are getting a good deal and tempt you to buy more than you need.

### Use your leftovers

Using your leftovers and preventing food waste is a great way to save money. Leftovers can make a tasty lunch for the following day or can be frozen to make a handy meal for another time. It is important to defrost leftovers completely, either in the fridge or in the microwave. Cook within 24 hours of defrosting and heat until piping hot.

### Read the labels

When you are shopping check the use-by date to make sure you will use it in time. If you think you are not going to use it by this date it can always be frozen to prevent the food going off.

# Understanding food labels

There is often a lot of information on food packaging. Some of which is very useful and some which can be confusing. By understanding what is the important information to look out for it can help us make healthier choices.

## Nutritional labels

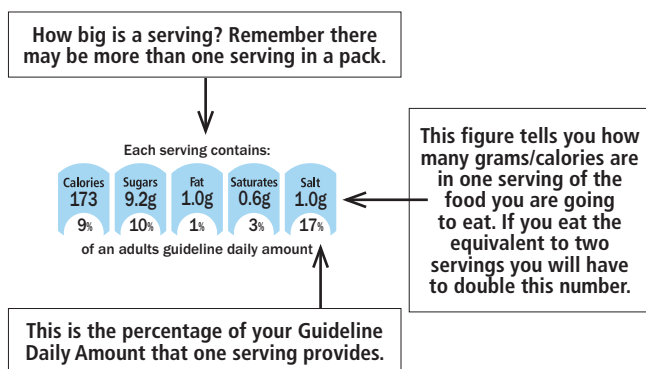
Eating a balanced diet means being able to enjoy foods from each of the five food groups. However, we should limit the amount of some groups more than others. By comparing the nutritional information that is provided on most food labels it can allow us to make choices that can lead to a healthier, balanced diet.

The nutritional information can be presented in different ways. The three main ways of showing nutritional information are:

- Guideline Daily Amounts
- Traffic Light Labelling
- Nutritional Contents Table

## Guideline Daily Amounts

Guideline Daily Amounts show the amounts of a particular nutrient that is present in a serving of a certain food. It also shows what percentage of the recommended daily amount of this nutrient the serving provides.



## Traffic light labelling

Some packs use the traffic light system to display nutritional information.

This system uses the colours green, orange and red to indicate whether the calories, sugar, fat, saturates and salt are high or low in each serving of the food. Green means low, orange means medium and red means high.

We should aim to make choices that are mostly made up of greens. Oranges are OK most of the time but we should try to limit the number of reds that are in our food.

## Ingredient list

By looking at the ingredient lists on food labels it can allow us to see exactly what is in the food we eat.

## Rice pudding with apple

Ingredients: Milk , Sugar , Rice (7%) , Apples (4%) , Apple Juice from Concentrate (2.5%) , Egg , Modified Maize Starch , Stabilisers: Carob Bean Gum, Guar Gum , Salt , Acidity Regulators: Ascorbic Acid, Sodium Citrates, Citric Acid , Flavourings.

Ingredients are listed in descending order of what is included in the product. The first item in the list is present in the greatest amount.

If the food you are looking at has ingredients that are high in fat and sugar appearing earlier in the list you may be able to find a healthier option.

In many cases longer ingredient lists suggest more calories and additives. It is often a good idea to choose foods that have shorter lists.

Anything that is named in the title of the food e.g. rice must have the percentage amount of that ingredient that is present in the food on the label.

## 'Use by' and 'Best before'

'Use by' dates are on perishable foods which go off quickly such as meat, fish and dairy products. Food that is after its 'use by' date may be unsafe to eat even if it looks and smells fine.

By using these dates properly it can help us save money. It is a good idea to check the 'use by' dates when you are shopping to ensure you will use the product before it reaches its 'use by' date. Food can always be frozen up until its 'use by' date.

'Best before' dates appear on foods that have a long shelf life. Up until the date the quality of the food is guaranteed to be at its best. After the 'best before' date the food will still be safe to eat but in some cases there might be a slight deterioration in the quality of the item.

# Section 4

# Recipes

# Useful measures and conversion tables

Please note all cup or spoon measures are level

Metric weight	Ingredient	Measure
100g	Flour	1 cup
100g	Sugar	½ cup
100g	Icing sugar	1 cup
100g	Lentils	<sup>2</sup> / <sub>3</sub> cup
100g	Broth mix	½ cup
100g	Rice	<sup>2</sup> / <sub>3</sub> cup
100g	Raisins/sultanas	1 cup
100g	Sweetcorn	1 cup
100g	Frozen peas	1 cup
25g	Sugar	1 tablespoon
25g	Flour	2 tablespoons
25g	Butter/margarine	2 tablespoons

Weights (approximate conversions)

Metric	Imperial
25g	1 oz
50g	2 oz
75g	3 oz
100g	4 oz
150g	5 oz
175g	6 oz
200g	7 oz
225g	8 oz
350g	12 oz
450g	16 oz/1 lb

Liquid Measures

Metric	Imperial
2.5 ml	½ teaspoon
5 ml	1 teaspoon
10 ml	1 dessertspoon/2 teaspoons
15 ml	1 tablespoon/3 teaspoons
150 ml	¼ pint (5 fl oz)
300 ml	½ pint (10 fl oz)
600 ml	1 pint (20 fl oz)
1 litre	1¾ pints (35 fl oz)

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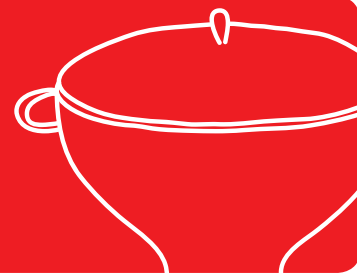
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(v) = suitable for vegetarians

# Carrot & coriander soup (served with garlic bread)



Serves 2



£



10 mins



40 mins



For the soup

1 onion

3 carrots

1 small clove of garlic

1 vegetable stock cube

1 teaspoon oil

1 pint of water

1 teaspoon of coriander

For the garlic bread

2 small cloves garlic

50g butter

Small French loaf



Chopping knife

Chopping board

Measuring jug

Large saucepan

Handheld blender/  
potato masher



No need to add salt to this soup – the stock cube is high in salt. Try other seasonings i.e. black pepper, mixed herbs or ginger.

## Method

1. Peel and chop the onion.
2. Wash/peel and chop the carrot into slices.
3. Crush one clove of garlic.
4. Heat the oil in a pan.
5. Add the chopped vegetables to the pan and cook gently for 10 minutes.
6. Add the coriander and garlic and cook for 2 minutes.
7. Add 1 pint of water and the stock cube to the pan, simmer for 20 minutes (add a little more water if it seems too thick).
8. Liquidise with a handheld blender for a creamy finish or mash with a potato masher to remove lumps (optional).

Serve with garlic bread:

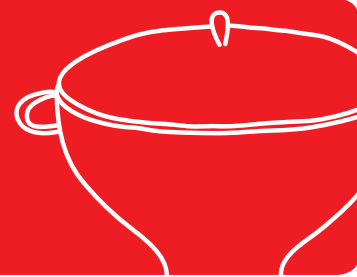
1. Crush the remaining 2 cloves of garlic with the flat blade of a knife, and mash up with 50g of butter/margarine.
2. Cut slices into a small French loaf, without cutting right the way through.
3. Spread the garlic and butter between each slice.
4. Put the loaf into a pre-heated oven at 200°C for 7 minutes.

## Nutrition Facts

- 102 kcal per portion (no garlic bread)
- 336 kcal per portion (with garlic bread)
- 25% of daily fibre requirement
- Good source of vitamins and minerals



# Creamed vegetable soup



Serves 2



£



10 mins



30 mins



1 medium onion  
1 medium potato  
1 medium carrot  
1 small piece swede  
25g butter or margarine  
1 pint stock (made with vegetable or chicken stock cube)  
¼ pint milk  
Pepper to taste



Large saucepan  
Chopping board  
Vegetable peeler  
Chopping knife  
Handheld blender



2 of your "5 a day".

Adding more vegetables gives extra flavour and increases the amount of vitamins, minerals and fibre which are vital for promoting good health.

Why not add chopped leeks, sweetcorn or a diced yellow pepper at the same time as the onion, carrot and potato.

## Method

1. Peel and slice all the vegetables.
  2. Place the margarine in a saucepan and allow to melt.
  3. Add the vegetables and fry gently for about 5 minutes.
  4. Add the stock and bring to the boil and allow to simmer until the vegetables are soft (about 20 minutes).
  5. Taste and add salt and pepper if required.
  6. Liquidise until smooth – add enough milk to give the consistency of thin cream.
  7. Reheat before serving.
- Serve with a crusty brown roll.

## Nutrition Facts

- 352 kcal per portion
- Low in saturated fat
- Source of protein
- 30% of total recommended intake for fibre
- Good source of vitamin C
- Source of calcium for strong teeth and bones

# Leek & potato soup



Serves 4



£



10 mins



40 mins



1 tablespoon margarine  
450g leeks (2–3 leeks)  
450g potatoes (2–3 medium potatoes)  
1 pint water  
1 chicken or vegetable stock cube  
Pepper to taste



Large saucepan  
Chopping board  
Chopping knife  
Handheld blender/potato masher (optional)



1 of your "5 a day".

This is a great soup for a cold winter evening. Make a big batch and freeze it in individual portions to use as you need it.

Try adding some mixed herbs for more flavour. There is no need to add salt as there is plenty of salt in the stock cube.

## Method

1. Clean and slice the leeks. Peel and chop the potatoes into chunks.
2. Melt the margarine in a large saucepan and fry the leeks and potatoes until beginning to soften (5–10 minutes).
3. Dissolve the stock cube in hot water and add to the pan and bring to the boil. Add pepper to taste. Cover and simmer for 30 minutes, until the potatoes are soft.
4. Liquidise or mash if a creamy soup is preferred.
5. Add more water or a little milk if the soup is too thick.
6. Reheat before serving.

Delicious with a spoonful of crème fraîche or plain yoghurt added to each bowl. Serve with bread.

## Nutrition Facts

- Low in calories: 295 kcal per portion
- Low in fat
- Good source of fibre
- Good source of vitamins such as vitamins A and C, and folate

# Lentil soup



Serves 2



£



10 mins



50 mins



1 tablespoon oil  
1 onion  
1 carrot  
2 rashers streaky bacon (optional)  
50g red lentils  
1 stock cube (ham, chicken or vegetable)  
1 pint of water (approx)  
Pepper to taste  
Fresh or dried parsley (optional)



Large saucepan  
Chopping board  
Chopping knife  
Handheld blender (optional)



2 of your "5 a day".

You can add a chopped stick of celery at the same time as the onion, and/or two tomatoes at the same time as the stock. This gives more flavour.

## Method

1. Peel and chop the onion and carrot into small pieces.
2. Chop the bacon (if using) into small pieces.
3. Heat the oil in a pan and gently fry the onion and carrot until beginning to go soft (about 5 minutes).
4. Add the bacon and fry gently for about 5 minutes.
5. Add the lentils and stir.
6. Add the stock cube dissolved in 1 pint of water.
7. Cook gently for 40 minutes, adding more water if it seems to be getting too dry.
8. For a smoother finish liquidise or sieve the soup.
9. Add chopped parsley or dried to garnish.

## Nutrition Facts

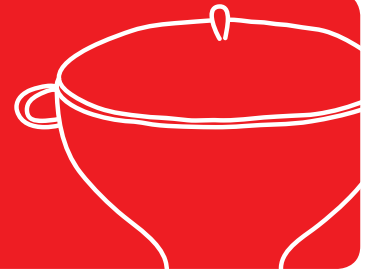
With bacon

- 312 kcal per portion
- 25% of recommend daily fat
- Excellent source of vitamin A
- Good source of protein

Without bacon

- 245 kcal per portion
- 18% of recommended daily fat
- Excellent source of vitamin A
- Source of protein

# Minestrone



Serves 2



££



15 mins



40 mins



1 tablespoon oil  
1 rasher of streaky bacon chopped  
1 small onion chopped  
1 carrot, grated  
1 leek, sliced  
1 clove of garlic crushed  
75g cabbage  
1 small tin of tomatoes  
1 pint water  
1 stock cube  
50g pasta – macaroni or spaghetti  
Pepper  
Parmesan cheese (optional)



Chopping knife  
Chopping board  
Large saucepan  
Garlic crusher (or grater)



2 of your "5 a day".

Never add extra salt to a soup before tasting; it may be salty enough already. If you like a lot of flavour try adding extra spices, herbs or chilli which will be healthier for your heart!

## Method

1. Heat the oil in a large saucepan.
  2. Add the bacon and fry for 1 minute.
  3. Add the onion, carrot, leek and garlic and cook for 5 minutes stirring frequently.
  4. Add the remaining ingredients and cook for 30 minutes.
  5. Serve into bowls and sprinkle some grated Parmesan cheese.
- Serve with crusty bread.

## Nutrition Facts

- 230 kcal (without Parmesan)
- 25% of daily total fat allowance
- Great source of fibre
- Great source of vitamins and minerals

# Mushroom soup



Serves 2



£



10 mins



50 mins



250g mushrooms finely sliced  
1 tablespoon olive or vegetable oil  
1 large onion, finely chopped  
1 potato, chopped  
½ pint of milk  
1 pint chicken stock (1 stock cube)  
¼ teaspoon garlic salt or 1 clove  
fresh garlic, finely chopped  
Lemon juice and seasoning  
1 teaspoon of Lea & Perrins (optional)  
Black pepper



Large saucepan  
Chopping board  
Large knife  
Measuring jug  
Wooden spoon



2 of your "5 a day".

Avoid adding any extra salt to the soup or use low-sodium stock cubes to reduce the overall salt content of the soup.

Serve with warm crusty bread.

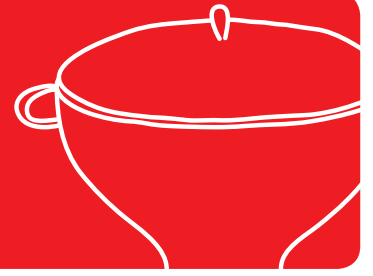
## Method

1. Heat oil in the saucepan.
2. Chop the onion and add to the pan and cook for 10 minutes.
3. Chop the potato and mushrooms and cook for about 5 minutes.
4. Slowly add the stock.
5. Simmer for 20 minutes.
6. Add milk, garlic, lemon juice, seasoning and simmer for another 10 minutes.  
Don't boil the soup after the milk is added.
7. Blend, if required, for a smoother soup.

## Nutrition Facts

- 419 calories
- 21% daily saturated fat
- Source of protein and B-vitamins and vitamin C
- Good source of calcium

# Pea & mint soup



Serves 2



£



15 mins



25 mins



1 potato  
1 clove of garlic  
1 chicken or vegetable stock cube  
1 onion  
1 dessertspoon vegetable oil  
(or a knob of butter)  
1 heaped teaspoon dried mint or  
fresh mint  
1 small packet frozen peas  
1 knob butter



Chopping knife  
Chopping board  
Large saucepan  
Hand blender



2 of your "5 a day".

Try chopping some cooked ham into small pieces and add to the soup once it's cooked.

Always try to buy frozen peas instead of canned if you can. They are higher in vitamins and fibre and lower in salt. However, canned peas are still a valuable source of vitamins and fibre and are very cheap!

## Method

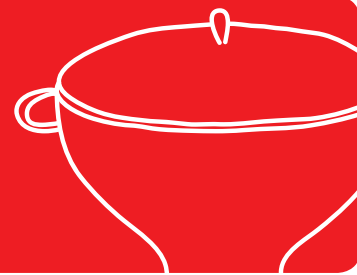
1. Slice the onion, wash the potato and chop into small cubes, chop the garlic into small pieces.
2. Put the oil or butter into a pan and add the onion, potato and garlic and fry gently for about 5–10 minutes – keep on a low heat and be careful not to burn.
3. Add 1 pint of boiling water with the stock cube mixed in and leave to simmer for 10 minutes.
4. Add the packet of frozen peas and bring back to the boil for 5 minutes.
5. Add the mint and then blend with a hand blender.

This is delicious served with chopped chives and a dollop of crème fraîche or cream.

## Nutrition Facts

- 265 kcal (without cream or crème fraîche)
- Great source of fibre
- Over 30% of daily salt allowance – use a reduced salt stock cube to lower the overall salt content
- Very low in saturated fat
- Great source of vitamin C and iron

# Tomato soup



Serves 2



£



5 mins



20 mins



10 ripe tomatoes, skinned (or 1 tin of chopped tomatoes)  
1 garlic clove, chopped  
1 tablespoon olive oil  
1 level tablespoon tomato puree  
½ pint (1 cup) chicken stock (1 stock cube)  
1 level tablespoon finely chopped parsley  
Pepper to taste  
1 level tablespoon cornflour  
2 tablespoons cold water



Large saucepan  
Chopping board  
Chopping knife



1 of your "5 a day".

If fresh basil is available, break a few leaves with your fingers and sprinkle them over each portion of soup.

Tomatoes are very rich in a compound called lycopene which is a powerful antioxidant. This compound is thought to be beneficial in protecting against heart disease, and age related deterioration in eyesight, as well as keeping the immune system healthy.

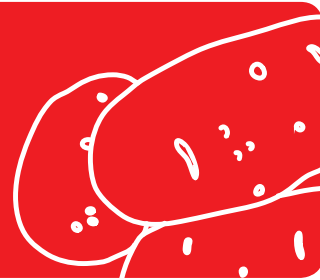
## Method

1. Chop the tomatoes and put them into a saucepan with the garlic, oil, tomato puree and stock.
2. Bring to the boil, lower the heat and cover the pan. Simmer gently for 15 minutes.
3. Stir in the parsley and pepper to taste.
4. Mix the cornflour to a smooth cream with the cold water. Add an equal quantity of hot soup then stir well and return to the saucepan.
5. Cook, stirring, until the soup comes to the boil and thickens. Simmer for 5 minutes, adjust the seasoning to taste. Serve immediately.
6. Optional: the soup can be blended for a smoother soup.

## Nutrition Facts

- 263 kcal per portion
- Low in fat
- Great source of vitamin C
- Good source of vitamin A
- 60% of total daily salt allowance (from stock cube)

# Cauliflower & potato curry



Serves 2



£



20 mins



50 mins



1 tablespoon vegetable oil  
3 onions  
2 cloves of garlic  
30g ginger  
125g chopped tomatoes  
1 teaspoon turmeric  
1½ teaspoons chilli powder  
185g cauliflower  
185g potatoes (2 medium potatoes)  
½ pint water  
125g peas (small tin, or frozen peas)  
2 teaspoon garam masala



Chopping knife  
Chopping board  
Measuring jug  
Large saucepan



3 of your "5 a day".

## Method

1. Crush or finely chop the garlic and ginger and chop the onions.
2. Peel and dice the potatoes. Split the cauliflower into small pieces.
3. Heat the oil and fry the onion, garlic and ginger until golden brown.
4. Add the chopped tomatoes, turmeric, and chilli powder. Cook for 5 minutes.
5. Add the cauliflower and diced potato to the spice mixture in the pan.
6. Coat them well and pour in the water. Cover and simmer gently for 15 minutes.
7. Add the peas and cook for a further 8–10 minutes.
8. Sprinkle over the garam masala and leave for 5 minutes before serving. Serve with rice or naan bread.

## Nutrition Facts

- 540 kcal per portion (with rice)
- Low in saturated fat
- Low in salt
- Good source of fibre
- Good source of vitamins and minerals



# Chicken curry & rice



Serves 2



£



10 mins



40 mins



2 chicken breasts  
1 tablespoon cooking oil  
1 onion  
1–2 cloves of garlic  
1 green or red pepper  
2 teaspoons mild curry powder  
1 chicken stock cube  
1 small tin of tomatoes (220g)  
125g long grain or basmati rice



Chopping board  
Large saucepan  
Small saucepan



This curry is also good served with naan bread, cucumber raita, sliced banana, carrot and mango chutney – See recipe for Curry Salads.

You can add a chopped apple, raisins or mushrooms when adding the tomatoes. This helps to meet your “5 a day”.

## Method

1. Peel and chop the onion and crush or chop the garlic. De-seed and chop the pepper.
2. Heat the oil in a saucepan and add onions and garlic. Cook until soft.
3. Add the peppers and cook gently for a few minutes. Take off the heat.
4. Chop the chicken into bite-size pieces. Return pan to the heat, add the chicken and stir until the chicken is no longer pink.
5. Add curry powder, stir and cook over gentle heat for 1 minute.
6. Add the tomatoes. Dissolve the chicken stock cube in a little water and add.
7. Add a little more water if the curry seems dry.
8. Bring to the boil, lower the heat and simmer for approximately 30 minutes. Serve with rice.

## Nutrition Facts

- 597 kcals per portion (served with rice)
- Low in saturated fat
- 25% of total daily fat allowance
- 50% of daily salt allowance (coming from stock cube – use a reduced salt stock cube)
- Good source of protein
- Good source of vitamin C

# Curry salad – banana & coconut



Serves 2



£



20 mins



2 mins



1 banana  
1 teaspoon lemon juice  
2 teaspoons of desiccated coconut



Chopping knife  
Chopping board



This adds to your "5 a day".

## Method

1. Cut a banana into thin slices, sprinkle with lemon juice and desiccated coconut. Serve as an accompaniment to a hot curry!

Serve on the side of any curry.

# Curry salad – carrot & mustard seed



Serves 2



£



20 mins



2 mins



225g carrots  
¼ teaspoon salt  
¼ teaspoon whole black  
mustard seeds  
½ teaspoon lemon juice  
1 tablespoon vegetable oil



Chopping knife or grater  
Chopping board  
Small frying pan



This adds to your "5 a day".

Add 1 green chilli finely cut into long thin strips if you like things hot!

## Method

1. Trim and peel the carrots and then grate OR finely chop them into long thin strips (at least 2-inches long).
2. Put oil and mustard seeds in a pan over medium heat and cover with lid.
3. When seeds are roasted (stopped popping), add the carrots, salt and lemon juice.

Serve on the side of any curry.

# Curry salad – cucumber raita



Serves 2



£



20 mins



2 mins



¼ of a cucumber  
1 small tub natural yoghurt  
½ green chilli finely chopped OR  
small pinch of chilli powder  
(optional)  
¼ teaspoon salt  
¼ teaspoon cumin powder  
pinch of red paprika



Chopping knife or grater  
Chopping board



This adds to your "5 a day".

## Method

1. Peel and coarsely grate OR finely chop the cucumber (if grated, squeeze the water out).
  2. Put the yoghurt into a bowl.
  3. Add salt, cumin powder and chilli (if using) and mix thoroughly.
  4. Add cucumber.
  5. Put into serving dish and sprinkle on the paprika.
  6. Cover and refrigerate until ready to eat.
- Serve on the side of any curry.

# Chilli con carne and rice



Serves 2



££



10 mins



35 mins



225g of beef mince  
1 medium onion  
1 clove of garlic  
1 small tin (220g) tomatoes  
1 small tin (220g) red kidney beans  
1 small carrot (optional)  
½ green pepper (optional)  
½ or 1 teaspoon chilli powder (according to taste)  
1 dessertspoon tomato puree  
1 teaspoon mixed herbs  
Handful of fresh coriander  
1 chicken or vegetable stock cube (optional)  
pepper to taste  
approximately 125g long grain rice



1 vegetable peeler  
1 medium frying pan  
1 large knife  
1 saucepan



4 of your "5 a day".

If you make a large batch of chilli it can be frozen and then reheated at a later date. This could help save money and time!

If you decide to use a stock cube, try not to add any extra salt after cooking. However feel free to add more herbs and spices.

## Method

1. Peel and chop the onion and garlic and set aside.
2. Peel the carrot and finely chop the carrot and pepper if using.
3. Put the mince into a pan and cook until the meat is sealed and browned all over.
4. Add the onion and garlic and fry for a few minutes.
5. Add the carrots and pepper and cook for a further few minutes.
6. Stir in the tomatoes, tomato puree, chilli powder, herbs, stock cube (if using), and salt and pepper and bring to the boil.
7. Lower the heat and simmer gently for 25 minutes (adding a little water if it gets a bit dry). Add the kidney beans near the end of the cooking time and the fresh coriander leaves.

Serve on a bed of boiled rice with soured cream, guacamole and a bowl of salad.

## Nutrition Facts

- 670 calories
- Good source of fibre
- Good source of protein, B-vitamins, vitamin A and C

# Chicken fajita



Serves 2



££



10 mins



15 mins



2 chicken breasts (boneless and without skin)  
1 tablespoon olive or vegetable oil  
1 green or red pepper  
1 onion  
¼ of cucumber  
2 tablespoons crème fraîche or sour cream  
Grated cheese white cheddar cheese  
Flour tortillas



1 large knife  
1 chopping board  
1 large frying pan  
1 cheese grater



1 of your "5 a day".

Use a low fat crème fraîche or sour cream and low fat cheese to reduce calories and saturated fat!

For a spicier flavour try adding ½ teaspoon of chilli power or paprika to the chicken, pepper and onion whilst frying.

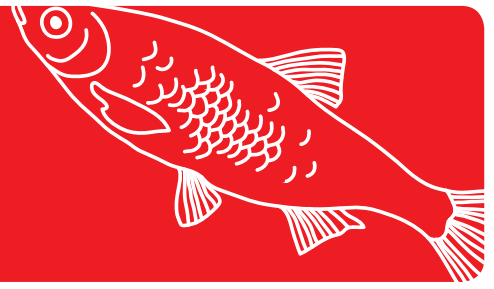
## Method

1. Cut chicken into strips and fry in the heated oil.
2. Chop the pepper and onion into strips, sauté in the same pan once the chicken has turned a white colour. Leave to fry until the chicken is cooked thoroughly and the pepper and onions are cooked.
3. Chop up the cucumber, either into slices or chunks. Grate the cheese in a separate bowl. Warm the tortillas for 30 seconds in a microwave.
4. Spread the crème fraîche/sour cream on the tortillas, one tablespoon per tortilla. Add the grated cheese and cucumber.
5. Serve the chicken, peppers and onions onto the tortilla and wrap.  
You can serve on the side a dip of salsa or guacamole.

## Nutrition Facts

- 749 calories
- 52% daily saturated fat
- Good source of protein, B-vitamins and vitamin C
- 25% daily fibre

# Fish cakes



Serves 2



££



15 mins



10 mins



300g potatoes  
(approx. 5 medium sized)  
300g white fish (haddock or cod)  
or 2 small tins tuna or salmon  
25g butter/vegetable based spread  
2 tablespoons fresh parsley  
(or 2 tps dried parsley)  
2 eggs  
100g breadcrumbs (grated bread)  
Salt and pepper to taste  
1 lemon



1 large knife  
1 chopping board  
1 deep frying pan  
1 saucepan  
1 potato peeler  
1 masher  
1 grater  
Cup or small bowl



If making tuna fish cakes, try replacing the parsley with some finely chopped fresh chilli and serve with sweet chilli dipping sauce.

## Method

1. Peel and boil the potatoes and then mash with the butter/vegetable spread.
2. In a deep frying pan, lightly cook the fish in a little milk for 5 minutes, remove from milk and then flake using a fork. If using tinned tuna or salmon drain and then flake with a fork.
3. Chop the parsley (if you have the fresh herb) and beat the eggs.
4. Mix the fish, parsley and half the beaten eggs into the potato mixture with some freshly ground black pepper and a little salt.
5. Divide the mixture into eight equal sized pieces and shape into flat round patties on a floured surface.
6. Dip each fish cake into the remaining egg and then coat with breadcrumbs.
7. Heat the oil in a frying pan, add the fish cakes and fry for a few minutes on each side until golden brown and heated through.

## Nutrition Facts

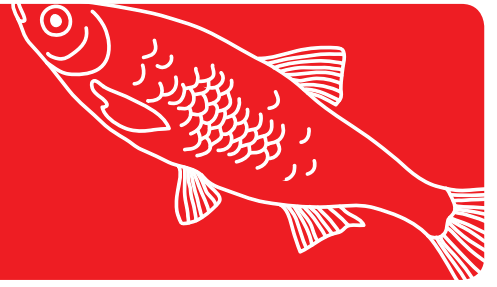
### White fish cakes

- 595 calories
- 27% daily saturated fat
- Good source of protein, B-vitamins and vitamin C
- Good source of iron

### Tuna fish cakes

- 603 calories
- 27% daily saturated fat
- Good source of protein, B-vitamins and vitamin C
- Good source of iron

# Fish pie



Serves 2



££



10 mins



15 mins



225g white fish (2 small fish)  
3 medium potatoes  
1 egg (optional)  
1 teaspoon butter/vegetable oil based spread  
Sauce  
25g butter/vegetable oil based spread  
25g plain flour  
¼ pint milk  
1 dessertspoon fresh/dried parsley  
Salt and pepper to taste



2 large saucepans  
1 small saucepan  
1 potato peeler  
1 large knife  
1 colander  
1 wooden spoon or whisk



Add peas or sweetcorn to the sauce to increase your "5 a day".

For a change try one small white fish and one smoked haddock. This will give a good smokey flavour.

For a richer dish replace one of the pieces of fish with a piece of salmon.

## Method

1. Turn on the oven to 180°C.
  2. Put the egg on to boil in a small saucepan for 10 minutes.
  3. Peel potatoes and cook in boiling salted water for approximately 20 minutes.
  4. To make the sauce: melt butter/margarine in a small pan, stir in the flour and cook for several minutes.
  5. Gradually add the milk, bring to the boil and cook until thickened.
  6. Season with salt and pepper and add the parsley.
  7. Strain and mash the potatoes when cooked with a little butter/spread and a spoonful of milk. Add a little salt and pepper.
  8. Cut the fish into bite-size pieces.
  9. Peel and chop the egg and add it to the fish pieces.
  10. Pour the hot white sauce over the fish and spread the mashed potatoes over the top.
  11. Bake in pre-heated oven for approximately 25 minutes.
- This is great served with broccoli or carrots.

## Nutrition Facts

- 405 calories
- 32% daily saturated fat
- Good source of protein and B-vitamins
- 21% daily calcium



# Lasagne



Serves 2



££



20 mins



50 mins



100g mince  
1 small onion (chopped)  
1 clove of garlic (chopped)  
1 small tin tomatoes (200g)  
1 teaspoon tomato puree  
salt and pepper  
pinch of mixed herbs  
¼ pint stock or water  
4 sheets of easy cook lasagne

For the sauce:

½ pint milk  
1 tablespoon flour  
25g fat spread/butter  
100g cheddar cheese  
salt and pepper  
pinch of nutmeg (optional)



1 large knife  
1 cheese grater  
2 medium saucepans  
1 small square oven proof dish  
1 chopping board  
1 whisk



To make a vegetarian version replace the mince with 100g of another vegetable such as courgette or mushrooms. You can use a meat substitute such as Quorn.

To lower the meal's saturated fat content substitute butter for a vegetable based spread.

1 of your "5 a day".

## Method

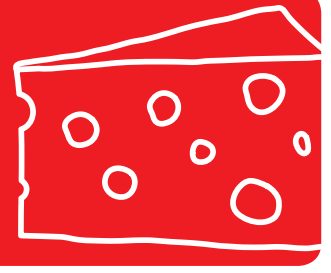
1. Brown the mince in a medium saucepan. Add the onion and garlic and cook for 5 minutes. Add the tomatoes, tomato puree, seasoning, herbs and water. Bring to the boil and simmer for 20 minutes.
2. Place the milk, flour and margarine in a saucepan and whisk over a low heat until smooth. Bring to the boil stirring constantly and cook for 2 minutes.
3. Add most of the grated cheese and season to taste.
4. Spread about ¼ of the meat sauce over the base of a dish add a little cheese sauce then a sheet of pasta. Repeat the process finishing with a layer of pasta and cheese sauce. Sprinkle the remaining cheese on top and bake at 180°C for approx. 30 minutes.

Serve with vegetables or side salad.

## Nutrition Facts

- 667 calories
- 46% of daily saturated fat
- Good source of protein, iron, calcium, vitamin A and B-vitamins

# Pasta carbonara



Serves 2



££



10 mins



15 mins



225g pasta (any type – spaghetti is good)  
75g bacon (2–3 rashers)  
3 dessertspoons single cream  
2 eggs  
3 dessertspoons parmesan or white cheddar cheese  
Pepper to taste



1 saucepan  
1 frying pan  
1 cheese grater  
1 mixing bowl  
1 sieve



Use wholewheat pasta to increase your fibre intake and cut the fat off the bacon to reduce saturated fat.

## Method

1. Put a pan of water on to boil. When boiling, add the pasta.
  2. Grill or fry the bacon and chop into small pieces.
  3. Grate the cheese.
  4. Mix the eggs in a bowl with a fork. Add the cream and cheese and mix all together.
  5. Drain the pasta and add the bacon and egg mixture, stirring well until the pasta is thoroughly coated.
- Serve with a side salad with tomatoes. Add a little olive oil, vinegar and pepper.

## Nutrition Facts

- 498 calories
- 25% daily saturated fat
- Good source of protein and B-vitamins

# Pasta salad



Serves 2



£



10 mins



10 mins



200g of pasta e.g. shells, macaroni  
½ green pepper, chopped  
2 tomatoes, chopped  
1 teaspoon lemon juice  
2 teaspoons olive oil  
Tin of tuna  
Fresh parsley



Chopping knife  
Chopping board  
Medium saucepan  
Sieve  
Medium bowl



1 of your "5 a day".

You can vary this salad by adding other ingredients i.e. kidney beans or diced cucumber.

Adding extra vegetables or beans to the salad will help you to achieve your '5 a day' and will also increase your fibre intake which is important for a healthy digestive system.

## Method

1. Bring a pot of slightly salted water to the boil.
  2. Add the pasta and cook for about 10–12 minutes – 12 until al dente (pasta not to soft). Drain the pasta. Add to the bowl.
  3. Mix all the ingredients together in a bowl. Stir in the lemon juice and oil.  
Alternatively add a little mayonnaise if preferred.
- A great dish to take to picnics or to work as a healthy lunch

## Nutrition Facts

- 265 kcal
- Very low in saturated fat
- Great source of B-vitamins and vitamin C
- Using wholewheat pasta will also help you to increase the fibre content of your diet

# Pasta with tuna in cream sauce



Serves 2



£



15 mins



20 mins



250g (½ packet of pasta)  
½ tablespoon of olive oil  
1 small tin of tuna in brine/spring water  
½ onion, finely chopped  
2 fresh tomatoes, finely chopped  
3–4 tablespoons single cream or low fat crème fraîche  
Fresh parsley, chopped (optional)  
Small tin of garden peas or handful of frozen peas  
Salt and freshly ground pepper



Chopping board  
Chopping knife  
Medium saucepan (pasta)  
Saucepan (tuna)  
Strainer (pasta)



Try using wholegrain pasta to increase the fibre content of the meal which will reduce the total calorie (kcal) content as well as aiding digestion.

Do not add any cheese as this alters the flavour.

Compared to single cream, crème fraîche contains more saturated fat.

## Method

1. Bring a pot of slightly salted water to the boil.
2. Meanwhile chop the onion and tomatoes.
3. In a non stick pan, heat the olive oil and add the onion and tomatoes.
4. Add the pasta to the boiled water and cook for 10–12 minutes until al dente\*.
5. Add the tuna and peas to the onion and tomatoes. Add pepper and parsley.
6. Add the cream/crème fraîche to the tuna, stir in gently and take off the heat.
7. Drain the pasta and put into the saucepan and add the tuna mix.
8. Mix gently until all the pasta is evenly covered.
9. Serve immediately.

Serve with crusty bread and salad.

\*Al dente means when you bite into it, it is still firm.

## Nutrition Facts

Made with low fat crème fraîche

- 571 kcal per portion
- Good source of protein
- 16% of total daily fat allowance
- Low salt
- Great source of vitamins and minerals

Made with single cream

- 580 kcal per portion
- Good source of protein
- 18% of total daily fat allowance
- Low salt
- Great source of vitamins and minerals

# Pizza



Serves 2



££



1 hour



15 mins



For the base:

150g strong bread flour  
1 teaspoon instant yeast  
½ teaspoon salt  
1 tablespoon olive oil  
100ml warm water

Toppings as desired e.g. mozzarella, pepperoni, chicken, bacon, peppers, mushrooms, olives, parmesan cheese etc.

For the tomato sauce:

1 clove garlic, crushed  
1 small onion, finely chopped  
200g tin of chopped tomatoes  
1 teaspoon oregano  
1 teaspoon tomato puree  
1 tablespoon olive oil



Chopping knife  
Chopping board  
Large mixing bowl  
Medium saucepan  
Rolling pin  
Garlic crusher (or grater)  
1 or 2 baking trays



1 of your "5 a day".

Experiment using different cheeses such as blue cheese, gorgonzola, goats' cheese etc.

Pizza is a tasty way to increase your '5 a day' – try using as many veggies as you can on top!

## Method

1. Heat oven to 240C/fan 220C/gas 8.
2. Put the flour into a large bowl, stir in the yeast and salt. Make a well in the centre of the flour mix, pour in the warm water and the olive oil and mix together.
3. Turn onto a lightly floured surface and knead for 5 minutes until smooth. Cover with cling film and leave to rise for 30 minutes.
4. Sauce: Heat the olive oil in a saucepan and add the garlic and onions and fry for about 5 minutes.
5. Add the tinned tomatoes, tomato puree and oregano. Boil and then simmer for 15 minutes.
6. Flour 1 or 2 baking trays (depending on the size).
7. Flour your work surface and roll out the dough into a thin rounded shape. Lift onto floured baking sheet.
8. Cover with desired toppings and put into oven to bake for 8–10 minutes until crisp.

Serve with a side salad or homemade potato wedges.

## Nutrition Facts

- 680 kcal (with a mozzarella, chicken and sweetcorn topping )
- 45% of daily saturated fat allowance
- Great source of protein
- Great source of B-vitamins and calcium

# Sausage casserole



Serves 2



££



10 mins



25 mins



4 sausages  
1 medium onion  
1 small courgette  
½ pepper  
1 tin (400g) chopped tomatoes  
2 or 3 mushrooms  
½ teaspoon mixed herbs  
1 stock cube (beef, chicken or vegetable)  
Vegetable oil  
Pepper to taste



Chopping knife  
Chopping board  
Large saucepan



2 of your "5 a day".

You can add beans (such as cannellini beans) to the casserole or some tinned lentils.

Adding beans or lentils will increase the meal's protein content and they're also a great source of fibre.

To reduce the casserole's salt content do not use the stock cube and add more herbs or spices.

## Method

1. Grill sausages lightly (they will be cooked again later).
  2. Put the sausages on a plate for later.
  3. Slice the onion, courgette and pepper.
  4. Heat oil in a saucepan. Add the onions and fry gently for a few minutes.
  5. Add the courgette, pepper and mushrooms and fry for a further 3 minutes.
  6. Add the tomatoes, herbs and stock cube.
  7. Chop the sausages into slices and add to the pan
  8. Leave to simmer gently for 10–15 minutes, adding a little water if it seems a bit dry.
  9. Taste and add a little pepper.
- The casserole tastes delicious when served with mashed potato and steamed vegetables.

## Nutrition Facts

- 416 kcal
- 25% of daily saturated fat allowance
- 100% of daily salt allowance
- Great source of vitamin A and iron

# Shepherd's pie



Serves 2



££



10 mins



40 mins



250g mince  
4 medium potatoes  
1 medium onion  
1 to 2 medium carrots  
1 tin tomatoes (200g)  
1 beef stock cube  
1 teaspoon mixed herbs  
pepper  
1 teaspoon butter/fat spread



1 large knife  
1 potato peeler  
2 medium saucepans  
1 potato masher  
1 small oven proof dish  
1 chopping board



Try adding other vegetables such as peas or mushrooms to meet your "5 a day".

## Method

1. Turn on the oven to 200°C.
2. Chop onion and carrots into slices and set aside.
3. Meanwhile, put the mince into a pan and cook gently, stirring to avoid it sticking to pan.
4. When the mince is browned, add the onion and carrots and cook for a few minutes.
5. Add the tin of tomatoes and stock cube by sprinkling over top of mince.
6. Add the herbs and a little pepper.
7. Bring to boil and simmer gently for approx. 20 minutes, stirring occasionally.
8. Peel potatoes, cut in half (even size pieces) and put in a pan of water. Cook until just soft (about 20 minutes). Drain and mash, adding the butter/fat spread, a little milk and some pepper.
9. The mince should not be too runny, but if it seems to be getting very dry and sticking to the bottom of the pan, add a little water.
10. Taste the mince after 20 minutes and add more seasoning if required (pepper, herbs).
11. Put the mince into a small ovenproof dish and carefully cover with a layer of the mashed potato. Use a fork to make even lines.
12. Put in oven for about 20 minutes or until the top is nicely browned and the mince is bubbling.

## Nutrition Facts

- 484 calories
- 25% of daily saturated fat
- Good source of iron, vitamin C, vitamin A and B-vitamins
- Good source of fibre

# Stir-fry



Serves 2



£/££



15 mins



10 – 15 mins



225g vegetables e.g. carrots, leeks, broccoli, mushrooms, beansprouts, courgettes, peppers, cauliflower, green beans

1 small onion

1 garlic clove

2 tablespoons of vegetable or olive oil

1 teaspoon freshly grated ginger

OR

¼ teaspoon ground ginger (optional)

1 dessertspoon apple or orange juice

2 teaspoons soy sauce

1 teaspoon vinegar

1 packet noodles

Pepper



Chopping board

Large frying pan or wok

Small saucepan (noodles)



2 of your "5 a day".

Try adding chicken or non-salted cashew nuts to this dish for extra protein. Chop a chicken breast into thin strips and add to the pan at stage 5, making sure the chicken is cooked thoroughly by cutting a piece in half to check if cooked in the middle. If it is still pink it needs a bit longer.

## Method

1. Thinly slice the onion and crush the garlic.
2. Wash and peel (depending on the veg. using) vegetables. Thinly slice them.
3. Meanwhile, boil a pan of water for the noodles.
4. Heat oil in a frying pan or wok. Add the onion and garlic when oil is warmed. Reduce heat and stir steadily for 1 or 2 minutes.
5. Add the harder vegetables, i.e. carrot, broccoli and cauliflower and cook for a few minutes until a little soft. (Add pieces of chicken, optional.)
6. Add the ginger and remaining vegetables ie peppers, courgettes, beansprouts and mushrooms and cook for 2–3 minutes stirring all the time.
7. Add noodles to boiling water and cook for 3–4 minutes. Drain the noodles when cooked.
8. Add the juice, soy sauce and vinegar and cook for 1 minute on high heat. Add a little more water or juice if you want to make the sauce runnier.
9. Taste and add more soy sauce, pepper if required.
10. Add noodles to the vegetables and mix together gently.

## Nutrition Facts

- 241 kals per portion (served with noodles)
- Low in saturated fat
- Low in salt
- Good source of vegetables which are high in vitamins, minerals and fibre



# Sweet & sour chicken



Serves 2



£



15 mins



20 mins



1 chicken breast  
1 tablespoon cooking oil  
½ onion  
¼ green pepper  
½ small carrot  
1 dessertspoon cornflour  
1 pineapple ring cut in chunks  
¼ pint of pineapple juice  
1 dessertspoon brown sugar  
1 dessertspoon soy sauce  
1 teaspoon tomato puree  
1 tablespoon vinegar  
Pepper  
Rice or noodles



Chopping board  
Sharp knife  
Frying pan/wok  
Small saucepan (rice/  
noodles)



2 of your "5 a day".

## Method

1. Cut the chicken into small cubes, heat the oil in a frying pan and brown the chicken quickly. Remove from the frying pan and set aside.
2. Wash, peel and slice the vegetables. Add to the frying pan and cook until soft for about 5 minutes.
3. Add the cornflour and stir into the vegetables. Add the remaining ingredients and stir well.
4. Bring to the boil to make a sauce. Add some water if necessary.
5. Mix the chicken into the sauce and simmer for approximately 10 minutes until the chicken is cooked.
6. Serve with noodles or rice and with a mixed salad on the side.

## Nutrition Facts

- 427 kJals per portion (served with rice)
- Low in saturated fat
- Low in salt
- Good source of fruit and vegetables which are high in vitamins, minerals and fibre

# Turkey & pepper stir-fry



Serves 2



£



10 mins



10–15 mins



## Ingredients

75g turkey (or chicken)  
1 teaspoons oil  
1 clove of garlic  
½ red pepper  
½ green pepper  
1 spring onion  
2 teaspoons soy sauce  
4 dessertspoons water  
2 dessertspoons orange juice  
1 teaspoon ground ginger (optional)  
noodles or rice



## Chopping board

Large frying pan/Wok  
Small saucepan (rice/noodles)



2 of your “5 a day”

This is a low calorie, heart healthy dish that is low in saturated fat and salt. It is also quick to prepare and very tasty!

## Method

1. Crush the garlic and slice the peppers and onion.
2. Chop the turkey into bite-sized pieces.
3. Fry garlic and turkey over medium heat for 5 minutes, stirring constantly.
4. Add peppers and onion and fry for a further minute.
5. Add soy sauce, water, juice and ginger.
6. Cook over medium heat for a further 3–4 minutes.
7. Serve on the noodles or rice.

## Nutrition Facts

- 220 kcals per portion (served with rice)
- 25% of total daily fat allowance
- Low in saturated fat
- Low in salt
- Source of protein
- Good source of vitamin C

# Blueberry muffins



Serves 12



£



15 mins



15–20 mins



150g self-raising flour  
50g sugar  
1 teaspoon baking powder  
1 egg  
2 tablespoons melted butter  
100ml milk (or mix of milk and natural yoghurt or crème fraîche)  
150g blueberries, washed and well dried  
1 teaspoon grated orange peel (optional)



Paper towel  
Sieve  
Large mixing bowl  
Small bowl  
Small pan (to melt butter)  
Muffin pan lined with muffin paper cases



Try experimenting with other fruits such as banana and raisin muffins or fresh cherry muffins. Extra fruit will help you to meet that “5 a day”!

## Method

1. Wash the blueberries and drain. Sprinkle a piece of towel roll with flour and roll the blueberries in it. Wrap the now lightly floured berries and leave for a short while to dry completely.
2. Preheat oven to 210°C/Gas Mark 7.
3. Sift the flour, sugar, and baking powder into a large mixing bowl.
4. In a separate bowl, beat the eggs.
5. Add the melted butter and then the milk.
6. Quickly stir the liquid ingredients into the dry, lightly stirring (10–15 strokes). Leave the lumps as too much handling will result in tough muffins.
7. Add the floured blueberries and the optional orange rind if you are using. Briefly fold in the berries. Spoon into the prepared muffin pans, allowing the mixture to fill about  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the cup. Bake in the hot oven for 15–20 minutes.
8. Muffins will be a light golden colour when fully cooked.
9. Remove at once from their tins.

## Nutrition Facts

- 100 kcals per portion
- Source of fibre

# Carrot cake



Serves 10



£



15 mins



40 mins



2 medium carrots  
2 eggs  
50g brown sugar  
100g wholemeal self-raising flour  
1 teaspoon baking powder  
1 teaspoon mixed spice or cinnamon  
50g desiccated coconut  
50g raisins  
3 tablespoons sunflower oil  
Icing  
75g low-fat cream cheese  
150g (12 tablespoons) icing sugar



Sieve  
Mixing bowl  
Grater  
Cake tin 20cm (8 inch)



Add grated rind of 1 orange to the icing for extra flavour.

## Method

1. Heat the oven to 190°C.
  2. Grease a 20cm (8 inch) round cake tin, line the base with baking paper or tin foil and grease again.
  3. Sieve the flour, baking powder and spice into a mixing bowl.
  4. Grate the carrots.
  5. Beat the eggs in a bowl with a fork and gradually add the oil.
  6. Add all the ingredients to the flour mixture and mix well using a wooden spoon.
  7. Spoon the mixture into the cake tin, smooth the top and bake for 35–40 minutes.
  8. The cake is ready when it is golden brown and the sponge springs back when touched lightly.
  9. Leave to cool in the tin for 5 minutes then turn out onto a wire rack.
  10. When the cake is cool spread the icing on top.
- For the icing
1. Sieve the icing sugar into a mixing bowl.
  2. Add the cream cheese and mix together until smooth.

## Nutrition Facts

- 244 kcals per portion
- Good source of vitamin A

# Flapjacks



Serves 12



£



10 mins



15–20 mins



200g unsalted butter  
200g Demerara sugar  
200g golden syrup  
400g porridge oats  
50g raisins



Cup  
Large saucepan  
Wooden spoon  
8 inch square tin, greased



1. Add 1 teaspoon of cinnamon for extra flavour.
2. Instead of raisins add other dried fruits e.g. apricots, cherries; or nuts/seeds like hazelnuts or pumpkin seeds for different flavours.

Oats are a great source of energy that releases slowly so you feel fuller longer.

## Method

1. Heat oven to 180°C.
2. Soak raisins in a cup of boiling water for 5 minutes then drain.
3. Put the butter, sugar and golden syrup in a saucepan and heat, stirring occasionally, until the butter has melted and the sugar and syrup dissolved.
4. Add the oats and fruit and mix well.
5. Transfer the oat mixture to the prepared cake tin and spread to about  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch thick. Smooth the surface with the back of a spoon. Bake in the oven at 180°C for 15–20 minutes, until lightly golden around the edges, but still slightly soft in the middle.
6. Leave to cool in the tin, then turn out and cut into squares.

## Nutrition Facts

- 384 kcal per portion
- High in saturated fat
- High in sugar

# Fresh fruit salad



Serves 2



£



5 mins



0 mins



1 small orange  
1 small banana  
1 small pear  
1 small red apple  
(or other fruit e.g. strawberries,  
pineapple etc.)



Chopping board  
Knife and peeler



You can also sprinkle a small handful of chopped nuts on top when serving e.g. flaked almonds, unsalted, shelled pistachios or chopped, roasted hazelnuts. Nuts are a great source of protein and healthy fats.

You can vary the fruit salad by putting in a different variety of fruits, or adding a small tin of pineapple or raspberries, or other fruit.

## Method

1. Peel all the fruit except the apple.
  2. Core and slice the fruit and place in the bowl.
- Serve with cream, crème fraîche, yoghurt or ice cream.

## Nutrition Facts

- 178 kcals per portion (with cream)
- Great source vitamins and minerals
- Low in fat (when served without cream)
- Low in saturated fat (without cream)

Use low fat crème fraîche or low fat Greek yoghurt instead of cream for a healthier choice.

# Fruit smoothie



Serves 4



2 nectarines  
– peeled and stones removed  
250g strawberries  
1 banana, chopped  
½ pint orange juice



3 of your "5 a day".

## Method

1. Place all ingredients in liquidiser and blend until smooth.

## Nutrition Facts

- 195 kcal per portion
- Low in fat
- Low in saturated fat
- Good source of fibre

# Magic lemon pudding



Serves 4



£



15 mins



40 mins



60g margarine or butter  
Grated zest and juice of  
a large lemon  
90g caster sugar  
2 eggs (separated)  
30g plain flour  
175mls/6 fl ozs milk



Mixing bowl (x2)  
Ovenproof dish (600mls/  
1 pint)  
Roasting tin  
Whisk or electric  
hand mixer



Serve with a portion of raspberries to help meet your "5 a day".

Instead of serving with cream/ice cream, you can serve with a teaspoon of lemon curd or some fresh raspberries which are lower in fat.

## Method

1. Heat oven to 160°C. Lightly grease the ovenproof dish.
2. Put the butter, lemon zest and sugar into a bowl and beat together until pale and fluffy.
3. Add the egg yolks, flour and lemon juice, stir to combine. Gradually stir in the milk.
4. Whisk the egg whites until stiff and gradually fold into the lemon mixture.
5. Pour the mixture into dish and then place in a roasting tin. Add enough hot water to the roasting tin so that it is almost to the rim of the tin.
6. Bake at 160°C for 40 minutes or until the sponge is springy to the touch.
7. Serve with cream or ice cream.

## Nutrition Facts

- 301 kcal per portion
- High in fat
- High in saturated fat



# Rhubarb crumble



Serves 4



£



25 mins



30 mins



4 sticks rhubarb  
2 dessertspoons sugar  
1 teaspoon ginger (optional)

Crumble Topping  
8 dessertspoons plain flour  
3 dessertspoons butter  
or margarine  
3 dessertspoons brown sugar



Chopping board  
Saucepan  
Mixing bowl  
Ovenproof dish



1 of your "5 a day".

You can make an apple crumble by replacing rhubarb with cooking apples, raisins and cinnamon.

## Method

1. Pre-heat oven to 180°C/Gas mark 4.
2. Remove the leaves of the rhubarb and the white bulbous bottom.
3. Slice the rhubarb into small chunks and place in a pan with 2 dessertspoons of water (only use a very little water), add the ginger.
4. Cook the rhubarb over a low heat until it has softened (5–10 minutes). Turn off the heat.
5. To make the crumble topping, put the flour into a mixing bowl.
6. Cut the butter or margarine into small pieces and lightly rub into the flour with your fingertips until it looks like breadcrumbs.
7. Stir in the sugar.
8. Put the rhubarb into an oven proof dish and spread the crumble mixture evenly over the top.
9. Bake in the middle of the oven for about 30 minutes or until the topping has turned slightly brown.

Delicious served with custard or cream.

## Nutrition Facts

- 315 kcal per portion
- Good source of vitamin C

You can increase the amount of fibre and some vitamin and minerals in the crumble topping by stirring in 50g of oatmeal when the sugar is added (step 7).

# Useful contacts

## [www.cyrenians.org.uk](http://www.cyrenians.org.uk)

About the work of Edinburgh Cyrenians

## [www.cyreniansgoodfood.org.uk](http://www.cyreniansgoodfood.org.uk)

Information on the Cyrenians Good Food Programme including FareShare and where you can download this handbook

## [www.communityfoodandhealth.org.uk](http://www.communityfoodandhealth.org.uk)

Information on community health initiatives in low income communities

## [www.takelifeon.co.uk](http://www.takelifeon.co.uk)

Scottish Government website with useful tips on healthy eating, recipes and exercise

## [www.bda.uk.com](http://www.bda.uk.com)

The British Dietetic Association

## [www.rehis.com](http://www.rehis.com)

The Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland (has list of organisations that deliver food hygiene and food and health courses)

## [www.food.gov.uk](http://www.food.gov.uk)

Food Standards Agency website. Other useful links are available through this website

## [www.scotland.gov.uk](http://www.scotland.gov.uk)

Includes information on grants and the voluntary sector

## [www.foodnetwork.com](http://www.foodnetwork.com)

Contains easy recipes, healthy eating ideas

## [www.eatwell.gov.uk](http://www.eatwell.gov.uk)

Useful information on health issues, healthy diets, food labelling etc.

## [www.health-in-mind.org.uk](http://www.health-in-mind.org.uk)

A charity promoting positive mental health and wellbeing in Scotland

## [www.nutrition.org.uk](http://www.nutrition.org.uk)

British Nutrition Foundation website with useful information on healthy eating and maintaining a healthy diet

## [www.healthscotland.com](http://www.healthscotland.com)

NHS Health Scotland website with useful links

## [www.whatsonyourplate.co.uk](http://www.whatsonyourplate.co.uk)

Information on the campaign for Scottish foods and farming, also contains easy recipe ideas

## [www.wasteawarelovefood.org.uk](http://www.wasteawarelovefood.org.uk)

Information on the Love Food Hate Waste nation-wide initiative. Some good recipes for using leftovers and seasonal products

## [www.coeliac.co.uk](http://www.coeliac.co.uk)

The Coeliac Society website – publishes a yearly updated list of gluten-free foods for those who have a gluten intolerance

## [www.foodforthebrain.org](http://www.foodforthebrain.org)

Website for more in-depth nutritional information linked to mental health

## [www.mentalhealth.org.uk](http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk)

Mental Health Foundation, includes eatwell section

## [www.sustainweb.org](http://www.sustainweb.org)

The alliance for better food and farming. This website contains lots of interesting information about food

## [www.bbc.co.uk/health/nutrition](http://www.bbc.co.uk/health/nutrition)

Lots of useful information

## [www.fareshare.org.uk](http://www.fareshare.org.uk)

Supports communities to relieve food poverty

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**Thank you!**



**“We think that poverty is only being hungry and homeless. The poverty of being unwanted, unloved and uncared for is the greatest poverty. We must start in our own homes to remedy this kind of poverty.”**

**Mother Teresa of Calcutta**

**To find out more about our work, please contact:**

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