

# Healthy Eating and Active Living for Adults, Teenagers and Children over 5 Years

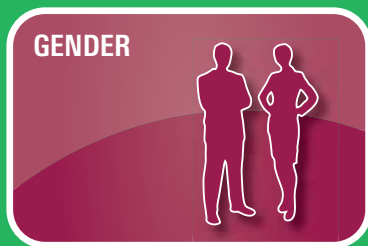
– A Food Guide for Health  
Professionals and Catering Services



# Healthy Eating and Active Living for Adults, Teenagers and Children over 5 Years

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This Food Guide describes the types and amounts of foods people need for healthy eating. **Everyone has different food needs.** This varies depending on:



Following this Food Guide and being active gives people the best chance of being healthy and well. This advice will also help keep their body weight within a healthy range. All of this will help protect against heart disease, type 2 diabetes, osteoporosis and certain cancers.



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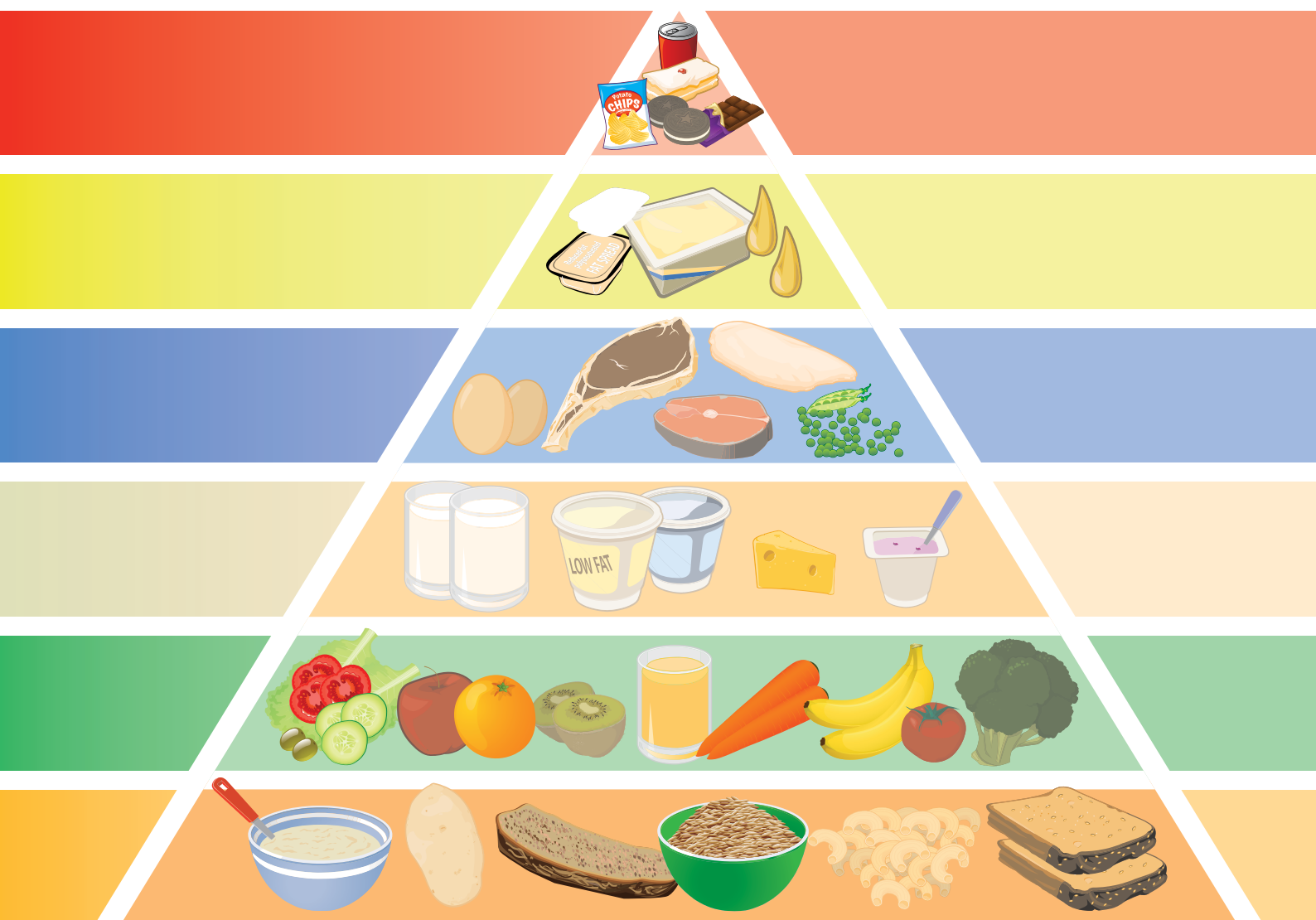
**New  
FOOD  
PYRAMID  
overleaf...**

# Healthy Eating and Active Living for Adults, Teenagers and Children over 5 Years

Foods that are rich in the same type of nutrients (protein, fat, vitamins, etc) are grouped together. There are **six groups** in this Food Guide. Healthy eating is all about choosing the **right amounts** of foods from **each group**.

The shape of the Food Pyramid shows the types of foods people need to eat most for healthy eating. The food groups at the bottom of the Food Pyramid are biggest because people should choose more foods from these groups for a healthy balance of essential nutrients.

## The Food Pyramid at a glance





Check out the contents of this Food Guide to find out:

- **What children need** to make sure they grow up strong and healthy
- **What teenagers need** to cover their growth spurt and to reach their full potential
- **What adults need** to protect themselves from heart disease and cancer
- **What older adults need** to keep healthy and well
- The **different needs** of **males** and **females**
- The **different needs** of **active** and **inactive** people

The tips and recommendations in this Food Guide will help people of all ages to reach a **healthy weight** and contribute to their overall vitality and well being.



**Other foods that are not necessary for healthy eating**

NOT too MUCH and NOT too OFTEN.

These foods are high in calories, fat, sugar and salt, and need to be limited.



**Fats, Spreads and Oils**

Boil, Bake, Steam and Grill – choose LOW FAT monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats more often.

All types are high in calories – use sparingly.



**Meat, Poultry, Fish and Alternatives**

Choose lean meat for iron. Take fish twice a week – oily is best.

Rich in protein, iron and vitamins.



**Milk, Yoghurt and Cheese**

Low-fat is best. Choose milk and yoghurt more often than cheese.

For healthy bones – rich in calcium and protein.



**Fruit, Vegetables and Salads**

At least 5 servings a day – choose a variety of colours.

Rich in protective nutrients – yet low in calories.



**Cereals, Breads, Potatoes, Pasta and Rice**

Choose wholemeal for the healthiest calories.

Provide fibre and the best calories for your body.



Before you proceed, OPEN THE FRONT COVER FLAP PAGE as shown below

This Food Guide is best viewed when the **front cover flap page** is open and on-view while the document is being read.

This allows the reader to reference the new Food Pyramid while reading the document.



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# Healthy Eating TOP TIPS

## Variety...

Enjoy a wide variety of food, choosing the right amounts from each Food Group.

## Physical Activity...

Find enjoyable ways to be physically active every day.

*Balancing food intake with active living will protect against disease and prevent weight gain.*



## Serving Sizes...

Watch serving sizes.

*Choose smaller portions and add plenty of vegetables, salad and fruit.*

## Healthy Weight...

**Wholemeal** breads, cereals, potatoes, pasta and rice (eaten plain) are the best foods for providing **calories for a healthy weight**.

*Base meals on these simple foods with plenty of vegetables, salad and fruit.*

## Meat/ Poultry/ Fish and Alternatives...

Choose **lean** meat and poultry; include **fish (oily is best)** and remember peas, beans and lentils are good alternatives.

## Vegetables, Salad and Fruit...

Eat **plenty of different coloured** vegetables, salad and fruit.

*At least five a day.*

## Low-fat Dairy...

**Low-fat** milk, yoghurt and cheese are best.

*Choose milk and yoghurt more often than cheese.*



## Fat Spreads...

Use polyunsaturated and monounsaturated spreads and oils sparingly.

*Reduced fat spreads are best.*

## Cooking Methods...

Grill, bake, steam or boil food instead of frying or deep frying.

## Other Foods...

Healthy eating can be enjoyed with limited amounts of 'other foods' like biscuits, cakes, savoury snacks and confectionery.

*These foods are high in calories, fat, sugar and salt so remember – NOT too MUCH and NOT too OFTEN.*



## Limit Salt...

Limit salt intake.

## Fluids...

Drink plenty of water.

## Vitamin D...

Everyone should make sure they are getting enough vitamin D. Taking oily fish once or twice a week is best.

*People choosing a supplement should be advised to take 5µg of vitamin D3 only a day (people over 50 years of age may need more).*

## Folic Acid...

All women of child bearing age who are sexually active should take a folic acid supplement (400 micrograms (µg)) every day to help prevent neural tube defects (NTDs) in babies, e.g. Spina Bifida.

## Breast is Best...

**Breastfeeding** should be encouraged and supported by everyone in Ireland because it gives babies the very best start in life and helps protect women's health.

## Food Safety...

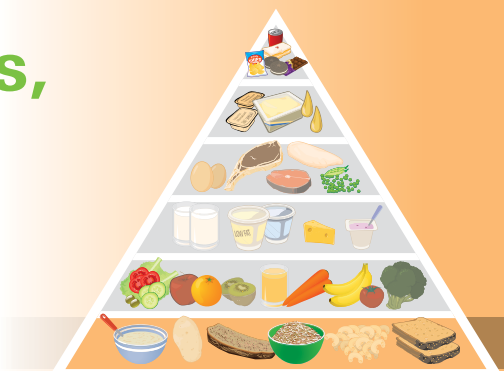
Prepare and store food safely.





# Cereals, Breads, Potatoes, Pasta and Rice Group

– choose wholemeal for fibre and healthiest calories



People should choose from this Food Group based on how many calories they need. The need for calories varies depending on body size, age, gender and how active people are.



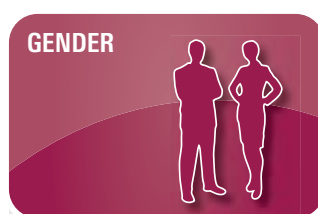
**BODY SIZE**

Bigger people need more calories than smaller people.



**AGE**

Younger people need more calories for growth and development – especially during the teenage growth spurt.



**GENDER**

Males need more calories than females, mainly due to differences in body size.



**ACTIVITY LEVEL**

Active people need more calories than inactive people. When people are active they need more servings from this food group.

See pages 24 and 25 for the amount of calories needed in a day by average children, teenagers and older adults.

To find out how many servings people of different ages and activity levels need go to pages 16-23.



**top tip**

**Brown is Best** – Choose wholemeal. High fibre foods help protect against bowel diseases such as diverticular disease and colon cancer.





## did you know?

Overweight people following the advice in this Food Guide will lose weight steadily. This is because their larger body size uses more calories doing the same daily activity as someone of normal weight.

The servings recommended in this Food Guide are suitable for everyone including those overweight.



### Some tips to help those overweight reach a healthy weight

- Choose the lower calorie food servings from this group.
- Keep added fats, oils and sauces to a minimum.
- Fill up on foods such as salads, vegetables and fruit.
- Enjoy exercise! – Build up your fitness gradually to 60-75 minutes of moderate activity EVERY DAY *See pages 30 and 31.*
- Limit "Other Foods" (see page 14) – better still, avoid these foods completely.
- Limit or avoid alcohol.
- Low carbohydrate diets are not good for health. Wholemeal breads, cereals and potatoes provide the best energy for the body to work. People should not be tempted to cut these important foods from the diet.

The food servings from this group provide between 100 and 220 calories. *Please see pages 24 and 25 for how many calories average people need in a day.*

Look at the table below where servings that are lower in calories are shown in the lighter colour. People who are trying to lose weight should choose the lower calorie food servings from this group where possible.

### Each Item Counts as One Serving – Be Aware of the Calorie Difference

CALORIES	CEREALS	BREADS	POTATO, PASTA, RICE					
<b>LOWEST</b> 100 – 135 kcals	½ cup raw porridge oats	1 slice soda bread	1 slice batch loaf	1 medium bread roll	1 medium sized boiled / baked potato	3 scoops mashed potato	1 cup cooked pasta	¾ cup / 150g tin sweetcorn
<b>LOW to MID</b> 135 – 160 kcals	2 whole-wheat breakfast cereal biscuits	2 regular slices pan bread	1 oval pitta bread	6 wholemeal crackers	1 cup sweet potatoes	1 cup cooked basmati rice		
<b>MID to HIGH</b> 160 – 190 kcals	½ cup muesli	1 tortilla bread	½ lunch size baguette roll	½ panini bread	8 baby potatoes	1 cup cooked white rice	1 cup cooked brown spaghetti	1 cup cous cous / quinoa
<b>HIGHEST</b> 190 – 220 kcals	1½ cups cereal flakes	2 'thick cut' slices pan bread	1 bagel	2 round pitta bread		1 cup cooked brown rice	1½ cup wholewheat noodles	

## Portion Size Reference Guide

Go to page 38 to see the full Portion Size Reference Guide

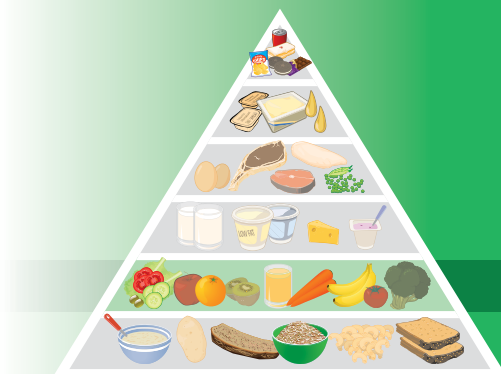


### 200ml Disposable Cup

Use a disposable plastic cup to guide portion sizes of cereals, cooked rice and pasta, and even vegetables, salad and fruit.

# Fruit, Vegetables and Salads Group

– choose a variety of colours for the best mix of protective nutrients



**Fruit and vegetables provide fibre along with a range of vitamins (A, B, C, E and K) and minerals (potassium, magnesium and some iron). These foods are low in calories and contain no fat (Avocado and olives are the only exceptions).**

For healthy eating, people should base most of the food they eat on this Fruit, Vegetables and Salads Group AND the Cereals, Breads, Potatoes, Pasta and Rice Group.

*To find out how many servings people of different ages and activity levels need go to pages 16-23.*

To encourage people to eat more fruit, salad and vegetables, the amounts that make up ONE serving are shown on the opposite page – **Remember MORE is BETTER.**

## did you know?

These foods are rich in protective nutrients that protect against heart disease and cancer. They are also low in calories and help control body weight.



This is the ONE food group where MORE is generally BETTER.

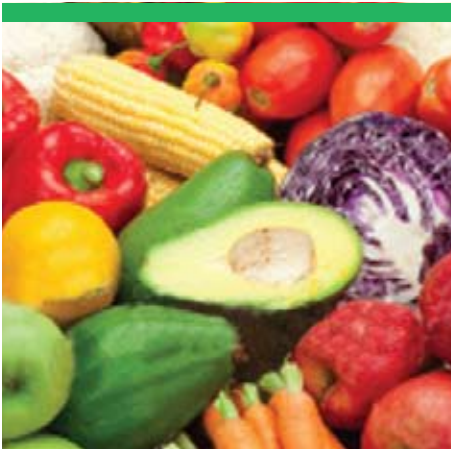


## top tip

Have at least 5 servings of fruit, vegetables or salad every day – More is Better.







## Each counts as ONE serving but more is better

FRUIT		VEGETABLES		SALAD	
1 medium apple / orange	2 small kiwis	4-6 strawberries (1 cup)	½ cup cooked carrots / parsnip/turnip	½ cup cooked peas	1 cup lettuce / tomato / cucumber
1 medium peach / pear	2 small mandarins / satsumas	10 grapes (½ cup) 10 cherries (½ cup)	½ cup cooked broccoli / cauliflower	½ cup cooked cabbage / kale / spinach / Brussels sprouts	1 cup onion (scallions, red and white onions)
1 medium banana	1 large slice of melon	½ cup blueberries	½ cup celery / leeks / courgette / aubergine	½ cup cooked lentils (green, brown, red)	1 cup beetroot / radishes
½ grapefruit	1 large / 2 small slices pineapple	⅔ cup raspberries / blackberries	½ cup peppers / mushrooms	½ cup cooked red kidney beans / chick peas	1 cup peppers
⅔ cup stewed fruit – no added sugar (apple, pear, rhubarb)	½ mango	½ cup prunes / apricots stewed with no added sugar	½ cup asparagus/ mangetout	½ cup green / French beans / broad beans / runner beans	1 cup bean sprouts / watercress
2 plums / apricots	2 small passion fruits	⅔ cup tinned fruit in own juice	1 cup chunky vegetable soup (preferably homemade)	½ cup baked beans	½ cup any raw / cooked vegetables (peas, mushrooms, broccoli, carrots, cabbage, celery)

## Fruits that just count once towards '5-a-day'

The fruits below provide beneficial nutrients *but* compared with the fruits, salad and vegetables listed above, they can be lower in fibre or contain added sugar, fat or salt. For these reasons, no matter how many servings of these fruits are eaten, only one counts towards '5-a-day'.

¾ cup unsweetened fruit juice	⅔ cup fruit / vegetable smoothie	⅔ cup stewed fruit with added sugar (apple, pear, rhubarb)	⅔ cup tinned fruit, e.g. fruit cocktail, pear, grapefruit	½ avocado	½ cup dried prunes / apricots or ¼ cup sultanas / raisins / dates / figs	5 olives
<b>LOW IN FIBRE</b>	<b>LOW IN FIBRE AND MAY CONTAIN ADDED SUGAR</b>	<b>ADDED SUGAR</b>	<b>ADDED SUGAR</b>	<b>CONTAINS FAT</b>	<b>HIGH IN CONCENTRATED SUGAR</b>	<b>CONTAINS FAT AND MAY BE HIGH IN SALT</b>

## Portion Size Reference Guide

Go to page 38 to see the full Portion Size Reference Guide

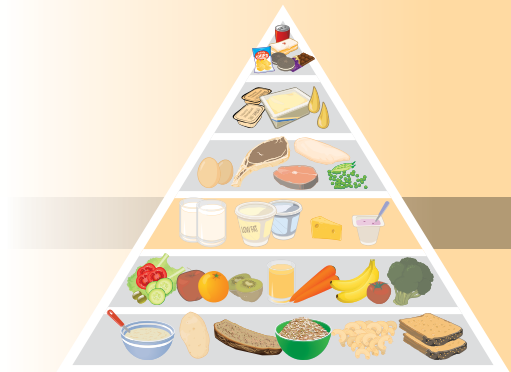


### 200ml Disposable Cup

Use a disposable plastic cup to guide portion sizes of cereals, cooked rice and pasta, and even vegetables, salad and fruit.

# Milk, Yoghurt and Cheese Group

– great for calcium for healthy bones



**Milk, yoghurt and cheese provide calcium and protein. Calcium, along with vitamin D is needed for good bone health throughout life.**

Children, teens and adults (up to late 20s) need good calcium intakes to build strong healthy bones. This protects against osteoporosis (fragile bones in later life).

Adults over 30, including the middle aged and the elderly need good calcium intakes to help protect against the normal bone loss of aging.

*To find out details on vitamin D go to page 28.*

**The milk, yoghurt and cheese group also provides good quality protein. Protein is needed to maintain the body and support growth.**

**Choose low-fat foods from this group.** Low-fat options provide the same amount of calcium and other nutrients with fewer calories.

## A note about cheese

Cheese is a rich source of calcium and protein. However, most cheeses are also high in fat, saturated fat and salt. Therefore, choose low-fat milk and yoghurt more often and enjoy cheese occasionally.

*To find out how many servings people of different ages and activity levels need go to pages 16-23.*

## did you know?

Low-fat milk is one of the most complete foods, providing the body with most of the nutrients it needs without the saturated fat.

All foods from this group are a good source of calcium, protein, vitamin B<sub>12</sub>, riboflavin and vitamin A.



## top tip

Low-fat milk and yoghurt are the best food choices from this group.





The amounts that make up one serving are shown below (along with the amount of calcium provided)

**Each item counts as ONE SERVING. Low-fat is Best.**

1 cup low-fat milk (about 240mg calcium)	1 cup full-fat milk (about 240mg calcium)	1 cup low-fat fortified milk (332mg)	¾ cup natural/ fruit yoghurt – low-fat is best (about 260mg calcium)	1 cup natural yoghurt drink – low-fat is best (about 210mg calcium)	1 cup flavoured yoghurt drink – low-fat is best (about 210mg calcium)	¾ cup flavoured pouring yoghurt – low-fat is best (about 200mg calcium)	1 matchbox size piece of soft cheese, e.g. Camembert cheese or Brie – choose lower fat versions more often (about 220mg calcium)	1 cup rice pudding or ¾ cup of custard made with low-fat milk (about 200mg calcium)
1 cup skimmed milk (about 240mg calcium)	1 cup flavoured milk – low-fat is best (about 230mg calcium)	1 cup calcium-fortified soya milk (about 178 mg calcium)	¾ cup ‘diet’ yoghurt (about 260mg calcium)	1 cup fruit yoghurt drink – low-fat is best (about 210mg calcium)	¾ cup natural pouring yoghurt – low-fat is best (about 200mg calcium)	1 matchbox-size piece of hard cheese, e.g. Cheddar – choose reduced-fat Cheddar or lower-fat hard cheeses, such as Edam, more often (about 240mg calcium)	1 cup cottage cheese – choose reduced fat varieties (about 250mg calcium)	1 cup semolina made with low-fat milk (about 240mg calcium)

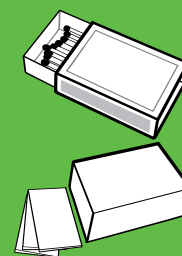
**Portion Size Reference Guide**

*Go to page 38 to see the full Portion Size Reference Guide*



**200ml Disposable Cup**

Use a disposable plastic cup to guide portion sizes of cereals, cooked rice and pasta, and even vegetables, salad and fruit.



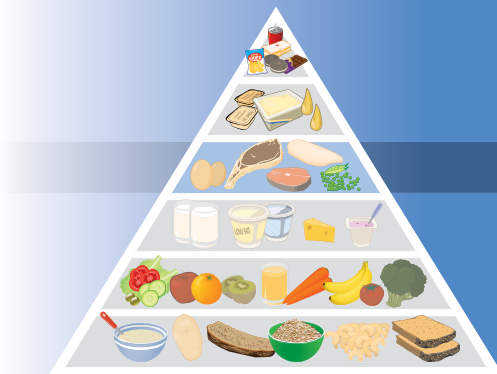
**Matchbox Size Piece of Cheese**

A matchbox can guide you on a serving. Low-fat options are best.



# Meat, Poultry, Fish and Alternatives Group

– rich in protein, iron and – in the case of oily fish – vitamin D and protective fatty acids



**All the foods in this group are rich in high quality protein. Protein is needed to maintain the body and support growth. People need some of these foods every day – but not a lot.**

All the foods in this group provide iron – but some are better than others. People not getting enough iron from their food may become anaemic. **Growing children, teens (especially girls) and menstruating women have high iron requirements.**

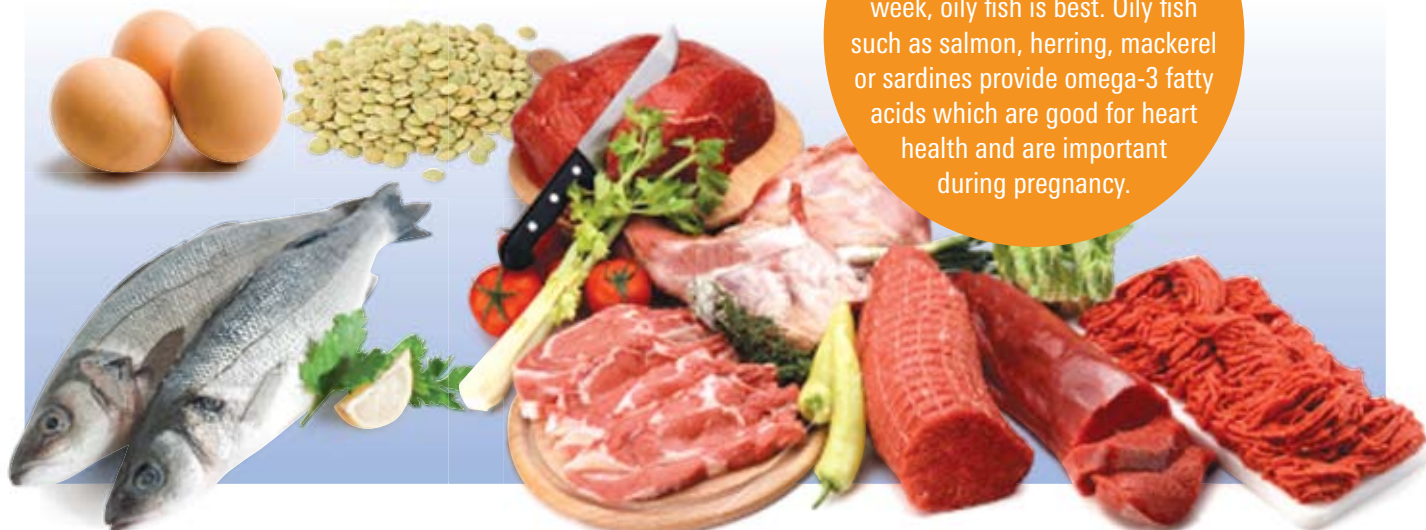
## top tip

Remove all visible fat from meat and all skin from poultry. Cook without fats or oils to keep calorie intakes low.



## top tip

Try to eat fish at least twice a week, oily fish is best. Oily fish such as salmon, herring, mackerel or sardines provide omega-3 fatty acids which are good for heart health and are important during pregnancy.





**Remember**

- Lean cuts of meat are best – remove all visible fat from meat and skin from poultry.
- Cook without added fats or oils to keep calorie intakes low.

**A word of warning on processed meat such as sausages, luncheon meats, salami, cured meats, etc.**

People need to limit the amount of these foods they eat because they are high in salt, preservatives and fat.

**did you know?**  
 Choosing a variety of foods from this group is best. Different foods in this group have different benefits.



Choose lean red meat for iron, oily fish for vitamin D and special fatty acids and pulses for low-fat fibre-rich protein.

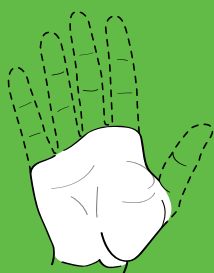


**Each item represents ONE SERVING**

<b>MAIN MEAL</b>	Lean cooked meat, e.g. beef, pork, lamb: the size of the palm of your hand is more than enough	Lean cooked poultry, e.g. chicken or turkey without skin: the size of the palm of your hand is more than enough	Fish – a cooked fillet the size of the palm of your hand is more than enough	Cooked peas, beans, lentils – ¾ cup	2 eggs
<b>LIGHT MEAL</b>	Lean cooked meat, e.g. beef, pork, lamb: 1 small slice	Lean cooked poultry, e.g. chicken or turkey without skin: 1 small slice	Fish – small portion cooked or tinned the size of half of the palm of your hand	Cooked peas, beans, lentils – ½ cup	1 egg Nuts – a handful of unsalted nuts or 1 – 2 teaspoons of peanut butter

**Portion Size Reference Guide**

*Go to page 38 to see the full Portion Size Reference Guide*



**Palm of the hand**

The width and depth of your palm (without fingers and thumb) shows how much meat, poultry or fish you need in a day. Most of this can be used for your main meal, with the remainder for your light meal.



**200ml Disposable Cup**

Use a disposable plastic cup to guide portion sizes of cereals, cooked rice and pasta, and even vegetables, salad and fruit.

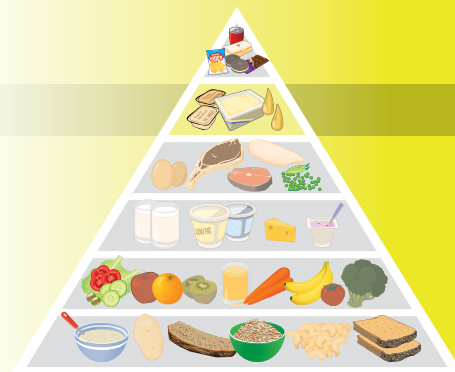
**5ml teaspoon**

This can guide your portion size for peanut butter.



# Fats, Spreads and Oils Group

– limit use of all fats and oils and choose low-fat polyunsaturated or monounsaturated types where possible



## People need to eat less of all fats, oils and spreads.

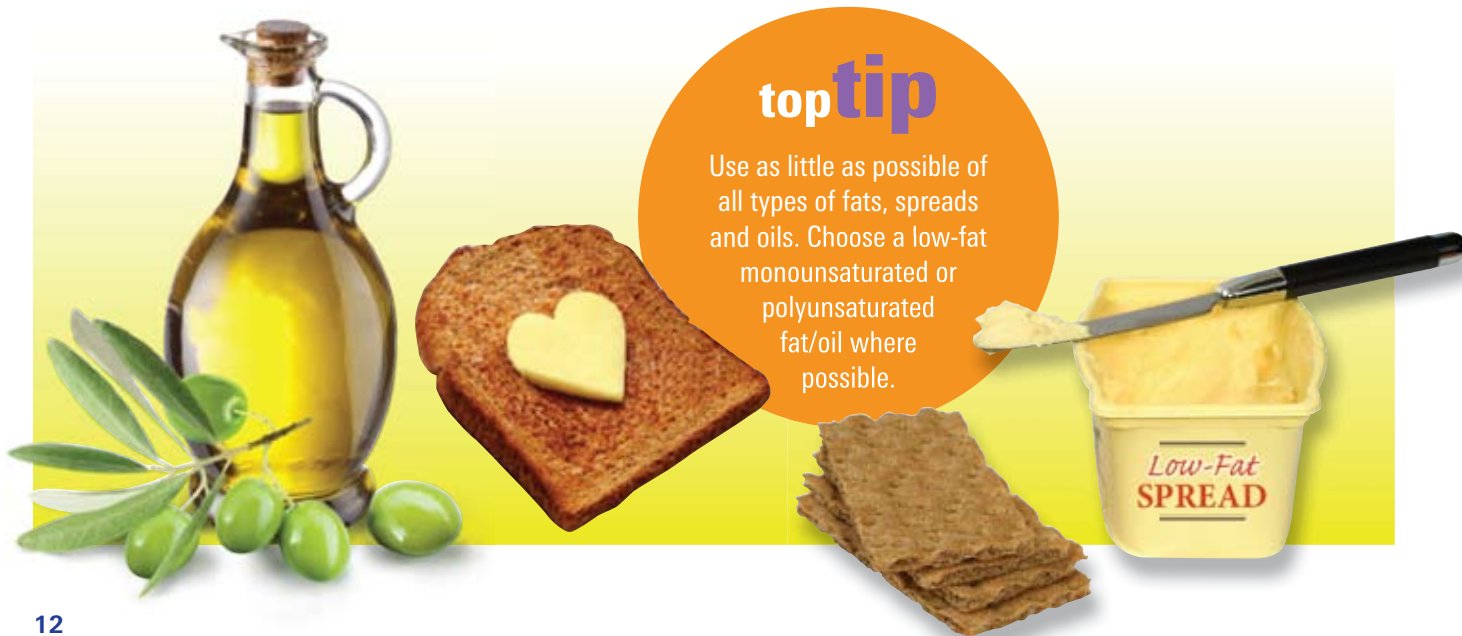
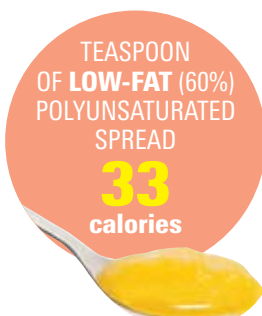
All types of fats and oils are very high in calories. While some fats and oils help protect against heart disease, they are just as high in calories as other more harmful fats and oils. People need to eat as little fat and oil as possible. Reduced fat spreads are lower in calories as they contain less fat and more water.

## Types of fats and oils – choose wisely

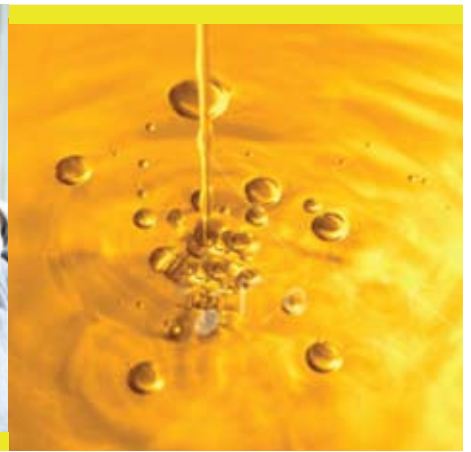
People need to be careful about the type of oil and fat they eat.

- Saturated fats raise blood cholesterol and can increase risk of heart disease. Foods high in saturated fat include meat fat, suet, lard, poultry fat, fatty meats such as sausages, milk fat, butter, cream, cheese, pies, pastries, confectionery and palm oil.
- People need to reduce these fats and oils as much as possible.
- Choose lean cuts of meat, poultry, low-fat dairy foods.
- Choose reduced fat polyunsaturated or monounsaturated spreads.

## All types of fats and oils are very high in calories – choose a reduced-fat spread where possible.







### The healthier fats and oils – polyunsaturated and monounsaturated

Sunflower, safflower, corn oil and margarines made from these are high in polyunsaturated fat. Olive oil, canola oil, rape seed oil and margarines made from these are high in monounsaturated fats.

**Polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fats and oils do not raise blood cholesterol and help keep hearts healthy. *But remember, polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fats and oils are just as high in calories as saturated fats and oils.***

Therefore people should limit the amounts of polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fats and oils they use and choose reduced fat options where possible.

### A note about *trans* fats

*Trans* fats are more harmful than saturated fat. In recent times, the amount of *trans* fats in the food supply has been reduced. Foods that may contain *trans* fat include hard margarine and foods made from them, such as biscuits, cakes, pies, pastries and confectionery.

### did you know?

Polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fat spreads and oils (corn oil, olive oil, etc.) are better for health than saturated fat (butter, lard, suet).

**BUT** they contain exactly the same amount of calories.



### Healthy Eating with Fats, Oils and Spreads

Where possible choose a reduced-fat polyunsaturated or monounsaturated spread. One portion of fat spread is more than enough for one slice of bread, try to make it do two.

Eat less of all fats, oils and spreads. Oils are healthier than solid fats, but just as fattening. Cook by grilling or baking as often as possible. Use oil in cooking very sparingly.

### Portion Size Reference Guide

Go to page 38 to see the full Portion Size Reference Guide

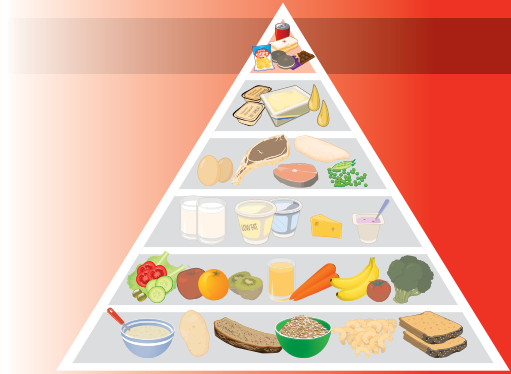


### Portion Pack

Portions of butter or spread found in cafés can guide the amount to use. For example, one pat of fat spread is more than enough for one slice of bread – try and make it do for two. Reduced fat polyunsaturated and monounsaturated spreads are best.

# Other Foods that are not Necessary for Healthy Eating

– NOT too MUCH and NOT too OFTEN



The foods in this group can be enjoyed as part of a healthy diet *as long as the amount eaten is limited*. These foods are high in calories, fat, sugar and salt but low in vitamins and minerals. So remember **NOT too MUCH and NOT too OFTEN**.

Sugar, jams, marmalade and honey are best used sparingly to make nutritious food tastier, e.g. a little sugar in porridge or to sweeten fruit, e.g. stewed apple, a little jam to replace fat spreads on wholemeal bread.

Other sugary foods such as cakes, biscuits and confectionery are also high in fat. The fat in these foods and in savoury snacks is high in calories. Also, the type of fat used can be harmful for heart health (see pages 12 and 13 on *fats and oils*). These foods should be limited to **sometimes BUT not every day**.

## did you know?

Replacing these foods with high-fibre breads, cereals and potatoes is one of the best things people can do for healthy eating.

The type of fat used in these foods can be harmful for heart health.



## top tip

Only have these foods occasionally – NOT every day



**See how many calories these foods contain**

and some of the drawbacks they have for healthy eating.



1 PACKET  
(25g) CRISPS  
**133**  
calories and  
high in salt  
and fat

1 ICED  
DOUGHNUT  
**323**  
calories and high  
in fat, saturated  
fat and sugar



2 WHOLEGRAIN  
BISCUITS  
**140**  
calories and  
high in fat and  
saturated fat



1 LARGE  
CHOCOLATE MUFFIN  
**420**  
calories and  
high in fat,  
saturated fat  
and sugar



1 SLICE OF  
APPLE TART  
**288**  
calories and  
high in fat and  
saturated fat and  
sugar

AVERAGE (50g)  
CHOCOLATE BAR  
**260**  
calories and  
high in fat,  
saturated fat  
and sugar



**Portion Size  
Reference  
Guide**

Go to page 38 to see the full  
Portion Size Reference Guide

**5ml teaspoon**

This can guide your portion size  
for jam, marmalade or honey.



**Not too Much**  
Share standard size  
or opt for 'fun size'.

**Not too Often**  
Enjoy 'Other Foods'  
sometimes but not  
every day.



# Kids & Young Teens (5–13 Years)

See pages 24 and 25 for information on how many calories average children need in a day.

## Healthy eating is important in children and young teens because:

- Their bodies are **growing** and **developing**
- They need to eat well so that they reach their **full potential**
- The teenage growth spurt starts between the ages of 8-12 in girls and between the ages of 10-14 in boys
- **Being active** is also **vital for healthy weight**



BOYS

GIRLS



**Other foods that are not necessary for healthy eating**

**NOT too MUCH and NOT too OFTEN**



**Fats, Spreads and Oils**

**Use Sparingly**



**Meat, Poultry, Fish and Alternatives**

**Main Meal Serving: 1  
Light Meal Serving: 1**



**Milk, Yoghurt and Cheese**

**3-5 Servings**



**Fruit, Vegetables and Salads**

**5 Servings**



**Cereals, Breads, Potatoes, Pasta and Rice**

**3-5 servings**

**3-4 servings**



## Being active is vital for children and growing teens

Being active for children and young teens means at least **60 minutes of moderate to vigorous activities** such as **running, skipping, cycling, swimming, football, basketball, GAA, rugby, chasing or dancing, EVERY DAY.**



### did you know?

Iron, calcium and vitamin D are important for growth and healthy bones, so it is important that children and young teens have lean red meat, milk, yoghurts and oily fish regularly.

These foods are high in calories, fat, sugar and salt, and need to be limited.  
*SEE CALORIE GUIDE ON PAGE 15*



A 5ml teaspoon can guide your portion size for jam, marmalade or honey.  
*FOR EXAMPLE*  
A teaspoon of jam

Use small amounts of reduced fat spreads. Cook with as little oil as possible – Boil, Bake, Steam and Grill.  
*SEE TABLE ON PAGE 13*



Portions of butter or spread found in cafés can guide the amount to use.  
*FOR EXAMPLE*  
One pat of fat spread is more than enough for one slice of bread – try and make it do for two. Reduced fat monounsaturated and polyunsaturated spreads are best.

Choose lean meat for iron. Take fish twice a week – oily is best.  
*SEE TABLE ON PAGE 11*

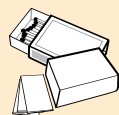


The width and depth of a child's palm of hand shows how much meat, poultry or fish they need in a day.



Use a 200ml disposable plastic cup to guide portion sizes.  
*FOR EXAMPLE*  
Cooked peas, beans, lentils – ¾ cup

Low-fat is best. Choose milk and yoghurt more often than cheese.  
*SEE TABLE ON PAGE 9*



A matchbox can guide you on a serving.  
*FOR EXAMPLE*  
1 matchbox size piece of cheese



Use a 200ml disposable plastic cup to guide portion sizes.  
*FOR EXAMPLE*  
1 cup low-fat fortified milk (332mg)

At LEAST 5 servings a day – eat plenty of different coloured fruit and vegetables.  
*SEE TABLE ON PAGE 7*



Use a 200ml disposable plastic cup to guide portion sizes.  
*FOR EXAMPLE*  
½ cup cooked carrots / parsnip / turnip | 10 grapes (½ cup)

Younger, smaller children need less than older, bigger children.  
*SEE TABLE ON PAGE 5*



Use a 200ml disposable plastic cup to guide portion sizes.  
*FOR EXAMPLE*  
½ cup raw porridge oats | 1 cup cooked white rice | ½ cup wholewheat noodles

# Older Teens (14–18 Years)

See pages 24 and 25 for information on how many calories average teenagers need in a day. This depends on whether they are active or sedentary.

## Healthy eating is important in older teens because:

- The **teenage growth spurt** continues
- They need to eat well to reach their **full potential**
- Boys and girls need iron for growth but girls need extra iron due to menstrual cycle
- Calcium and Vitamin D are vital at this stage for lifelong bone health
- **Being active** is also **vital for healthy weight**



BOYS

GIRLS



**Other foods that are not necessary for healthy eating**

**NOT too MUCH and NOT too OFTEN**



**Fats, Spreads and Oils**

**Use Sparingly**



**Meat, Poultry, Fish and Alternatives**

**Main Meal: 1  
Light Meal: 1-2**

**Main Meal: 1  
Light Meal: 1**



**Milk, Yoghurt and Cheese**

**5 Servings**



**Fruit, Vegetables and Salads**

**5-6 servings**

**5 servings**



**Cereals, Breads, Potatoes, Pasta and Rice**

**Active 5-7  
Sedentary 4-5**

**Active 4  
Sedentary 3**





## Being active is vital for older teens

Being active for older teens means at least **30 minutes of moderate to vigorous activities** such as **walking, running, cycling, swimming, GAA, football, rugby, basketball, or dancing, EVERY DAY.**

### did you know?

Teenage girls need more iron than boys – choosing lean red meat regularly will help prevent anaemia.

For vegetarians: peas, beans, lentils and eggs with vitamin C rich foods (fruit and vegetables) are the best alternative.

Calcium and vitamin D are vital for teenagers as half of their adult bone strength is built up during these few years.



These foods are high in calories, fat, sugar and salt, and need to be limited.  
*SEE CALORIE GUIDE ON PAGE 15*



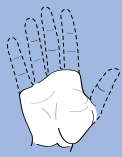
A 5ml teaspoon can guide your portion size for jam, marmalade or honey.  
*FOR EXAMPLE*  
A teaspoon of jam

Use small amounts of reduced fat spreads. Cook with as little oil as possible – Boil, Bake, Steam and Grill.  
*SEE TABLE ON PAGE 13*



Portions of butter or spread found in cafés can guide the amount to use.  
*FOR EXAMPLE*  
One pat of fat spread is more than enough for one slice of bread – try and make it do for two. Reduced fat monounsaturated and polyunsaturated spreads are best.

Choose lean meat for iron. Take fish twice a week – oily is best.  
*SEE TABLE ON PAGE 11*

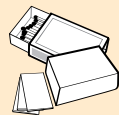


The width and depth of a teen's palm of hand shows how much meat, poultry or fish they need in a day.



Use a 200ml disposable plastic cup to guide portion sizes.  
*FOR EXAMPLE*  
Cooked peas, beans, lentils – 3/4 cup

These foods are vital for this age group as half of adult bone strength is built during these few years.  
*SEE TABLE ON PAGE 9*



A matchbox can guide you on a serving.  
*FOR EXAMPLE*  
1 matchbox size piece of cheese



Use a 200ml disposable plastic cup to guide portion sizes.  
*FOR EXAMPLE*  
1 cup low-fat fortified milk (332mg)

At **LEAST 5 servings** a day – eat plenty of different coloured fruit and vegetables.  
*SEE TABLE ON PAGE 7*



Use a 200ml disposable plastic cup to guide portion sizes.  
*FOR EXAMPLE*  
1/2 cup cooked carrots / parsnip / turnip | 10 grapes (1/2 cup)

Younger, smaller teens need less than older, bigger teens. Girls need less than boys. Less active teens need fewer servings.  
*SEE TABLE ON PAGE 5*



Use a 200ml disposable plastic cup to guide portion sizes.  
*FOR EXAMPLE*  
1/3 cup raw porridge oats | 1 cup cooked white rice | 1/2 cup wholewheat noodles

# Adults (19–50 Years)

See pages 24 and 25 information on how many calories average adults need in a day. This depends on whether they are active or sedentary.

## Healthy eating is important in adults because:

- It **protects against diseases** such as heart disease and cancer
- With activity it helps to maintain a **healthy weight**
- Women need more iron due to menstrual cycle
- **Calcium** and **Vitamin D** are vital for keeping bones strong and healthy



**MEN**

**WOMEN**



**Other foods that are not necessary for healthy eating**

**NOT too MUCH and NOT too OFTEN**



**Fats, Spreads and Oils**

**Use Sparingly**



**Meat, Poultry, Fish and Alternatives**

**Main Meal: 1  
Light Meal: 1-2**

**Main Meal: 1  
Light Meal: 1**



**Milk, Yoghurt and Cheese**

**3-5 servings**

**3 servings**



**Fruit, Vegetables and Salads**

**5-7 servings**

**5-6 servings**



**Cereals, Breads, Potatoes, Pasta and Rice**

**Active 5-7  
Sedentary 4-6**

**Active 4-5  
Sedentary 3-4**



## Being active is vital for adults

Being active for adults means at least **30 minutes of moderate to vigorous activities** such as **walking, running, cycling, swimming, GAA, rugby, football, basketball, or dancing, at least 5 days a week.**



### did you know?

An active healthy lifestyle is important to help prevent heart disease. This is especially true for men, who do not have the same hormonal protection as women.

Women of child-bearing age should take a folic acid supplement every day to help prevent neural tube defects in the event of pregnancy.

These foods are high in calories, fat, sugar and salt, and need to be limited.  
*SEE CALORIE GUIDE ON PAGE 15*



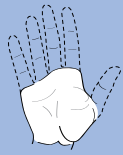
A 5ml teaspoon can guide your portion size for jam, marmalade or honey.  
*FOR EXAMPLE*  
A teaspoon of jam

Use small amounts of reduced fat spreads. Cook with as little oil as possible – Boil, Bake, Steam and Grill.  
*SEE TABLE ON PAGE 13*



Portions of butter or spread found in cafés can guide the amount to use.  
*FOR EXAMPLE*  
One pat of fat spread is more than enough for one slice of bread – try and make it do for two. Reduced fat monounsaturated and polyunsaturated spreads are best.

Choose lean meat for iron. Take fish twice a week – oily is best.  
*SEE TABLE ON PAGE 11*

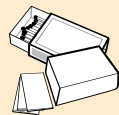


The width and depth of an adult's palm of hand shows how much meat, poultry or fish they need in a day.



Use a 200ml disposable plastic cup to guide portion sizes.  
*FOR EXAMPLE*  
Cooked peas, beans, lentils – 3/4 cup

These foods together with vitamin D rich foods are vital for maintaining bone health.  
*SEE TABLE ON PAGE 9*



A matchbox can guide you on a serving.  
*FOR EXAMPLE*  
1 matchbox size piece of cheese



Use a 200ml disposable plastic cup to guide portion sizes.  
*FOR EXAMPLE*  
1 cup low-fat fortified milk (332mg)

At LEAST 5 servings a day – eat plenty of different coloured fruit and vegetables.  
*SEE TABLE ON PAGE 7*



Use a 200ml disposable plastic cup to guide portion sizes.  
*FOR EXAMPLE*  
1/2 cup cooked carrots / parsnip / turnip | 10 grapes (1/2 cup)

Men need more than women. Less active adults need fewer servings.  
*SEE TABLE ON PAGE 5*



Use a 200ml disposable plastic cup to guide portion sizes.  
*FOR EXAMPLE*  
1/3 cup raw porridge oats | 1 cup cooked white rice | 1/2 cup wholewheat noodles



# Older Adults (51+ Years)

See pages 24 and 25 for information on how many calories average older adults need in a day. This depends on whether they are active or sedentary.

## Healthy eating is important for older adults because:

- It **protects against diseases** such as heart disease and cancer
- With activity it helps to maintain a **healthy weight**
- **Calcium** and **Vitamin D** are vital for keeping bones strong and healthy
- Wholemeal cereals and breads along with plenty of vegetables, salads and fruit prevent disease, keep bowels healthy and prevent constipation



**MEN**

**WOMEN**



**Other foods that are not necessary for healthy eating**

**NOT too MUCH and NOT too OFTEN**



**Fats, Spreads and Oils**

**Use Sparingly**



**Meat, Poultry, Fish and Alternatives**

**Main Meal: 1  
Light Meal: 1**

**Main Meal: 1  
Light Meal: 1**



**Milk, Yoghurt and Cheese**

**3 Servings**



**Fruit, Vegetables and Salads**

**5 Servings**



**Cereals, Breads, Potatoes, Pasta and Rice**

**Active 4-5  
Sedentary 4**

**Active 3-4  
Sedentary 3**



## Being active is vital for older adults

Being active for older adults means at least **30 minutes of moderate activities such as walking, jogging, cycling, or swimming, at least 5 days a week.**



### did you know?

Oily fish is a great food for older adults because it is rich in vitamin D and special fatty acids which help keep their bones strong and their hearts healthy.

These foods are high in calories, fat, sugar and salt, and need to be limited.  
*SEE CALORIE GUIDE ON PAGE 15*



A 5ml teaspoon can guide your portion size for jam, marmalade or honey.  
*FOR EXAMPLE*  
A teaspoon of jam

Use small amounts of reduced fat spreads. Cook with as little oil as possible – Boil, Bake, Steam and Grill.  
*SEE TABLE ON PAGE 13*



Portions of butter or spread found in cafés can guide the amount to use.  
*FOR EXAMPLE*  
One pat of fat spread is more than enough for one slice of bread – try and make it do for two. Reduced fat monounsaturated and polyunsaturated spreads are best.

Choose lean meat for iron.  
Take fish twice a week – oily is best.  
*SEE TABLE ON PAGE 11*

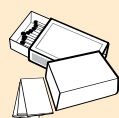


The width and depth of an adult's palm of hand shows how much meat, poultry or fish they need in a day.



Use a 200ml disposable plastic cup to guide portion sizes.  
*FOR EXAMPLE*  
Cooked peas, beans, lentils – 3/4 cup

These foods together with vitamin D rich foods are vital for keeping bones strong and preventing fractures.  
*SEE TABLE ON PAGE 9*



A matchbox can guide you on a serving.  
*FOR EXAMPLE*  
1 matchbox size piece of cheese



Use a 200ml disposable plastic cup to guide portion sizes.  
*FOR EXAMPLE*  
1 cup low-fat fortified milk (332mg)

At **LEAST 5** servings a day – eat plenty of different coloured fruit and vegetables.  
*SEE TABLE ON PAGE 7*



Use a 200ml disposable plastic cup to guide portion sizes.  
*FOR EXAMPLE*  
1/2 cup cooked carrots / parsnip / turnip | 10 grapes (1/2 cup)

Men need more than women.  
Less active adults need fewer servings.  
*SEE TABLE ON PAGE 5*



Use a 200ml disposable plastic cup to guide portion sizes.  
*FOR EXAMPLE*  
1/3 cup raw porridge oats | 1 cup cooked white rice | 1/2 cup wholewheat noodles

# How Many Calories are Needed in a Day by Average People who are Active

Average boy  
(5 – 13 years)

**1,400 – 2,200**  
calories



Average  
teenage boy  
(14 – 18 years)

**2,400 – 2,800**  
calories



Average  
adult male  
(19 – 50 years)

**2,400 – 2,800**  
calories



Average older  
adult male  
(51+ years)

**2,200 – 2,400**  
calories



Average girl  
(5 – 13 years)

**1,400 – 2,000**  
calories



Average  
teenage girl  
(14 – 18 years)

**2,000** calories



Average  
adult female  
(19 – 50 years)

**2,000 – 2,200**  
calories



Average older  
adult female  
(51+ years)

**1,800** calories



## top tip

Active living promotes health and prevents disease.

**Everyone should be active.**

## did you know?

People who are taller and bigger than average need more calories and people who are smaller need less.



# How Many Calories are Needed in a Day by Average People who are Sedentary

All children need to be active for healthy growth and development.

Average teenage boy  
(14 – 18 years)

**2,200** calories



Average teenage girl  
(14 – 18 years)

**1,800** calories



Average adult male  
(19 – 50 years)

**2,000** calories



Average adult female  
(19 – 50 years)

**1,800** calories



Average older adult male  
(51+ years)

**2,000** calories



Average older adult female  
(51+ years)

**1,600** calories



did you  
**know?**

Living in today's world makes people sedentary.

People need less calories when they are sedentary.

Sedentary people have more body fat and less muscle. More activity and exercise will improve their body composition.

# Pregnancy

## Healthy eating during pregnancy benefits both mother and baby's lifelong health.

A mother's nutrition during pregnancy directly affects her unborn baby's development as well as its lifelong health. Healthy eating during pregnancy is also important to protect her own health and well being.

With a few exceptions, healthy eating is mostly the same as it is for the non-pregnant women. However, many women may need to take food supplements to meet their needs for extra iron, folic acid and vitamin D – they should follow their doctors advice.

Pregnant women should try to take oily fish (Salmon, Mackerel, Trout and Herring) once or twice a week. This provides a special fatty acid called DHA which unborn babies need for eye and brain development. Oily fish also provides vitamin D which women need in greater amounts during pregnancy. However, certain types of fish (marlin, shark, ray) should be avoided because they may contain mercury. Also, limit intake of tuna (once a week for fresh tuna and not more than two 8oz cans of tinned tuna a week).

During the last three months of pregnancy, women may need more calories. This is best provided by one to two more servings from the Fruit and Vegetable or Dairy or Cereals, Breads, Potatoes, Pasta and Rice Group.

## Foods to limit/avoid

- Women who are pregnant, or planning a pregnancy, should take no more than 200mg of caffeine per day. This is roughly 1–2 cups of coffee or 2–4 cups of tea.

*For more information on the caffeine content of drinks and food go to page 32.*

Research has shown that high intakes of caffeine (greater than 400mg per day) during pregnancy can be harmful to the developing foetus.

- Liver is best avoided as it provides very high amounts of vitamin A.
- No amount of alcohol is safe during pregnancy and should be avoided.

## Food safety is very important during pregnancy

Some bacteria that may be in certain foods harm the baby in the womb, e.g. *Listeria monocytogenes*. To protect against this, pregnant women should avoid unpasteurised milks and cheeses, uncooked cured or smoked meats or smoked fish as well as ready-to-eat foods.

*Pregnant women should be particularly careful to follow general advice on food safety (see page 36 and [www.fsai.ie](http://www.fsai.ie)).*



## did you know?

As well as being best for babies, breastfeeding protects the mothers' health. Breastfeeding reduces risk of breast and ovarian cancers, helps mothers recover after childbirth and return to their normal weight.

# Breastfeeding

## Everyone in Ireland needs to encourage and support breastfeeding

Breast milk is 'tailor-made' for babies. Breastfeeding gives babies the very best start in life as it protects them against diseases, chest infections and allergies such as asthma and eczema.

### top tip

Breastfeeding gives babies the very best start in life, protecting them against disease and allergy.



Breastfeeding mothers should follow the healthy eating advice for women of their age but in addition:

- Meet their need for extra calories by taking one to two more servings from the bread, cereals and potatoes group *or* the dairy group *or* the fruit and vegetables group
- Drink plenty of fluids – breastfeeding increases thirst
- Limit the consumption of caffeine (see page 32 for more information)
- Ask your doctor or health care professional about food supplements.

### did you know?

The nutrients provided by breast milk change to meet the changing needs of each individual baby as they grow and develop.

## Expressing breast milk

See [www.breastfeeding.ie](http://www.breastfeeding.ie) for information on how breast milk can be expressed, stored safely and used to feed the baby.

## A note about alcohol

Small amounts of alcohol (10%) can reach the baby through breast milk. Breastfeeding women should be advised not to take any alcohol for at least two to three hours before they breastfeed their baby. Breast milk expressed before drinking alcohol can be used to feed the baby.

See page 40 for guidelines on alcohol for women.





# Vitamin D

## The Sunshine Vitamin

Vitamin D is needed by everyone for strong healthy bones and it may protect against heart disease and cancer. People can make vitamin D from strong sunlight falling on their skin BUT this is not safe due to skin cancer risk. People need to eat some of the few foods that provide vitamin D or to take a vitamin D supplement.

### Foods that naturally contain vitamin D – eating oily fish one to two times a week is best

Only a few foods naturally contain vitamin D - of these oily fish is the best. Other foods such as eggs, liver and kidney only contain very small amounts of vitamin D. **Choosing trout, mackerel or salmon twice a week provides most people with half of their weekly vitamin D needs.**

- A serving of trout (150g) contains 15µg of vitamin D.
- A serving of mackerel (150g) contains 13µg of vitamin D.
- A serving of salmon (150g) contains 12µg of vitamin D.
- A serving of tuna (150g) contains 4.5µg of vitamin D.
- A tin of sardines (100g) contains 5µg of vitamin D.
- One egg contains almost 2µg of vitamin D.

### Foods fortified with vitamin D

In Ireland a growing number of foods are now fortified with vitamin D. Choosing fortified foods will boost intake. Different fortified foods will provide different amounts of vitamin D. **Check food labels to find out how much vitamin D is in a serving – aim for an intake up to 5µg a day.**

*For information on food labelling go to page 37.*

- A serving (1 cup) of fortified milk can provide up to 4µg of vitamin D.
- A serving (1 cup) of fortified cereal flakes can provide up to 2.5µg of vitamin D.
- A fortified cheese string provides almost 1µg of vitamin D.



### did you know?

Most people in Ireland do not get enough vitamin D. The sunlight is too weak from October to March and people need to protect themselves against strong summer sunlight to prevent skin cancer.



## Vitamin D Supplements

Taking a daily vitamin D supplement is another way of getting vitamin D. **The best choice is a supplement that provides 5 micrograms (µg) of vitamin D3 per day.** This provides enough but allows for the extra vitamin D coming from fortified foods. Older adults may need more vitamin D – they need to ask their doctor or health care professional.

Many food supplements provide vitamin D:

- Multi vitamin products
- Fish oils
- Omega 3 capsules, etc

**If taking food supplements, care should be taken not to 'double up' on vitamin D.** For example, a person choosing to take fish oils and a multi-vitamin may be getting twice the vitamin D they are aiming for.

Vitamin D supplements can be used, choose one that provides 5µg per day.

**top tip**

**Choosing oily fish one to two times a week is the best way to get vitamin D.**



## **WARNING** Taking very high amounts of vitamin D can be harmful

Taking more than five to ten times the recommended amount of vitamin D is **UNSAFE**.

- More than five times the recommended dietary amount is unsafe for children.
- More than ten times the recommended dietary amount is unsafe for adults.

Supplements should be kept **OUT OF REACH OF CHILDREN** who are at greater risk because of their small body size.

While liver and kidney contain vitamin D, these foods should not be given to **BABIES** or eaten by **PREGNANT WOMEN** because they contain high levels of vitamin A.

**top tip**

Fortified foods can be used **BUT** be aware of how much vitamin D is in one serving – aim for an intake of 5µg per day.



# Everyone needs to be Active to be Healthy

Active living is one of the best ways of improving health – at all ages and all body sizes. 'Active Living' means finding ways to be active in EVERYTHING people do EVERY DAY.

## Tips for being active in Everyday Living

- Spend more time outdoors – walks in the park, woodland, seaside, mountain or trips to the playground.
- Need to travel short distance - walk or cycle instead of taking the car, e.g. trips to school, work, or the shops.
- Take the dog for regular walks.
- Take the stairs instead of the lift or escalator.

## WORRIED ABOUT FITNESS?

Adults who have not been active for some time should seek advice from their doctor.

## Being active for CHILDREN means doing at least 60 minutes of moderate-to-vigorous activity EVERY DAY

This means:

- Running / Chasing games
- Tennis
- Martial Arts
- Swimming
- Basketball
- Rugby
- Cycling
- Football
- Hurling
- Skipping with a rope
- Dancing
- Camogie

## Being active for ADULTS means Doing at least 30 minutes of moderate activity on AT LEAST 5 days a week

This means:

- Brisk walking
- Swimming
- Gardening
- Jogging
- Medium-paced cycling
- Housework

did you know?

Active parents have active children.





**People who want to lose weight** should include at least 60-75 minutes of moderate activity every day.

**To keep weight off after weight loss**, being active is very important. After weight loss, a person's smaller body size uses up less calories than the amount they needed previously for their larger body size.

**Enjoy being fitter and slimmer.** Aim to be active 60-90 minutes most days. Research shows that being active is key to maintaining weight loss.

**top tip**

For more information, go to  
[www.getirelandactive.ie](http://www.getirelandactive.ie)



**Sedentary** means having a lifestyle that is not active. Sedentary people are those who do not meet the recommended levels of physical activity. Being sedentary includes desk work, driving, watching TV, using a computer, cinema, etc.



# Drink Plenty of Fluids

Regular drinks are necessary to replace fluid lost during the day.

Without enough water, people become dehydrated and feel more tired.

The elderly, in particular, need to be careful to drink enough as the sense of thirst decreases with aging.

**Water is the best drink.** It replaces fluid without adding extra calories or stimulants – such as caffeine, and it is free. Diet soft drinks provide fluid but these can be harmful to teeth.

Adults generally need 8-10 cups of fluid every day. A lot of this comes from the fluids they drink, including tea, coffee, juices, milk etc., as well as from the fluids naturally in food.

People need to take extra fluids when they sweat more than usual due to hot weather or exercise.

## A note about caffeine

Caffeine is a stimulant which can be mildly addictive. Caffeine is found naturally in foods and drinks such as coffee, tea and cocoa. It is also used as an additive in soft drinks, energy drinks, some chewing gums and medications. High intakes of caffeine can be harmful during pregnancy.

Pregnant women and women planning to become pregnant need to limit their intake of caffeine to no more than 200mg a day (see pages 26-27 on pregnancy and breastfeeding). In general, people should avoid high intakes of caffeine. This is particularly important for children who are more vulnerable due to their smaller body size. The table shown gives the average amount of caffeine in drinks and foods commonly consumed in Ireland.

For more information see [www.fsai.ie](http://www.fsai.ie)

Food or Drink	Portion Size	Caffeine Content
Coffee, brewed	1 cup	111mg (range 102-200mg)
Coffee, instant	1 cup	78mg (range 27-173mg)
Coffee, decaffeinated	1 cup	4mg (range 3-12mg)
Espresso	1 shot	40mg (range 30-90mg)
Tea, brewed	1 cup	44mg (range 40-120mg)
Snapple (fruit and diet versions)	1 bottle (480ml)	42mg
Pepsi	1 bottle (500ml)	32mg
Pepsi Max	1 bottle (500ml)	30mg
Diet Coke	1 bottle (500ml)	39mg
Coke	1 bottle (500ml)	29mg
Caffeine-free Coke	1 bottle (500ml)	0mg
7-up (diet and regular)	1 bottle (500ml)	0mg
Red Bull	1 can (250ml)	80mg
Hot cocoa	1 cup	8mg
Milk chocolate	1 bar	11mg
Dark chocolate	1 bar	31mg
Coffee flavoured ice-cream	1 scoop	16mg (range 15-17mg)

*The exact amount of caffeine will vary according to cup size, brewing methods and brand of tea or coffee.  
1 cup =200ml; 1 shot=30ml; 1 bar=45g; 1 scoop=60g*



# Limit Salt Intake to Protect Against Heart Disease and Stroke

Salt intakes in Ireland are 75% higher than they should be. This leads to high blood pressure, heart disease and stroke.

Younger people have a much stronger sense of taste for salt. Children and young people should be protected from developing a 'taste for salt'.

Many of the main foods people in Ireland eat such as bread, breakfast cereals and fat spreads already contain a lot of salt.

People of all ages need to cut back on their use of salt wherever possible.

To cut back on salt in the diet:

- Remove the salt cellar from the table
- Where possible, avoid adding salt to foods during cooking
- Limit foods such as salty and cured meats, stock cubes, instant gravies, packet soups and ready-meals
- Use fruit to make tasty sauces for meat and poultry, e.g. apple or cranberry sauce
- Use lemon juice to flavour fish
- Flavour food with pepper, herbs and spices, lemon juice, vinegar

## top tip

Do not give children the 'salt habit'. Do not add salt to their food during cooking and keep salt out of sight at the table.

Flavour food with pepper, herbs and spices, lemon juice, vinegar.



## did you know?

People's sense of taste becomes used to eating less salt, so after a few weeks it becomes much easier to enjoy food without salt.





# Healthy Eating on a Budget

- ✓ Plan weekly meals and make a shopping list.
- ✓ Look out for special offers/coupons for foods on the list.
- ✓ Shop at a low-cost supermarket whenever possible.
- ✓ Buy groceries in bulk even when catering for one.
- ✓ Use what is needed from 'Multi-Buy's or 'Value-Packs' – freeze the rest for later.
- ✓ Generic food lines can be better value than brands.
- ✓ Porridge is low in calories, high in fibre and is the best value breakfast cereal.
- ✓ Large wholemeal sliced-pans can be frozen – thaw out slices as needed.
- ✓ Low-fat milk is just as cheap as full-fat.

## Tips to get 5-a-day in an affordable way

- Look out for special 5-a-day offers.
- Buy vegetables, salads and fruit in season, for example:
  - In Spring/Summer use carrots, lettuce, cucumber, tomatoes and spring-onions
  - In Autumn/Winter use cabbage, cauliflower, celery, onions, carrots and turnip
  - Any time of the year use tinned and frozen vegetables. They can be stored for longer, take less time to prepare, have no waste and can be cheaper
- Bulk up casseroles, stews and lean mince meat dishes using lots of low cost vegetables such as onions, carrots, parsnip and turnip, tins of tomatoes and peas.
- Tins of fruit such as pineapple, mixed fruit, pears and peaches in their own juice make quick, tasty desserts.

### top tip

Buy groceries  
in bulk at a  
low cost  
supermarket.



### did you know?

The most expensive food items tend to be at eye level in shops – so 'Bend and Stretch' for better value



## Tips for affordable lean meat, poultry, fish and alternatives

- Look out for affordable lean meats such as top rib (house-keepers cut) and lean stewing meat. Cook slowly with lots of vegetables for delicious stews and casseroles.
- Lean mince is the best value – stretch out 2-3oz (70g) per person by adding plenty of vegetables.
- Eggs provide the best quality protein and are a cheap alternative to meat.
- Mackerel is the best source of vitamin D and is rich in heart-healthy fatty acids (Omega 3 EPA and DHA). Other great value oily fish include herring and kippers.
- Look out for special offers on more expensive oily fish like salmon and white fish such as cod, whiting and haddock.

## Affordable Healthy Snacks

- Fresh fruit in season.
- Baked apples or stewed fruit.
- Grilled banana on brown bread.
- Low-fat yoghurt or frozen yoghurt instead of ice cream.
- Drinking chocolate or cocoa made with low-fat milk.
- Homemade rice pudding using low-fat milk.
- Wholemeal salad sandwich.
- Beans on wholemeal toast.
- Scrambled eggs on brown bread.

**Do not be tempted by special offers on 'Other foods that are not necessary for healthy eating' (confectionery, biscuits, crisps etc) – they are high in sugar, salt, fat and saturated fat.**

## top tip

Cook fish in a loose tin foil parcel with lemon, herbs and vegetables.



## Useful Resources

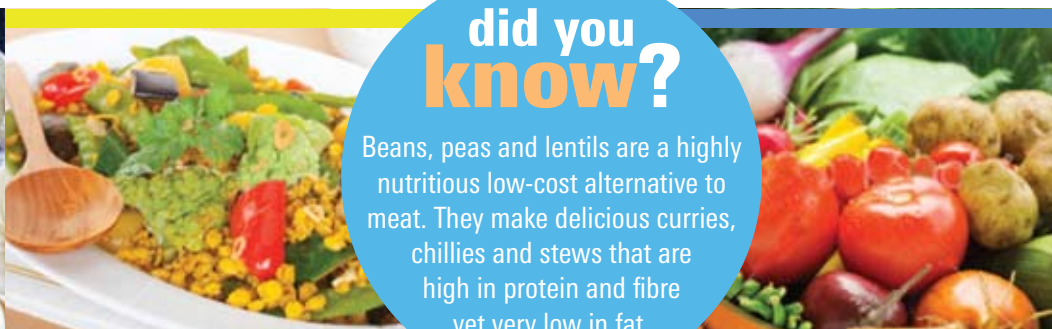
101+ Square Meals recipe book, available at [www.mabs.ie](http://www.mabs.ie)<sup>1</sup> or phone 1890 283438

A Good practice Guide for community Food Initiatives available at [www.healthyfoodforall.com](http://www.healthyfoodforall.com)<sup>2</sup>

**Contact your local HSE Community Nutrition and Dietetic Service for information on Community Nutrition programmes (such as 'Healthy Food Made Easy' or 'Cook It!' courses)**

<sup>1</sup> [http://www.mabs.ie/publications/Resources%20for%20education/101\\_Sq\\_Meals.pdf](http://www.mabs.ie/publications/Resources%20for%20education/101_Sq_Meals.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.healthyfoodforall.com/good\\_practice\\_guides.htm](http://www.healthyfoodforall.com/good_practice_guides.htm)



## did you know?

Beans, peas and lentils are a highly nutritious low-cost alternative to meat. They make delicious curries, chillies and stews that are high in protein and fibre yet very low in fat.

# Food Safety

Take care to keep food safe from harmful bacteria ('germs'). If harmful bacteria 'get into' food they feed on the food, multiply and spoil the food – especially if the temperature is right for them. Bacteria thrive in warm temperatures – therefore keeping food hot above 63°C or cold in a fridge below 5°C is key to keeping food safe. At high temperatures, bacteria are killed. At low temperatures, bacteria are still alive but do not multiply in numbers and spoil food. This explains why food keeps longer in the fridge than at room temperature.

## Tips for Keeping Food Safe

- Wash hands regularly using hot water and liquid soap before and during food preparation. This is particularly important before and after handling raw food, especially raw meat.
- Wash equipment and wash and disinfect food preparation surfaces after use.
- Never allow raw food to come into contact with ready-to-eat food.
- Thoroughly cook food until it reaches a temperature of 75°C in the centre – check using a meat thermometer.
- Eat cooked food within two hours of cooking, otherwise keep it above 63°C or cool it quickly, cover and place it in a refrigerator.
- Keep cold food cold and store it in a refrigerator below 5°C.
- Store raw meats on the bottom shelf of the refrigerator, store other raw food on the shelf above this and store ready to eat foods on shelves above raw foods. Keep raw food away from ready-to-eat food.
- If food needs defrosting, do this in a refrigerator until thawed throughout.
- Only freeze food once.
- Re-heat food all the way through (70°C or above).
- Do not consume food after its use-by date.



### top tip

For more information see 'Safe Food To Go' available from the FSAI website

[www.fsai.ie](http://www.fsai.ie)



### did you know?

'Best-before' means that quality (taste, aroma appearance etc) is best before this date – *but the food is still safe to eat.*

'Use-by' means that after this date, the food should not be eaten because *it may be unsafe.*



# Food Labelling

## Making Sense of Nutrition Information

Under EU food law, when nutrition information is given it must be presented per **100g** of food or drink – see below:

Nutrition Information	Per 100g
<b>Energy</b>	kJ/kcal
<b>Protein</b>	g
<b>Carbohydrate</b> of which: sugars	g g
<b>Fat</b> of which: saturates	g g
<b>Fibre</b>	g
<b>Sodium</b>	g
<b>Information on vitamins present will be listed next</b>	(mg/µg)
<b>Information on minerals present will be listed next</b>	(mg/µg)

**top tip**

Look for the products with the lowest GDA numbers

Most people need to cut down on all of these nutrients.



### Making sense of EU nutrition labelling

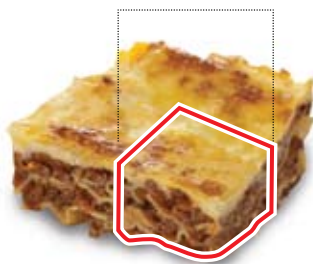
**BE AWARE** 100g of some foods may be more or less than a typical serving –

For example:



100g of bread is around 4 slices. A typical serving is only two slices

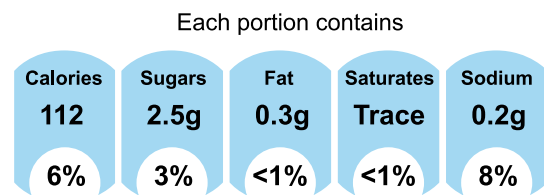
WHILE...



100g of lasagne is only a quarter of a serving. A typical serving of lasagne is 400g

### Voluntary nutrition labelling (usually given per portion of food)

Many food companies choose to display Guideline Daily Amounts (GDAs). In addition to EU nutritional labelling, GDAs are most often presented for a serving of food (the serving weight – not 100g).

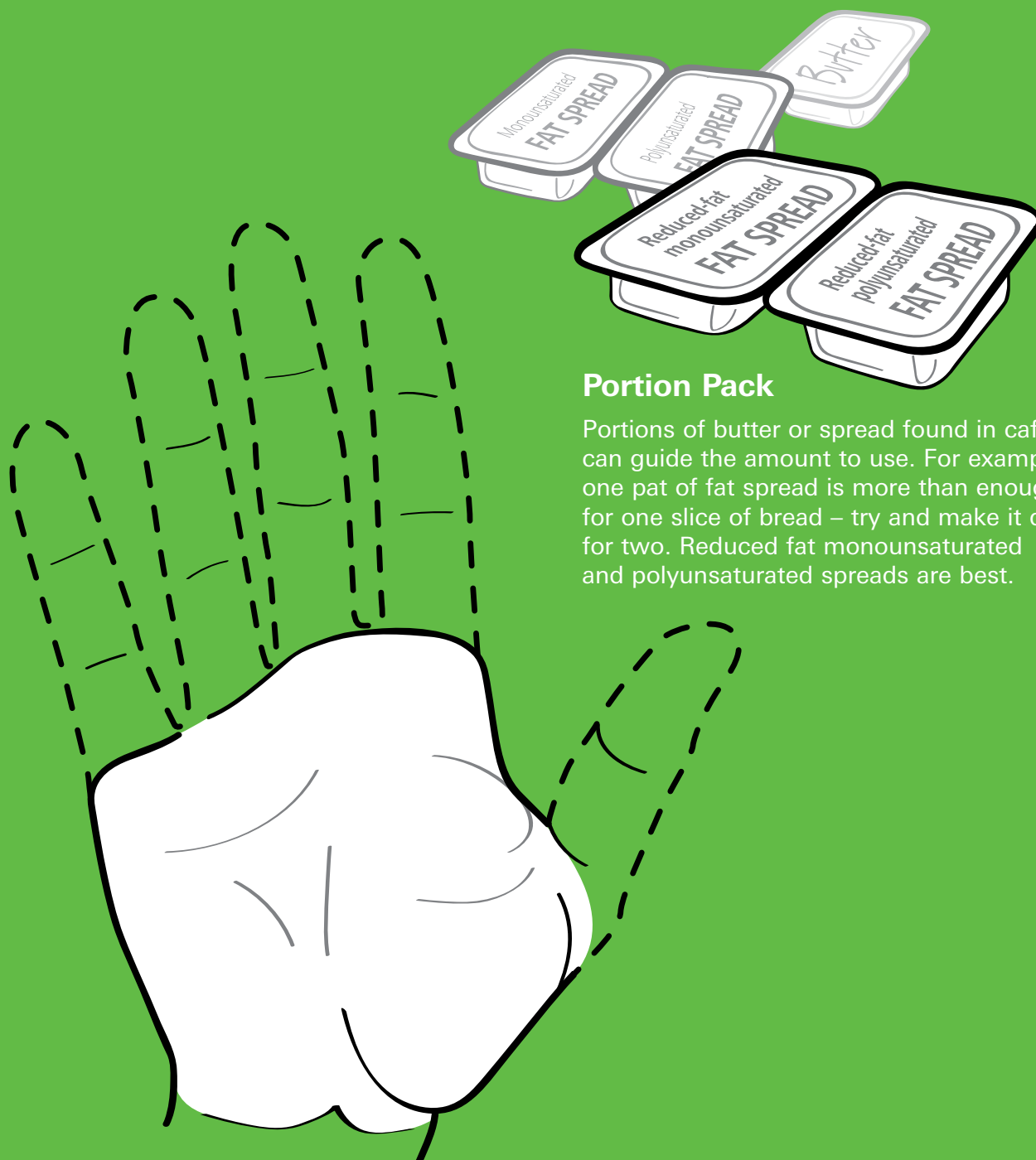


of an adult's Guideline Daily Amount

GDAs present the amount of calories, sugar, fat, saturated fat and salt in the serving of food.

GDAs also show this information as a proportion of an average adult's diet. **BUT it is important to remember that most people need to cut down on the all of the nutrients displayed in GDAs.**

# The Portion Size Reference Guide



## Portion Pack

Portions of butter or spread found in cafés can guide the amount to use. For example, one pat of fat spread is more than enough for one slice of bread – try and make it do for two. Reduced fat monounsaturated and polyunsaturated spreads are best.

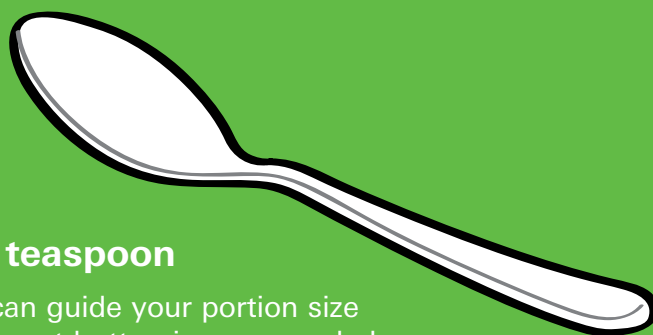
## Palm of the hand

The width and depth of your palm (without fingers and thumb) shows how much meat, poultry or fish you need in a day. Most of this can be used for your main meal, with the remainder for your light meal.



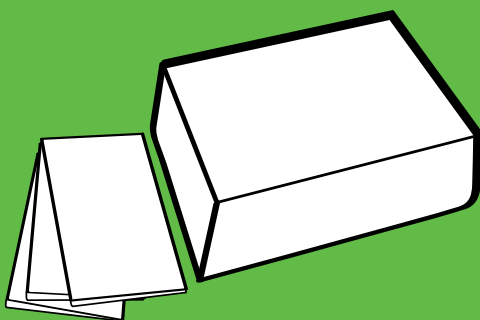
### 200ml Disposable Cup

Use a disposable plastic cup to guide portion sizes of cereals, cooked rice and pasta, and even vegetables, salad and fruit.



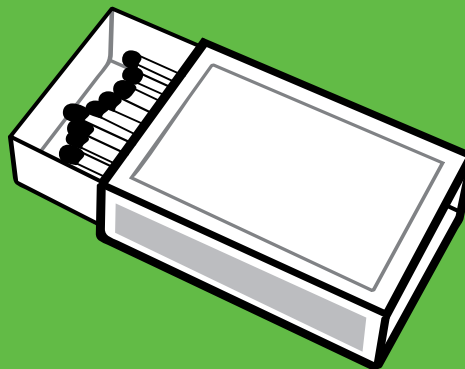
### 5ml teaspoon

This can guide your portion size for peanut butter, jam, marmalade or honey.



### Matchbox Size Piece of Cheese

A matchbox can guide you on a serving. Low-fat options are best.





# A Note About Alcohol

Drinking too much alcohol increases the risk of heart disease, stroke, liver disease and many cancers (mouth, throat, liver and breast).

**Alcohol is not a food BUT contains a lot of calories.**

**Alcohol units are used to guide on safe drinking limits.**

A unit is a rough measure of the drink amount that will provide about 10g alcohol, e.g. ½ pint beer, pub measure of spirits, and a small glass of wine.

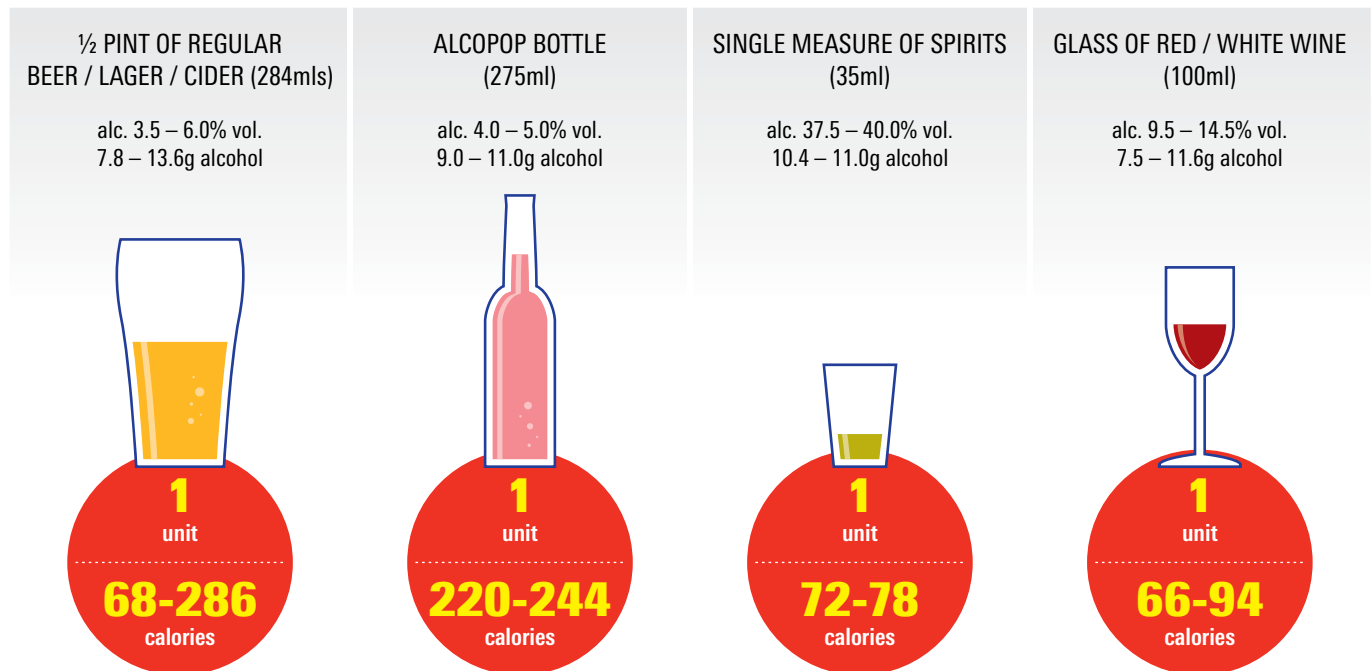
**Weekly alcohol limits** recommended for men and women have been lowered by the Department of Health.

- Men should **not consume more than 17 units** (approximately 170g alcohol) spread over a week.
- Women should **not consume more than 11 units** (approximately 110g alcohol) spread over a week.

For better health, **men and women should aim to consume less than these limits.**

**Never binge and have some alcohol-free days.**

## Alcohol units & calories in standard drinks



### did you know?

Drink sizes used to guide alcohol units are much smaller than typical drink servings. **There are almost 8 glasses in a standard bottle of wine.**

### top tip

**Read labels and choose drinks with the lowest "alc. % vol."** This can have a dramatic effect on the amount of alcohol in a drink (see table above).





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*The information contained in this brochure is based on  
the Food Safety Authority of Ireland 2011 report Scientific  
Recommendations for Healthy Eating Guidance in Ireland*