



Eating well and your heart

If you've been told that your diet or weight could be putting your health at risk, eating the right foods in the right amount is really important.

A healthy diet isn't just about what you eat – it's also about how much you eat. Because no matter how healthily you eat, you can still put on weight if you're eating too much.

Eating a healthy diet has many benefits, including helping you to reach and maintain a healthy weight, managing high blood pressure and cholesterol levels, and reducing the risk of developing Type 2 diabetes. But if your portion sizes are too big, your weight will be harder to manage.

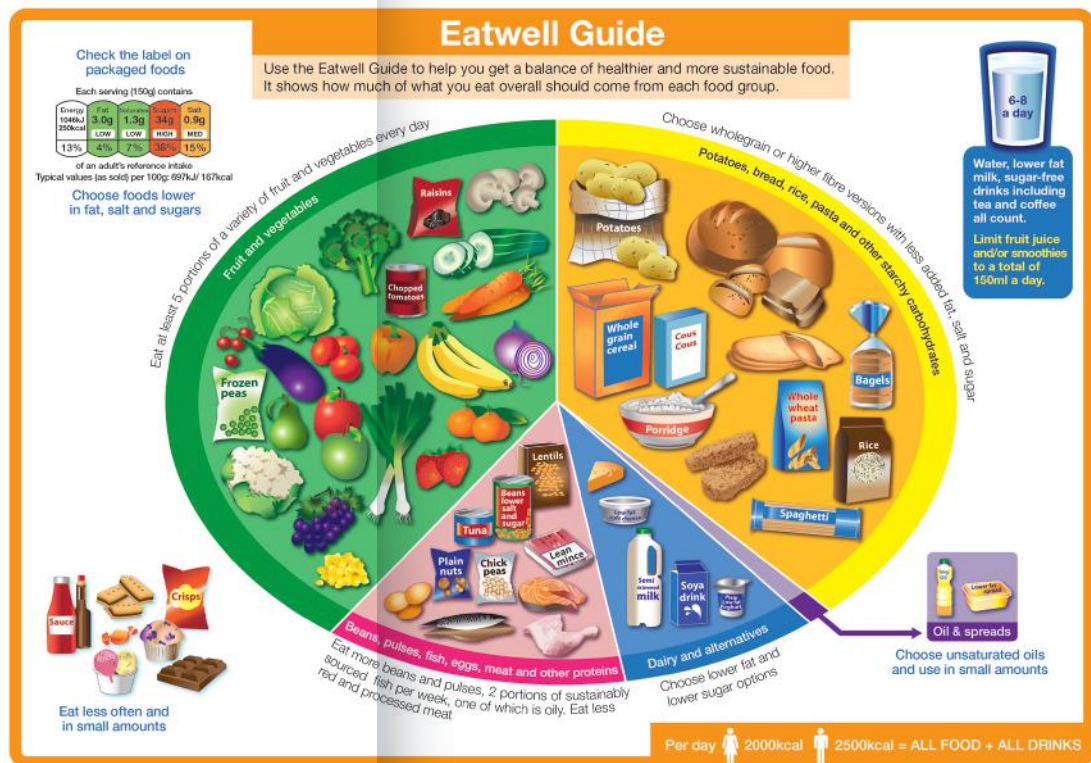
Taking a little more time to think about how much you're eating can help you maintain a healthy weight and reduce your risk of heart and circulatory diseases.

to reduce your risk of heart
and circulatory diseases



The Eatwell Guide

To make sure you get all the nutrients your body needs, you need more of some foods and less of others. The Eatwell Guide shows us how to get the balance right:



Source: Public Health England in association with the Welsh Government, Food Standards Scotland and the Food Standards Agency in Northern Ireland

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Portion control

Understanding what a portion size is and only eating the recommended amount is important. Having good portion control will help you to keep your calories in check.

Measuring portion sizes can be done using household items like spoons and cups, but an easier way is to just use your hand. This works for men, women and even children, who have smaller hands and need smaller portions.

Recommended daily intake

The suggested daily portions for each food group in this booklet are based on a calorie intake for people who want to lose weight:



1500 kcal



1800 kcal

Handy portion sizes

Rice, potatoes, bread & pasta

These are often called ‘starchy carbohydrates’.

Look for wholegrain versions of these foods where possible. They contain more fibre, vitamins and minerals.

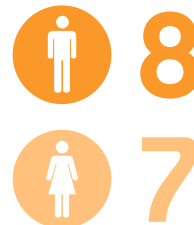
Remember that potatoes, yams and plantains count as carbohydrates, not as one of your five-a-day.



What does one portion look like?



How many portions should I eat in a day?



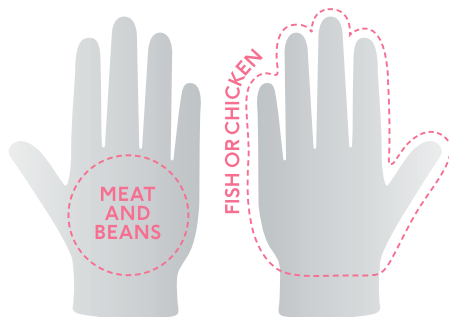
Beans, pulses, eggs, fish, meat & other proteins



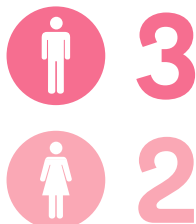
Choose lean cuts of meat and eat less red and processed meat like ham and bacon.

Some good alternatives to meat are beans, peas and lentils as they are lower in fat and higher in fibre.

What does one portion look like?



How many portions should I eat in a day?

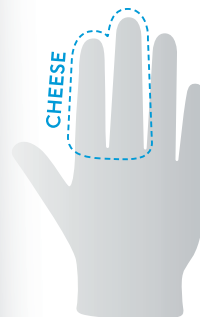


Dairy and alternatives



Look for low-fat versions where you can and choose unsweetened yoghurts and milks. This food group doesn't include butter or margarine – these count as fats.

What does one portion look like?



How many portions should I eat in a day?

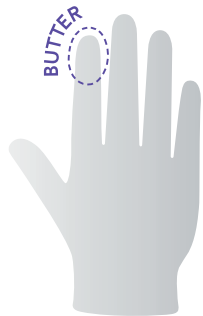


Oils and spreads

Choose unsaturated fats like olive oil or rapeseed oil and their spreads, instead of saturated fats like butter or ghee. Bake, grill or boil your food instead of frying it.



What does one portion look like?



How many portions should I eat in a day?



Fruit and vegetables

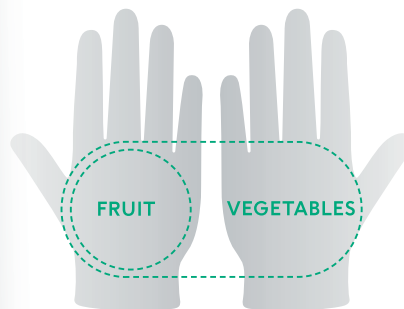
These give you vitamins, minerals and fibre, and they're low in calories.



There are many ways to get your five-a-day – fresh, frozen, dried, juiced or tinned (in juice or water).

Fruit juices and smoothies are high in free sugars, so have no more than one small glass (150ml) a day.

What does one portion look like?



How many portions should I eat in a day?



Tips for portion control

- ✓ Check the recommended portion sizes on labels. Many products are packaged for sharing.
- ✓ Try serving food on smaller plates – it can help you to eat less. The same amount of food looks bigger and more filling on a smaller plate.
- ✓ Put snacks in a bowl and put the rest away so you're less likely to eat them all.
- ✓ Put leftovers in the fridge or freezer straight away so you're not tempted to have seconds.
- ✓ Remember you don't have to finish all the food on your plate – stop when you feel full.
- ✓ Think about your food intake over the day – if you know you're having a big dinner, have a smaller lunch.

Look at labels

If you want to make healthy choices it's important to check food labels. Most products have colour coded nutritional information on the front which tells you at a glance if the food has **low**, **medium**, or **high** amounts of fats, saturated fats, sugars and salt. Choose **greens** as often as you can.

	FAT	SUGARS	SATURATES	SALTS
LOW Healthier choice	3g or less	5g or less	1.5g or less	0.3g or less
MED OK most of the time	3.1g to 17.5g	5.1g to 22.5g	1.6g to 5g	0.3g to 1.5g
HIGH Just occasionally	More than 17.5g	More than 22.5g	More than 5g	More than 1.5g

All measures per 100g



Understanding the label

Fat and saturates

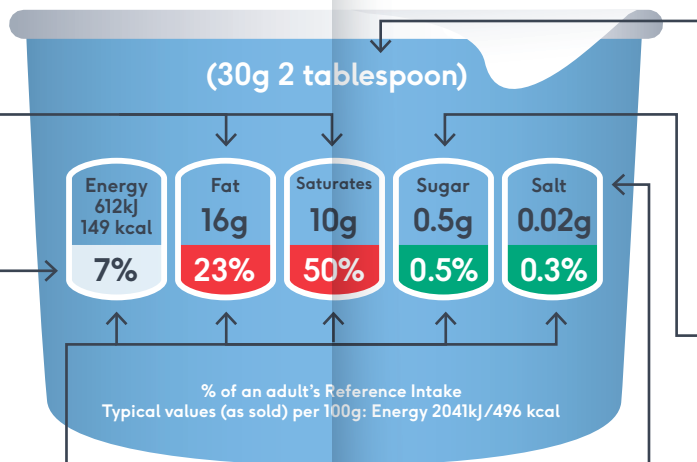
Fat tells you how much total fat is in the food. 'Saturates' is another word for saturated fat.

Energy

The terms kJ (kilojoules) and kcal (kilocalories) tell you how much energy is in a food product.

Reference Intake (RI)

These are the recommended maximum daily amounts of energy and nutrients you need for a healthy balanced diet. % RI tells you how much of the reference intake the stated portion size provides.



Portion size

This is often written in brackets at the top of the food label. It is the manufacturer's recommendation for one portion of the product. The %RI is worked out based on this portion size.

Sugars

This is how much total sugar is in a food, both natural and added.

Salt

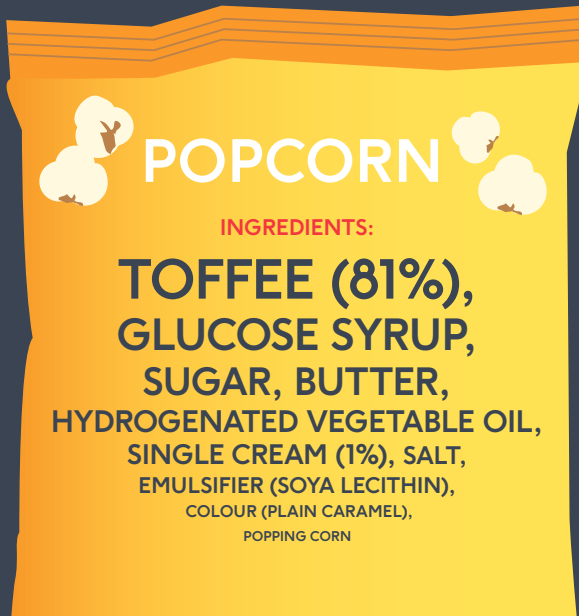
This is how much salt is in a product.

Portion sizes given on a pack may be less than you'd usually eat. If you have more than the portion you end up consuming more calories, fat, saturated fat, salt or sugar than you realise.

Ingredients lists

All packaged foods will have a list of the ingredients in the food on the packet.

The ingredients list will let you know if there is added salt and sugar in the food you're buying. If an ingredient is high up on the list, it means there's a lot of it in the food. If it's near the bottom of the list, it means there's not much in there.



Nutrition claims

Light/lite or reduced: Means the food must be at least 30% lower in a particular value, such as calories or fat, than the standard product. Do compare products, as some foods that claim to be light on fat may have more calories than you think.

Low-fat, low-sugar and low-salt: Means that that food genuinely has low levels of these things, and will be colour coded **green**. You should still check the label though – low-fat foods can still be high in sugar.

No added sugar: Means the food hasn't had sugar added to it as an ingredient. It might still taste sweet if it contains fruit or the sugar has been replaced with an artificial sweetener.

Unsweetened: Means no sugar or sweetener has been added to the food. But it still may contain sugar from milk or fruit.



Steve, age 69

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Heart transplants. Clot busting drugs. Pacemakers. Breakthroughs born from visionary medical research. Research you fund with your donations.

Heart and circulatory diseases kill 1 in 4 people in the UK. They cause heartbreak on every street. But if research can invent machines to restart hearts, fix arteries in newborn babies, build tiny devices to correct heartbeats, and give someone a heart they weren't born with – imagine what's next.

We fund research into all heart and circulatory diseases and their risk factors. Heart attacks, heart failure, stroke, vascular dementia, diabetes and many more. All connected, all under our microscope. Our research is the promise of future prevention, cures and treatments.

The promise to protect the people we love. Our children. Our parents. Our brothers. Our sisters. Our grandparents. Our closest friends.

You and the British Heart Foundation. Together, we will beat heartbreak forever.

Beat heartbreak forever.

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