

NUTRITION: QUICK GUIDE

Carbohydrates

- For children and young people, approx. 50% of daily intake should come from a mixture of carbohydrate sources.
- Carbs should be included in every main meal and every snack
- More exercise or activity = more carbohydrates required!

Why?

Carbs are our primary, most efficient source of energy! our body converts carbs into glucose for our brain, cells & muscles.

So, not enough carbs means we have to use other things for energy, which causes problems.

Carbs support our bodies to regulate sleep, boost mood, promote brain and body function!

Examples

Bread, potatoes, rice, pasta, pulses, legumes, wholegrains, yoghurt, milk etc.



Protein

- We should have 3 portions of protein per day with main meals.
- Protein enriched foods and supplements are not needed!
- Excessive protein can hinder mineral absorption.

Why?

Proteins are essential for building muscles and overall growth and repair (super important for developing teens!). They also protect against infections, and support hormonal function.

Examples

Animal proteins e.g. poultry, red meat, fish, eggs, dairy.

Vegetable proteins e.g. avocados, broccoli, legumes, beans, seeds, grains, tofu, chickpeas, nuts etc.



Fats & Oils



- 35% of our total calorie intake should be made up of fats.
- Fats should be included in meals throughout the day.
- Portions can be smaller than carbs/proteins, but are equally essential!

Why?

Many vitamins can only be absorbed with enough fats in our diet. Low fat intake / body fat significantly affects female reproductive health and menstruation.

Cushions vital organs, supports temperature control and promotes hair and skin health, bowel regulation, mental health and concentration.

Examples

Olive oil, avocados, nuts, nut butters, seeds, oily fish, some dairy products.

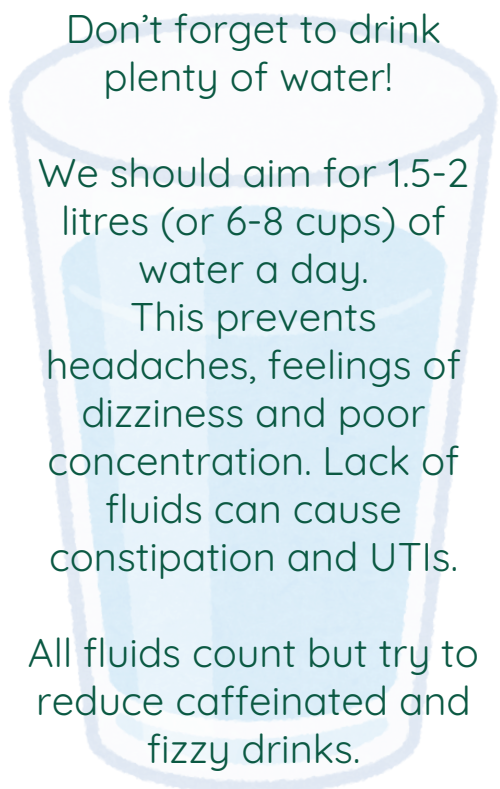
Fluids

Don't forget to drink plenty of water!

We should aim for 1.5-2 litres (or 6-8 cups) of water a day.

This prevents headaches, feelings of dizziness and poor concentration. Lack of fluids can cause constipation and UTIs.

All fluids count but try to reduce caffeinated and fizzy drinks.



Balance is key!

Remember the 80:20 rule:

80% nutritious foods

→ Complex carbs, protein/dairy, fats, fruit & veg

20% fun foods

→ Cakes, biscuits, cookies, crisps, chocolate etc.

Fun foods are equally important as these are big part of community, culture, social eating and enjoyment!

They are also important for developing a healthy relationship with food!



Micronutrients

- There are also 13 essential **vitamins** and 13 essential **minerals** we need.
- A **varied** and **balanced** diet with the **right proportions of foods** from the **main food groups**, should provide enough vitamins and minerals.
- The only necessary supplement for a well nourished body is **Vitamin D**. We should all take a 10ug microgram supplement during winter months (Oct - April).
- **Calcium** and **Iron** are the main micronutrients to be mindful of, as people can easily be deficient in these.

Calcium



Examples



- Crucial for strengthening bones and teeth, muscle contraction, blood clotting and regulating metabolism
 - Young people need more than adults!
 - Calcium should be included in meals/snacks throughout the day
 - Avoid low fat/skimmed/ light products.
- Dried fruit/nuts
 - Milk/milk products
 - Fish
 - Cereal/cereal products
 - Soya beans (tofu)
 - Pulses

Iron

Examples



- Supports energy levels and promotes healthy growth.
 - Women/young girls have higher requirements than males.
- Red meat (beef, lamb, pork)
 - Fortified breakfast cereals
 - Dark green leafy vegetables (cabbage, spinach, broccoli)



A Word of Warning!

Only 2.1% of nutrition content on TikTok is accurate!

New research looked at 67,000 TikTok videos and analysed them against regulated public health and nutrition guidelines. They found that only 1400 videos (2.1%) were accurate.

We need to be mindful of what both we and our young people are consuming online!

Fruit & Veg

- Aim to eat the rainbow!
- Different coloured fruits and veg contain different micronutrients.
- There is no single 'superfood' - the key is balance!
- Fruit and veg should always accompany a meal and not be the main feature.



→ Aim for 2 servings of fruit and 5 servings of veg daily.

Resources

- [Home | British Dietetic Association \(BDA\)](#).
- Calcium BDA - [Calcium | British Dietetic Association \(BDA\)](#).
- Iron BDA - [Iron | British Dietetic Association \(BDA\)](#).
- Hydration BDA - [The importance of hydration | British Dietetic Association \(BDA\)](#).
- Facts on Fats CCI - [Eating Disorders Information Sheet - The Facts on Fat \(health.wa.gov.au\)](#).
- Carbohydrates - [Eating Disorders Information Sheet - Carbohydrates \(Myths and Facts\) \(health.wa.gov.au\)](#).
- National Centre for Eating Disorders – Nutritional Interventions for Eating Disorders (Jane Nodder)

