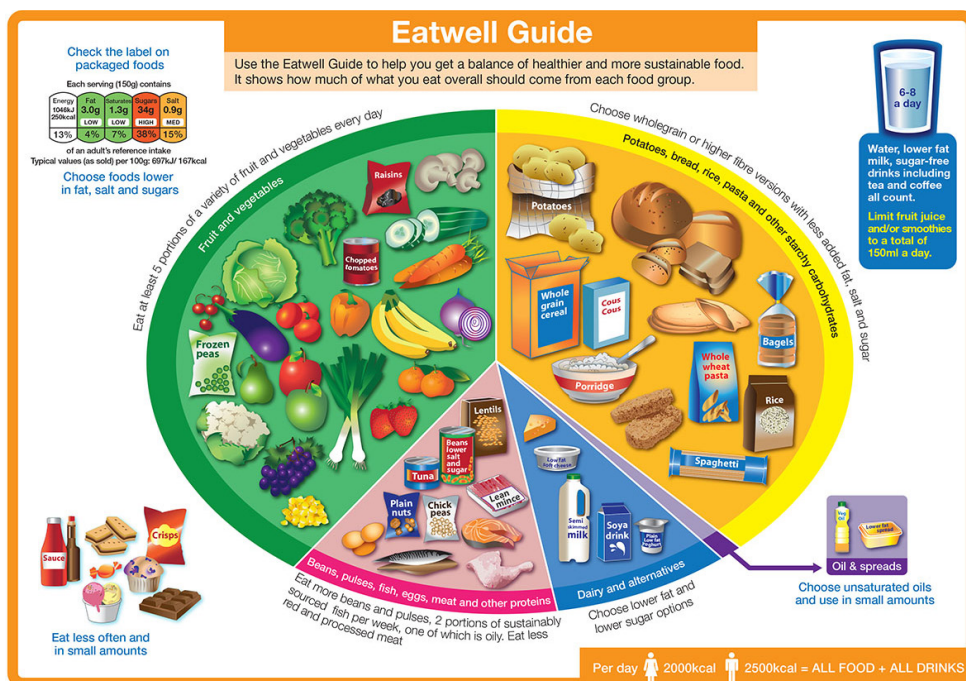


# Healthy eating for young children further information

## What does a healthy diet look like?



The Eatwell Guide shows the different types of foods and drinks we should consume - and in what proportions - to have a healthy, balanced diet. It applies to most people regardless of weight, dietary restrictions/preferences or ethnic origin. It does not apply to children under 2 because they have different nutritional needs. Between the ages of 2 and 5, children should gradually move to eating the same foods as the rest of the family, as shown on the Eatwell guide.

A healthy balanced diet for children under five should be based on the following food groups:

- Eat at least 5 portions of a variety of fruit and vegetables every day
- Base meals on potatoes, bread, rice, pasta or other starchy carbohydrates; choosing wholegrain versions where possible
- Have some dairy or dairy alternatives (such as soya drinks); choosing lower fat and lower sugar options
- Eat some beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat and other proteins (including 2 portions of fish every week, one of which should be oily)
- Choose unsaturated oils and spreads and eat in small amounts
- Drink 6-8 cups/glasses of fluid a day

Foods high in fat, salt or sugar are not needed as part of a healthy, balanced diet. If included, children should have them less than once a day and only in small amounts.

Provide a variety of different foods from each of the groups so your child will get the wide range of nutrients needed to stay healthy and function properly.



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Food groups	Examples of food included	Main nutrients provided	How much?
<b>Fruit and vegetables</b>	<p>Fresh, frozen, canned, dried (max 30g per day) and juiced fruit (max 150ml per day) and vegetables. Fruit and vegetables can be eaten raw or cooked.</p> <p>Potatoes do not count as they are considered a starchy carbohydrate food.</p>	<p>Fruit and vegetables are particularly important for health as they are rich in vitamins, minerals and fibre, such as carotenes (a form of vitamin A), vitamin C, zinc and iron.</p>	<p><b>Five portions</b></p> <p>We all should eat more fruit and vegetables, at least five portions of a variety of fruit and vegetables each day.</p> <p>Provide at least one portion as part of meal (breakfast, lunch and dinner) and with some snacks each day. Provide a range of fruit and vegetables.</p> <p>A portion of dried fruit is only 15-30g and can only count as portion. A portion of fruit juice or smoothie is 150ml and also only counts as one portion. Fruit juice, smoothies and dried fruit should only form part of a meal and not be given in between meals or as part of a snack as it is high in sugar. Dilute fruit juice and smoothies with water.</p>
<b>Starchy foods</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Bread, such as soda bread, rye bread, pitta, flour tortilla, baguettes, chapatti, bagels</li> <li>● Grains, such as rice, millet, quinoa, barley, spelt</li> <li>● Starchy vegetables such as potatoes, yams, plantains</li> <li>● Maize, cornmeal and polenta</li> <li>● Wheat, bulgur, couscous, semolina</li> <li>● Pasta and noodles</li> <li>● Breakfast cereals, oats</li> </ul>	<p>Starchy foods are good sources of energy, and also contain some protein, fibre, vitamins and minerals, such as B vitamins, calcium and iron.</p>	<p><b>Four portions</b></p> <p>Base meals (breakfast, lunch and dinner) on starchy foods and provide a starchy food as part of at least one snack each day.</p> <p>Wholegrain breads and cereals are high in fibre and are more nutritious than those made with white flour, and are more filling: choose wholegrain varieties, or keep the skins on potatoes for more fibre, vitamins and minerals.</p> <p>Try to avoid adding too much fat (such as oil or butter with potatoes) or sauces and spreads (creamy pasta, butter on bread) as these contain lots of calories.</p>

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Food groups	Examples of food included	Main nutrients provided	How much?
<b>Dairy and dairy alternatives</b>	<p>Milk, cheese, yoghurt, fromage frais, quark, cream cheese, custard. This also includes non-dairy alternatives such as unsweetened soya milk enriched with calcium.</p> <p>Butters and creams are not included in this group as they are high in saturated fat and so they fit into the 'foods to eat less often and in small amounts' section.</p>	<p>Milk and dairy provide protein, carbohydrates and fat for energy and growth.</p> <p>They also contain vitamins and minerals such as calcium for strong bones and teeth.</p>	<p><b>Three portions</b> Provide as part of meals, snacks and drinks.</p> <p>Flavoured yoghurts and fromage frais can be high in sugar so use plain varieties and add fruit.</p> <p>Unsweetened calcium enriched dairy alternatives can be used as an ingredient for children under one and as a main drink for children over one.</p> <p>Avoid skimmed milk and skimmed milk products, as these are low in fat and do not provide enough energy for children under five. Full fat milk should be given to children aged one to two as their main drink to make sure they get enough energy and nutrients. Children over the age of two can have semi-skimmed milk if they are growing well and eating a healthy, balanced diet.</p>
<b>Beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat and other proteins</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Beans and other pulses, including lentils, chickpeas, baked beans, kidney beans, butter beans</li> <li>● White fish (fresh, frozen or canned), including haddock, plaice, pollock, coley, cod, canned tuna</li> <li>● Oily fish (fresh, frozen or canned) including mackerel, sardines, fresh tuna, salmon</li> <li>● Shellfish (fresh, frozen or canned) including prawns, mussels, crab, squid, oysters</li> <li>● Eggs</li> <li>● Meat, poultry and game, including lamb, beef, pork, chicken</li> <li>● Nuts</li> <li>● Vegetarian meat alternatives such as tofu, Quorn, soya mince</li> </ul>	<p>Meat, fish, egg, dried peas, lentils and nuts provide protein and minerals such as iron and zinc.</p> <p>Red meat is a particularly good source of iron.</p> <p>Oily fish is rich in Omega 3, which helps development of the nervous system.</p>	<p><b>Two portions</b> Provide a portion as part of lunch and dinner.</p> <p>Provide two to three portions a day for vegetarian children.</p> <p>Provide a variety of foods from this group across the week.</p> <p>Provide two portions of fish a week, including a portion of oily fish. A portion is equivalent to 40g.</p> <p>Do not give more than 40g of red or processed meats to your child per day.</p>

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Food groups	Examples of food included	Main nutrients provided	How much?
<b>Oils and spreads</b>	Unsaturated oils including vegetable oil, rapeseed oil, olive oil. Soft spreads made from unsaturated oils. Butters are not included as these are high in saturated fat and are included in the 'foods to eat less often and in small amounts' section.	<p>Fat is a concentrated form of energy (calories). Some fat in the diet is important to make sure that young children get all the energy they need to grow and be active. Fats are high in vitamins A, D and E which are important for growth, a healthy immune system, and healthy bones and teeth.</p> <p>Essential fatty acids, including omega 3 found in oily fish, are needed for the development of our brain and other tissues.</p>	Use these products sparingly and less often as they are high in fat.
<b>Foods to eat less often and in small amounts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cakes and biscuits</li> <li>• Chocolate</li> <li>• Sweets</li> <li>• Puddings and desserts</li> <li>• Pastries</li> <li>• Ice-cream</li> <li>• Jam and honey</li> <li>• Crisps</li> <li>• Sauces</li> <li>• Butter and cream</li> <li>• Mayonnaise</li> </ul>	Saturated fat, sugar and salt.	<p>These foods are not required as part of a healthy, balanced diet. If included, they should only be consumed very occasionally and in small amounts. In general, children should cut down the amount of these foods they eat.</p> <p>Use the Change4Life Smart Sugar app to see how much sugar is in foods and drinks. The app can be downloaded for free from the App store or Google Play Store.</p>