



## See how easy it is:

Meal	Eating suggestion	No.
<i>Breakfast</i>	Breakfast cereal with a couple of spoonfuls of dried apricots or other dried fruit added and semi or skimmed milk.	1
	A glass of orange juice.	1
<i>Lunch</i>	A wholemeal sandwich of your choice with a grated carrot, a sliced tomato or a handful of salad.	1
	A smoothie drink made from fresh fruit and low fat yoghurt or milk.	1
<i>Snack</i>	An apple or a banana	1
<i>Main meal</i>	A couple of broccoli florets and a spoonful of carrots as part of your meal.	2
	A handful of strawberries with low fat yoghurt or ice cream.	1
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>8</b>

## Go the whole way

When there is a choice of white or wholemeal pasta, bread, flour or cereals go for wholemeal. Wholegrain cereals provide important vitamins, minerals and dietary fibre. The difference is that the wholegrain version has not been processed so much and so retains more goodness as well as fibre.

## Eat less sugar

Eat fewer cakes, biscuits, chocolate and sweets. Drink sugar free alternatives and try artificial sweetener in hot drinks. Don't add extra sugar to food such as breakfast cereal, fruit and porridge.

## Reducing fat

Most of us eat too much fatty food. There are two main types of fat in food, saturated and unsaturated. All are high in calories.

**Saturated fat:** butter, cheese, meat, meat products, pastry.

### Unsaturated fat:

- **Mono-unsaturated fats:** olive oil, rapeseed oil, peanut oil, margarine high in mono-unsaturates, avocados, nuts.
- **Poly-unsaturated fat:** sunflower oil, corn oil, soya oil, reduced fat spreads high in poly-unsaturates.
- **Omega-3:** oily fish, seafood such as clams and prawns, flaxseed oil and spinach.

## Checking labels

Labels may list 'fat content and /or of which saturates per 100g.'

### Total fat and saturated fat levels

3g is a low fat content.

20g is a high fat content.

1g is a low saturated fat content.

5g is a high saturated fat content.

### Lowering cholesterol

If you have a high cholesterol level you will have been advised to reduce the amount of saturated fat in your diet. Reducing saturated fat reduces the amount of LDL or 'bad' cholesterol in our blood stream. This is what contributes to an increased risk of heart disease and stroke.

(Note: eggs, liver and shellfish although rich in cholesterol have only a small effect on blood cholesterol levels.)

For more information ask for the CHSS Cholesterol Factsheet.

### How to reduce saturated fat

The aim is to reduce saturated fat in the diet and replace it with unsaturated fat such as oils and fish.

Saturated fat is found in things like red meat, and full fat dairy products such as butter and cream. It is also used a lot in processed foods, ready meals and snacks that have been fried.

- Choose leaner choices of meat such as chicken and turkey instead of beef and ham.
- Use sunflower or olive oil for cooking and for dressings.
- Use oil based or low fat spreads instead of butter.
- Avoid shortening and lard.
- Avoid hydrogenated fat as this is polyunsaturated oils that have been altered in processing to make it solid and saturated. Found in pastries, convenience foods, fried foods, crackers, biscuits and snacks.
- Grill, steam or bake rather than fry.
- Trim all visible fat before cooking.
- Drain fat that comes out of food during cooking on kitchen paper.
- Avoid meat products such as pies, pasties, sausage rolls hamburgers and sausages.
- Choose low fat varieties of yoghurts, milk and cheese.
- Increase the healthy oil we need found in oily fish such as salmon, mackerel and herring.
- Replace snacks such as crisps, cakes and biscuits with fruit or low fat alternatives.
- Check labels for hidden fats in processed and ready made meals.



## **Which foods are the highest salt containing foods?**

The highest salt containing foods are processed foods like ready meals, baked beans, soups, processed meat such as ham and bacon, smoked foods, restaurant and takeaway food, some cereals and even bread. It is difficult to avoid eating some of these foods but look for low salt alternatives instead, or eat fresh food which has no added salt.

## **How to reduce salt in your diet**

- Don't add salt at the table or in cooking. Check with your doctor before you use low salt alternatives, as they usually contain potassium, which can also be harmful.
- Use other flavourings such as herbs and spices, lemon and garlic to add interest to your food.
- Avoid processed foods, which contain more than three quarters of the salt hidden in our diet. This includes ready meals, fast foods or convenience foods and many canned foods.
- Avoid bacon, sausages, ham, cheese, pizzas, sachet soups and stock cubes.
- Avoid salted crisps, nuts, crackers or other salty snacks especially when socialising as they will also make you thirsty and encourage you to drink more alcohol.
- Look for products that declare themselves low salt or reduced salt.
- Be aware of other foods that **can** have high salt content such as cereals, mineral water and bread. Even some low fat yogurts and ice-cream can contain hidden salt. Check the labels!

The organisation CASH Consensus Action on Salt and Health has lists of food groups comparing their sodium content.

## **Drink less alcohol**

As a guide, an alcohol intake of up to 3 units a day for men and 2 units a day for women with some alcohol free days is acceptable for good health. Count one unit as a small glass of wine, one measure of spirit or half a pint of beer or lager.

FACTSHEET

FACTSHEET

FACTSHEET

