

The Healthy Eating Pyramid  
or,  
*“What to eat, and how much.”*



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## The Healthy Eating Pyramid.

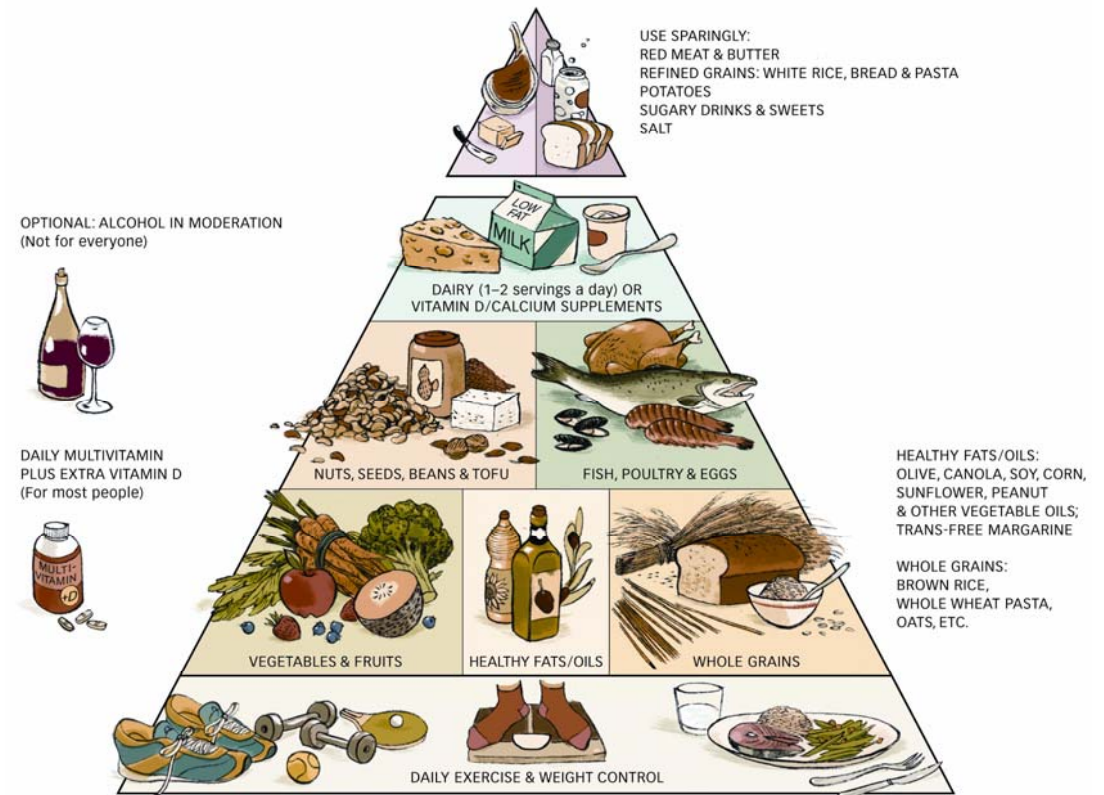
The Healthy Eating Pyramid is a guide to what food/drink we should have throughout a week.

It is not a weight loss diet, or bulking up diet, or one that you “go on” for a few weeks before your holidays.

Instead, it is a healthy, balanced *lifelong* way of eating/drinking, suitable for the vast majority of the population.

Use the shape of the pyramid as a guide to *what* you should eat, and *how much*. Things at the bottom of the Pyramid should be consumed in much higher quantities and frequencies than those at the top of the Pyramid.

For most people, simply eating/drinking things in these *proportions* will result in a healthy bodyweight.



## ***Daily Exercise and Weight Control.***

As the title suggests, this should be carried out *EVERY* day. Exercise can be classed as structured fitness classes or sports training sessions, or physical activities throughout the day. These include:

- Manual labour
- Physical daily chores
- Walking the dog
- Playing with the kids
- Walking/cycling to and from work/shops
- Simply avoiding the easy option for each situation.

Weight control means being *aware of the impact* that our food/drink have on our health, fitness and weight.

In other words, eating too much bad food makes us fat and unhealthy.



## ***Vegetables and Fruit.***

We should all aim to consume a bright, multicoloured mixture of veg *EVERY* meal.

They should certainly be the *bulk* of your main daily meal. This does not mean a couple of slices of tomato and cucumber pushed around the side of your plate!

Don't think of your meal as "*something with vegetables*", instead think of it as "*vegetables with something*".

Aim to have some fruit *EVERY* day also. You could have them as snacks between meals to keep hunger at bay.

Try having a mixture of fruit for your pudding instead of cake or chocolate.

Examples of fruit include bananas, watermelons, strawberries, mango, oranges, apples, pineapple, grapes, cherries, lemons.

Examples of veg include carrots, cabbage, lettuce, cauliflower, onions, courgette, sweet potato, celery, spinach.



## Healthy fats and oils.

"Fats" are not bad for you, and you should not avoid eating "fats". Eating "low fat chocolate" or "low fat ice cream" is *not* a healthy option to help you lose weight either. But some fats are better than others.

- Unsaturated fats - These are the "good" fats. These usually come from plant or fish sources and are liquid at room temperature. Examples include olive oil, vegetable oil, nut/seed oil and oily fish. Whenever possible, choose unsaturated fats over other kinds, like...
- Saturated fats - These are the "bad" fats. These come from animal sources and are usually solid at room temperature. Examples include meat products like sausages/pies, cakes and biscuits. Whenever possible, *cut down* on these saturated fats.
- Trans fats - These are the "very bad" fats and are usually man-made. They are usually hidden away in the small print of many *processed* foods. Try to *eliminate* these trans-fats.



## ***Whole Grains.***

These are literally the whole of the grain of corn/wheat etc. By including the whole of the grain, you get all the important vitamins, minerals and fibre. Fibre is important because not only does it essentially contain no calories at all, but it causes people to eat less and feel fuller for longer.

Whenever possible, choose whole grain, or whole wheat or whole meal foods over their much more processed and refined "white" versions.

Examples include wholemeal bread, wholemeal pasta, brown rice, oats.



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## ***Nuts, seeds, beans and tofu.***

These are natural foods rich in fibre, protein and healthy fats. They also contain a large mixture of vitamins and minerals essential to a healthy body. They can be added to meals to add texture and taste, or eaten as snacks between meals. Try to incorporate a good mixture of them, as they will have different tastes and nutritional strengths and weaknesses.

Examples include brazil nuts, cashew nuts, chestnut, walnut, pumpkin seeds, sesame seeds, sunflower seeds, flax seeds, fava beans, chickpeas, kidney beans, lentils.



## ***Fish, poultry and eggs.***

Excellent, healthy sources of top quality protein for a strong and injury resistant body. Always choose the more "natural" form of the food. For example:

Choose a fish fresh from the market, not a fish finger.

Choose a free range chicken straight from the butchers, not chicken McNuggets.

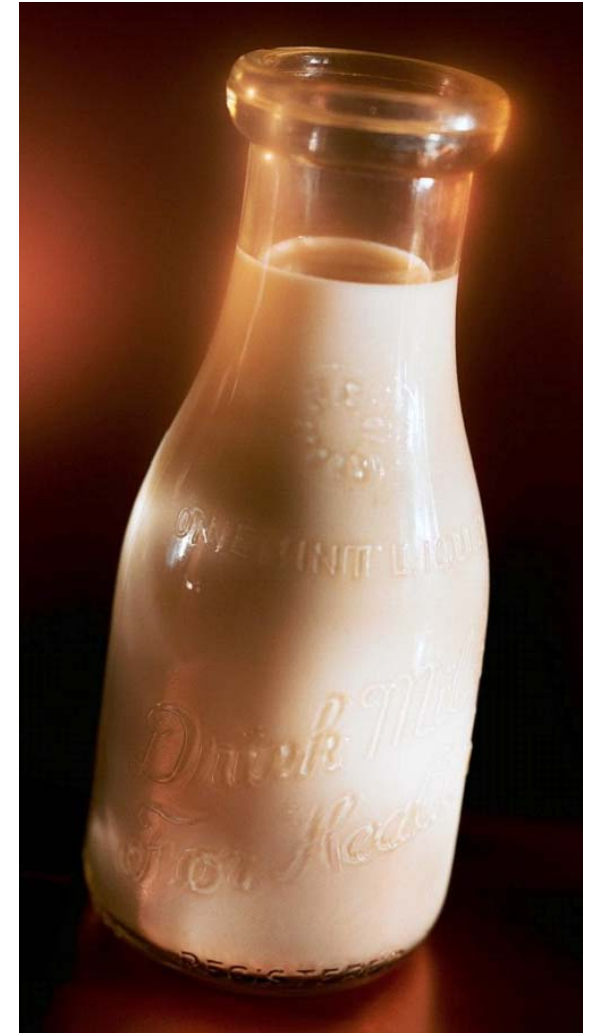
Choose free range boiled eggs, not the eggs you put in cakes.



## ***Dairy.***

Good, natural, healthy foods with plenty of vitamins and minerals. But they do tend to be high in calories and high in saturated (bad) fats. So go easy on them and limit your intake.

Examples include semi skimmed milk, cheeses, natural yogurts.



## **Others.**

These should be treated as "treats" and as such consumed sparingly. Only have small amounts and don't have them often (only about once a week).

Red meat and butter - red meat tend to come from 4 legged mammals such as pigs, cows and sheep. These are high in saturated (bad) fats. Examples include burgers, sausages, mincemeat.



Refined grains - the opposite of whole grains. These have been heavily ground, purified and bleached. This process removes most of the fibre, vitamins, minerals and goodness, leaving nothing but empty calories.

Examples include white bread, white pasta, white rice.

Potatoes/potato products - While there is nothing wrong with a simple baked potato, it is high in calories. And most of the foods it is turned into (chips, crisps etc) is simply junk food.

Sugary drinks, sweets and chocolate - These have no nutritional value at all. They do not fill you up, but they just pile on the calories and add to tooth decay.



Salt - we only need very small amounts of salt to live and we easily get enough from the foods we eat. And most man made processed foods have large amounts of salt added at the factory, so we certainly don't need to add any more at the dinner table.



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