

Some tips on how to increase fruit and vegetables in your diet

- Try some different types which you have not tried before. The variety of tastes and textures may be surprising. Juices, frozen, canned and dried varieties all count.
- Try adding chopped bananas, apples, or other fruits to breakfast cereals.
- Aim to include at least two different vegetables with most meals. Do not over-boil vegetables. Steaming, stir-frying, or lightly boiling are best to retain the nutrients.
- Always offer fruit or fruit juice to accompany meals.
- How about cherry tomatoes, carrot sticks, dried apricots, or other fruits as part of packed lunches? A banana sandwich is another idea for lunch.
- Fruit is great for snacks. Encourage children to snack with fruit rather than sweets.

Further Help and Information

Heart UK

7 North Road
Maidenhead
Berkshire SL6 1PE
HELPLINE: 0845 450 5988
WEB: www.heartuk.org.uk

British Heart Foundation

14 Fitzhardinge Street
London W1H 6DH
HEART INFORMATION LINE: 08450 70 80 70
WEB: www.bhf.org.uk

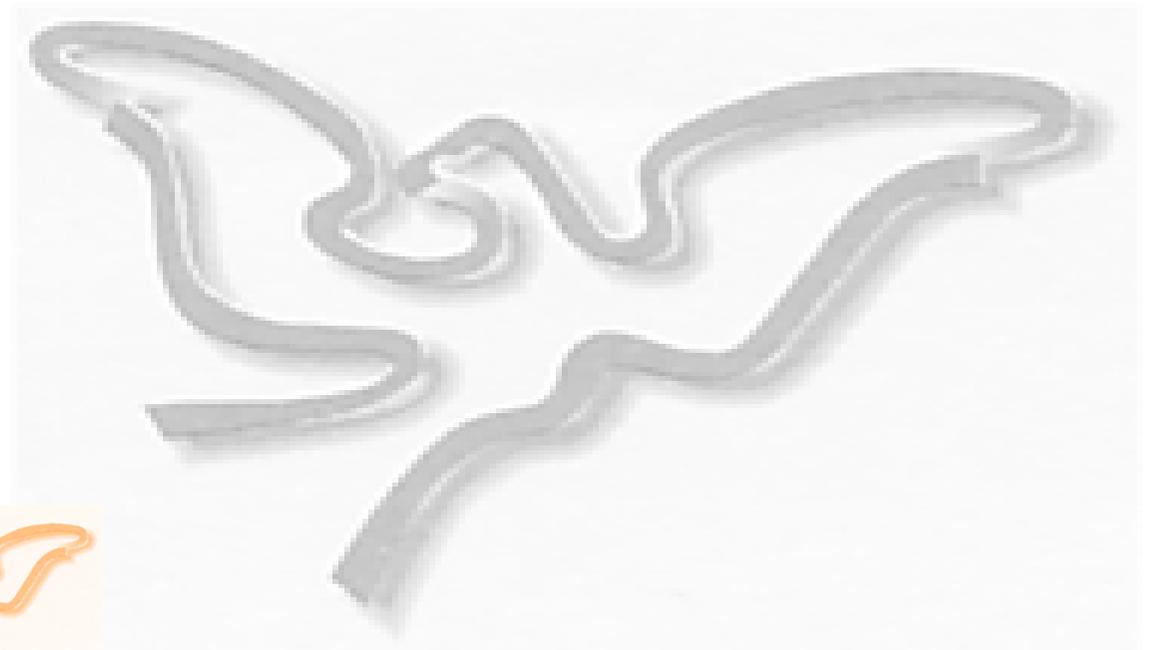
British Nutrition Foundation

WEB: www.nutrition.org.uk
Their website provides healthy eating information



CUMBERLAND HOUSE

PRIMARY HEALTH CARE CENTRE



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Healthy Eating

Can diet lower my cholesterol level?

Changing from an unhealthy diet to a healthy diet can reduce a cholesterol level. However, dietary changes alone rarely lower a cholesterol level enough to change a person's risk of cardiovascular disease from a high risk category to a lower risk. However, any extra reduction in cholesterol due to a diet will help. A healthy diet has other benefits too, apart from reducing the level of cholesterol.

Briefly, a healthy diet means: -

- AT LEAST five portions, and ideally 7-9 portions of a variety of fruit and vegetables per day.
- THE BULK OF MOST MEALS should be starch-based foods (such as cereals, wholegrain bread, potatoes, rice, pasta) plus fruit and vegetables.
- NOT MUCH fatty food such as fatty meats, cheeses, full cream milk, fried food, butter etc. Use low fat, mono, or polyunsaturated spreads.
- INCLUDE 2-3 portions of fish per week. At least one of which should be 'oily'.
- LIMIT SALT to no more than 6g a day (and less for children).
- If you eat meat it is best to eat lean meat, or poultry such as chicken.
- If you do fry, choose a vegetable oil such as sunflower, rapeseed or olive oil.

In addition, foods that contain plant sterols or stanols can reduce blood cholesterol level. Eg, a daily dose of about 2g of plant sterols or stanols can reduce LDL cholesterol by about 10%. Plant sterols and stanols are available in margarine spreads, yoghurts, milk drinks and other foods sold in stores. Food products containing plant sterols and stanols are generally designed to provide about one third of the recommended daily dose per meal. However, always read the manufacturer's advice about portion sizes.

Recommendations from the Food Standards Agency include the following:

- You should not eat more than 3g per day of plant sterols and stanols.
- Pregnant women, breast-feeding women and children under the age of 5 years should not eat foods with added plant sterols or stanols.
- Foods with added plant sterols or stanols should be eaten as part of a balanced diet.

What are the health benefits if I eat enough fruit and vegetables?

- You have a lower chance of developing cardiovascular diseases due to atheroma (hardening of the arteries). For example, heart disease, peripheral vascular disease, or a stroke.
- You have a lower chance of developing some cancers such as bowel and lung cancer.
- Fruit and vegetables also:
 - Contain lots of fibre which help to keep your bowels healthy. Problems such as constipation and diverticular disease are less likely to develop.
 - Contain plenty of vitamins and minerals, which are needed to keep you healthy.
 - Are naturally low in fat.
 - Are filling but are low in calories. So are ideal to keep your weight in control.

One study showed that, for people of the same age, there were about a quarter less deaths in those who ate lots of fruit and vegetables compared to those who did not. This was mainly due to a reduction from three common causes of death in the UK—heart disease, stroke and cancer.

How do fruit and veg prevent illness?

They are rich in vitamins and minerals which keep the body healthy. They also contain chemicals called 'anti-oxidants', such as carotene, which are thought to protect against damaging chemicals that get into the body. However, the exact way in which they prevent illness is not fully understood.

One portion of fruit or vegetables is roughly equivalent to:

- One large fruit such as an apple, pear, banana, orange, or a slice of melon, or
- Two smaller fruits such as plums, kiwis, satsumas, clementines, or
- One cup of small fruits such as grapes, strawberries, raspberries, cherries or
- Two large tablespoons of fruit salad, stewed or canned fruit or
- One tablespoon of dried fruit or
- One glass of fresh fruit juice (150ml) or
- A normal portion of any vegetable (about two tablespoons) or
- One dessert bowl of salad

Example of a low fat healthy diet sheet

Food Type	Foods that can be eaten regularly (little or no fat and /or 'healthy foods'.	Foods to be eaten in moderation.	Foods to avoid or to eat rarely (high in fat and/or 'unhealthy foods')
Cereal foods	Wholemeal flour and bread. Porridge oats. High fibre breakfast cereals. Wholegrain rice and pasta.	White flour and bread. Low fibre breakfast cereals. White rice and pasta. Plain biscuits. Plain or fruit scones.	Croissants. Fried bread. Most cakes and biscuits. Pastries. Suet pudding.
Fruit, vegetables and nuts.	All fresh and frozen vegetables and fruit. Dried beans and lentils. Baked potatoes. Dried fruit. Walnuts.	Oven chips. Avocado pears. Olives. Almonds. Pecans. Hazelnuts.	Chips. Fried or roast potatoes. Fried, creamed, buttered or cheesed vegetables. Crisps and potato snacks. Coconut. Brazils. Roasted peanuts.
Fish	All white fish. Oily fish such as herring, mackerel, sardines, kippers, pilchards, or salmon (not tinned in oil).	Shellfish.	Fish roe. Caviar.
Meat	Lean white meat such as chicken and turkey breast (without skin).	Lean ham, beef, pork and lamb. Lean mince. Liver and kidney.	Visible fat on meat. Crackling. Sausages. Pates. Duck, goose. Meat pies/pastries.
Eggs, Dairy Foods	Skimmed or semi-skimmed milk. Cottage or curd cheese. Low fat yoghurt. Egg whites.	Edam. Camembert. Parmesan. Up to 3 egg yolks per week.	Whole milk. Cream. Ice cream. Most hard cheeses. Chocolate. Cream cheese.
Fats and spreads.	None.	Low fat spreads. Margarine (high in polyunsaturates). Corn, sunflower & olive oil.	Butter. Dripping & lard. Margarine not high in polyunsaturates.
Drinks and soups.	Tea and coffee. Mineral water. Fruit juices.	Pack soups. Alcoholic drinks.	Cream soups. Milky drinks. Sugary drinks.