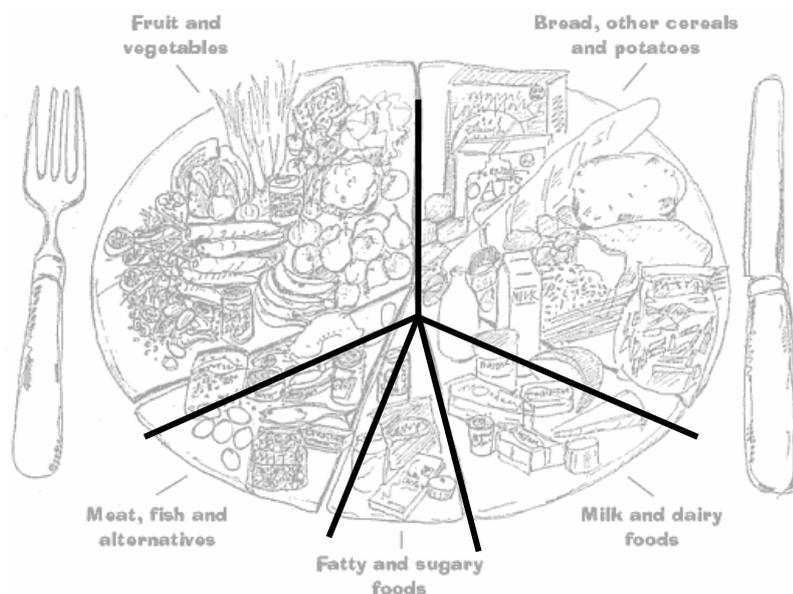


A Balanced Meal Information Sheet



A balanced diet means eating the **right amount** of the **right type** of food.

The plate of food shows how much of each food type should be eaten each day.

You should choose a variety of foods from each of the following four food groups every day.

1. Bread, other cereals and potatoes - (the largest group, sometimes called starchy **carbohydrates**) bread, potatoes (including low fat oven chips), yams, breakfast cereals, pasta, rice, oats, noodles, maize, millet and cornmeal. These foods are the main **energy** source for the body. We should eat 6-11 portions a day. (A portion is the size of the palm of a hand.)

2. Fruit and vegetables - (the second largest group) this includes fresh, frozen, dried and canned fruit and vegetables. Also, 100% fruit or vegetable juice and pure fruit juice smoothies count. Beans and pulses, such as baked beans and lentils also contribute to this group. These foods are important to provide the **vitamins and minerals** the whole body needs to stay healthy and are an important source of **fibre**. We should eat 5 portions of fruit and vegetables a day

3. Dairy foods - (the third largest group, equal with meat and fish etc.) include milk, cheese, cream and yoghurt. These foods are important for **healthy bones and teeth**. We should eat 3-4 portions a day.

4. Meat, fish and alternatives - (often called **proteins**, they are the third largest group equal with milk and dairy,) includes meat, poultry, fish, eggs and alternatives. Meat products include bacon, salami, sausages, beef burgers and pâté. Fish includes frozen and canned fish such as sardines and tuna, fish fingers and fish cakes. Alternatives include nuts, tofu, mycoprotein, textured vegetable protein (TVP), beans such as kidney beans and canned baked beans, and pulses such as lentils. These are important for **growth and repair** in the body. They are often called 'muscle foods' as they help build muscles. We should eat 2-3 portions a day.

Foods with added fat and sugar - are contained in a fifth and smallest group. These should only be eaten in small amounts and are not essential for a healthy balanced diet.

Foods containing added fats include margarine, butter, other spreading fats and low fat spreads, cooking oils, mayonnaise, cream, fried foods including fried chips, chocolate, crisps, biscuits, pastries, cake, puddings, ice-cream, rich sauces and gravies are all in this food group because they contain fat. Foods containing sugar include soft drinks (not diet drinks), sweets, jam and sugar, as well as foods such as cakes, puddings, biscuits, pastries and ice-cream.