

# The impact of diet on health -

[Nutrition](#)



The Impact of Diet on Health - A balanced diet is the correct nutrients in the correct quantity to maintain good health. Nutrients — Protein — growth and repair Carbohydrates — energy Fat — energy and warmth Vitamins - protection Minerals — protection Fluids - Hydration Protein — You need protein for your body's growth, maintenance and repair. It helps you to have strong muscles and fight off infections. Protein is one of the most complicated substances within the human body. When you digest protein, it is broken down into much simpler substances called amino acids. Some of the twenty amino acids found in protein can be made by your body. However the other eight amino acids which are called essential amino acids are only obtained by eating certain foods. Protein can be found in eggs, meat, milk, kidney beans, cheese and other dairy products. You can also obtain protein through some vegetable sources, some of which include peas, beans, nuts and cereals. Carbohydrates — You and your body need carbohydrates for energy. Most foods which you consume contain carbohydrates. The body breaks these down into simple sugars which are the major source of energy for the body. There are two major types of carbohydrates or carbs found within foods; simple and complex. Simple Carbohydrates — Simple carbs are found in refined sugars like the sugar you find within a sugar bowl at a café. You will also find simple sugars in more nutritious foods such as fruit and milk. It is better to get your simple sugars from fruit and milk as they contain vitamins, fibre and important nutrients like calcium. Foods such as lollipops do not contain simple sugars as they are full of sugars and additives which are no good for you and your body. Complex Carbohydrates — Complex carbohydrates are also called starches. Starches include grain products such as bread, crackers, pasta and rice. As with simple sugars, some complex

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carbohydrate foods are better choices than others. Refined grains such as white flour and white rice have been processed which removes their nutrients and fibre. However un — refined grains are also rich in fibre which helps your digestive system work well. Fat — You need fat in your body to give you energy and keep you warm. There are two types of fat, essential fat and storage fat. Essential Fat — Essential fat is required for normal physiological functioning within the body. Women have 9% more fat than men as it is required for childbearing and other hormonal related functioning's. You find essential fat stored in the marrow of your bones, heart, lungs, liver, spleen, kidneys, intestines, muscles and lipid rich tissues of the central nervous system. Storage Fat — Storage fat consists of a fat accumulation within the adipose tissue. Both men and women have similar quantities of storage fat, on average 12% for men and 15% for women. Your body tends to deposit fat according to your individual genetic code. Females will accumulate fat around their thighs and hips and males around their stomachs. Fat is found in all foods except for fruit and vegetables. Vitamins & Minerals — Vitamins & minerals are needed in your body for protein. They boost the immune system and help support normal growth and development. They also help cells and organs to do their jobs. For example, you may have heard that carrots are good for your eyes and it's true. Carrots are full of substances called carotenes that your body converts into vitamin A which helps prevent eye problems. Vitamin K helps blood to clot, so cuts and scrapes stop bleeding quickly. You can find vitamin K in leafy vegetables, broccoli and soybeans. Another vitamin which is good for your body it vitamin B as it is good for a healthy nervous system. If you are after strong bones you need to eat foods such as milk, yoghurt and green leafy

vegetables which are rich in the mineral calcium. Water — Your body needs water to regulate body temperature and to provide the means of nutrients to travel to all of your organs. Water also transports oxygen to your cells, removes waste from the body and protects your joints and organs. Your body is estimated to be about 60 — 70% water. Blood is mostly water, and your muscles, lungs and brain also contain a lot of water. In order to calculate how much water you need to drink in ounces per day, you must take your body weight in pounds and divide that number by two. If you exercise regularly, you should drink another 8 ounces of water for every twenty minutes that you exercise. Also if you drink alcohol, you should drink at least the same amount in water. Fibre — Fibre is a very important part of our diet. However many of us don't eat enough of it. On average most people in the UK only consume about 12g of fibre a day however you should be aiming to eat at least 18g of fibre a day. Fibre is only found in foods that come from plants. You won't find fibre in other types of food such as meat, fish or dairy products. Good sources of fibre include nuts, oats, wholegrain breakfast cereals, fruit, vegetables and much more. Eating foods that are high in fibre will help keep you feeling fuller for longer. This may also help you if you are trying to lose weight. There are two types of fibre, soluble and insoluble. Soluble Fibre — Soluble fibre can be digested by your body and may help to reduce the amount of cholesterol that is found within your blood. Cholesterol is a naturally occurring fatty substance that can clog up your arteries if you eat a diet that is too high in fat. Beans, oats and lentils are good examples of a soluble fibre. Insoluble Fibre - Insoluble fibre cannot be digested. It passes through your gut without being broken down, and it helps other foods to move through your digestive system more easily. Insoluble fibre keeps your

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bowels healthy and helps prevent constipation and other digestive problems such as irritable bowel syndrome. Good sources of insoluble fibre include; wholemeal bread, wholegrain rice, wholegrain breakfast cereals, fruit and vegetables. If you are increasing your intake of fibre, it is important to increase it gradually. A sudden increase can make you produce more wind, leave you feeling bloated and can cause stomach cramps. Recommended Daily Allowance — A recommended daily allowance or RDA is the amount of each nutrient that a person should consume roughly each day in order to stay fit, strong and healthy. On average the protein amount that is required per day depends on our age, size and how much exercise we do. Nutritionists work out how much protein we should consume by multiplying our body weight in kilograms by 0.8 or our weight in pounds by 0.37. This will tell you how much protein you should be eating in grams as a minimum. The general recommendation for carbohydrates is to have 50 to 60% of your calories come from carbs. If you are on a 2000 calorie diet, 1000 — 1200 calories should come from carbohydrates. Due to the fact carbs contain 4 calories per gram; you should eat between 250 and 300 grams of carbs per day. Fat provides you with more energy than carbohydrates or protein due to the fact it contains 9 calories per gram. An individual's total fat intake should be no more than 30% of their total calorie intake. If you consume 2000 calories per day, no more than 600 of these should come from fat. This means that you should take in no more than 66 grams of fat per day. The institute of medicine advises that men consume roughly 3 litres which is around 13 cups of fluids a day and that women should consume 2.2 litres roughly 9 cups of fluids a day. Everyone needs to consume half a gallon of water per day in order to survive. Water keeps the salts in our body which regulate our heart

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beat in order and ensures that all of our organs remain healthy. However if you drink too much water it will dilute those salts and can stop your heart beat. Most people do not eat enough fibre as they are averaging at consuming 12g per day when in fact they should be consuming around 18g per day (for an adult). Fibre is found in cereals, lentils, beans, fruit and vegetables. Through not eating enough fibre it can cause some gut disorders such as cancer and diverticulitis.