Contents
What should I be eating? 1
What is a portion of fruit and veg? 2
Should I cut down on salt? 3
What about drinking? 4
Should I cut out fat? 5
Should my diet be different to the diet of a woman of my age? 6
Should I eat the same diet all my adult life? 7
Where can I get more information? 8
Eating a balanced diet is important for good health and to help reduce your risk of heart disease and certain cancers. This booklet contains practical advice to help you make some healthy food choices.

Q What should I be eating?

A For a healthy balanced diet, aim to do the following:

- Eat at least five portions of fruit and vegetables each day. These can be fresh, frozen, tinned, dried or a glass of juice. See What is a portion of fruit and veg? on page 2.

- Eat more starchy foods, such as pasta, rice, potatoes, cereals and pulses (beans, peas and lentils). These should make up about a third of your diet.

- Choose lean meat, and trim off the fat and any skin.

- Try to eat fish twice a week, including one portion of oily fish, such as mackerel or sardines.

- Grill, bake, poach, boil, steam or microwave your food, rather than frying or roasting. Or you could try 'dry roasting', without adding any fat.

- Reduce the amount of sugar in your diet.
What is a portion of fruit and veg?

1 portion = any of these:

- 1 apple, banana or orange
- 2 plums or other fruit of a similar size
- ½ a grapefruit or avocado
- 2 to 3 tablespoonfuls of vegetables (raw, cooked, frozen or canned)
- 2 to 3 tablespoonfuls of fruit salad (fresh, stewed or canned)
- ½ to 1 tablespoonful of dried fruit (such as raisins and apricots)
- 1 handful of grapes, cherries or berries
- 1 dessert bowl of salad
- 1 glass (150ml) of fruit juice (however much you drink, fruit juice counts as a maximum of 1 portion a day)
Q Should I cut down on salt?

A Sodium in salt can lead to high blood pressure, which increases the risk of stroke. So, you should try to cut down on the salt you add to your food during cooking and at the table. Remember to check the labels of any ready-prepared foods for the sodium content, before you buy. (See the Salt stats and facts below.)

Potassium, on the other hand, has a beneficial effect on blood pressure. Fruit and vegetables such as bananas, tomatoes and avocados are all good sources of potassium.

Salt stats and facts

• \( \frac{1}{4} \) of the salt we eat comes from processed food

• People in the UK eat about 9 g salt (about 3.5 g sodium) a day, on average

• Men should have about 6 g salt or about 2.5 g sodium a day

• 0.5 g sodium or more per 100 g is a lot of sodium

• 0.1 g sodium or less per 100 g is a little sodium
What about drinking?

Men can drink up to 3 to 4 units of alcohol a day without significant risk to their health. A unit is half a pint of ordinary-strength beer, lager or cider, a small glass of wine or a single 25 ml measure of spirits.

Drinking too much alcohol can increase your weight, particularly around the abdominal area, as well as leading to other long-term health problems, such as high blood pressure. To help you cut down, you could try drinking lower-strength drinks, drinking half pints instead of pints, or alternating alcohol with non-alcoholic drinks.

Try to drink at least 6 to 8 cups of water a day, or more if you exercise. If you don’t like the taste of plain water, you could try sparkling water, or add some squash or fruit juice for flavour. You could also try adding a slice of lemon or lime.
Should I cut out fat?

It's important to have some fat in your diet. Fat helps the body absorb certain vitamins, and it's a good source of energy and the 'essential fatty acids' that the body can't make itself. But fat should make up no more than one third of the energy (or calories) in your diet. On average, men in the UK eat more fat than this.

Avoid fatty foods, especially those rich in saturated fat. Foods high in saturated fat include red meat, meat pies, sausages, butter, cheese, and cakes and biscuits made with hydrogenated fats. Choose foods high in monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fat, such as olive, sunflower and vegetable oils.