



Conni Arnold
Fitness

Nutrition Guide



Learn the basics of nutrition & how to
successfully fuel for your fitness routine

Introduction



Hello and welcome to your general nutrition guide!! As you may well know, fitness and nutrition go hand in hand; muscle gain, strength, endurance, and weight loss goals will be achieved much faster if you give some attention to your nutrition. Even if you don't have a specific goal right now, a balanced diet will do wonders for your health, your mood, and your energy in the gym!

I've put together this guide for you to go through in your own time, to help you make sense of the huge subject that is nutrition. In it you'll find both general nutrition information, and details on the link between food and exercise. At the end of each chapter, there are a few questions to test what you've just learnt, **and** to help you take *actionable steps* towards improving your nutrition. Because I don't just want you to learn; I want you to apply this to yourself, too!

The information in here is by no means advanced, but what you'll gain is the knowledge to start making **small, informed changes to your diet** to help you enhance your workouts, achieve your goals, and improve your overall health and wellbeing.

Use this guide however you want, whenever you want, and feel free to reach out if you have any questions!

Contents



- Page 4: My role as your PT
- Pages 5-20: Basics of nutrition
- Page 22: UK government guidelines
- Page 23: What does a balanced diet look like?
- Page 25: Tips for vegetarian & vegan diets
- Page 27: Food labelling
- Page 31: Eating for exercise
- Page 33: What to eat before, during & after exercise
- Page 38: How much do I need to eat?
- Page 41: Focus on nutrient value
- Page 46: Anti 'diet culture' zone
- Page 47: Next steps
- Page 48: The end
- Page 49: Seeking further help

My role as your PT



As a personal trainer, my scope of practice in nutrition is to be a 'nutritional advisor'. Here are the things I can and can't do for my clients when it comes to nutrition:

I CAN:

- Give you general nutrition advice (like this guide)
- Agree realistic nutritional targets with you and support you in achieving them
- Help you with creating better habits around food

I CAN'T:

- Write you a meal plan
- Prescribe a specific diet
- Prescribe supplements
- Tell you how to fix gut issues, allergies/intolerances, or eating disorders
- Do anything else that only a registered nutritionist or dietician is qualified to do (if you think you need more specific nutrition advice, I recommend seeking the help of either one of these- there is more info on this at the end of the guide).

Basics of Nutrition



First, it's important to understand the basics of nutrition. In this section you'll gain knowledge on:

- Macronutrients (carbohydrate, fat and protein)
- Micronutrients (vitamins & minerals)
- Hydration
- UK government guidelines & the Eatwell Guide
- Food labelling

I'll also touch on how these things link back to exercise, but we'll talk more about that in the second section.

Macronutrients 1:

Carbohydrate



Macronutrients ('macros') are the nutrient group that are required by the body in larger amounts.

The first of those macronutrients is **carbohydrates**.

Carbohydrate sources include **potatoes, bread, pasta, rice, oats, cous-cous, and quinoa**.

Fruit and vegetables are also carbohydrates. This includes fresh, tinned, and frozen ones.

Processed foods, such as cakes, biscuits, and sweets, are also high in carbohydrates, though their dietary value is significantly lower.

Carbohydrates (carbs) are the body's **most optimal fuel source** because of how quickly they can be used by the body as energy.

Carbs are used alongside fat during low-intensity exercise, but become the dominant fuel type as exercise intensity increases.

MYTH BUSTING: 'CUTTING CARBS'



YOU MAY HAVE HEARD THAT, THAT TO LOSE WEIGHT, YOU NEED TO CUT OUT CARBS ALTOGETHER. THIS IS NOT TRUE! TO LOSE WEIGHT YOU SIMPLY NEED TO BE IN A CALORIE DEFICIT, WHICH CAN BE ACHIEVED IN LOTS OF WAYS.

CARBS ARE NEEDED AS PART OF A HEALTHY, BALANCED DIET, SO CUTTING THEM OUT COMPLETELY CAN HAVE ADVERSE HEALTH EFFECTS (AND MAKE YOU REALLY GRUMPY).

Test your knowledge:

1. What is a macronutrient?
2. Why are carbohydrates the most optimal fuel source for the human body?
3. Why should you not 'cut carbs'?

Make a note of your main takeaway from this chapter.



Macronutrients 2: Fat



The next macronutrient is fat. Fat is essential for the human body to function correctly. A number of vitamins can only be absorbed by the body in the presence of fat (vitamins A, D, K and E), meaning a diet very low in fat can lead to vitamin deficiency. Fat also protects the internal organs, and makes up a large part of our central nervous system and spinal cord!

UNSATURATED FAT

Unsaturated fat is what people refer to when they say 'healthy fats'. Unsaturated fats are mostly found in plant foods and have many health benefits, including improving blood cholesterol levels, easing inflammation, and stabilising heart rhythms. For this reason, unsaturated fats are the preferred dietary fat source.

- **Unsaturated fat sources:** Olives, avocado, nuts, seeds, flax oil, oily fish, safflower oil, grapeseed oil, peanut oil

Making sure you eat both Omega-3 and Omega-6 fatty acids is also important. Sources of these include:

- **Omega 3:** Flaxseed, oily fish, cod liver oil, flax oil, walnut oil, hemp seeds
- **Omega 6:** Evening Primrose oil, sunflower oil, pumpkin seeds, sesame seeds, soybean oil

SATURATED FAT & TRANS FATS



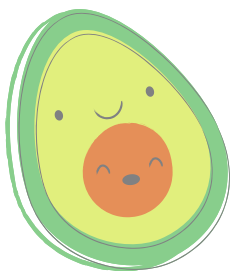
A small amount of saturated fat is needed for a balanced diet, as it has benefits including enhancement of the immune system and liver function, and providing structural integrity to the cells. However, eating lots of saturated fat can have adverse health effects. The current guidelines recommend limiting saturated fat intake to 31g per day (men)/24g per day (women).

- **Saturated fat sources:** Meat, dairy, eggs, coconut, coconut oil, palm oil, processed foods

Trans fats (trans fatty acids) should be limited, as they can increase levels of bad cholesterol in the body and are associated with inflammation, diabetes, and atherosclerosis.

- **Trans fat sources:** Pre-made cakes, pastries, pies, margarine, beef fat, dairy fat, general fast food/convenience foods.

MYTH BUSTING: FAT MAKES YOU FAT?

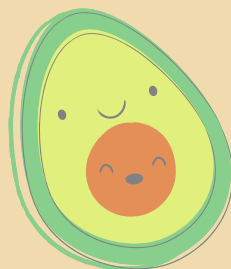


BECAUSE FAT HAS MORE CALORIES THAN CARBS OR PROTEIN GRAM FOR GRAM (9G VS. 4G FOR CARBS & PROTEIN), YOU WILL CONSUME MORE CALORIES FOR LESS VOLUME WHEN YOU EAT FOODS HIGH IN FAT. HOWEVER, EATING FAT IS NOT IN ITSELF THE CAUSE OF WEIGHT GAIN! THE CAUSE OF WEIGHT GAIN IS CONSISTENTLY EATING MORE CALORIES THAN YOU BURN, AND IT DOESN'T MATTER IF THOSE CALORIES COME FROM FAT, CARBS, PROTEIN, OR ALCOHOL.

Test your knowledge:

1. Why is dietary fat important for health?
2. Name 3 foods high in unsaturated fat.
3. Why should you limit your consumption of trans fats?

Make a note of your main takeaway from this chapter.



Macronutrients 3:



Protein

Protein can be found in every cell of the human body, and makes up about 18-20% of the body's weight. Its primary function is to repair cells and make new ones.

High protein sources include **meat, fish, dairy, eggs, soy products (tofu, edamame beans, soy milk), tempeh, beans, lentils, nuts, seeds, seitan, quinoa, and buckwheat.**

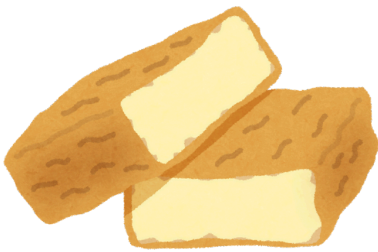
Proteins are made up of 20 amino acids, of which 9 are considered essential because the body can't produce them itself. For this reason it's important to focus on eating foods containing those 9 essential aminos.

Complete sources of the essential 9 amino acids are: Meat, eggs, dairy, soy, buckwheat, quinoa.

However, combining foods with varying amounts of amino acids (non-complete sources) also works. For example: rice & beans; veggies and seeds; grains and beans; grains and pulses. An important note for those following plant-based diets!



Protein is **not** a great fuel source for the body, and is only really used for energy when exercise lasts many hours and/or all carbohydrate and fat stores have been used up. This isn't ideal, as it takes the protein away from where it's needed most: in muscle repair. Include protein in your meals throughout the day, but make sure you're fuelled with sufficient carbohydrate and fat for your workouts- especially if your goal is to build muscle!



MYTH BUSTING: PROTEIN DEFICIENCY?

HONESTLY, THIS IS NOT SOMETHING TO WORRY ABOUT. PROTEIN DEFICIENCY IS EXTREMELY RARE IN DEVELOPED COUNTRIES, AND THE AMOUNT OF PROTEIN WE NEED IS OFTEN GROSSLY OVERESTIMATED. YOU WILL NEED MORE THAN THE MINIMUM IF YOU EXERCISE A LOT, BUT YOU ARE VERY UNLIKELY TO BE 'DEFICIENT' IN PROTEIN – EVEN IF YOU EAT A PLANT-BASED DIET.

RECOMMENDED PROTEIN INTAKE - USE THIS AS A GUIDE:

- SEDENTARY ADULT: 0.8 grams per kg bodyweight
- RECREATIONAL ADULT EXERCISER: 0.8-1.5 grams per kg bodyweight
- ADULT ENDURANCE ATHLETE: 1.2-1.6 grams per kg bodyweight
- GROWING TEENAGE ATHLETE: 1.5-2.0 grams per kg bodyweight
- ADULT BUILDING MUSCLE: 1.5-1.7 grams per kg bodyweight
- ESTIMATED UPPER LIMITS (ADULTS): 2.0 grams per kg bodyweight

Test your knowledge:

1. What is the primary function of protein?
2. What are the three complete, *plant-based* sources of the 9 essential amino acids?
3. What is the recommended protein intake for a ‘recreational adult exerciser’?
4. ***Calculate YOUR estimated daily protein intake based on the ‘recommended protein intake’ guide above.***

Make a note of your main takeaway from this chapter.



Micronutrients

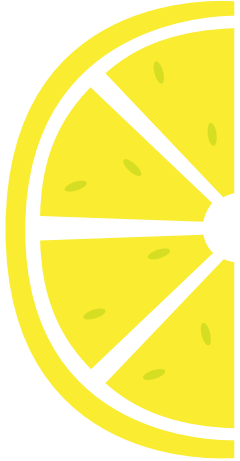


Micronutrients are needed by the body in smaller amounts than macronutrients, but they are **vital in keeping your body functioning optimally**: they assist in nervous system & brain function; vision; bone development; and blood pressure maintenance, to name a few. They also help your body use macronutrients efficiently - so basically, if you're focusing heavily on carbs, protein & fat but are ignoring micronutrients, you're doing yourself a disservice!

Micronutrients are split into **vitamins** and **minerals**. These can be found across a huge variety of foods. The best way to ensure you are getting a big range of vitamins and minerals into your diet is by eating lots of different foods (especially different fruits & vegetables) on a regular basis.

Vitamins A, C, and E, and the minerals zinc, selenium, copper and manganese, are **antioxidants**. Foods high in antioxidants are especially important if you **exercise** a lot, because exercise increases oxidative stress on the body. Sources of antioxidants include **citrus; green veggies; green leafy veg; ginger; fish; and brazil nuts**.

Tips to easily increase your vitamin & mineral intake:

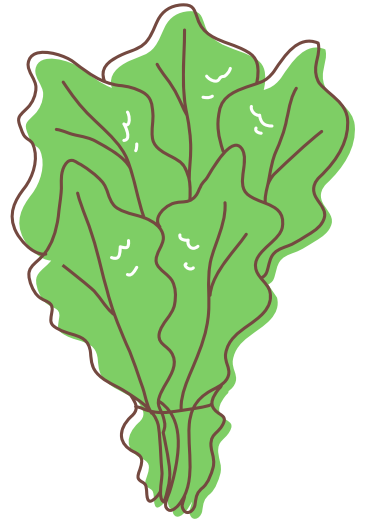


Add slices of lemon, cucumber and mint leaves to your water bottle

(Vitamins: A, B, C, D, E, K, B1, B2, B6
Minerals: Copper, phosphorous, magnesium, potassium)

Add leafy greens such as spinach and kale into your smoothies

(Vitamins: A, K, B6, C,
Minerals: calcium, potassium, copper, manganese, selenium, iron)



(Extra tip: Buy a bag of pre-made salad and eat some with your dinner every day)



To diversify your micronutrient intake, switch up the meals you eat each week! If that's too overwhelming right now, start by buying a few different fruits or veggies each time you go shopping.

Test your knowledge:

1. What do micronutrients do?
2. Why are antioxidants important if you exercise a lot?
3. ***List one easy way you will increase your micronutrient intake, starting today.***

Make a note of your main takeaway from this chapter.



Hydration



Water is essential for the normal functioning of our bodies, and for exercise performance and recovery. How much you need is based on several factors, including your weight, environmental temperature, and how much muscle you have. Guidelines based on weight alone are below, so use these as a minimum:

55kg	-----	1.7L per day
65kg	-----	2L per day
75kg	-----	2.3L per day
85kg	-----	2.6L per day
95kg	-----	2.9L per day

TIPS TO INCREASE WATER INTAKE:

- Fill a 2 litre bottle in the morning, keep it with you & aim to finish it by the end of the day.
- Eat watery fruits (peaches, watermelons, pears, mangoes) as snacks.
- Habit stack: Drink water every time you have a coffee/tea, or every time you go to the loo, etc. etc.





Hydration



Some facts and tips about water & exercise:

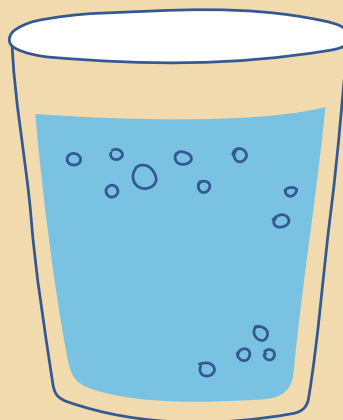
- Our muscles are 75% water. For this reason, a 3% loss of water can cause a 10% drop in strength, and an 8% drop in speed during exercise.
- How much water you need per day depends on several things, including your weight, the environmental temperature, and how active you are, but it also depends on how much muscle mass you have - the more muscle you have, the more water you need.
- Being adequately hydrated helps maintain body temperature during exercise (stops you overheating).
- When we exercise we don't just lose water through sweat; we lose important electrolytes, too. This is when a sports drink would come in handy (especially on a hot day/if you know you're going to sweat a lot).
- Ensure you're hydrated **BEFORE** your workout, then take small sips during.
- Those who hydrate during exercise have been shown in studies to perform better than those who don't.

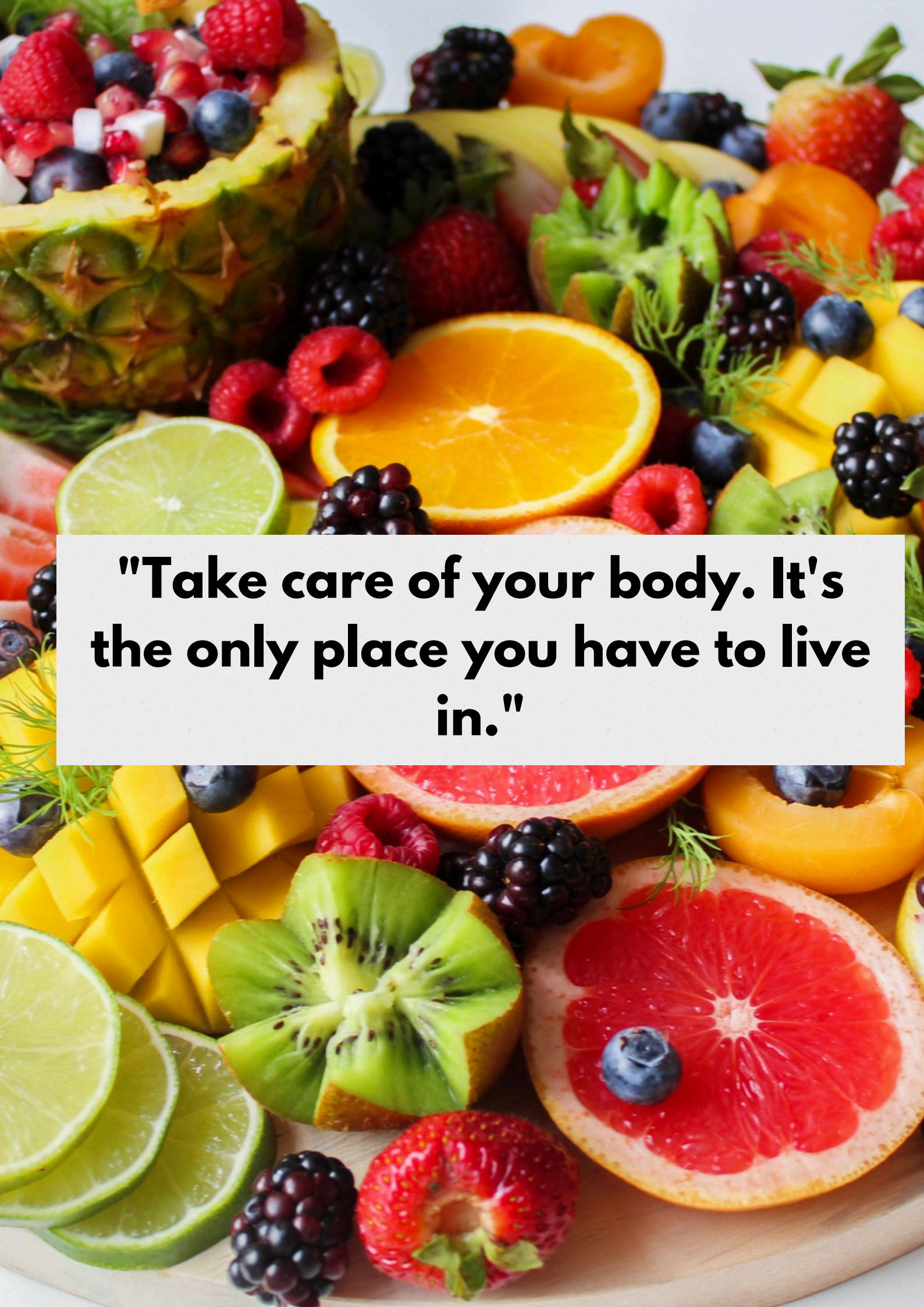


Test your knowledge:

1. What percentage of our muscles are water?
2. Why is being well hydrated important for exercise?
3. *How will you easily increase your water intake, starting today?*

Make a note of your main takeaway from this chapter.





**"Take care of your body. It's
the only place you have to live
in."**

UK Government Guidelines



These are the current UK government guidelines for daily food intake. Whilst they serve as a good starting point, **bear in mind they do not take into account a person's activity levels.** For example: 2,000 calories per day for women is given as standard. But extremely active women may find 2,000 calories inadequate fuel for all of the activity they do, especially if they do not want to lose weight! In this case, they would need to eat more than 2,000 calories per day. The macronutrient split shown will also vary from person to person; what's written is a guideline for minimum requirements to avoid deficiency.

Adult males (19-64): 2,500 calories per day

56g protein

97g fat

333g carbohydrate

Adult females (19-64): 2,000 calories per day

45g protein

78g fat

267g carbohydrate

WHAT ABOUT ALCOHOL?

IF YOU HAVE A WEIGHT LOSS GOAL, IT'S IMPORTANT TO FACTOR IN CALORIES FROM ALCOHOL, AND TO LIMIT IT WHERE YOU CAN. ALCOHOL CONTAINS MORE CALORIES GRAM FOR GRAM THAN CARBS DO BUT, UNLIKE CARBS, ITS NUTRIENT VALUE IS ZERO. SEE BELOW:



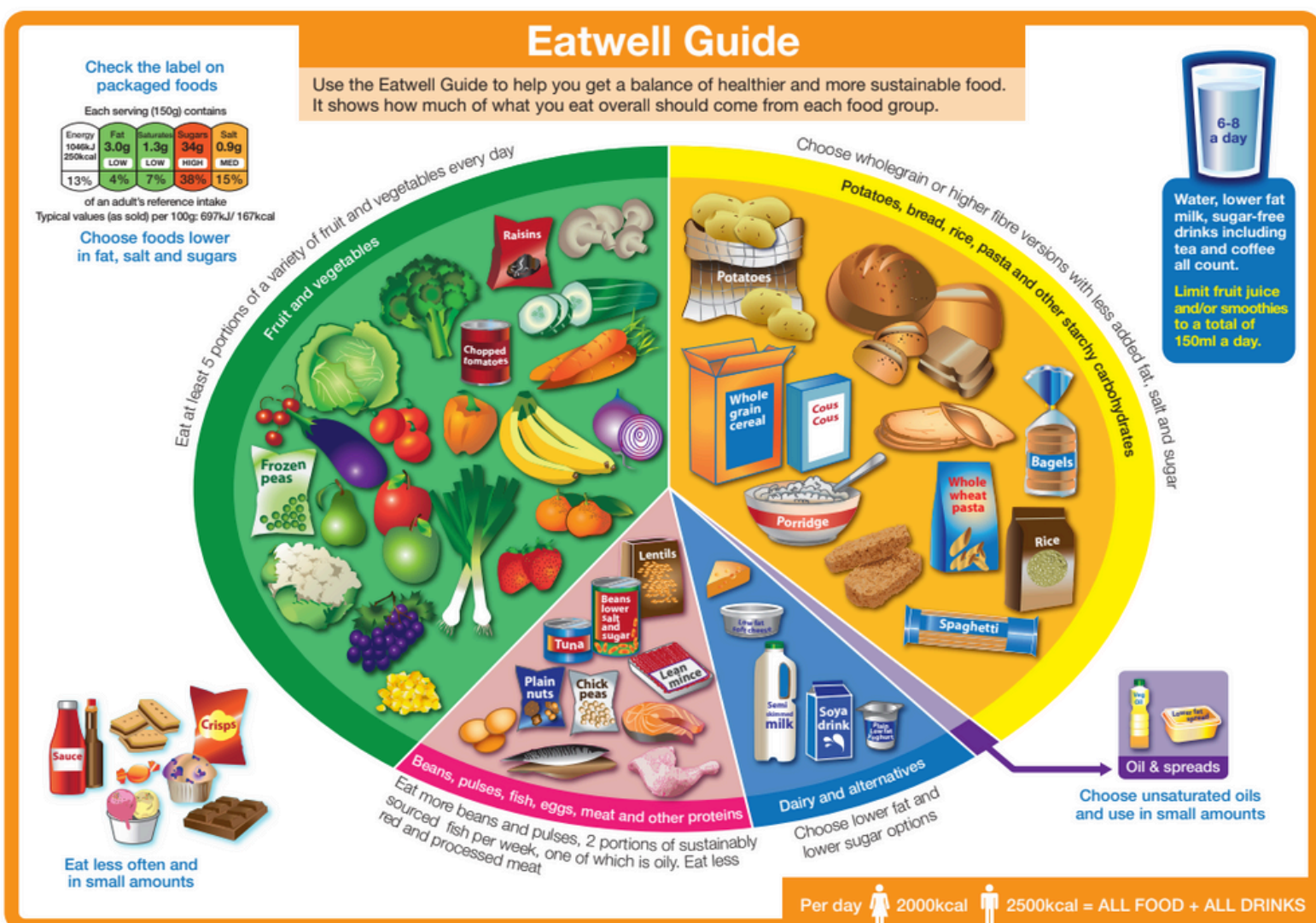
- **Carbs** contain 4 calories per gram
- **Proteins** contain 4 calories per gram
- **Fats** contain 9 calories per gram
- **Alcohol** contains 7 calories per gram

What Does A Balanced Diet Look Like?



The Eatwell Guide below shows the current UK recommendations for a healthy, balanced diet. You can use this, as well as the tips on the following page, as a guide to see how your own diet compares, and where you could make some small, achievable changes to it.

[Click here for the Plant Based Eatwell Guide.](#)



What Does A Balanced Diet Look Like?



The Eatwell Guide comes with the following 7 healthy eating tips:

- **Don't skip breakfast**
- **Base your meals around starchy carbohydrates** (wholewheat/wholegrain options are best)
- **Eat at least 5 portions of fruit & veg every day.** This includes tinned, frozen & dried. (By the way: 5 is the *bare minimum*; you can and should be eating lots more!)
- **Eat more fish** (as opposed to meat): at least 2 portions of fish per week, 1 of them being oily - plus more beans & pulses
- **Cut down on saturated fats** (on average, men should limit saturated fat intake to 31g per day; women 24g)
- **Eat less salt** - limit intake to 6g per day
- **Stay hydrated** - aim for 6-8 cups of water per day as a basic guideline

Vegetarian & Vegan Diets



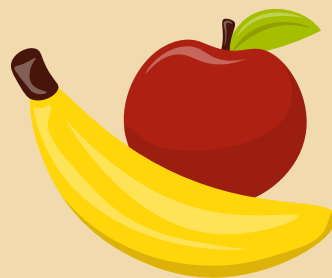
If you're vegetarian or vegan, here are some extra tips:

- **Follow the 'Plant Based Eatwell Guide'** (see above)
- **Animal products contain more calories gram for gram than plant-based products do.** Bear this in mind if you have a weight gain or weight loss goal. For example, a 100g piece of tofu will have fewer calories than a 100g piece of salmon. For this reason, you may initially find it difficult to put on weight on a plant-based diet, until you can eat more volume than you're used to.
- **Use complementary foods to diversify amino acid intake:** Pair veggies & beans; rice & beans; grains & veggies. Basically, eat a wide variety of food (as with any diet!).
- Oily fish is recommended in the Eatwell Guide due to its high Omega-3 content. **Vegetarian/vegan sources of Omega 3** include flaxseed; chia seed; hempseed; seaweed; walnut and edamame. Plant-based omega-3 supplements are also available as alternatives to fish oil.
- **Protein shakes are useful to supplement** the diet where needed.

Test your knowledge:

1. According to the UK government guidelines, how many calories should adult men and adult women eat on a daily basis, on average?
2. What advice is given by the Eatwell Guide regarding breakfast?
3. Give two tips for plant-based (vegetarian/vegan) diets.
4. ***Of the 7 healthy eating tips on page 24, which one(s) are you doing well at the moment? Which one(s) could you work on? How will you do that?***

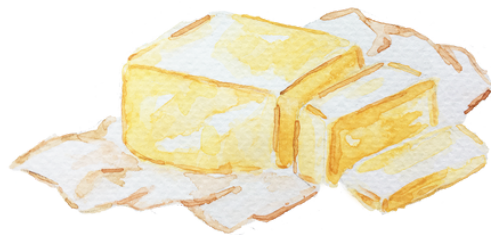
Make a note of your main takeaway from this chapter.



Food Labelling



Reading food labels, and trying to figure out what's good for you & your goals and what's not, can be a bit of a headache! The truth is that the language used on food labels is often ***purposefully confusing***, so that consumers either **give up and buy the product anyway**, or **buy it because they believe it must be the better option**. Let's get smart and avoid the scams. Here are a few marketing terms to look out for on food labels, and what they *really* mean:



"LOW FAT"

By law, this has to be at least 25% lower in fat than the original. Be aware of this label if you are counting calories for fat loss: items labelled 'low fat' aren't necessarily 'low calorie'; check the nutritional information before you buy!

Food Labelling



"LOW CALORIE"

Legally, anything with this label has to have fewer calories in it than the original, but there's no set guideline for how many- meaning it could just have 1 calorie less.

"SUGAR FREE"

This label can deceive people into thinking the product is a healthy or low calorie option, when all it usually means is that, although no sugar has been added, artificial sweeteners have been to improve the product's taste. These go by names like dextrose, mannitol, aspartame, and sucralose. Furthermore, artificial sweeteners have been shown to stimulate craving sensations & appetite. Manufacturers use this to their advantage, to make people come back for more.

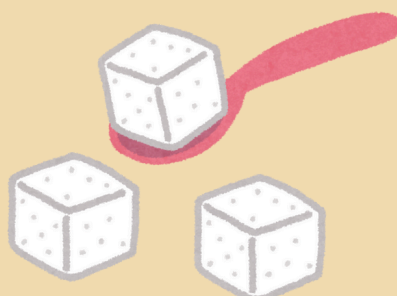


The bottom line: If you are buying a low fat, low calorie, or sugar free product thinking it's the 'better' option for your goals, check the nutritional information, as these labels can be misleading.

Test your knowledge:

1. What should you bear in mind if a food is labelled as being 'low fat'?
2. What should you bear in mind if a food is labelled as being 'low calorie'?
3. What should you bear in mind if a food is labelled as being 'sugar free'?

Make a note of your main takeaway from this chapter.



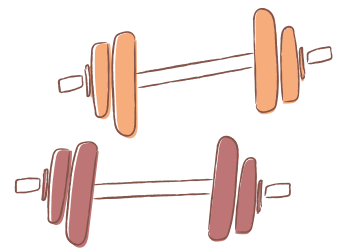
"Good nutrition creates health in all areas of our existence. All parts are interconnected."



Eating For Exercise



Now we've covered the basics of nutrition, let's talk more about how all this relates to your workout routine!



How you structure your nutrition largely depends on your goals and lifestyle. A professional athlete will have different requirements to - and will need to be stricter than - someone who exercises recreationally, for example. The good news is that **most people will benefit from simply eating a balanced diet, and observing the pre- and post-workout guidelines.**

So with that being said, here are a few nutrition tips that will support your exercise routine:

Eating For Exercise



- **Eat before and after your workouts.** Food is fuel for the body AND will help you recover after a workout. The following page has more details on what and when to eat.
- **Hydrate, hydrate, hydrate!** Our muscles are 75% water, so stay hydrated throughout the day to nail your workouts and recovery.
- **Eat a balanced diet** to get all the necessary nutrients that will help you perform & recover well (see the section 'What Does A Balanced Diet Look Like?')
- **Think quality, not just quantity.** The nutrient value of your food is just as important as how many calories it contains, if not more so (see the section 'Consider Nutrient Value').

What To Eat Before, During & After A Workout



BEFORE A WORKOUT

Before exercise, the body needs fuel, largely in the form of **carbohydrate** and **fat**. Eat a meal 1.5-2 hours before a workout for slow release energy, and to allow time for digestion. If needed, a snack high in carbohydrate (eg. a date) can be eaten closer to the start of the session for quick energy release. High-fat foods shouldn't be eaten close to the start of a workout, as fat takes longer to digest.



Example pre-workout meal: 2 bagels with hummus, avocado & falafel

Example pre-workout meal: 2 slices of wholemeal toast with banana & peanut butter

Example pre-workout snack: A handful of dates

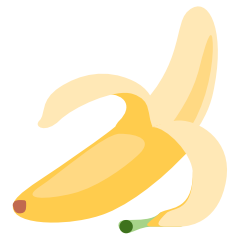
Example pre-workout snack: Fruit smoothie

What To Eat Before, During & After A Workout



AFTER A WORKOUT

After exercise, both **carbohydrate** and **protein** is required to aid muscle repair and replenish glycogen stores. Protein shakes/bars are convenient if you have to wait some time before eating a proper meal, and can be paired with an easy carbohydrate snack.



Example post-workout meal: Salmon, mashed potato & asparagus

Example post-workout meal: Smoked tofu, rice, and edamame beans

Example post-workout meal on the go: Protein shake + banana

Example post-workout meal on the go: Protein bar + apple

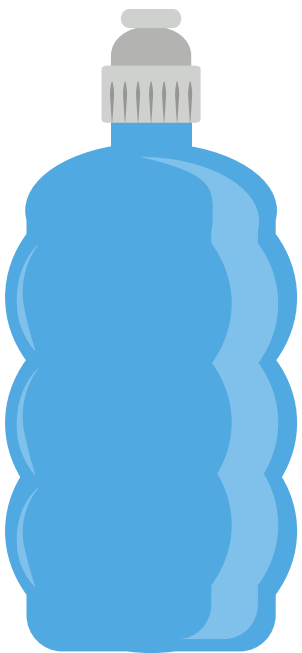
Be mindful that muscles can take up to 72 hours to repair after exercise, so what you eat during the following days matters as well.

What To Eat Before, During & After A Workout



DURING A WORKOUT

For most people, drinking water during exercise is enough. However, if exercise lasts longer than an hour (eg. during a race), or if a pre-exercise meal isn't possible (eg. if you are training at 5am and find it difficult to eat that early), you might want to consider intra-workout fuel. For example: **sports drinks or gels** that provide the body with **carbohydrates** (often used by runners). **Electrolyte drinks or tablets** are also useful if it's very hot or you sweat a lot; we lose these through sweat. **Electrolytes** are essential minerals our bodies need to function. They include: sodium, magnesium, potassium, and calcium. When your body is low on electrolytes, it can lead to symptoms such as weakness & fatigue; muscle cramps; and nausea. Use electrolyte tablets & sports drinks to your advantage when needed!

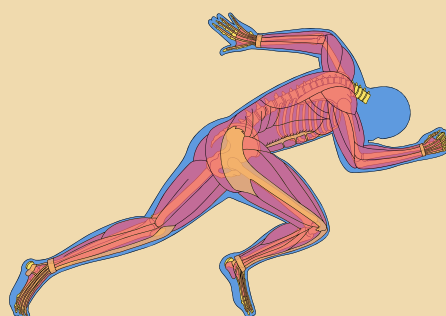


Test your knowledge:



1. Why should you eat a meal 1.5-2 hours before exercise?
2. Why is it important to eat foods rich in carbohydrates and protein after exercise?
3. How long can our muscles take to repair following a workout?
4. ***Reflect on your exercise routine. Do you think there is any case where you would benefit from intra-workouts, such as sports drinks/gels, or electrolytes?***
5. ***Plan a pre-workout meal OR snack you can eat before your next workout.***
6. ***Plan a post-workout meal OR snack you can eat after your next workout.***

Make a note of your main takeaway from this chapter.





"Don't start a diet that has an expiration date. Focus on a lifestyle that will last forever."

How Much Do I Need To Eat?



We know that calculating caloric intake is useful if wanting to lose weight. But there are other reasons, too, such as wanting to build muscle, put weight on, or if your energy/performance is lacking and you want to know if you're eating enough. In other words, it's a way of finding out, **quantitatively, how well you're currently fuelling yourself, and how you could adjust that to suit your goals.**

Everyone's recommended calorie intake is different and is based on things like bodyweight & activity levels.

You can get a good estimate of yours by calculating your **BMR (Basal Metabolic Rate)** and **TDEE (Total Daily Energy Expenditure)**.

BMR and TDEE are explained on the next page.

How Much Do I Need To Eat?



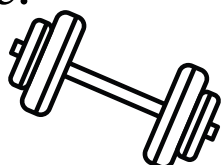
BMR: This is your basal metabolic rate, ie. the amount of calories you burn simply by existing! If you were in a coma, your body would still burn this amount of calories per day.

Important: Eating close to, or below, your BMR can cause severe health issues. Without adequate calories, your body shuts down its 'non-essential' functions, including the menstrual cycle & the immune system! A very low calorie diet should only be administered by, and done under the supervision of, a medical professional, and only on a short-term basis for medical reasons.

TDEE: This is your total daily energy expenditure, ie. your BMR plus a number that takes into account how active you are. Also known as your 'maintenance calories', TDEE is the amount of calories you need every day to fuel everything you do, without losing or gaining weight.

Once you know your TDEE, you know how much you should be aiming to eat on a daily basis. Use tools such as [this TDEE Calculator](#) to estimate yours (or ask me).

Note: This is only an estimate and will likely need some trial & error when put into practice!



How Much Do I Need To Eat?



Here are some realistic, actionable tips you can implement right now to help with lowering or increasing calorie intake (without tracking) and creating healthier habits around food:

- If you consume high-calorie, sugary drinks & snacks 7 days per week: Swap them for lower-calorie options on 3 days per week to begin with (eg. black coffee instead of latte with full fat milk).
- Increase the amount of protein in each meal, to help with muscle growth & feeling fuller for longer (20-30g per meal is a good baseline to aim for).
- Include more high-volume, low-calorie meals & side salads, such as stir fries and leafy salads with raw veggies. This will help with satiety.
- If you get a takeaway 4x a month, for example, reduce the takeaways to 2x per month, and make a homemade version the other 2x, instead. Get creative.
- If you're struggling to gain weight/consume enough calories: Eat a large handful of nuts (a calorie-dense, low volume snack) every day.

The focus should always be on making small changes you can stick to, rather than overhauling your diet in one go.



Focus On Nutrient Value



So that's the quantitative side of things. Now let's move onto the *qualitative* side!

Calories are often the main focus for many people when it comes to food - **but they are not the be all and end all**. It's important to consider the **nutrient value** of the foods you are consuming on a regular basis. A nutrient-rich diet will benefit your energy levels, how much weight you can lift in the gym, your mood, and your overall health.

Two people could be eating the same amount of calories per day and be performing very differently in the gym (and feeling very differently, too), depending on exactly what they are eating.

Take the examples on the next 2 pages. Even though they are consuming the same amount of calories (let's say), person B is likely to have more energy and feel better than person A, because the nutrient value of their meals is greater.

Focus On Nutrient Value



PERSON A - FOOD DIARY:

- Breakfast: Bowl of sugary cereal
- Lunch: Store-bought white bread sandwich with processed meat & cheese slices, crisps & can of coke
- Dinner: Takeaway pizza from the Greaseland Pizza Parlour
- Snacks: 18 low calorie chocolate bars & 53 low calorie biscuits
- Water intake: 300ml per day



ANALYSIS: Mainly processed food; no fruit/veg; insufficient water intake; high in saturated fat; high in refined sugar; lack of micronutrients.

Having processed/'junk' food as the bulk of your diet will negatively impact your health, mood, and performance in the gym as it **doesn't contain the nutrients your body needs to function optimally.**

Focus On Nutrient Value



PERSON B - FOOD DIARY:

- Breakfast: Porridge with variety of fruit, seeds & peanut butter
- Lunch: Falafel & hummus sandwich on wholemeal bread with avocado & salad leaves, handful of dried fruit & a smoothie
- Dinner: Homemade chili served with rice and a side salad
- Snacks: Handful of nuts, a few biscuits
- Water intake: 3 litres per day



ANALYSIS: Mainly wholefoods, meals based around starchy carbs, lots of fruit/veg, sufficient water intake; lots of micronutrients; no restriction (eating biscuits in moderation)... Eating a balanced diet based around wholefoods will provide your body with the nutrients it needs to function correctly & fuel your fitness goals.

BONUS! The 'happy hormone' serotonin is mainly produced by the gut. If you eat well, you'll FEEL good, too!

Test your knowledge:



1. What do BMR and TDEE stand for?
2. Give one tip to reduce calorie intake *without* tracking your food.
3. Why is it important to focus on the nutrient value of food, rather than just how many calories are in it?
4. **Calculate your BMR and TDEE using this online calculator.**
5. **Consider the following questions:**
 - ***Do you feel full after meals, or are you hungry again within the hour?***
 - ***How is your mood after eating a meal?***
 - ***Do you feel energetic during your workouts, or do you struggle with energy/strength?***

Make a note of your main takeaway from this chapter.





"One cannot think, love, sleep well if one has not dined well."



Anti 'Diet Culture' Zone



Please bear in mind that the above examples aren't intended to paint any foods as 'good' or 'bad, 'naughty' or 'nice'. I prefer to make the distinction between foods that are:

HEALTH-PROMOTING and/or IN LINE WITH MY GOALS

and foods that are:

NOT HEALTH-PROMOTING and/or NOT IN LINE WITH MY GOALS

I do not promote feelings of guilt around certain foods, and will never tell you to 'burn off' anything you eat, as diet culture does. My aim when discussing nutrition is to encourage habits/foods that make you **feel** and **perform** your best, and that are good for your **fitness goals, health, and overall wellbeing.**

Exercise and food are NOT there to cancel each other out like sworn enemies; they go hand-in-hand. Food is fuel. ❤️

Next Steps

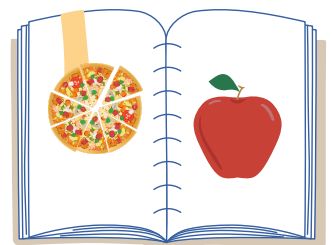


Hopefully, you have answered the questions at the end of each chapter (if not, go back and do that now!). So you've got some new knowledge, and small tasks you can work on right away to start improving your nutrition. Small changes, done consistently over time, make a big difference, so start there.

Another helpful thing is to **keep a food diary for 5-7 days**. This helps you become more conscious of what you're eating & drinking on a daily basis. Reflecting on that, it's likely you'll *know* what changes to make next.

Clients: I encourage you to make use of the nutrition **worksheets** on your app, including the SMART goals worksheets. I can support you with any goals you create there.

And finally, I encourage you to write down 2-3 main takeaways from this guide. **What piece of information stood out to you? Did anything surprise you? Did you learn anything new? Did it help you solve a problem you've been having around diet/food?**



And That Concludes This Guide!



You have now learnt:

- The basics of nutrition
- What makes up a balanced diet
- How your diet impacts your fitness routine
- How to use the principles of nutrition to fuel and recover from your workouts
- How much you need to eat to achieve your goals and perform at your best
- Small tips & tricks to help you make sustainable changes to your diet, without restricting yourself!

I hope this guide has been helpful, and that it's empowered you to start optimising your nutrition for even better health and fitness. I look forward to hearing how you get on! Take care. 😊

Conni x



@connifitness

www.conniarnoldfitness.co.uk

Copyright Conni Arnold Fitness

Seeking Further Help



Whilst this guide provides the basic science of nutrition, some of us require more support than others when it comes to optimising our diets. If you feel you need more support, for example if you suffer from food intolerances, or think you would benefit from a tailored nutrition plan, you can seek help from either a **registered dietician**, a **registered nutritionist**, or a **nutritional therapist**. The links to more information for all of these are below. Your GP will also be able to give you more information:

[The Nutrition Society](#)

[The British Dietetic Association](#)

[The British Association For Applied Nutrition & Nutritional Therapy](#)

