

The Care Home Digest

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Healthy eating for adults



Adulthood - Keep healthy, prevent illness

Balanced, varied diet
Low fat
Low salt
Low sugar
High Fibre
5 a day
Hydration
Limit alcohol
Achieve & maintain healthy BMI

Healthy Eating



Older age - Prevent frailty and malnutrition

Nutrient rich, balanced diet in combination with activity
Higher protein
Vitamins
Minerals
Hydration
Maintain weight at a healthy BMI

Eating for Health (focus on diet quality)

Older age – If malnutrition occurs: recognise, identify & treat/manage

Nutrient dense diet
Nutrient dense food fortification
Hydration

Food based management (focus on diet quality)

[illegible]

Eating, drinking and ageing well. A nutrient-rich diet is...



EAT THE RAINBOW

Fruit and vegetables

Fruit and vegetables provide a wide range of vitamins and minerals. Have at least five varied portions every day. Pick leafy greens like kale, spinach, and lettuce which are good sources of folate.

1 portion =

80g	fresh, frozen or canned
30g	dried

Carbohydrate (Starchy)

Carbohydrates provide energy, especially for the brain. Have one portion of something starchy at each meal.

1 portion =

190g	cooked pasta, rice or grains
80g	bread or chapatti/roti
30g	breakfast cereal or flour
150g	potato, sweet potato, yam, cassava, plantain

Fibre

Fibre gets your gut working normally, supporting good gut bacteria and it can also help mental health. To help maintain a healthy gut choose wholegrain carbohydrate options and eat fruit, vegetables, beans and lentils.

Drinking enough?

Fat

Fats are high in energy and should be eaten sparingly but they can help you absorb vitamins like A, D, E and K. Limit high-fat foods like processed meats and pastries. Swap butter/ ghee for unsaturated vegetable, rapeseed, olive and sunflower oils and spread. Nuts and seeds are also good choices.

Protein

Protein is good for muscle strength, so have at least one portion with each meal. Consider having two or more portions of fish per week, one of which is oily, such as salmon or mackerel. Limit processed meats.

1 portion =

90g	cooked meat or poultry
140g	fish or shellfish
2	eggs
100g	meat alternative
150g	cooked beans or lentils
30g	nuts

Milk and milk-based foods

Milk and milk-based products are a key source of calcium. Have three portions of milk and milk-based products per day such as milk, yoghurt, or cheese. If you don't like, or can't have milk and milk-based foods, choose calcium-fortified milk-free alternatives.

1 portion =

200ml	milk
30g	cheese
125g	yoghurt

Vitamin B12

Intake can be low in older adults but vitamin B12 can help maintain energy levels and health. Regularly have foods fortified with it, for example breakfast cereals or yeast extract, or have animal products including lean meat, fish, poultry, eggs, milk and milk-based foods as outlined above.

Fluid is also important as you age. As you get older, you might not recognise the feeling of thirst as you used to, but you still need to drink. All fluids count, not just water. Other fluids include tea, coffee, milk, squash, fruit juice, fizzy drinks, hot chocolate and weak alcoholic drinks (up to 4% strength (ABV)). Water, tea, coffee (without added sugar) and milk are the best choices for your teeth. Men and women have slightly different fluid needs:



Alcohol

Alcohol isn't an essential nutrient and intake should not exceed national recommendations of 14 units per week. Spread your intake across the week, rather than drinking in large quantities in one go – and have some alcohol-free days.



WOMEN
at least
1600 ML
per day
= 3 PINTS



MEN
at least
2000 ML
per day
= 3 PINTS



250ml
7-8 MUGS A DAY



150ml
11-14 FULL CUPS A DAY

- Cups & glasses can be lots of different sizes so it's important to know how much fluid they hold.
- Drinking often during the day can be the key to getting all the fluid you need.



Salt

Salt can make food tastier but too much can increase your risk of high blood pressure. Limit it and try replacing with herbs, spices, garlic, vinegar and lemon juice. Reduce your intake of processed meats and salty snacks, as well as the amount of salt you add when cooking or at the table.



Sugar

Sugar doesn't provide the body with anything it needs to keep well. Limit your intake of sweet snacks, sugary drinks and confectionery.



If you drink less than the amount advised and are worried that drinking more might cause you problems controlling your bladder, please discuss this with a healthcare professional.

Specific support for care homes



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Nutrition and hydration needs, screening for malnutrition and care planning

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Chapter 1 briefly discussed how to identify a resident who is at risk of malnutrition. As mentioned in Chapter 1, anyone at risk of malnutrition will need a personalised nutrition and hydration care plan that outlines how their nutrition and hydration needs will be addressed.

Catering and care teams have an important role in the management of residents with or at risk of malnutrition, and this is likely to be the most frequently requested special diet that will need to be provided within the home. There needs to be clear and transparent communication between the catering and care teams so that catering teams are aware of the nutrition goals agreed with the resident or put in place in their best interests²⁵

Links to resources

► National

- Eating, drinking and ageing well
<https://www.bda.uk.com/resource/eating-drinking-and-ageing-well-a-new-bda-resource-for-older-people.html>
- Care Home Digest
<https://www.bda.uk.com/practice-and-education/care-home-digest.html>
- Spotting and treating malnutrition
<https://www.bda.uk.com/resource/malnutrition.html>
- Muscle health, nutrition and ageing
<https://www.bda.uk.com/resource/muscle-health-nutrition-and-ageing.html>
- Hydration in older adults
<https://www.bda.uk.com/resource/hydration-in-older-adults.html>
- Vitamin D
<https://www.bda.uk.com/resource/vitamin-d.html>

► Hertfordshire and West Essex

- Care home malnutrition management pathway
<https://www.hweclinicalguidance.nhs.uk/all-clinical-areas-documents/download?cid=1128&checksum=3fe78a8acf5fda99de95303940a2420c>
- Care homes & ONS - Relatives and friends information
https://www.hweclinicalguidance.nhs.uk/all-clinical-areas-documents/nutrition-hydration/nutrition_support/
- Eating well for small appetites
<https://www.hweclinicalguidance.nhs.uk/all-clinical-areas-documents/download?cid=257&checksum=d96409bf894217686ba124d7356686c9>
- Eating well - Homemade supplements
<https://www.hweclinicalguidance.nhs.uk/all-clinical-areas-documents/download?cid=259&checksum=cfa0860e83a4c3a763a7e62d825349f7>

Thank you – Any questions?

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- Committee member



and



- Chair – Department of Health and Social Care Advisory Committee on Borderline Substances (ACBS)
- Chair – PrescQIPP Nutrition Virtual Professional Group
- Judge – National Association of Care Catering (NACC) Care Chef and Care Awards
- CQC specialist adviser – Nutrition in Social Care
- Founding member – SPARC  Swallow Perspectives, Advocacy and Research Collective
- Committee member – UK Swallow Research Group