



## POCKET GUIDE FOR A HEALTHY DIET



## HEALTH BENEFITS OF A HEALTHY DIET

### BREASTFEEDING

WHO recommends that babies are fed only breastmilk from birth through their first 6 months of life.



Exclusive breastfeeding provides babies all the nutrition they need for healthy growth and development.

Babies who are exclusively breastfed in the first 6 months get the best start:

- protection from respiratory infections and diarrhoeal disease; and
- protection from noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) including obesity, asthma and diabetes later in life.

### COMPLEMENTARY FEEDING



WHO recommends introducing complementary foods at 6 months, with continued on-demand breastfeeding until 2 years of age or beyond.

Appropriate complementary foods are a key step to ensure a baby's healthy growth.

- The transition to healthy and safely prepared family foods can prevent child malnutrition.
- The introduction of a variety of locally available and affordable fresh foods helps develop healthy food habits for life.

### FRUITS & VEGETABLES

WHO recommends consumption of at least 400 g (5 portions) of fruits and vegetables a day.



Fruits and vegetables are an important source of vitamins, minerals and fibre. Eating a variety of fruits and vegetables helps ensure that vitamins and minerals required for your body are available. A high fibre diet can help reduce the risk of overweight and diabetes.



### SUGARS

WHO recommends reducing consumption of sugars to less than 10% of the total energy consumed in a day. Less than 5% brings additional health benefits.



Since sugars are one of the main contributors to excess calories in a diet, reducing sugar consumption can help prevent overweight, obesity and related diseases such as heart disease and type 2 diabetes.

It can also significantly reduce the risk of dental caries and other dental diseases.



### FATS & OILS

WHO recommends eating less than 30% of total the total energy consumed in a day from fats, and less than 10% in the form of saturated fats.



Replacing saturated with unsaturated fats and removing trans fats from the diet helps reduce the risk of cardiovascular diseases, type 2 diabetes and obesity.



### SALT

WHO recommends consumption of less than 5 g salt (2 g sodium) per day for adults.

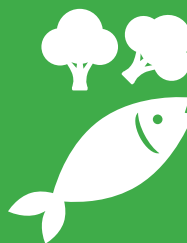


Limiting salt (sodium) consumption can help reduce the risk of hypertension, which in turn reduces the risk of cardiovascular disease and stroke.



### IRON

The WHO recommendation for iron varies according to sex, age, body weight and your typical diet composition. For example, women over 18 years old with an average weight of 62 kg and a diet rich in meat and dairy should consume 19.6 mg of iron/day.



Eating iron-rich foods helps prevent anaemia. In its severe form, anaemia causes fatigue, dizziness and drowsiness, and affects child development. Pregnant women and children in particular should pay extra attention to iron-rich foods.



### WATER

WHO recommends the consumption of 1.4 to 2 litres of water per day for adults. More should be consumed in hot climates and due to sickness or exercise.



Safe drinking water can prevent diarrhoea and other infectious diseases. It is also crucial for the body to perform its functions, including supplying nutrients to the cells and removing waste.

Sugary drinks should be replaced with water as the source of hydration.



## SERVING SIZE

You can use your hands to estimate serving sizes.



The secret to serving size is in your hand



**A FIST** = 1 serving of cooked rice  
1 serving of cooked noodle  
1 serving of fruit (e.g. apple)  
1 serving of vegetables (e.g. green beans)



**PALM** = 1 serving of lean meat  
1 serving of fish



**THUMB TIP** = 1 teaspoon  
**3x THUMB TIPS** = 1 tablespoon (=3 teaspoons)

## FRUITS & VEGETABLES

One serving of fruits or vegetables is approximately a handful, which means a child's serving is smaller than an adult's. Eat five handfuls per day, or more.



You can eat more fruit and vegetables by:

- always including vegetables in your meals;
- eating fresh fruits and raw vegetables as snacks;
- eating fresh local fruits and vegetables in season; and
- adding fruits and vegetables of at least three colours in your plate (e.g. red, yellow, green, purple and white).

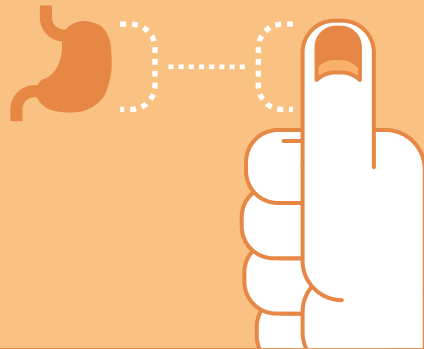


## BREASTFEEDING

Babies 0-6 months should be fed only breastmilk. No other food or water are needed.



Virtually all mothers can produce enough milk. A newborn baby's stomach is only the size of your thumbnail.



## COMPLEMENTARY FEEDING



Start with small amounts of food and gradually increase the variety of food and frequency of meals.

Complementary foods should be provided:

- 2-3 times/day at 6-8 months of age
- 3-4 times/day at 9-11 months of age
- 3-4 times/day at 12-24 months of age, plus nutritious snacks such as a piece of fruit or bread 1-2 times/day.

Fresh foods should be added to the staple food (such as rice, wheat, yam, potato) every day to provide other nutrients.

Do not add salt or sugar.  
Avoid processed foods.

## SUGARS

Adults should eat less than 12 teaspoons (50 g) of sugars per day, considering a 2000 kcal diet. For children aged 4-12 years, the limit varies from 8-12 teaspoons (30-50 g).



The limit of 12 teaspoons applies to sugars added to foods and beverages by the manufacturer, cook or consumer, and also sugars naturally present in honey, syrups, fruit juices and fruit juice concentrates.

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- Watch out for hidden sugars in processed foods and drinks, such as breads, sauces, dressing, soups and alcohol.
- Choose water instead of sugary drinks.
- Choose fresh fruits as snacks instead of fruit juices and sugary snacks.

Did you know that 330mL of fruit juice can contain 9.5 teaspoons of sugar?

## FATS & OILS

Adults should limit their consumption of total fats and oils to 67 g per day for a 2000 kcal diet. For children aged 4-12 years, the limit varies from 41-67 g.



Reduce your fat intake:

- choose healthier cooking oils (e.g. sunflower, canola, olive oil);
- remove visible fats from all types of meat;
- boil, steam or bake rather than fry;
- avoid foods high in saturated fats such as cheese, ice cream, fatty meat;
- choose foods high in unsaturated fats (e.g. salmon, avocados, natural peanut butter and nuts).

Stop consuming processed foods that contain trans fats, by checking on the food labels.

One teaspoon holds about 3.5 g of oil.



## FOR MORE INFORMATION

HEALTHY DIET FACT SHEET  
<http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs394/en/>

SUGAR  
<http://www.wpro.who.int/nutrition/>

NUTRITION IN THE WESTERN PACIFIC REGION  
<http://www.wpro.who.int/nutrition>

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## SALT

The limit of 5 g of salt per day represents less than 1 teaspoon.



Watch out for salt/sodium in processed foods, such as instant noodles, processed meat and salty snacks, and even soft drinks.

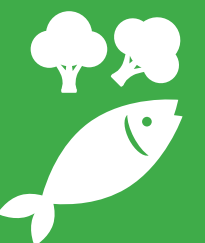
- Choose fresh foods rather than processed foods.
- Use herbs instead of salt, soy sauce or fish sauce for seasoning.
- Remove the salt shaker from the dining table.

Eat fresh fruits and vegetables as snacks.



## IRON

To reach the recommended iron intake for your sex, age and body weight, eat plenty of iron-rich foods.



Iron-rich foods include:

- green leafy vegetables (e.g. broccoli, spinach, kale, collards);
- legumes (e.g. beans);
- nuts (almonds, cashew nuts, hazelnuts);
- seaweed, sea mustard;
- whole grains (wheat, oats, rice); and
- animal products such as meat, eggs, liver, oysters, clams, anchovy, shrimp, salmon and tuna.

The presence of meat, poultry and fish in the diet improves iron absorption.

