

The background is a light blue gradient with several realistic water droplets of various sizes scattered across the surface. The droplets have highlights and shadows, giving them a three-dimensional appearance.

# **What's for lunch?**

## **Introducing new foods**

# AIMS & OUTCOMES

- To understand the importance of a balanced diet.
- To understand the effects of unhealthy food and drinks.
- To be able to identify key snack swaps.
- To be confident in introducing new foods in different ways.
- To identify healthy alternatives for pack lunches and snacks.
- To be able to seek further advice and support if needed.

# HEALTHY VS UNHEALTHY

## Healthy diet

- More active
- More energised
- Natural anti-depressant
- Improves learning capacity
- Strengthens heart muscles
- Body heals quicker
- Stronger immune system

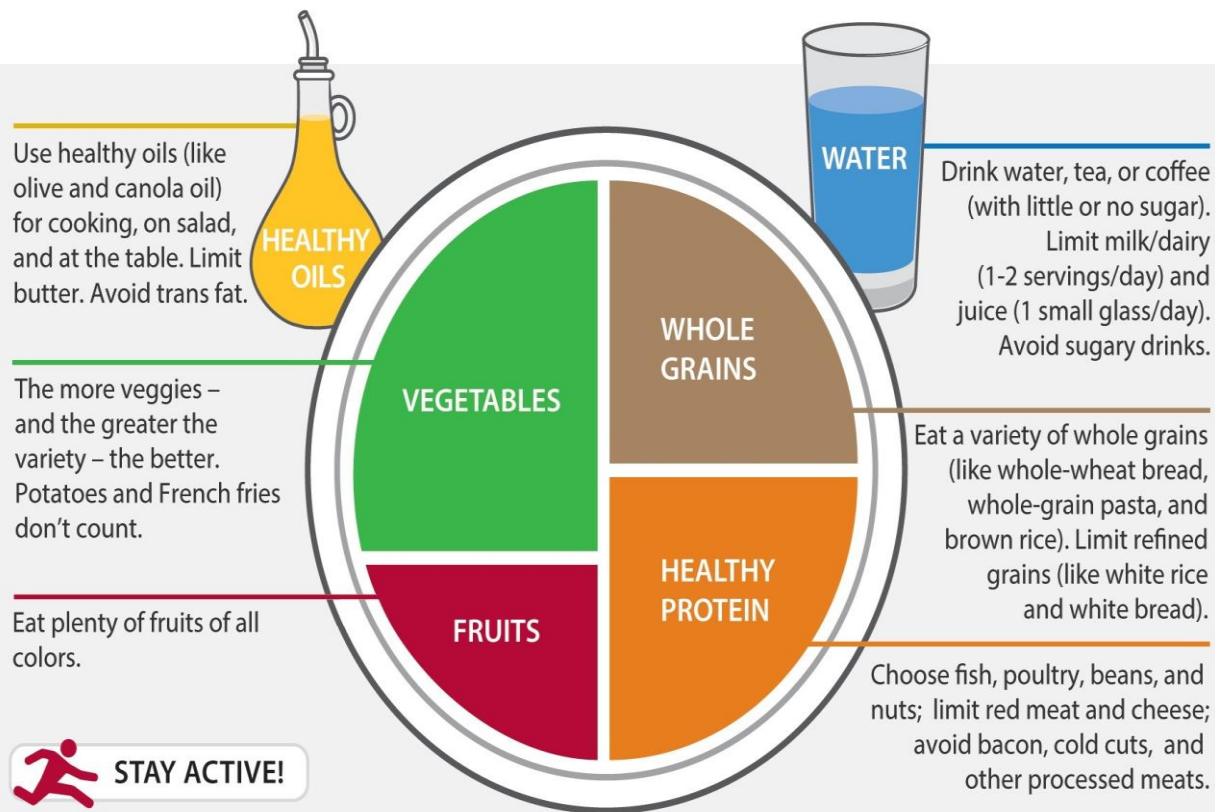


## Unhealthy diet

- At risk of depression and other mental illnesses
- At risk of health conditions in adulthood
- Longer recovery time from injury/ illness
- Bad sleep habits
- Lack of confidence
- Prone to stress

# IMPORTANCE OF BALANCE

## HEALTHY EATING PLATE



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Balance is key from a young age. If we begin to broaden children's tastes and senses they are more likely to try new foods.

Food Group	Servings per Day	Portion Size for Ages 1 to 3	Portion Size for Ages 4 to 6	Portion Size for Ages 7 to 10
Fruits	2–3 servings	¼ cup cooked, frozen, or canned ½ piece fresh ¼ cup 100% juice	¼ cup cooked, frozen, or canned ½ piece fresh ⅓ cup 100% juice	⅓ cup cooked, frozen, or canned 1 piece fresh ½ cup 100% juice
Vegetables	2–3 servings	¼ cup cooked	¼ cup cooked ½ cup salad	½ cup cooked 1 cup salad
Grains	6–11 servings	½ slice bread ¼ cup cooked cereal, rice, or pasta ⅓ cup dry cereal 2–3 crackers	½ slice bread ⅓ cup cooked cereal, rice, or pasta ½ cup dry cereal 3–4 crackers	1 slice bread ½ cup cooked cereal, rice, or pasta ¾–1 cup dry cereal 4–5 crackers
Meats and other proteins	2 servings	1 ounce meat, fish, chicken, or tofu ¼ cup cooked beans ½ egg	1 ounce meat, fish, chicken, or tofu ⅓ cup cooked beans 1 egg	2–3 ounces meat, fish, chicken, or tofu ½ cup cooked beans 1 or 2 eggs
Dairy	2–3 servings	½ cup milk ½ ounce cheese ⅓ cup yogurt	½ cup milk 1 ounce cheese ½ cup yogurt	1 cup milk 1 ounce cheese ¾–1 cup yogurt

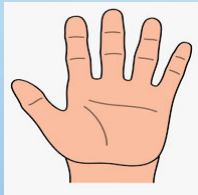
Portion sizes can be surprising. Take a look at what children should be eating daily.

# SENSORY EXPERIENCE

If we're thinking about processing sensory information and the difficulties a child may be facing when they eat, we need to consider the senses they use when eating.



Vision (visual) - Eating starts with our eyes. We need to be able to see where the food is, we also look at the shape, colour and presentation of our food.



Touch (tactile) - We touch the food with our hands, body and face so that we can move the food from the plate and into our mouths. We have to be able to feel the food as we put it into our mouths and chew it. It also tells us the shape and texture of the food and whether it is hot or cold.



Smell (olfactory) - As we smell food as we bring it towards our mouths and explore how it smells.



Taste (gustatory) - As the food goes into our mouths we taste it.

# SENSORY EXPERIENCE



Hearing (auditory) - We listen to how the food sounds as we eat it, particularly if we eat something hard.



Body Awareness - (Proprioception) We need to know how much force to use when biting and chewing different foods and when our mouths are full/empty.



Vestibular - (Balance) We need to be able to keep ourselves and our head upright and in the correct position when eating.

# PICKY EATERS

THINK ABOUT THE SENSORY PROCESS IN THE PREVIOUS SLIDES.

IS YOUR CHILD FINDING ONE SENSORY AREA PARTICULARLY DIFFICULT?

LET'S TRY AND INVESTIGATE BY INTRODUCING NEW FOODS..

- 1. PUT THE NEW FOOD ON THE TABLE
- 2. PUT THE NEW FOOD ON THEIR PLATE
- 3. ENCOURAGE THEM TOUCH IT
- 4. ENCOURAGE THEM TO LICK THE FOOD
- 5. ENCOURAGE THEM TO HOLD THE FOOD IN THEIR MOUTH
- 6. ENCOURAGE THEM TO SWALLOW THE FOOD

THIS TECHNIQUE CAN BE TRIED DAILY, THE KEY IS NOT TO GET STRESSED AND SHOW ANXIETY. THIS IS A FUN TIME TO TRY NEW FOOD. IF THE FOOD IS NOT EATEN WITHIN THE MEAL TIME, TAKE IT AWAY AND TRY AGAIN THE NEXT DAY.

ON AVERAGE IT CAN TAKE UP TO **20 TIMES** FOR A CHILD TO LIKE A NEW FOOD!

# HOW TO GET STARTED

**Be creative.** A so-called ‘picky eater’ may be more willing to eat “rocks and trees” than meatballs and broccoli. Let them play with their food as much as possible. Make food fun!



**Expectations.** Outline what behaviours are unacceptable, such as throwing the plate of food on the floor, but what they can do is, feel the texture of food with their fingers. This process helps your child explore the food.



**Environment.** do they need a distraction such as music? Does your child need a puppet / favourite character to help them model eating? Would it help to place a mirror in front of them to see where their mouth is? Is the seating comfortable and positioning appropriate?





# ROUTINES

- MENU PLANNING FOR EVENING MEALS
- STICK TO A 5 OPPORTUNITIES TO EAT THREE MEALS A DAY, PLUS MID MORNING SNACK AND A SMALL AFTERNOON SNACK.
- LET CHILDREN GET INVOLVED WITH MEAL PLANNING.
- LET CHILDREN HELP WITH MEAL PREPARATION AND COOKING (SUPERVISED BY ADULT).
- MAKE MEAL TIMES A FAMILY TIME.

## Family Meals Build Strong Families

Family meals are the most reliable way for families to connect, and there are tons of benefits for everyone.

### Benefits...

Children who eat with their family have

- More nutritious foods, more fruits and veggies
- Less obesity
- Better vocabulary
- Improved school behavior and performance
- Healthy eating habits
- Less high-risk behavior in teens (smoking, drinking, drugs, sex, violence!)
- Feeling of family togetherness

### Tips for successful family meals

- No TV or phone during meals
- Be warm and engaged, not controlling and restrictive
- Ask question, share stories of your day
- Start with a few meals a week
- Try breakfast, lunch or dinner
- Let children help prepare meals

### Reminders about healthy food habits

- Never use food as a reward or punishment
- Have meal and snack time around the same time each day

### Parents are responsible for

- What to feed
- When to feed
- Where to feed

### Children are responsible for

- Whether to eat (from what is offered)
- How much to eat

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# SUPPORT WITH MEAL TIMES

<https://www.nhs.uk/healthier-families/food-facts/healthier-food-swaps/>

<https://www.nhs.uk/healthier-families/food-facts/healthier-food-swaps/#fs-app>

<https://www.nhs.uk/healthier-families/recipes/>

<https://www.yummytoddlerfood.com/kids-meal-ideas/>

<https://realfood.tesco.com/meal-planner/featured-meal-plans.html>

