

The Food Pyramid

For adults, teenagers and children aged five and over

Not needed for good health.

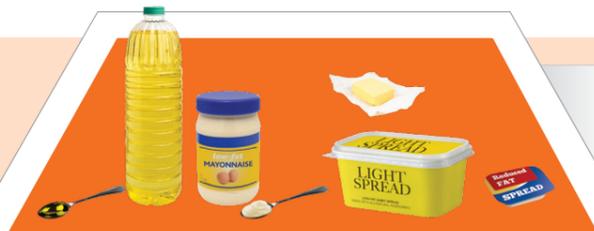
Foods and drinks high in fat, sugar and salt



NOT every day

Most people consume snacks high in fat, sugar and salt and sugar sweetened drinks up to 6 times a day (Healthy Ireland Survey 2016). There are no recommended servings for Top Shelf foods and drinks because they are not needed for good health.

Fats, spreads and oils



In very small amounts

Use as little as possible. Choose mono or polyunsaturated reduced-fat or light spreads. Choose rapeseed, olive, canola, sunflower or corn oils. Limit mayonnaise, coleslaw and salad dressings as they also contain oil. Always cook with as little fat or oil as possible – grilling, oven-baking, steaming, boiling or stir-frying.

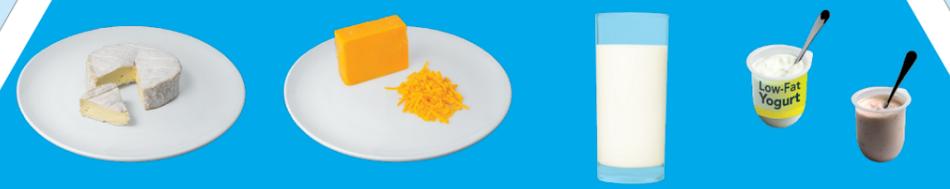
Meat, poultry, fish, eggs, beans and nuts



2 Servings a day

Choose lean meat, poultry (without skin) and fish. Eat oily fish up to twice a week. Choose eggs, beans and nuts. Limit processed salty meats such as sausages, bacon and ham.

Milk, yogurt and cheese



3 Servings a day

5 for children age 9–12 and teenagers age 13–18
Choose reduced-fat or low-fat varieties. Choose low-fat milk and yogurt more often than cheese. Enjoy cheese in small amounts. Women who are pregnant or breastfeeding need 3 servings a day.

Wholemeal cereals and breads, potatoes, pasta and rice



3-5* Servings a day

Up to 7* for teenage boys and men age 19–50
Wholemeal and wholegrain cereals are best. Enjoy at each meal. The number of servings depends on age, size, if you are a man or a woman and on activity levels. Watch your serving size and use the Daily Servings Guide below.*

Vegetables, salad and fruit



5-7 Servings a day

Base your meals on these and enjoy a variety of colours. More is better. Limit fruit juice to unsweetened, once a day.

Needed for good health. Enjoy a variety every day.

***Daily Servings Guide – wholemeal cereals and breads, potatoes, pasta and rice**

Active	Child (5–12)	Teenager (13–18)	Adult (19–50)	Adult (51+)	Inactive	Teenager (13–18)	Adult (19–50)	Adult (51+)
		3–4	4	4–5		3–4		3
	3–5	5–7	5–7	4–5		4–5	4–6	4

There is no guideline for inactive children as it is essential that all children are active.

Average daily calorie needs for all foods and drinks for adults

Active 2000kcal **Inactive** 1800kcal **Active** 2500kcal **Inactive** 2000kcal

Serving size guide

Cereals, cooked rice and pasta, and vegetables, salad and fruit Use a 200ml disposable plastic cup to guide serving size.	Cheese Use two thumbs, width and depth to guide serving size.	Meat, poultry, fish The palm of the hand, width and depth without fingers and thumbs, shows how much you need in a day.	Reduced-fat spread Portion packs found in cafes can guide the amount you use. One pack should be enough for two slices of bread.	Oils Use one teaspoon of oil per person when cooking or in salads.
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Drink at least 8 cups of fluid a day – water is best

Get Active!
To maintain a healthy weight adults need at least 30 minutes a day of moderate activity on 5 days a week (or 150 minutes a week); children need to be active at a moderate to vigorous level for at least 60 minutes every day.

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www.healthyireland.ie



Not needed for good health.

Foods and drinks high in fat, sugar and salt

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NOT every day

Small or fun-size servings of chocolate, biscuits, cakes, sweets, crisps and other savoury snacks, ice cream and sugary drinks – **not every day, maximum once or twice a week.**

1 serving size is:

In very small amounts

1 portion pack reduced-fat or light spread for 2 slices of bread
1 teaspoon oil per person when cooking

Fats, spreads and oils

Use as little as possible. Choose mono or polyunsaturated reduced-fat or light spreads. Choose rapeseed, olive, canola, sunflower or corn oils. Limit mayonnaise, coleslaw and salad dressings as they also contain oil. Always cook with as little fat or oil as possible – grilling, oven-baking, steaming, boiling or stir-frying.



Meat, poultry, fish, eggs, beans and nuts

Choose lean meat, poultry (without skin) and fish. Eat oily fish up to twice a week. Choose eggs, beans and nuts. Limit processed salty meats such as sausages, bacon and ham.

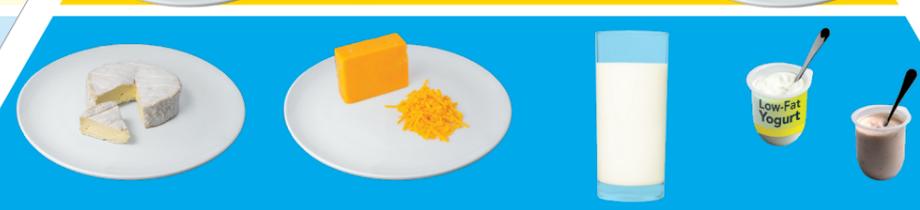


2 Servings a day

50–75g cooked lean beef, lamb, pork, mince or poultry (half size of palm of hand)
100g cooked fish, soya or tofu
¾ cup beans or lentils
2 eggs
40g unsalted nuts or seeds

Milk, yogurt and cheese

Choose reduced-fat or low-fat varieties. Choose low-fat milk and yogurt more often than cheese. Enjoy cheese in small amounts. Women who are pregnant or breastfeeding need 3 servings a day.



3 Servings a day

5 for children age 9–12 and teenagers age 13–18

1 glass (200ml) milk
1 carton (125g) yogurt
1 bottle (200ml) yogurt drink
2 thumbs (25g) hard or semi-hard cheese such as cheddar or edam
2 thumbs (25g) soft cheese such as brie or camembert

Wholemeal cereals and breads, potatoes, pasta and rice

Wholemeal and wholegrain cereals are best. Enjoy at each meal. The number of servings depends on age, size, if you are a man or a woman and on activity levels. Watch your serving size and use the Daily Servings Guide below.*



3-5* Servings a day

Up to 7* for teenage boys and men age 19–50

2 thin slices wholemeal bread, 1½ slices wholemeal soda bread or 1 pitta pocket
½ cup dry porridge oats or ½ cup unsweetened muesli
1 cup flaked type breakfast cereal
1 cup cooked rice, pasta, noodles or cous cous
2 medium or 4 small potatoes, 1 cup yam or plantain

Vegetables, salad and fruit

Base your meals on these and enjoy a variety of colours. More is better. Limit fruit juice to unsweetened, once a day.



5-7 Servings a day

1 medium sized fruit – apple, orange, pear or banana
2 small fruits – plums, kiwis or mandarin oranges
Small fruits – 6 strawberries, 10 grapes or 16 raspberries
½ cup cooked vegetables – fresh or frozen
1 bowl salad – lettuce, tomato, cucumber
1 bowl homemade vegetable soup
150ml unsweetened fruit juice

*Daily Servings Guide – wholemeal cereals and breads, potatoes, pasta and rice

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Serving size guide



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Use a 200ml disposable plastic cup to guide serving size.



Cheese
Use two thumbs, width and depth to guide serving size.



Meat, poultry, fish
The palm of the hand, width and depth without fingers and thumbs, shows how much you need in a day.



Reduced-fat spread
Portion packs found in cafes can guide the amount you use. One pack should be enough for two slices of bread.



Oils
Use one teaspoon of oil per person when cooking or in salads.



Drink at least 8 cups of fluid a day – water is best



Get Active!

To maintain a healthy weight adults need at least 30 minutes a day of moderate activity on 5 days a week (or 150 minutes a week); children need to be active at a moderate to vigorous level for at least 60 minutes every day.

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NOT every day

! Maximum once or twice a week

Fats, spreads and oils



In very small amounts

Meat, poultry, fish, eggs, beans and nuts



2 Servings a day

Milk, yogurt and cheese



3 Servings a day
5 for children age 9-12 and teenagers age 13-18

Wholemeal cereals and breads, potatoes, pasta and rice



3-5* Servings a day
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Vegetables, salad and fruit



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Your guide to Your guide to fats, spreads and oils

Fats, spreads and oils provide essential fats but use in very small amounts.

Use as little as possible.



Food Shelf Facts



All types of fats and oils are very high in calories but some contain better fats than others.



Reduced-fat spreads are lower in calories as they contain less fat and more water.



Saturated fats, found in hard fats, raise blood cholesterol and can increase risk of heart disease.



Essential fats are found in vegetable oils, including rapeseed, olive, canola, sunflower and corn oils.

What is a Serving?

1 serving size is:

1 portion pack of reduced-fat or light spread for 2 slices of bread

1 teaspoon of rapeseed, olive, canola, sunflower or corn oil per person when cooking

Portion guide

Portion packs of reduced-fat spread found in cafes can guide the amount you use. One should be enough for two slices of bread.



1 for 2 slices of bread

Healthy Eating Tips



Choose mono or polyunsaturated reduced-fat or light spreads.



Choose rapeseed, olive, canola, sunflower or corn oils.



All oils contain the same amount of calories. Always cook with as little fat or oil as possible – measure it out instead of pouring into the pan.



Limit mayonnaise, coleslaw and salad dressings as they also contain oil. Choose lower fat options and use smaller amounts.

Your guide to Foods and drinks high in fat, sugar and salt

Most people consume snacks high in fat, sugar and salt and sugar sweetened drinks up to 6 times a day (Healthy Ireland Survey 2016). There are no recommended servings for this shelf because they are not needed for good health.

Not every day – maximum once or twice a week.



Food Shelf Facts



These foods have little nutritional value and may cause obesity which can lead to heart disease, type 2 diabetes and some cancers.



Many processed foods like cakes, biscuits and confectionery contain high levels of added sugars and can be high in calories.



Eating too much salt can lead to raised blood pressure, which triples your chances of developing heart disease and stroke.



Many processed foods like takeaways and ready meals are high in fat and can be harmful to heart health.

A Guide to 100 Calories

Each of the following contains 100 calories

4 squares of chocolate (half a bar)

1 small or fun-sized chocolate coated bar

1 bag lower-fat crisps

1 small cup cake (no icing)

1 plain mini muffin

2 plain biscuits or 1 chocolate biscuit

½ can or 200ml of sugary drink

1 scoop of vanilla ice-cream

½ or 1 cereal bar – check the label for calories

5–6 chips

Healthy Eating Tips



Limit foods and drinks high in fat, sugar and salt to sometimes – not every day. Choose smaller amounts or fun-size servings.



Limit chips and takeaway food as much as possible – most are very high in fat, salt and calories.



Choose healthy snacks such as fruit and vegetables.



Drink water instead of sugary drinks.

Your guide to Meat, poultry, fish, eggs, beans and nuts

The foods on this shelf provide protein for growth and repair. They are also the main source of iron for healthy blood.

Choose 2 servings a day.



Food Shelf Facts



Lean red meat is a good source of iron. Chicken, turkey and fish are good low-fat options.



Oily fish provides essential omega 3 fats.



Beans and eggs are good sources of protein and are low in fat. They are a good choice for meat-free days.



Limit processed salty meats such as sausages, bacon and ham – not every day.

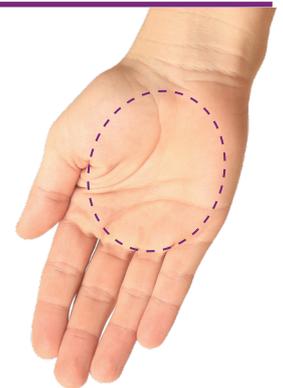
What is a Serving?

1 serving size is:

Lean beef, lamb, pork, mince or poultry	50–75g cooked (half size of palm of hand)
Cooked fish, soya or tofu	100g
Beans or lentils	$\frac{3}{4}$ cup
Eggs	2
Unsalted nuts or seeds	40g

Portion guide

The palm of the hand, width and depth without fingers and thumbs, shows how much meat, poultry and fish you need in a day.



Healthy Eating Tips



Lean meat is best. Remove skin from poultry and visible fat from meat for the healthier option.



Use low-fat cooking methods such as grilling, baking, steaming or boiling. Cook without fat or oil to keep calorie intake low.



Eat oily fish up to twice a week.



Homemade shepherd's pies, stews, stir-fries and curries are good choices for family meals.

Your guide to Milk, yogurt and cheese

The foods and drinks on this shelf provide calcium needed for healthy bones and teeth. They also provide good quality protein for growth and repair.

Choose 3 servings a day.
Choose 5 if aged between 9 and 18 years.



Food Shelf Facts



Calcium found in dairy foods is important for bone health and especially during the teenage growth spurt.



Vitamin D helps absorb calcium better. The Irish diet is low in vitamin D – talk to your pharmacist or doctor about taking a supplement.



Low-fat options provide the same amount of calcium and other nutrients with fewer calories and saturated fat.



All foods from this shelf are a good source of calcium, protein, vitamin B12, riboflavin and vitamin A.

What is a Serving?

1 serving size is:

- 1 glass (200ml) milk

- 1 carton (125g) yogurt

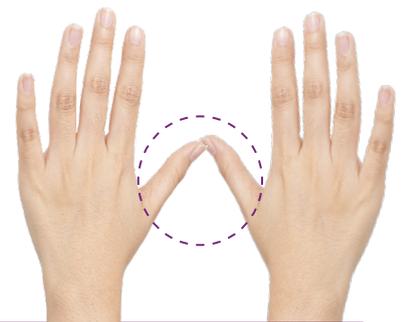
- 1 bottle (200ml) yogurt drink

- 2 thumbs (25g) of hard or semi-hard cheese such as cheddar or edam

- 2 thumbs (25g) soft cheese such as brie or camembert

Portion guide for cheese

Use two thumbs, width and depth to guide portion size.



Healthy Eating Tips



Choose reduced-fat or low-fat varieties. Choose low-fat milk and yogurt more often than cheese.



Milk on cereal can be a good way to reach 5 servings a day if aged 9 to 18 years.



Some yogurts and yogurt drinks can have added sugar. Check the label.



If choosing dairy alternatives such as soya milk and yogurts, choose those with added calcium.

Your guide to Vegetables, salad and fruit

The foods on this shelf are low in calories and contain fibre which aids digestion. They provide many important vitamins and minerals.

Choose 5 to 7 servings a day.



Food Shelf Facts



The foods in this shelf can help control body weight as part of a healthy lifestyle and contain nutrients that protect against heart disease and cancer.



Enjoy a variety of coloured fruit and vegetables to benefit from the different minerals and vitamins each contains.



Oranges, strawberries or kiwifruit are rich in vitamin C which aids iron absorption.



Most fruit and vegetables are fat free.

What is one Serving?

1 serving size is:

Apple, orange, pear or banana	1
Plums, kiwis or mandarin oranges	2
Strawberries	6
Grapes	10
Raspberries	16
Cooked vegetables – fresh or frozen	½ cup
Salad – lettuce, tomato, cucumber	1 bowl
Homemade vegetable soup	1 bowl
Unsweetened fruit juice	150ml

Portion guide

Fill half your plate with vegetables, salads or fruit.



Healthy Eating Tips



Base your meals on vegetables, salad and fruit. Add salad vegetables to sandwiches.



Limit fruit juice to once a day with a meal and always choose unsweetened.



Choose fruit and raw vegetables such as chopped carrots as tasty, healthy snacks.



Add vegetables to stir-fries, stews and curries – the more vegetables the better.

Your guide to Wholemeal cereals and breads, potatoes, pasta and rice

The foods on this shelf are the best energy providers for your body.

Choose 3 to 5 servings a day. Up to 7 servings for teenage boys and men aged 19–50. Very active people will need more.



Food Shelf Facts



Wholegrain choices contain fibre to help your digestive system and can protect against bowel diseases.



Wholemeal breads, cereals and potatoes provide the best energy for the body to work.



The amount of energy you need depends on your physical activity levels. Adults watching their weight will need less.



The number of servings you need depends on age, size, if you are a man or a woman and on activity levels.

What is a Serving?

1 serving size is:

2 thin slices wholemeal bread,
1½ slices wholemeal soda bread or
1 pitta pocket

⅓ cup dry porridge oats or
½ cup unsweetened muesli

1 cup flaked type breakfast cereal

1 cup cooked rice, pasta, noodles or cous cous

2 medium or 4 small potatoes,
1 cup yam or plantain

Portion guide

Use a 200ml disposable plastic cup to guide portion size for breakfast cereals, cooked rice and pasta.



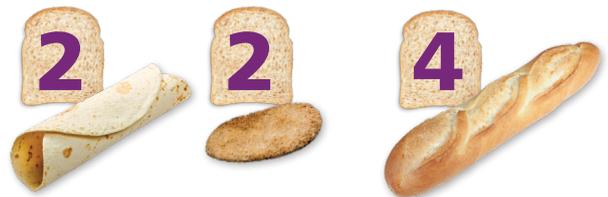
Healthy Eating Tips



Choose a **variety** of foods from this shelf every day.



Try using brown rice and wholewheat pasta and check your portion guide.



Be aware of portion size and calorie difference

1 small wrap = 2 slices of bread
1 pitta pocket = 2 slices of bread
1 demi baguette = 4 slices of bread

Some types may contain more calories than others.