

## An easy guide for finding the right balance for you



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## Why think about PORTIOn SizE?

Most of us probably don't think about portion size when we eat - it typically depends on what we would usually have, how hungry we feel and how much is in a pack or on a plate. But having a healthy balanced diet is about getting the right types of food and drinks in the right amounts.

This guide aims to help you find the right balance for you - it's not only about eating less, it's also about eating differently!
The information in this booklet has been developed by the British Nutrition Foundation (BNF) - these are not Government recommendations but suggestions of practical portion sizes for healthy adults for a range of food and drinks that can be used to help you put a healthy, balanced diet into practice.
It is designed to complement the Government's Eatwell Guide, which provides guidance on the proportions of the food groups that make up a healthy, balanced diet.

## Getting portion size right for you

We're all individuals with different needs but for healthy adults the types of different food and drinks we need are pretty much the same for all of us. However, the amount of food we need varies from person to person.
The portion sizes we give are averages for healthy adults, based on a daily calorie allowance of 2000 kcal - the amount estimated for an average, healthy weight adult woman. If you're tall or very active you may need more. If you're a small person or are trying to lose weight, you may need smaller portions. If you use the hand measures we give, portion sizes will vary with the size of your hands and so, generally, bigger people will automatically get bigger portions and smaller people will get smaller portions.
There are lots of different ways to eat a healthy, balanced diet and you can use this guidance to fit in with your preferences and beliefs - from Mediterranean, vegetarian or vegan to a more traditional British diet. It's about balancing the food groups and finding the portion sizes that are right for you.


## Finding your balance acress the Day

This image shows how many portions to aim for from each food group each day for a healthy, balanced diet.


Putting IT iNTo PReवाice - an example day

| Meal: Foods included: | (2) <br> Fruit \& veg | 景 Starchy | (1) Protein | $\begin{aligned} & \text { Eef } \\ & \text { Dairy } \end{aligned}$ |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  |  | $\checkmark$ |  | $\checkmark$ |
| Breakfast 2 wheat biscuits with semi-skimmed | $\checkmark$ |  |  |  |
| 1 banana |  |  |  |  |
| Small glass of orange juice (150ml) | $\checkmark$ |  |  |  |
| Morning snack Apple |  |  |  |  |
| LunchBaked potato about the size <br> of your fist |  |  |  |  |
| Tuna mayonnaise made with a whole medium-sized tin of tuna |  |  |  |  |
| Cereal bowl full of mixed salad | $\checkmark$ |  |  |  |
| 2 tangerines | $\checkmark$ |  |  | $\checkmark$ |
| Afternoon 2 oatcakes with reduced fat <br> snack cheese |  | $\checkmark$ | $\checkmark$ |  |
| Dinner Spaghetti Bolognese served with the <br> amount of cooked spaghetti that would <br> fit in two hands cupped together | $\checkmark$ | $\checkmark$ |  |  |
| 3 serving spoons or more of broccoli | $\checkmark$ |  |  | $\checkmark$ |
| Small pot of low fat fruit yogurt | 7 | 4 | 2 | 3 |
| TOTAL PORTIONS PER DAY | 1 |  |  |  |

## PORTION SIZES

In the next pages you will find suggested portion sizes for healthy adults for a range of food and drinks from each of the main food groups.
These portion sizes are based on an analysis of how the portions of food and drinks we consume can fit into a healthy, balanced diet. They aim to give you an idea of sensible portion sizes but you will find that the portions available in shops, cafes, restaurants and takeaways will vary.
For each portion size we have given the weight in grams, the calorie content and a practical way of measuring it, unless it is something that comes ready portioned like a bagel, a sausage or a can of tuna. The calorie values are based on average data and so you may see different values on food packs. If you want to be accurate then weighing your food is the best way to measure out portion sizes, but using the measuring ideas will help you get portion sizes about right.

Note that where we have used 'tablespoons' this refers to a 10 ml spoon that would be used to eat soup or pudding, rather than a larger serving spoon. The portions given are per person.


Two hands cupped together



## Starchy carbohydrates. 3-4 a day

Potatoes, bread, rice, pasta or other starchy carbohydrates
Choose 3-4 portions of starchy carbohydrate foods a day - you could have one with each meal and could also include snack-sized portions. Those that are 200kcal or more tend to be the things you would have as a main meal, and those that are less then 200kcal for lighter meals or breakfast.
It's a good idea to include wholegrains like wholemeal breads, brown pasta and wholegrain cereals, and potatoes with skins regularly as they are important sources of fibre. If you're having more than one food from this group in a mea then portion sizes can be smaller, e.g. if having rice and naan bread with a curry. For foods like pasta or rice, both cooked and uncooked portion sizes are included - these gain weight when they are cooked as they absorb water. Unless stated otherwise, the information provided here is based on the food alone without additions e.g. bread without spread, cereal without milk.

Less than 200kcal - for lighter meals and breakfast

| Food | Portion size (g) | Calories | How to measure |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Flaked breakfast cereals | 409 | 130-150 kcal | About 3 handfuls |
| Weetabix-type cereal biscuits (2) | 409 | 133 kcal | Ready portioned |
| Wholegrain malted wheat cereal | 40 g | 136 kcal | About 3 handfuls |
| Shredded wheat type cereal (2 biscuits) | 459 | 150 kcal | Ready portioned |
| Multigrain hoops | 40 g | 147 kcal | About 3 handfuls |
| Muesli | 50 g | 183 kcal | About 3 handfuls |
| Porridge (dry weight) | 459 | 171 kcal | About 1 and a half handfuls |
| 2 slices of medium-sliced wholemeal bread | 80 g | 174 kcal | Ready portioned |
| $1 / 2$ small baguette | 709 | 184 kcal | Ready portioned |
| Pitta bread | 609 | 153 kcal | Ready portioned |
| Mashed potato (mashed with spread) | 180g | 184 kcal | About 4 tablespoons |
| Cooked new potatoes | 1759 | 119 kcal | About 6 small potatoes |
| Wrap | 659 | 183 kcal | Ready portioned |
| Sandwich thins | 409 | 98 kcal | Ready portioned |
| Bagel thins | 50g | 130 kcal | Ready portioned |
| Garlic bread ( $1 / 4$ small baguette) | 50 g | 174 kcal | Ready portioned |
| 1 medium wholemeal bread roll | 60 g | 146 kcal | Ready portioned |
| 1 small chapatti | 459 | 148 kcal | Ready portioned |
| Plain microwave rice | 1259 | 190 kcal | Half a 250g pack |

More than 200kcal - mostly for main meals

| Food | Portion size (g) | Calories | How to measure |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Plain pasta - dried | 75 g | - | 2 handfuls |
|  |  |  | For spaghetti: use your finger and thumb to measure a bunch the size of a $£ 1$ coin |
| Plain pasta - cooked | 180g | 270 kcal | About the amount that would fit in 2 hands cupped together |
| Rice - dried | 65g | - | About 2 handfuls |
| Rice - cooked | 180g | 236 kcal | About the amount that would fit in 2 hands cupped together |
| Couscous - dried | 90 g |  | About 2 handfuls |
| Couscous - cooked | 150g | 267 kcal | About the amount that would fit in 2 hands cupped together |
| Large wholemeal bread roli | 90 g | 220 kcal | Ready portioned |
| Bagel | 85g | 232 kcal | Ready portioned |
| Oven chips | 165g | 257 kcal | About 2 handfuls |
| Roast potatoes | 200g | 322 kcal | About 4 small potatoes |
| Large scone | 70 g | 242 kcal | Ready portioned |
| Egg noodles - dried | 65 g | - | Usually ready portioned |
| Egg noodles - cooked | 175g | 253 kcal | Usually ready portioned |
| 1 large chapatti | 90g | 290 kcal | Ready portioned |
| 2 slices thick-sliced bread | 949 | 204 kcal | Ready portioned |
| Cooked baked potato | 220g | 213 kcal | About the size of your fist |
| Plain naan bread (1/2 naan) | 70 g | 200 kcal | Ready portioned |
| Snacks (less than 150kcal) |  |  |  |
| Food | Portion size (g) | Calories | How to measure |
| Oat cakes (2) | 24 g | 109 kcal | Ready portioned |
| Plain rice cakes (3) | 219 | 81 kcal | Ready portioned |
| 1 slice of medium-sliced wholemeal bread | 40 g | 87 kcal | Ready portioned |
| Small roll | 35g | 85 kcal | Ready portioned |
| Mini wrap | 30 g | 90 kcal | Ready portioned |
| Mini pitta (2 small, 1 medium) | 45g | 109 kcal | Ready portioned |
| Small fruit scone | 40g | 135 kcal | Ready portioned |
| Plain popcorn | 20 g | 94 kcal | About 3 handfuls |
| Malt loaf (2 slices of sliced loaf) | 43g | 129kcal | Ready portioned |
| 1 crumpet | 50 g | 104 kcal | Ready portioned |
| cream crackers (3) | 24 g | 107 kcal | Ready portioned |

## Protein foods. 2-3 a day

## Beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat and other protein

Apart from oily fish like salmon and mackerel, in this food group for most people it's a good idea not to have the 200kcal or more options too often and to go for those less than 200 kcal most of the time. You can also include protein foods as snacks - they can provide a range of nutrients and are a good alternative to sweet snacks.
It's a good idea to include plant-based sources of protein in your diet - like beans, chickpeas and lentils (all types of pulses), which are good alternatives to meat because they're naturally low in fat, and provide fibre, protein, vitamins and minerals - they can also count as one portion of your 5 A DAY. It's recommended that you have two portions of fish a week, one of which should be oily. (Note that there are some restrictions on fish consumption for women and girls see NHS pages on fish). If you eat a lot of red and processed meat (see those foods with *) it's a good idea to cut down - for more information see NHS pages on meat. If you're including more than one food from this group in a meal e.g. mince and beans in a chilli, then portion sizes can be smaller you could use about half the portions that are suggested below.
For foods like meat and fish we have included both cooked and raw portion sizes - these foods lose weight when cooked as they lose water. We've generally used grilling, stewing and baking. Cooking methods that use more oil or fat, such as roasting or frying, will increase the fat and calorie content.

| Less than 200kcal - for lighter meals and breakfast |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Food | Portion | Calories | How to measure |
| Chicken breast - raw | 160g | - | About half the size of your hand |
| Chicken breast - grilled | 120g | 178 kcal | About half the size of your hand |
| Roast chicken | 100g | 153 kcal | About 2 and a half slices (calories given for white meat) |
| Lentils, beans and other pulses | 120 g | 120-140 kcal | About 6 tablespoons |
| Baked beans | 200g | 162 kcal | Half a standard 400 g can |
| Eggs (2) | 120 g | 172 kcal | Ready portioned |
| White fish fillet (not battered or breaded) - raw | 140-195g | - | The size of half to a whole hand |
| White fish fillet (not battered or breaded) - cooked | 100-140g | 106-148 kcal | The size of half to a whole hand |
| Tofu | 80 g | 58 kcal | Use the size of pack as a guide |
| Canned tuna | 120 g | 131 kcal | A whole medium-sized can (about 160 g net weight) |
| Soya mince | 100g | 110 kcal | Use the size of pack as a guide |

Less than 200kcal - for lighter meals and breakfast

| Food | Portion | Calories | How to measure |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Ouorn mince | 100 g | 103 kcal | Use the size of pack as a guide |
| Vegetarian sausages (2) | 80g | 114-154 kcal | Ready portioned |
| *Bacon (2 slices) - raw | 75 g | - | Ready portioned |
| *Bacon (2 slices) - grilled | 50 g | 144 kcal | Ready portioned |
| *Lean beef mince - raw | 125 g |  | Use the size of pack as a guide |
| *Lean beef mince - cooked | 100 g | 157 kcal | Use the size of pack as a guide |
| *Lean diced stewing pork - raw | 150 g | - | Use the size of pack as a guide |
| *Lean diced stewing pork - cooked | 100 g | 169 kcal | Use the size of pack as a guide |
| *Lean beef stewing steak - raw | 125 g | - | Use the size of pack as a guide |
| *Lean beef stewing steak - cooked | 100 g | 185 kcal | Use the size of pack as a guide |
| Veggie burgers (1) | 49-108g | 78-147 kcal | Ready portioned |
| Fish fingers (3) | 90 g | 164 kcal | Ready portioned |

*Red or processed meats- these should be limited to an average of 70 g of cooked meat per day (about 500 g per week).

## More than 200kcal - mostly for main meals

| Food | Portion size (g) | Calories | How to measure |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Salmon fillet - raw | 120-165g |  | About half the size of your hand |
| Salmon fillet - grilled | 100-1409 | 239-335 kcal | About half the size of your hand |
| Mackerel fillet - raw | 125-1759 | - | About half the size of your hand |
| Mackerel fillet - grilled | 100-140g | 283-396 kcal | About half the size of your hand |
| *Meat sausages (2 standard size) - raw (Uncooked) | 114g | - | Ready portioned |
| *Meat sausages (2 standard size) - grilled | 90 g | 265 kcal | Ready portioned |
| *Lean rump steak - raw | 1759 | - | About half the size of your hand |
| *Lean rump steak - grilled | 130 g | 310 kcal | About half the size of your hand |
| *Lamb mince - raw | 160g | - | Use the size of pack as a guide |
| *Lamb mince - cooked | 100 g | 208 kcal | Use the size of pack as a guide |
| *Beef burger - raw | 120-150g |  | Ready portioned |
| *Beef burger - grilled | 80-100g | $261-326 \mathrm{kcal}$ | Ready portioned |
| *Lean stewing lamb - raw | 140g | - | Use the size of pack as a guide |
| *Lean stewing lamb - cooked | 1009 | 240 kcal | Use the size of pack as a guide |
| Breaded chicken goujons (3) | 759 | 208 kcal | Ready portioned |
| Breaded frozen white fish fillet | 1259 | 234 kcal | Ready portioned |


| Snacks (less than 150kcal) |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Food | Portion size (g) | Calories | How to measure |
| Canned tuna | 60 g | 65 kcal | Half a medium can |
|  |  |  | about 160 g net weight) |
| Unsalted nuts and seeds | 20 g | 113-137 kcal | About the amount that fits in your palm |
| Boiled egg (1) | 60 g | 86 kcal | Ready portioned |
| Prawns | 80 g | 54kcal | About 4 tablespoons |
| Reduced fat houmous | 55 g | 103 kcal | About 2 tablespoons or about $1 / 4$ of a standard pack |
| *Ham (2 slices) | 30 g | 32 kcal | Ready portioned |
| Smoked mackerel pate | 50 g | 119 kcal | Use the size of pack as a guide |
| Peanut butter | 20 g | 121 kcal | About 1 tablespoon |
| *Cocktail sausages (4) - raw | 45g | - | Ready portioned |
| *Cocktail sausages (4) - cooked | 35 g | 100 kcal | Ready portioned |
| Ready-made falafel (2) | 40 g | 113 kcal | Ready portioned |
| * Liver pate (about $1 / 5$ of a 200 g pack) | 40g | 99 kcal | Use the size of pack as a guide |
| *Red or processed meats- these should be limited to an average of 70 g of cooked meat per day (about 500 g per week). |  |  |  |

## Dairy and alternatives. 2-3 a day

It's a good idea to go for lower fat options most of the time. Check food labels and go for those with less saturates, salt and sugars. If you are having plant-based non-dairy alternatives, try to choose those that are low in sugars and fortified with calcium, and ideally other nutrients.

| Lower fat options (low or medium for fat on food labels) |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Food | Portion <br> size (g) | Calories | How to measure |
| Milk on cereal (skimmed) | 125ml | 42 kcal | About half a glass |
| Milk as a drink (skimmed) | 200 ml | 68 kcal | One glass |
| Milk on cereal (semi-skimmed) | 125ml | 58 kcal | About half a glass |
| Milk as a drink (semi-skimmed) | 200 ml | 92 kcal | One glass |
| Milk on cereal (whole) | 125ml | 79 kcal | About half a glass |
| Milk as a drink (whole) | 200 ml | 126 kcal | One glass |
| Yogurt (fruit, low fat) small pot | 125-150g | 98-117 kcal | Ready portioned |
| Yogurt, plain, low fat | 120 g | 68 kcal | About 4 tablespoons |
| Soft cheese (spreadable, low fat) | 30 g | 46 kcal | About 3 teaspoons |
| Cottage cheese | 100 g | 103 kcal | About 3 tablespoons |
| Unsweetened plant-based milk alternatives on cereal | 125 ml | 23-55 kcal | About half a glass |

Lower fat options (low or medium for fat on food labels)

| Food | Portion size (g) | Calories | How to measure |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Unsweetened plant-based milk alternatives as a drink | 200ml | 36-88 kcal | One glass |
| Plant-based yogurt alternative (fruit) | 125g | 94kcal | One individual pot or about 4 tablespoons |

Higher fat options (high for fat on food labels)

| Food | Portion size (g) | Calories | How to measure |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Hard cheese (e.g. cheddar) | 30g | 125 kcal | About the size of two thumbs |
| Reduced fat hard cheese | 30g | 94 kcal | About the size of two thumbs |
| Stilton-type cheese | 30g | 123kcal | About the size of two thumbs |
| Full fat soft cheese | 30 g | 76 kcal | About 3 teaspoons |
| Brie-type cheese | 30 g | 103 kcal | About the size of two thumbs |

## Fruit and vegetables. At least 5 portions a day

One portion is approx. 80 g . For dried fruit a portion is about $\mathbf{3 0 g}$ and for fruit and vegetable juices and smoothies a portion is 150 ml (limit to a combined total of 150 ml a day).

The more variety the better - try to include a range of colours and types. These portion sizes are only a guide and can be larger - as long as they are not served with added sugar or fat you can eat big portions of most fruit and vegetables for relatively few calories. You can combine more than one type to make up your portions, for example in a fruit salad or different types of vegetables in a soup or stew. Fresh, frozen, dried and canned fruit and vegetables can all count. If choosing canned fruit or vegetables go for those in water or fruit juice without added sugars or salt. Dried fruit can count towards your 5 A DAY but it's best to keep this to mealtimes as it's high in sugars and can stick to teeth.

## Portion size examples:

$$
\begin{array}{l|c}
\text { Small fruit: } & \text { Two plums, two satsumas, two kiwi fruit, three apricots, six lychees, }
\end{array}
$$ seven strawberries or 14 cherries.

## Portion size examples:

| Medium-sized fruit | One apple, banana, pear, orange or nectarine. |
| :---: | :---: |
| Large fruit | Half a grapefruit, one slice of papaya, one slice of melon (5cm slice), one large slice of pineapple or two slices of mango ( 5 cm slices). |
| Dried fruit | About one heaped serving spoon of raisins, currants or sultanas, one serving spoon of mixed fruit, two figs, three prunes or one handful of dried banana chips. |
| Green vegetables | Two large broccoli spears (or 8 smail florets) or four heaped serving spoons of cooked kale, spinach, spring greens or green beans. |
| Cooked vegetables | Three heaped serving spoons of vegetables, such as carrots, peas or sweetcorn, or eight cauliflower florets. |
| Salad vegetables | Three sticks of celery, a 5 cm piece of cucumber, one medium tomato or seven cherry tomatoes |
| Pulses | Three heaped serving spoons of pulses like beans, lentils or chickpeas counts as one of your 5 A DAY (maximum). |
| Fruit juice and smoothies | One small glass is about 150 ml - this can count as one of your 5 A DAY but limit to a combined total of 150 ml a day. |

## Unsaturated oils and spreads Include in small amounts

Unsaturated oils and spreads are healthier fats and provide essential fatty acids and fat soluble vitamins.

Foods like butter, coconut oil and cream are not included in this group as they are high in saturates - these are included in foods high in fat, salt and sugars group).

## Spread thinly on bread and use in small amounts when cooking. <br> (Note that all oils and spreads are high in calories).

## Portion size examples:

1 teaspoon olive/vegetable oil - 27 kcal
1 tablespoon olive/vegetable oil - 99 kcal
Standard spread, spread thinly on 1 slice of bread - 31 kcal
Low fat spread, spread thinly on 1 slice of bread - $\mathbf{1 8}$ kcal
1 tablespoon salad dressing made with oil - 82 kcal

## Treats

## Foods high in fat, salt or sugars and sugary drinks

Everyone knows that these are the foods we are supposed to eat less of! Treats are not needed in the diet and so if you do include them then it's best to keep the portion sizes small, that is, about $100-150 \mathrm{kcal}$ and not have them too often.

You can look at traffic light labels on the front of packs and go for those with less fat, saturates, salt and sugars.
Sugary drinks are included in this group - these can contribute a lot of sugar and calories so it's best to choose drinks that don't contain added sugars.

## Portion size examples:

A small chocolate biscuit bar
4 small squares of chocolate $(20 \mathrm{~g})$
2 small biscuits
A small multipack bag of crisps
A mini muffin
A small chocolate mousse

## COMPOSTIE FOODS

These are foods made up of more than one food group. For example a spaghetti Bolognese dish includes starchy carbohydrates (the pasta), minced meat or a vegetarian alternative from the protein foods group, vegetables in the tomato-based sauce and if served with cheese would also include a dairy food.
If you are choosing ready-made versions of these e.g. ready meals or pizzas, then calorie content is the best way to select an appropriate portion size and you can also check front of pack labels for fat, saturates, sugars and salt.
Government guidance suggests aiming for about 400kcals for breakfast and 600 kcals for a main meal and so use this as a rule of thumb when choosing foods and drinks. These figures are for the whole meal including drinks and accompaniments.
For composite foods you make at home, it would be very difficult to calculate the calories you're eating but you can use the portion sizes provided for each of the food groups as a guide.

## Some examples are shown on the next page.

## Spaghetti Bolognese

- Allow about 75 g of uncooked spaghetti per person (you can measure a portion for one person by using your finger and thumb to make a hole the size of a $£ 1$ coin) or more if you are cooking for people with higher calorie needs or if you want leftovers.
- The portion size we give is about 125 g of raw mince ( $1 / 4$ of a 500 g pack) but you could halve this in a dish which has lots of other ingredients and you could replace some or all the meat with meat-free mince or pulses
- Add plenty of vegetables - a Bolognese sauce often includes onion, tomatoes (fresh, canned or as part of a ready-made sauce), carrots and celery but add any others that you like. If you're using a cook-in sauce, you can boost the dish by adding extra vegetables - you could try ready-prepared, canned or frozen vegetables to save time.


## Fish pie

- Allow about 180 g mashed potato per person (about 3 average sized potatoes)
- Allow around $120-200 \mathrm{~g}$ raw fish per person - a small, raw fillet of fish is about $120-140 \mathrm{~g}$
- Add vegetables if you can e.g. frozen peas or spinach.

Remember to serve with plenty of cooked vegetables or salad

## FAQS

## How do I know which portion sizes to choose for me?

Everyone has their own individual requirements but generally, bigger, more active people can eat more calories without gaining weight, whereas if you are smaller and less active you will need fewer calories to maintain your weight. When using this guide, for some food groups there are different categories with different calorie contents as well as snack options.
If your calorie needs are lower, for example if you're a smaller person with lower activity levels, you can go for more of the lighter and snack options and only have the higher calorie options occasionally. If you use hands to measure out portions then, generally bigger people will automatically get bigger portions and smaller people smaller ones. You can also go for the lower frequency suggestion for the food groups - e.g. 2 rather than 3 protein foods per day. If you have higher requirements, for example if you are tall and active, you could have the higher calorie options more frequently and go for the higher frequency for the food groups e.g. 4 portions of starchy carbohydrates a day.

Can I use this guide for children and when we are eating as a family?
This guidance is specifically for adults and does not include portion sizes for children. If you are eating as a family, smaller children (i.e. toddlers and primary school children) should have smaller portions - if in doubt you could start off small and they can ask for more if they are still hungry. Teenagers have similar requirements to adults so the portion sizes provided here could be used as a guide. See BNF's toddler plate guide for more information on portion sizes for young children.

## Is alcohol included in the guide?

This guidance doesn't include alcohol but it's important to be aware that alcoholic drinks add calories and so including these will add to your total calorie intake and could mean you consume too much. For more information see NHS pages on calories in alcohol. It's also important for both men and women not to drink more than 14 units of alcohol a week on a regular basis - see here for more information about alcohol units.

## What about drinks?

Drinks can be part of different food groups, for example, juices from fruit and vegetables, milk in dairy and alternatives and so portion sizes and UK healthy eating advice for these are given in this guide. It is important to drink plenty of fluids - about 6-8 glasses/cups a day. For most of us, it's a good idea to mainly go for drinks that have fewer or no calories such as water, lower fat plain milk, unsweetened tea or coffee (note that latte style coffees will be higher in calories) or sugar-free drinks. For more information about healthy drinks see BNF's healthy hydration guide.

## What about portion sizes when I'm eating out?

If you are eating out, it is a good idea to look at calorie labelling if it is available. Supermarkets, some cafes, coffee shops and restaurants provide information on the calories in meals, snacks and drinks. As a rule of thumb the Government has suggested aiming for about 400 calories for breakfast and 600 calories for lunch and for dinner, so this is a useful guideline when choosing what you have for meals - see here for more information.
Be aware that if you are including sides and drinks these can add up and you will need to include them in the total. It can be more difficult when calorie information isn't provided, but if you are given large portion sizes when eating out, see if you can take some home for another time. If you know that the takeaway or restaurant you're going to serves big portions you could try sharing dishes or going for starters or side dishes rather than main courses. For more information about healthy eating outside the home see here.

## Can I use this guide to help me lose weight?

This guidance has not been designed as a weight loss plan but controlling portion size is an important part of reducing your calorie intake to lose weight. If you'd like to lose weight it is a good idea to visit your GP to see what services are available in your area and there are also resources available online, such as this free NHS weight loss programme.

## ILnks for further information

More details on the Government's Eatwell Guide www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/551502/ Eatwell_Guide_booklet.pdf
A healthy, balanced diet: www.nutrition.org.uk/healthyliving/healthydiet/ healthybalanceddiet.html
Starchy carbohydrates www.nutrition.org.uk/healthyliving/healthydiet/starchyfoods.html
Fruit and vegetables www.nutrition.org.uk/healthyliving/healthydiet/ fruit-and-vegetables.html
Protein foods www.nutrition.org.uk/healthyliving/healthydiet/protein.html
Dairy and alternatives www.nutrition.org.uk/healthyliving/healthydiet/dairy.html
Unsaturated oils and spreads www.nutrition.org.uk/healthyliving/healthydiet/ oilsandspreads.html
Foods high in fat, salt and sugars www.nutrition.org.uk/healthyliving/ healthydiet/fatsaltsugar.html

## wwwnutritionorg-uk/findyourbalance

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