

FOOD GROUP FOCUS

fruit AND veg

WHAT'S THE DEAL WITH 5-A-DAY?

Currently we're recommended to eat at least 5 portions of fruit and veg a day – just over a third of what we eat. This is based on a body of research, including recommendations from the World Health Organization, which conclude that consuming more than 400g a day (i.e 5 portions of 80g) was linked to a reduced risk of death from chronic diseases. Around the globe this message differs, with countries offering advice based on number of portions, plate sizes or encouraging messages.

PORTION SIZES

80g of fresh, frozen or canned fruit or veg which can come from one source or a variety. If choosing canned, opt for natural juice/water with no added sugar or salt.

30g of dried fruit or veg. Try to limit consumption of dried fruits due to their high sugar content and consume as part of a meal to reduce teeth damage.

COUNTS AS ONE PORTION ONLY

150ml of unsweetened 100% fruit/vegetable juice or 100% fruit and/or vegetable smoothies. This only counts as one of your 5 a day as compared to a whole fruit or veg as a lot of the fibre is lost in processing. In addition, the sugars which are naturally present within the fruit are released and more available to damage teeth.

80g of beans and pulses e.g haricot, butter, soya and kidney beans as well as chickpeas and lentils.

THE EATWELL GUIDE

Most of us know we should be eating more fruit and vegetables, but the latest statistics show only 31% of men and 32% of women are consuming the recommended '5 A Day'. Across the day, fruit and veg should make up just over a third of the food we eat.

WHAT'S SO GREAT ABOUT FRUIT & VEG?

FIBRE

Fruit and veg are a great source of fibre, which is particularly prevalent in berries, pears and oranges, as well as broccoli, peas and sweetcorn.

We are recommended to consume 30g of fibre a day, so including a wide range of fruit & veg in your diet is an excellent way to get you there.

WATER

Essential for life and important for our physical and mental performance. An average of 20% can come from food sources. The water content of our food is extremely variable, however, fruit and veg are an excellent source.

BIOACTIVES

These are compounds that occur in small quantities in foodstuffs that may be beneficial to health. They are different to macro and micronutrients such as protein, fats, vitamins and minerals as they are not essential for our health. Fruit & veg are particularly rich in all types such as polyphenols, plant sterols, flavonoids and other antioxidants.

VITAMINS & MINERALS

These are essential to our health and to keep our body functioning properly. Following a balanced diet rich in fruit and vegetables is a great way to get a good variety of vitamins and minerals.

THE BIGGER PICTURE

Sustainable diets are often in the headlines due to a greater focus on the way that we eat and the affects this has on the environment we live in. There is a consensus that a sustainable diet is one that is lower in animal products such as red and processed meats and a moderate dairy consumption.