

Getting Manchester Moving

www.gettingmanchestermoving.org

Healthy Eating - Buying 'Healthy' Foods - What to Look For

What are 'healthy' foods anyway?

It is really best to think of a healthy eating plan rather than group individual foods as healthy or not. All foods can be included in a healthy diet to some extent; it is important to consider the types of food we are eating, how much we are eating and how often we are eating them. Eating a variety of fresh fruit and vegetables will ensure that your body receives lots of vital nutrients. Other basics such as bread, potatoes, rice and pasta are useful sources of energy - wholegrain, whole wheat and brown varieties are better at 'filling you up' and are a valuable source of fibre. Fresh meat, fish, eggs and pulses are excellent sources of protein as well as providing iron.

What about processed foods?

Much of our food is processed to some extent. Most types of bread have preservatives added in order to give them a longer shelf life and many are fortified with vitamins and minerals. Some breakfast cereals are also fortified in this way and are a significant source of iron in many peoples' diets. Food labels are a good way of checking what has been added to a product and how this has affected the nutrient profile; unfortunately food labels can also be confusing!

What should I look for?

If you are trying to lose weight then it is a good idea to consider how much energy a food contains. Look at how many calories (often written as kcals) a portion of the food provides – pay special attention to the recommended portion sizes as sometimes these are smaller than you might think! Try to gradually reduce the number of calories you eat each day until you start to see a reduction in your weight.

Children and pregnant women should seek medical advice before reducing their energy intake. Food labels sometimes give a whole range of information – the main things to look out for are the total amounts of fat, sugar and salt.

Fat - 20g or more per 100g is a lot; 3g or less per 100g is a little

Sugar - 10g or more per 100g is a lot; 2g or less per 100g is a little

Salt - 1.25g or more per 100g is a lot; 0.25g or less per 100g is a little

It is important to be aware of food labels, however don't get preoccupied with them. They are useful in identifying 'hidden' fat, salt and sugar - sometimes these are added to foods that you might not expect. A good rule of thumb is to incorporate as much fresh produce as you can into your diet and rely less on fast food, takeaways, ready meals and high calorie snacks.

make time for activity

There are 1440 minutes in the day.
Be active for 30 of them!

Useful link

NHS Choices – Healthy Eating

<http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/healthy-eating/Pages/Healthyeating.aspx>

Recipes for Healthy Eating

VEGETABLE SOUP - Serves 4

Ingredients

1 onion
1 carrot
1 leek
1 potato
2 celery sticks
25g butter
25g flour
1 vegetable stock cube
500ml water, boiling

Method

Peel and chop the onion.
Top and tail the carrot, then peel and dice.
Top and tail the leek, then slice.
Peel and cube the potato.
Cut the celery.
Heat the butter in a saucepan and fry all the vegetables, except the potatoes, for 5 minutes.
Stir in the flour and cook for 2 minutes.
Dissolve the stock cube in the boiling water.
Add the water to the saucepan and bring to the boil.
Add the potatoes and simmer for 30 minutes.

SPINACH AND CHICKEN NOODLE - Serves 2

Ingredients

175g egg noodles
1 tablespoon sunflower (or olive) oil
2 small boneless, skinless chicken breasts thinly sliced
1 bunch salad onions, trimmed and halved widthways
1 garlic clove, sliced
100g chestnut mushrooms, sliced
1½ teaspoons coarsely crushed black peppercorns

3 tablespoons oyster sauce
100 ml chicken stock
100g spinach leaves cut into large strips (remove any tough stalks)

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Method

Cook the noodles in boiling water as per packet instructions.

Drain well and keep warm.

Heat the oil in a frying pan and then add the chicken slices and cook over a high heat for 3-4 minutes or until browned and almost cooked through.

Add the salad onions, garlic, mushrooms and crushed peppercorns to the pan and cook, stirring for 2 minutes.

Add the oyster sauce and stock, stirring to heat through.

Add the spinach leaves and cook for 1-2 minutes until just wilted.

Stir and then serve on a bed of noodles.

VEGGIE BEAN BURGERS - Serves 4

Ingredients

2oz/50g cooked mixed beans (dried or tinned)

1 small onion, finely chopped

1 carrot, finely grated

1tsp dried mixed herbs

1oz/25g wholemeal breadcrumbs

Method

Mix all ingredients in a food processor or blender until almost smooth.

Shape into 4 thick burgers and chill well.

Brush with oil and grill (or barbecue) for about 15 minutes, turning once or twice.

Serve in sesame baps with relish, salad and huge chunky

For more recipe ideas visit these links:

NHS Choices – Healthy Eating

<http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/healthy-eating/Pages/Healthyeating.aspx>

NHS Choices – 5 a Day

<http://www.nhs.uk/LiveWell/5ADAY/Pages/5ADAYhome.aspx>

The British Dietetic Association – Weightwise

<http://www.bdaweightwise.com/>

The British Dietetic Association – Teenweightwise

<http://www.teenweightwise.com/>

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