

Basic Food Hygiene

Hygiene is the practice of keeping clean to stay healthy and prevent disease – so please bear the following in mind when you are cooking.

- Always wash your hands before preparing food.
- Always wash and dry fresh produce before use.
- Don't lick your fingers.
- Don't keep tasting and stirring with the same spoon. Use a clean spoon every time you taste the food.
- Never use the same tea towel to wipe down a chopping board, you have been using for cutting up meat, because you will simply be spreading germs from one surface to another. Use a fresh tea towel instead.
- Always transfer left overs to a clean container and cover with a lid, cling film or foil. Leave until completely cool, then store in the fridge.
- Don't put raw and cooked meat on the same shelf in the fridge. Store raw meat on the bottom shelf, so it can't drip over other food items.
- Keep all perishable food wrapped separately. Don't overfill the fridge or it will remain too warm.
- When reheating food, always make sure it is piping hot throughout, never just warm.
- Never reheat previously cooked food more than once.
- Never re-freeze food that have defrosted unless you cook it first.





Nutritional Groups

Foods from the basic food groups provide the nutrients essential for life and growth. Each of the food groups provides a range of nutrients, and all have a role in helping the body function such as providing us with energy to do our daily work, keeping the body warm and providing the building blocks for repair and for growth of substances necessary to regulate chemical processes.

There are six major nutrients: Carbohydrates (CHO), Lipids (Fats), Proteins, Vitamins (protective foods), Minerals and Water.

Carbohydrates

Carbohydrates are known as the energy giving food and there are two main forms of carbs (carbohydrates): simple carbohydrates and complex carbohydrates.

Simple carbohydrates (or simple sugars): including fructose, glucose, and lactose, which also are found in nutritious whole fruits and dairy products, and more easily digested by the body. And it gives instant energy. They are also often found in processed and refined food such as white sugar, pasta and white bread.

Complex carbohydrates (or starches) are those take longer for the body to digest, and are most commonly found in starchy vegetables, whole grain bread and pasta, in brown rice, legumes and cereals. Complex carbohydrates will fill your stomach quickly and it will give you long lasting energy.

Lipids (fats and oil)

Lipids are one of the four major groups of organic molecules. Lipids include fats, steroids, phospholipids, and waxes. Good and healthy lipids are known as unsaturated fats and oils and it does a major role in our body. It helps to absorb some vitamins such as A, D, E and K to our body. They also are the building blocks of hormones and they insulate the body (keep warm). And it helps to store energy in our body. During the times of unavailability of food the fat stored in our body provide energy, to prevent from starvation. So fat is not unhealthy, but you'll want to choose the right amount and the right kind of fat.

There are two types of lipids that should be eaten sparingly: saturated and trans fat. Both can raise cholesterol levels, clog arteries, and increase the risk of heart disease. And this unhealthy lipids are mostly found in fried food and in fast food.

Proteins

Have you ever wondered how professional wrestlers, circus acrobats, and Olympic athletes get strong muscles? Well, it has a lot to do with the nutrient protein, which builds their muscles. Protein is a nutrient that's naturally found in plants and animals such as meat, dairy products, poultry, fish and seafood, eggs, nuts, legumes and beans. It's made of microscopic building blocks called amino acids. Protein is an important and necessary part of your daily meals, to help you to grow and stay healthy.

Vitamins

The word vitamin means 'vital for life' (essential for life). Vitamins and minerals are compounds necessary, for the healthy functioning of our bodies. We need vitamins and minerals to help us grow, to see correctly, to form bones, muscles, skin and organs, as well as to help us battle infections (mainly in immune system)

The known vitamins include A, C, D, E, and K, and the B vitamins: thiamin (B1), riboflavin (B2), niacin (B3), pantothenic acid (B5), pyridoxal (B6), cobalamin (B12), biotin, and folate/folic acid.



Minerals

Minerals have a number of functions in the body, including developing body tissues and supporting metabolic processes. The minerals that are most important are Calcium (to maintain strong bones and teeth), Iron (the body uses iron to make hemoglobin, a protein in red blood cells that carries oxygen from lungs to all parts of the body), Iodine (the body needs iodine to make thyroid hormones which control the body metabolism and many other important functions) and Zinc (Zinc is found in cells throughout the body. It is needed for the body's defensive (immune) system to properly work. It plays a role in cell division, cell growth, wound healing, and the breakdown of carbohydrates. Zinc is also needed for the senses of smell and taste). Zinc Fluorine (essential for the maintenance of solidity of our bones).

Water

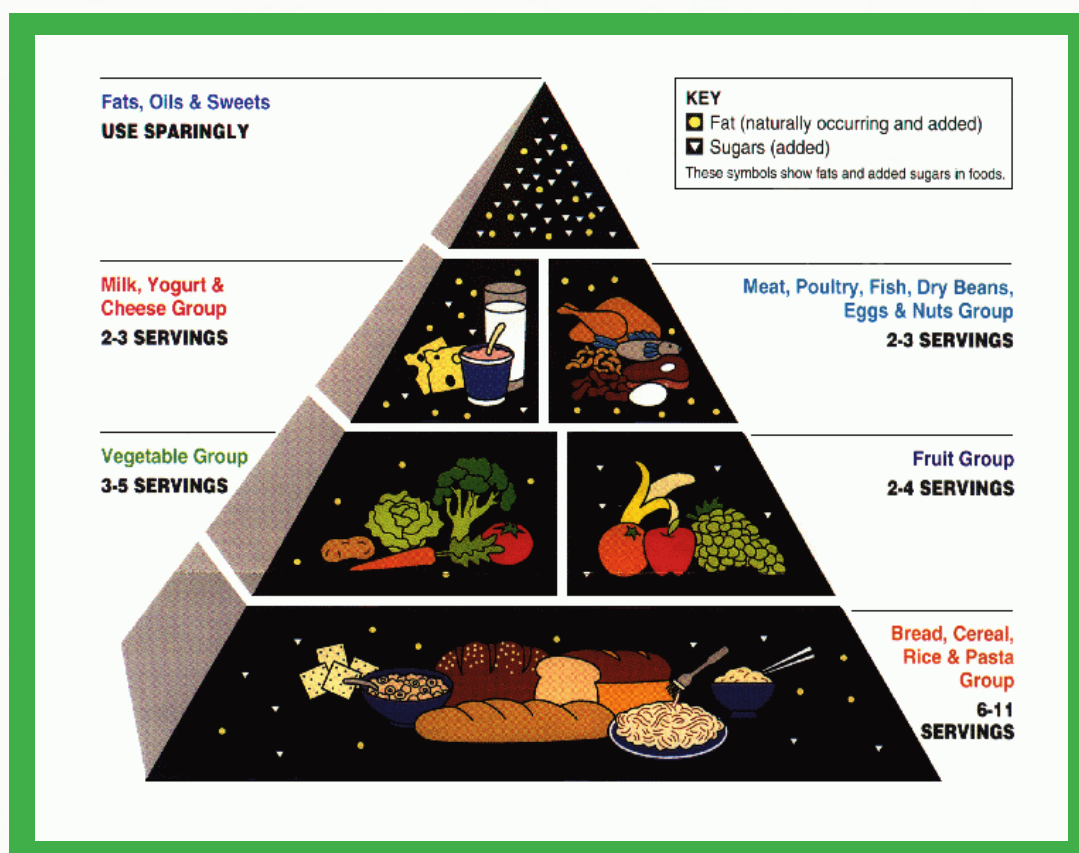
Water is defined as an essential nutrient, because it is required in amounts that exceed the body's ability to produce it. All biochemical reactions occur in water. It fills the spaces in and between cells and helps form structures of large molecules such as protein and glycogen. The human body can last for weeks without food, but only days without water. Our body is made up of 50 to 75 percent water. Water forms the basis of blood, digestive juices, urine and perspiration, and is contained in lean muscle, fat and bones. As the body can't store water, we need fresh supplies everyday to make up for losses from the lungs, skin, and urine. The amount we need depends on our body size, metabolism, the weather, the food we eat and our activity levels.



In order to have a healthy life and good nutritional status, a person needs to eat a balanced diet. You need to know the commonly used food groups in order to have a balanced diet.

The Food Guide Pyramid

The food pyramid is a representation of the optimal number of servings to be eaten each day, from each of the basic food groups.



The Food Guide Pyramid is a way to show how much food people can eat everyday, to have a healthy diet. It also shows the kinds of foods and their nutrients. At the base of the pyramid are foods from grains such as bread, cereals, rice and pasta. They are rich in vitamins, minerals and fibre and are an important source of energy. You can eat a lot of them everyday.

The second level of the pyramid includes vegetables and fruits. These are rich in fibre, vitamins and minerals like iron and magnesium.

On the third level of the pyramid are two groups of foods. One is milk, cheese, yoghurt and the other is meat, fish, dry beans, eggs and nuts.

They are rich in protein, vitamins and minerals like calcium, iron and zinc.

The top of the pyramid includes oils, fats and sweets. These foods have a lot of calories and you only need a little amount of them everyday.

