

# How much is too much?

Following The Balance of Good Health will give you the best possible eating plan for good health. It's more about what you *can* eat than what you can't. In fact, nothing is banned. It gives you the flexibility to choose the foods you enjoy *and* to indulge in treats like chocolate, crisps and cakes now and then. Even the odd glass of wine or a beer is fine.

When watching your weight, you also have to plan the *amounts* of food you eat. It's not just the *quality* - the *quantity* matters too. Although everyone is different, as a rule, most people will

lose weight if they eat or drink between 1,500 and 1,800 calories a day. Women tend to need less than men, so if you're female, choose 1,500 calories. If you're male, choose 1,800 calories. The table below shows how many portions you would eat from each food group, for 1,500 or 1,800 calories a day. You could write your own plan in the blank right hand column. If you would like individualised advice ask your GP to refer you to a dietitian or your practice nurse.

Daily portions based on The Balance of Good Health

Food Group		1,500 calories	1,800 calories	Your Plan
Fruit and vegetables		7 or more	8 or more	
Bread, other cereals and potatoes		7	8	
Milk and dairy foods		2	3	
Meat, fish and alternatives		2	2	
Fatty and sugary foods	Fats	2	2	
	Occasional foods	1	1	
Alcohol (If you choose not to drink alcohol at all, you can have the points as fatty and sugary foods instead.)		up to 1	up to 2	



# How much is a portion?

## Fruit and vegetables (have 7 - 8 portions per day)

Vegetables eg. cauliflower, cabbage, peas, carrots, mushrooms, tomatoes, leeks, swede, courgettes, broccoli, french beans, peppers	2 large tablespoons
Salad - mixed green eg. lettuce, cucumber, onion, pepper	1 small bowl
Tomato	1 medium
Whole fresh fruit	eg. 1 apple, 1 pear, 1 orange, 1 banana, 1 peach
Tinned fruit in natural juice eg. peaches, pineapple, raspberries and pears	3 large tablespoons
Stewed fruit eg. apple, rhubarb, cherries	4 large tablespoons
Large fruits	1 slice melon or pineapple, ½ grapefruit
Small fruits	12 grapes, 3 apricots, 2 plums, 2 kiwi fruits, 7 strawberries
Dried fruit eg. raisins	1 baby box - matchbox size
Fruit juice (maximum one per day)	1 small glass or small carton

## Bread, other cereals and potatoes (have 7 - 8 portions per day)

Breakfast cereal eg. flakes or crispies	3 tablespoons
Muesli	2 tablespoons
Shredded wheat	1
Weetabix	1
Bread or toast	1 large slice (medium thick)
Bread bun or roll	½ large
Pitta bread	1 mini or picnic size
Chapatti	1 small
Crackers	3
Crispbreads	4
Plain naan bread	1 small
Rice, plain boiled	2 heaped tablespoons

### **Bread, other cereals and potatoes (have 7 - 8 portions per day) Cont...**

Pasta, plain, boiled	3 heaped tablespoons
Egg noodles, boiled	half packet
Potatoes	2 egg size
Bagel, plain or cinnamon & raisin	½
Crumpet/pikelet	1
Muffin	1
Malt loaf	1 small slice
Muesli bar	1

### **Milk and dairy foods (have 2 - 3 portions per day)**

Milk (preferably semi-skimmed or better still, skimmed)	1 medium glass, 200ml (½ pint)
Yoghurt, plain or flavoured, low fat and low sugar	1 small pot, 150g (5oz)
Cheese - preferably low fat	1 matchbox size, 40g (1½ oz) (Brie, Camembert, Edam, reduced fat cheddar, Smoked Austrian are good). The mini portion size cheeses are handy.
Cream cheese - light	the size of 2 small matchboxes, 80g (3oz)
Cottage cheese	1 large pot, 200g (8oz)
Fromage frais - light	1 small pot 150g (5oz)



### **Meat, fish and alternatives (have 2 -3 portions per day)**

Lean meat like beef, pork, ham, lamb, chicken (without skin)	3 slices (an amount the size of a pack of playing cards)
Fish - white or oily	as meat
Fish fingers	3
Eggs	2
Baked beans in tomato sauce (low sugar and salt if possible)	5 tablespoons
Lentils	4 tablespoons cooked
Beans eg. red kidney beans, butter beans, chick peas	4 tablespoons cooked
Nuts or peanut butter	2 tablespoons

### **Fatty and sugary foods (see amounts below)**

#### **Fats (have 2 portions per day)**

##### **Spreading fats and oils**

Butter or margarine spread	1 teaspoon
Low fat spread	2 teaspoons
Oil (any type)	1 teaspoon

##### **Dressings and sauces**

Mayonnaise	1 teaspoon
Low calorie mayonnaise	2 teaspoons
Blue cheese dressing	1 teaspoon
Salad cream	1 tablespoon
Low calorie salad cream	2 tablespoons
Gravy or white sauce (roux)	1 tablespoon
Gravy or white sauce (made with cornflour)	4 tablespoons

### Occasional foods (have 1 portion per day or 7 per week)

Sugar	3 teaspoons
Jam or honey	1 heaped teaspoon
Crisps, preferably low fat	1 small packet
Cream	1 tablespoon
Ice cream	1 small scoop
Biscuits, plain	2
Slice of cake	$\frac{1}{2}$
Doughnut	$\frac{1}{2}$
Danish pastry	$\frac{1}{2}$
Chocolate	1 small bar or 2 mini bars
Sweets	1 small tube/bag
Pastry in savoury item eg. pork pie, sausage roll, quiche lorraine	$\frac{1}{2}$

Half a slice of cake or half a sausage roll may seem rather impractical. You may wish to save up your weekly 'ration' of cakes and pastries to have at weekends or a time when you know you would like to enjoy a special treat. For example, one doughnut would be 2 portions, so 2 day's 'rations'.

### Alcoholic drinks (max 1- 2 per day or 7 - 14 per week)

Ordinary strength beer or lager	1 small, 300 ml ( $\frac{1}{2}$ pint)
Wine	1 glass, 100ml (4 fl oz)
Spirits	1 tot (pub measure), 25 ml (1 fl oz)