

Building Balanced Meals

Staying hydrated is really important, drinking regularly is key.



Water or milk are the best options.

With less of our favourite foods on the shelves, a lot of us are having to cook foods we might not normally use, but as long as we are eating foods from each of the food groups below, we should be getting all the nutrients that we need.

Fruits and Vegetables (wash before use!)

- Frozen options contain just as many nutrients as fresh!
- Buy tinned in natural juice or water, with no added sugar or salt.
- Cook vegetables in stews, chilli's, curries and soups, which can be frozen and saved if self-isolating.
- Add dried fruit to cereal
- Add frozen peas and sweetcorn to rice/couscous
- Tinned tomatoes/passata can be used in bolognese, chilli, curry or pasta bakes.



Potatoes, bread, rice, pasta and other starchy foods

- Mix and match your recipes, you can normally switch pasta, rice or potatoes in lots of recipes.
- No bread? Try making your own, or even try making cheese/chive scones to go with soups.
 - Try couscous or quinoa as alternatives to rice if it's not available.
 - A simple scone recipe (without the sugar) can be great as a pizza base.

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

- Experiment with a range of beans, chickpeas and lentils to fill out meals.
- Nuts and nut-spreads are a great source of protein and have a long shelf life.
- Tinned tuna or salmon can be added to pasta or made into fishcakes.
- If possible freeze meats/poultry individually rather than in large packets, so you only need to defrost what you need.

Dairy and alternatives

- UHT milk is still a good source of calcium.
- Aim for 3 portions of dairy or fortified alternatives a day.



Supplements

For the general public who are working towards a balanced diet, supplements are not needed.

Apart from Vitamin D! We get most of our vitamin D from the sunshine, so if self-isolating or limiting time outdoors, you may want to consider a daily 10 microgram supplement.



Store Cupboard Essentials

Dried goods and packets

- Pasta e.g. penne, lasagne sheets, spaghetti
- Porridge oats
- Breakfast cereals
- Rice
- Noodles
- Couscous
- Flour/Chapati flour
- Lentils and pulses
- Dried fruit



Tins

- Tinned tomatoes and other tinned vegetables
- Tinned fruit (in natural juices)
- Tinned beans e.g. kidney beans, butter beans and chickpeas
- Tinned fish e.g. sardines, mackerel, tuna, salmon and pilchards



Cartons and bottles

- Long-life milk
- Long-life fruit juice
- Vegetable/Olive oil



Flavourings

- Black pepper
- Herbs and spices
- Garlic/Ginger
- Tomato puree
- Stock cubes
- Soy sauce
- Mustard
- Worcester sauce



Check 'Best before' dates

Avoid Food Waste

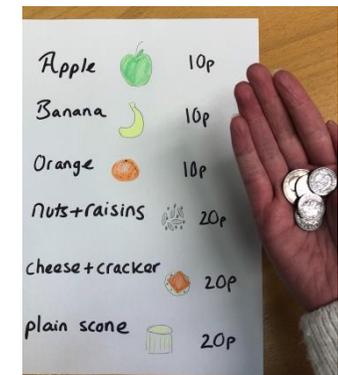
- Freeze leftovers, or have them for lunch the next day.
- Lots of leftovers can be added to soups/stews – it all helps food go further.
- Where possible, allow everyone to serve their own food according to their appetite, or start with smaller portions and allow seconds if still hungry to avoid overeating.

Food labels - Freeze what you can in advance

- Go through the dates on your foods, if you don't think you will be able to use perishable goods before they expire, make sure to freeze them so they don't get wasted.
- **USE BY:** This means the food has to be eaten/frozen before this date for safety.
- **BEST BEFORE:** Safe to eat after this date, these dates are about quality not food safety.

Snack sensibly

- Be mindful of the snacks you are eating as it can be easy to graze on foods when stuck at home. Stick to a normal routine of eating and be mindful of portion sizes.
- If you have small children, a tuck shop idea might be helpful, decide on a small budget and stick to it!



Be mindful, there is no need to panic buy!

- For more information about nutrition and foods visit:
- NHS choices
 - British Dietetic Association
 - British Nutrition Foundation