

 Western Health
and Social Care Trust

 Community Food
& Nutrition Team

 Public Health
Agency

Project supported by the PHA

AND FOOD MOW



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A healthy well balanced diet is just as important for our mental health as it is for our physical health. By following these eight simple tips, you can look better, feel better and boost your overall wellbeing!



1. Eat Regularly Throughout the day

- Missing or skipping meals (especially breakfast) leads to low blood sugar levels. This can make you feel tired, sluggish, irritable and add to a low mood.
- Eat a varied and well balanced diet.

2. Get 5-A-Day

- Aim to eat at least 5 portions of a variety of fruit and vegetables every day to get all the essential vitamins, minerals and fibre our bodies need.

3. Choose High Fibre

- Potatoes, bread, rice, pasta and cereals are carbohydrate foods – they give our body and brain energy to function. Not getting enough can make us feel weak, tired and fuzzy headed.
- Refined and sugary carbohydrates like white bread and pasta are absorbed into our bloodstream quickly causing a 'high' of energy, but wears off quickly too leaving us feeling sluggish and low.
- Wholegrain & high fibre varieties are more filling and slowly absorbed. This helps stabilise our mood and energy levels. Check the **'Swaps'** on the right.

4. Powerful Protein

- Protein foods include red meat, fish, poultry, eggs, beans, pulses, nuts, lentils and alternatives such as Quorn/tofu.
- Include at least 2 portions every day – these foods maintain our muscles, organs, skin and immune system. They're also great sources of B vitamins and iron. Not getting enough of these can lead to tiredness, low mood and feeling irritable.

5. Omega 3

- Omega 3 is important for our brain and heart health.
- To get enough, make sure to include at least 1 portion of oily fish every week, fresh or tinned:
 - Salmon
 - Sardines
 - Trout
 - Pilchards
 - Mackerel
 - Herring

Swap
White Bread
FOR
Wholegrain/
Granary Bread

Swap
Frosted/Sugary Cereal
FOR
Wheat Biscuits or
Porridge

Swap
White Rice/Pasta
FOR
Wholewheat pasta
& Brown Rice

6-8 Glasses
of Fluid Daily

6. Maintain a Healthy Weight

- Being underweight or not eating enough can deprive the body of energy, important nutrients and also affect our mood.
- Comfort eating foods high in sugar and fat such as chocolate, biscuits and crisps can lead to weight gain. We often eat these when feeling unhappy, upset or stressed. Putting on weight, being overweight or obese can affect our self-esteem, confidence and put our health at risk in the longer term.

Try to stay a healthy weight for your height by eating a varied and well balanced diet.

7. Stay Hydrated

- Dehydration can affect our feelings, cause restlessness, headaches and poor concentration.
- Drink at least 6 – 8 glasses of fluid every day. Water is best or try low fat milk, sugar-free diluting juice or herbal teas.
- Tea & coffee count but contain caffeine. Too much caffeine can cause sleep problems, headaches and irritability so cut down if you can.
- Energy drinks and fizzy drinks also contain caffeine so are best avoided.

8. Alcohol Awareness

- Alcohol has a depressant effect so can impact your mood & make you feel down.
- Stay within the recommended limits of 14 units a week for both men & women. That means no more than 6 pints of average strength beer or 7 medium sized glasses of wine spread throughout the week, see the Recommended **Weekly Alcohol Units** table on the back page.

Click on the link below for more information on alcohol.



For more information on healthy eating, visit:

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well/>

<https://www.safefood.net/healthy-eating>

For more information on healthy eating and drinking well, click on the link below.



Recommended Weekly Alcohol Units

6 Pints of Beer a Week



Based on
567ml
4% ABV

OR

6 Medium Glasses of Wine a Week



Based on
175ml
13.5% ABV