What you eat and how much you move

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Getting More Involved
- a young person's guide
to health and well-being

Healthy eating

What does healthy eating actually mean?

Eating the right food is really important as it can help you feel more positive, have more energy, concentrate better and feel calmer.

At times it can be difficult to judge whether you are eating healthily enough, especially if you are unsure about cooking and putting meals together. In this guide you will find links to more information that can help you to start thinking about eating healthily and moving a bit more.

If you don't cook for yourself yet (or decide what meals you eat at home) that's ok - it may be that you wish to read this guide with your foster carer or support worker to talk about healthy eating together.

Under the UNCRC, all children and young people have a right to be healthy. Article 24 of the Convention states that all children have a right to good food and water. As you become older, there is more of an opportunity for you to make your own choices when it comes to what you eat and drink. If you are younger the adults in your life should ensure you have a healthy diet and are as healthy as you can be.

When you meet with your nurse for your health assessment, they may ask you about the food that you eat and can give you some help and advice. You can find out more about your nurse and health assessment in the Children's Rights, health and well-being guide.

Where do I start?

A good place to start is to think about the types of food that you are eating. We all need a balanced range of food to make sure we are getting everything that we need to stay healthy.

You can check out the Eatwell Plate nhs.uk/livewell/the-eatwell-guide which breaks down the different types of food groups including fruit and vegetables, carbohydrates, protein and dairy. It also tells you how much you should be eating and has a handy calorie checker.

High fat foods and sugary snacks such as chocolate, cake, crisps and fizzy drinks should be eaten less often. There are lots of healthy snack options such as fruit, carrot or cucumber sticks, cherry tomatoes, low fat yoghurt or rice cakes with peanut butter.

If you are concerned that you may be underweight or overweight this is something you could talk to with your foster carer or social worker. You could also discuss this with your nurse.

Five a day

Fruit and vegetables are essential for a healthy diet as they provide a lot of the vitamins, minerals and fibre that we need. Try to eat a range of colourful fruit and vegetables to get different nutrients that you need to stay healthy.

As a rough guide you should try to eat at least five portions of fruit and vegetables every day. You can choose from fresh, frozen, tinned, dried or juiced.

Smoothies can count for one of your five a day portion if they are unsweetened, but you shouldn't have more than 150ml a day (which is a small glass). This is because when fruit and vegetables are blended, more sugar is released which can cause tooth decay or lead to weight gain.

TOP TIP: Give yourself a challenge - try and introduce one new vegetable into your diet each week.
You can find out more about your five a day at nhs.uk/livewell/5ADAY which includes information on how to get your five a day on a budget, on the go, what counts as a portion size and handy recipes.

What to drink

Drinking enough water is key to staying hydrated and feeling well. Dehydration can cause headaches and tiredness, make you feel irritable and affect your concentration. Tap water is free, always available and a good option if you are looking to be a bit healthier.

Drinking water will energise you, keep your skin looking good, help your kidneys to work properly, aid your digestion and keep you feeling good!

Young people should aim to drink six-eight glasses of water a day.

Energy drinks have a lot of caffeine in which is a stimulant and can be addictive. Stimulants can raise your blood pressure and increase your heart rate. Too much caffeine can cause headaches or migraines, stress or anxiety and make it difficult to sleep.

Other drinks such as fizzy drinks, milkshakes and fruit juices have a lot of sugar in them so can lead to dental problems and weight gain so try to drink these less often.

Get moving, get happy!

Sport and exercise can have huge benefits for health and well-being. And the more fun you have with it, the more benefits you will notice!

Daily exercise and outdoor activities will help you become:

- Fit - physically fitter and healthier
- Strong - have stronger bones
- Confident - have more confidence
- Calm - more relaxed and help you sleep
- Energised - have brighter energy
- Smarter - more able to focus and concentrate
- Glowing - bright skin, bright eyes, smiling face.

If you are starting to think about being a bit more active, you may not know where to start with it all.

It's good to remember that taking small steps to move a bit more will have a big impact on how you feel and your general health and fitness.

Top tips
for getting started:

- Do something you enjoy - talk to your carers or nurse about what you want to do and get some advice
- Take small steps - build your fitness up slowly
- Walk a bit more if you can - this is a really easy way to increase your activity
- Check out what clubs and activities are available at school
- Do something with friends - playing a game of football, swimming or dancing can be great fun and can help to keep you motivated
- Dance!
- Try a fitness app - there are great free apps available including couch to 5k which can support you to walk, jog or run a bit more.
- If you are a young disabled person you can access Disability Sport Wales which has a club tool finder to see what clubs/sports are near you. Or you can contact your local Disability Sport Wales adviser who is there to point you in the right direction if you need some advice.

Steps forward

TOP TIP: Remember it's really important that you keep safe when trying something new - get advice from the people around you including your carers, social worker and nurse. You could even put it on the agenda at you next review meeting or health assessment to talk about and make a plan.

Three things I can do to improve my diet or level of fitness:

1.

2.

3.