

Healthy Eating

A healthy and varied diet can help to enhance general wellbeing, achieve and maintain a healthy body weight, and reduce the risk of a number of diseases.

Tips for Healthy Eating

- Eat at least 5 portions of fruit and vegetables a day (see below for portions)
- Drink plenty of fluids - aim for eight to ten glasses each day.
- Choose water, sugar-free diluting juice, natural fruit juice, semi-skimmed or skimmed milk, herbal or weak teas.
- Start the day with breakfast - cereal, porridge, fruit, yoghurt, toast.
- Incorporate extra vegetables into casseroles, pasta sauces, rice and other dishes
- Use reduced fat dressings
- Use small amounts of strong flavoured cheese to flavour foods
- Use thick cut chips or potato wedges - these absorb less fat than thin cut chips
- Pasta, rice or potatoes should take up no more than one third of your plate.

What is 1 portion?

One portion of fruit or vegetables is about 80g and fresh, frozen, juiced, canned and dried varieties all count. Below are examples of one portion:

- One medium sized piece of fruit e.g., apple, orange, banana
- One slice of large fruit, such as melon, mango or pineapple.
- One handful of grapes or two handfuls of cherries or berry fruits.
- Two small fruits e.g., kiwis, satsumas or plums
- One tablespoon of dried fruit.
- A small tin (roughly 200g) of fruit.
- A side salad.
- Three tablespoons of vegetables (raw, cooked, frozen or canned) e.g., frozen or mushy peas, boiled carrots or stir-fried broccoli.
- Vegetables served in a portion of vegetable curry, lasagne, stir-fry or casserole.
- One glass of fruit or vegetable juice (you can only juice as 1 portion regardless of how much you drink)

Healthy Cooking

There are a number of ways to cook healthier meals, these include:

- Grill, steam, stir-fry or bake foods
- Use non-stick pans, where possible
- Use fats and oils sparingly

- Skin excess fats and oils from the surface of liquids and gravy before serving
- Trim excess fat off meats
- Trim the skin off poultry before serving
- Use skimmed or semi-skimmed milk
- Use little or no salt (<6g recommended daily)
- Experiment with herbs, spices, tomato puree and lemon or lime juices.
- Reduce the amount of sugar used by adding dried or fresh fruit instead.

Eating at the University

The University of Edinburgh is committed to the promotion and provision of healthy eating choices and Accommodation Services has prepared a Statement of Intent - Healthy Eating at the University of Edinburgh.

Whether you prefer to eat in one of the University's canteen facilities, buy pre-prepared food to eat elsewhere, or buy from a vending machine, you can still eat healthily.

Accommodation Services provide and actively promote healthy food and drink options in their catering outlets. Recipes are made with careful consideration given to the ingredients and cooking process, with oils and fats used sparingly, little or no salt used, fat trimmed off all meats and lower fat vegetarian options without cheese as the main ingredient. Healthy options on menus are highlighted using symbols and staff are happy to discuss any of the ingredients with you should you have any queries.

Both the John McIntyre Centre at Pollock Halls and Chapters Restaurant at Patterson's Land, Moray House achieved the Scottish Health Choices Award (Chapters obtained a 'Highly Commended' award). Although the Scottish Health Choices Award Scheme (SHCAS), a national healthy eating award scheme for caterers, funded by the Scottish Executive, has now been disbanded, Accommodation Services maintain the same standards with regard to the preparation and promotion of healthy eating choices in these and other catering outlets.

If you buy food or drinks from one of the many vending machines available throughout the University, or if you are eating a lunch prepared by Accommodation Services or an external catering company, there are still many healthy options available.

Vending Machines

If you have a vending machine in your School or building, ask the local School Administrator to contact the supplier of the Vending machine products to make sure that some healthy options are made available. Some ideas include:

- Water (still, carbonated, flavoured)
- Unsweetened Fruit juices

- Fruit smoothies
- Yoghurt drinks
- Fresh / dried fruit
- Products lower in sugar, fat or salt
- Unsalted nuts, crisps and snacks
- Oven baked snacks
- Pretzels
- Crackers
- Cereal bars
- Lower fat biscuits or cakes
- Muffins

Working Lunches

If you're in charge of organising a working lunch at the University, make sure to choose, or ask your food supplier to provide, healthier options. Ask for:

- Wholegrain or wholemeal breads for sandwiches
- Wholegrain or wholemeal pitta wraps
- Soups
- Salad options
- Water and unsweetened fresh juice
- Fruit bowl selection, apples, oranges, bananas, grapes, strawberries, pears, plums, peaches.
- Fresh fruit salad
- Yoghurt, fromage frais
- Lower fat cakes - muffins, scones.
- Skimmed or semi-skimmed milk for tea and coffee

External Sources of Advice

- www.takelifeon.co.uk
- www.eatwell.gov.uk

Other sources of advice:

- www.nutrition.org.uk
- www.food.gov.uk/scotland
- www.healthylivingaward.co.uk

If you have any suggestions for topics for the health promotion pages or ideas for health related events, please contact Karen.Darling@ed.ac.uk or any of the members of the Health Promotion Working Group.