The Food Pyramid

LESSON 2
The Food Pyramid

- The Food Pyramid gives us an idea of the different types of foods we need to eat everyday to get the nutrients our bodies need. The food pyramid also helps us to understand the amounts of each of the food groups that are healthy.

- Following the food pyramid will help you to eat the right amount of calories everyday as well as help you to get the protein, iron, calcium and other nutrient you need to grow strong muscles and bones.

- It is simple to use the food pyramid – the foods on the largest shelf are those we need in the largest amounts. The food on the smallest shelf are those we need in the smallest amount.
Fruit & Vegetables

5-7 Servings Per Day

Fruit and vegetables give us:

- Fibre
- Vitamin C
- Vitamin A
- Minerals

Help prevent:

- Cancer
- Heart Disease
- Diabetes

1 serving is:

- 1 apples, orange, banana
- 2 kiwis, plums, mandarins
- ½ cup of cooked vegetables
- 1 bowl salad or soup
- 150mls pure fruit juice
Wholemeal Cereals & Breads, Potatoes, Pasta & Rice

Need 3-5 servings per day. Active teen boys may need up to 7 Servings

1 Serving is:

- 2 thin slices of wholemeal bread
- 1 wholemeal pita bread
- 1.5 slices brown soda bread
- 1 cup cooked rice or pasta
- 4 small potatoes
- Provide Fuel or Energy
- Fibre
- B vitamins
- Wholegrain bread is also a source of iron
Beware of Portion Sizes

Be aware of portion sizes and calorie difference:

- 1 small wrap = 2 slices of bread
- 1 pitta pocket = 2 slices of bread
- 1 demi-baguette = 4 slices of bread
- Some types may contain more calories than others
Milk, Yoghurt, Cheese

Teens need 5 servings per day Children and Adults need 3 servings per day

This group gives us:

- Calcium for bones
- Helps prevent osteoporosis
- Protein to build muscles
- B vitamins
- Iodine
- 1 Serving is:
  - 1 glass of milk
  - 1 pot yoghurt
  - 30g hard cheese
Calcium and Bones

- 1 in 2 women and 1 in 4 men will break a bone due to osteoporosis
- You lay down 90% of your bone by the time you are 19
- Calcium is essential for healthy bones & dairy is the best source
- Can use calcium-fortified plant milks
- Difficult to get enough calcium from other foods:
  - To get 1200mg of calcium from other foods you would need:
    - 21 servings of broccoli
    - 9 x 100g servings of kale
    - 5.7kg of cauliflower
    - 500g of almonds (3000 calories)

If you can’t or don’t take dairy, do see a CORU Registered Dietitian for advice. It can be difficult to get all the calcium you need without dairy. You may need a calcium supplement.
Meat, Poultry, Fish, Eggs, Beans & Nuts

2 servings per day

1 Serving is:

• 50-75g cooked meat or chicken
• 100g cooked fish or tofu
• ¾ cup of beans or lentils
• 40g unsalted nuts or seeds

These foods give us:

• Protein
• Iron
• Minerals

• Choose lean meat and limit processed meats
• Choose fish at least twice a week and include oil-rich fish
Fats, Spreads and Oils

- We need a little fat everyday
- Essential oils are found in olive, rapeseed, sunflower and corn oils
- Nuts, seeds & avocado are also healthy sources
- Fat is very high in calories so it is best to have it in small amounts
- Use added fats like oils and spreads in very small amounts
- 1 pat of butter (7g) should cover 2 slices of bread
- Always use a spoon to measure oil when cooking- never just pour from the bottle
- Use small amounts of mayonnaise and dressings
Saturated Fat

- Saturated fat is one fat to really limit
- It is linked to heart disease as well as some types of cancer
- Foods high in saturated fat are often high in sugar or salt as well so there are lots of reasons to reduce or limit these foods.

Foods to limit include:
- Biscuits
- Cakes
- Pastries
- Sweets

Processed meats:
- Sausages
- Black & white pudding
- Pâté
Foods & drinks high in fat, sugar & salt

- These foods are not needed as part of a healthy diet.
- They have little nutritional value.
- They may cause obesity which leads to heart disease, diabetes and cancer.
- These foods include soft drinks, sweets, crisps, takeaways, ice cream.
- Irish people eat up to 6 foods from this shelf per day.
- Maximum 1-2 foods from this shelf per week.
What’s in my takeaway?

Burger & Chips:
- ¼ pounder with bacon and cheese, chips & soft drink = 1480 calories

Chinese takeaway:
- Spring rolls, sweet 7 sour chicken and egg fried rice = 2184 calories
- Prawn crackers = 608 calories per serving

Pizza:
- 12” deep cheese & tomato has up to 2821 calories

Indian takeaway:
- Poppadoms, onion bhajis, chicken tikka masala & pilau rice = 2287 calories
Making Healthier Choices

• Choose more **fresh foods** and fewer processed foods

• **Learn to cook** – it is easier to eat healthy if you can cook healthy

• Aim to eat 5 or more different fruits and vegetables everyday

• Choose **wholegrain** or **high fibre** foods

• Eat fish & include oil-rich fish at least once a week (**salmon**, **mackerel**, **sardines**, **trout**)

• **Limit salt** - in foods and added to meals
Breakfast

Foods to include:

- Wholegrain cereal or bread
- Fruit
- Milk or yoghurt for calcium
- Can include boiled or poached egg, peanut butter, seeds added to cereal
- Always eat breakfast
- Wholegrain foods are slow release and give you better energy
- Always have fruit – it will help you towards your 5-a-day
- Always include milk or yoghurt to get your calcium
Mid-Morning or Afternoon Snacks

Good options:

- Fruit
- Handful of nuts or seeds
- Yoghurt
- Check if you are hungry before you snack
- Teenagers usually are hungry, but not always
- Listen to your body – ask: “Am I hungry” when it comes to snacking
Lunch

- Wholegrain bread, roll or wrap
- Lean meat, chicken or turkey, fish, cheese, hummus or egg
- Large serving of vegetables or salad including vegetable soup
- Yoghurt or glass of milk
- Fruit

Try different ways to eat more vegetables & fruit:

- Vegetable sticks
- Homemade soups
- Hummus
- Whole or chopped fruit
- Melon, cucumber, carrot, apples, oranges, berries
Dinner

- Lean meat, chicken, fish, eggs, beans or nuts
- Large serving of vegetables or salad
- About ½ your plate should be vegetables
- Glass of milk or a yoghurt
- Finish with fresh or stewed fruit
- Choose fresh foods as much as you can
- **Remember to hydrate throughout the day:**
  - 1.5-2 litres of water per day
- Getting dehydrated will leave you feeling tired and reduce concentration
Balance Your Plate

Protein

• Meat, Chicken, Beans

Carbs

• Pasta, Potatoes, Bread

Vegetables

• Vegetables & Salad

Healthy fats can be included in cooking and on salads.

Remember to add your calcium with milk, yoghurt and cheese