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This information is taken from 'Fuel for Performance, Nutrition for Sport',  
a sports nutrition resource updated and revised by the following Welsh sports dietitians:  
Rhian Owen, Chris Cashin, Elaine Hibbert-Jones and Gill Regan.  
Every acknowledgement is given to all the sports dietitians who contributed to the original publication  
of this resource, which was first published in 1998.

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## What should I eat?

To keep healthy, everyone should eat a balanced diet providing sufficient nutrients for growth, health and well-being. The eatwell plate below shows the general population how much of what they eat should come from each food group. This includes everything eaten during the day, including snacks.

The eatwell plate is not specifically aimed at athletes because athletes should eat more high carbohydrate foods and protein rich foods than the general population. However, many aspects of the eatwell plate still apply because as an athlete, you will still need to eat:

- plenty of fruit and vegetables
- plenty of bread, rice, potatoes, pasta and other starchy foods
- some milk and dairy foods
- some meat, fish, eggs, beans and other non-dairy sources of protein
- just a small amount of foods and drinks high in fat

Your daily diet should provide adequate amounts of carbohydrate, protein, fat, vitamins and minerals to support your training and maintain optimum health and well-being.



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**Bread, rice, potatoes, pasta and other starchy foods** - Eat plenty

**Fruit and vegetables** - Eat plenty, at least five portions of a variety of fruit and vegetables a day

**Milk and dairy foods** - Eat some, choose lower fat alternatives whenever possible or eat higher fat versions infrequently or in smaller amounts

**Meat, fish, eggs, beans and other non-dairy sources of protein** - Eat some, choose lower fat alternatives whenever possible or eat higher fat versions infrequently or in smaller amounts. Aim for at least two portions of fish a week, including a portion of oily fish.

**Foods and drinks high in fat** - Eat just a small amount

- Variety is essential to get the maximum out of your diet - it is all too easy to get into the habit of eating the same foods all the time.
- You may find it easier to aim for small, frequent meals and snacks rather than having fewer, larger meals in the day.
- Meals do not have to be made up of the traditional foods. If it suits you, have sandwiches for breakfast and cereal as a late-night snack.

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## Fruit and vegetables

### Why should you eat them?

- They are a good source of carbohydrate, fibre, vitamins, minerals and antioxidant nutrients.
- They are low in fat.
- They add interest, flavour, variety, texture and colour to your meals and snacks.
- Frozen, tinned vegetables and jacket potatoes are quick to cook in the microwave. Don't forget that frozen fruit and vegetables are just as good as fresh
- As well as being low in fat, vegetables, beans and lentils are very nutritious and cheap to buy.

### How to eat more of them

- Add some fruit to your breakfast cereal – dried or fresh
- Tinned beans can be added to meals like spaghetti bolognese, soups, casseroles and pasta to increase the carbohydrate and protein content.
- Put salad vegetables in your sandwiches.
- All sorts of raw vegetables can be used to make interesting salads and don't forget to throw in chopped fruit too!
- Always try to have one or two vegetables with your potatoes, pasta or rice at mealtimes.
- Snack on fruit and vegetables e.g. fresh fruit, dried fruit, raw vegetables. Try with low fat dips e.g. salsa, reduced fat houmous.
- Mix fruit with low fat yoghurt or diet fromage frais for a healthy dessert
- Fruit juices are an easy way to take on carbohydrate for your refuelling and a glassful can count as one of your 5 portions a day.

### Useful tips

- Buy fruit and vegetables in season. They are usually cheaper if purchased loose rather than prepacked.
- Prolonged or poor storage of fruit and vegetables can lead to a reduction in nutrient content, so shop regularly and eat them up quickly.
- Do not overcook vegetables or use bicarbonate of soda as this will destroy the vitamins. Cook them quickly e.g. steam, stir-fry, microwave or lightly boil.

**Remember '5 a day' is the healthy, balanced way.**

For further information, visit [www.5aday.nhs.uk](http://www.5aday.nhs.uk) or click on the links below:

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