

# FOOD

What you eat affects your health and dental status. By maintaining a healthy weight and healthy eating habits that provide all the nutrients your body requires, you can help prevent type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, some cancers and poor dental health. Your eating habits also affect the environment and climate.



## A GOOD START

A good breakfast starts the day off well and provides the energy your body needs for the new day. Continuing to eat regularly during the day can be good for you. Many people find that their blood sugar level fluctuates less and they become less peckish when they eat regularly approximately every three hours. Regular eating habits also make it easier for you to plan your food shopping and to make conscious food choices.

Preparing food from scratch using raw ingredients is a matter of course to many people, but not everyone knows how to. If you wish to start preparing food, a basic cookbook or grocery bags full of raw ingredients and recipes for a week can be a good help. The shops also stock good ready-made food.

### Good basic cookbooks

**Vår kokbok**, COOP provkök, Nordstedts förlag

**Rutiga kokboken**, Ica bokförlag

**Portionen under tian : bra mat för dig, din plånbok och planeten**, Hanna Olvenmark

## VEGETABLES, FRUIT AND BERRIES

Having vegetables, fruit and berries with each meal and snack makes the food colourful, wholesome and healthy. The colours contain natural antioxidants that have a protective effect on the body, so eat fruit, berries and vegetables of varying colours. Eating 500 grams of fruit, berries and vegetables each day can also make it easier to maintain a healthy weight.

Did you know that the fibre, antioxidants, vitamins and minerals in fruit/berries and vegetables...

- ♥ Have a positive effect on blood sugar levels?
- ♥ Reduce blood fats?
- ♥ Reduce blood pressure?
- ♥ Have a positive effect on the bacterial flora in the gut?
- ♥ Strengthen the immune defences?

As well as eating vegetables, fruit and berries in their natural form, you can also use them in cooking. Stir-fry, boil, oven-bake, grill and barbecue. Vegetables are just as good frozen as fresh. By all means try new types.

### How to eat 500 g of fruit/berries and vegetables

3 pieces of fruit, 2 portions of vegetables, 200 ml of berries = 1 piece of fruit;  
1 portion of vegetables = 1 handful

A vegetarian diet, or a mixed diet containing lots of vegetables, fruit, berries and wholegrain, has a low impact on the environment and climate (CO<sub>2</sub>e).

## FISH

Have you ever tried herring, mackerel, sardines, salmon or shellfish as a topping?

There are many ways to prepare and serve fish and shellfish, e.g. boiled fish with egg sauce, grilled fish with cold sauce, fish au gratin, shellfish salad, stir-fried fish with vegetables and noodles – or why not try sushi?

Fish and shellfish are rich in vitamin D as well as the minerals iodine and selenium. Oily fish, such as salmon, herring and mackerel, also contains DHA, the special omega-3 fatty acid that can reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease.

By all means eat fish and shellfish as a main course 2–3 times a week. The MSC label shows that the fish has been caught in a sustainable way and is good for the development and function of the brain.

Freshwater fish and fish from the Baltic Sea can contain high levels of environmental toxins. The Swedish National Food Agency's website contains advice on how often the various types of fish can be consumed. [www.slv.se](http://www.slv.se)

## FAT

The different types of fat – saturated, unsaturated and polyunsaturated – have different functions in the body, so it is good if the fat in your diet comes from different food groups. Examples of foods with different fat compositions are: oily fish, rapeseed oil, olive oil, seeds, almonds, nuts and dairy products. It is good for your health if the majority of the fat that you consume comes from plants.

Fat enables your body to take up the fat-soluble vitamins A, D, E and K, as well as building up and repairing cells and producing hormones.

Fat is an important carrier of flavour in cooking. It is best to get it just right; too much fat does not add further to the flavour. The fat in food also makes you feel full and makes you less peckish.

Fat contains a lot of calories. Even if you eat a well-composed diet, losing weight can be difficult if the number of calories is too high.

Omega-3 fatty acids, found primarily in oily fish and rapeseed oil, are essential for life. The body is unable to make these itself, so they have to be added via food or dietary supplements.

## WHOLEGRAIN

Wholegrain means that all parts of the grain are present – endosperm, germ and bran. This could be the entire grain, or grain that has been crushed or ground. Wholegrain products contain a lot of dietary fibre, as well as being rich in iron, potassium, magnesium, folic acid and antioxidants such as vitamin E and phenols. Examples of products containing more than 70% wholegrain are: crispbread, porridge, wheat berries and brown rice. By all means choose foods with a high wholegrain content.

## MEAT AND PROCESSED MEAT

Meat contains many nutrients and is an important source of iron, particularly for women of childbearing age, adolescents and children.

Eating several portions of cooked red meat and processed meat products each week increases your risk of certain types of cancer, as well as the risk of cardiovascular disease. Red meat means meat from cattle, pigs, lamb and wild game. The Swedish National Food Agency and the World Cancer Research Fund therefore recommend eating no more than 500 grams of red meat per week, and that only a small part of this should be processed meat.

### How to reduce the amount of meat

Replace some of your meat dishes during the week with vegetarian alternatives. Flavour minced meat dishes and casseroles with beans, lentils, vegetables and root vegetables.

A portion of just about the right size covers around 3/4 of the palm of your hand. Meat production has a major impact on the environment and climate. In many countries – though not in Sweden – a lot of antibiotics are used in raising animals. However, meat production can also have positive environmental effects. Grazing animals help to keep natural grazing land open, which promotes biodiversity.

Think of yourself and the environment when choosing meat and processed meat.

## SALT

Iodised salt is an important source of iodine, which is required for the metabolism. Iodine may be missing from herbal salt, flake salt and coarse salt. It is important to use salt that contains iodine. Generally, we eat twice as much salt as we should. Of all the salt we consume, 60–70% comes from ready-made foods such as processed meat products, cheese, cereals, bread, dietary fat and convenience food. It is good to eat foods that contain less salt. Look for the Keyhole when you are shopping.

## DRINKS

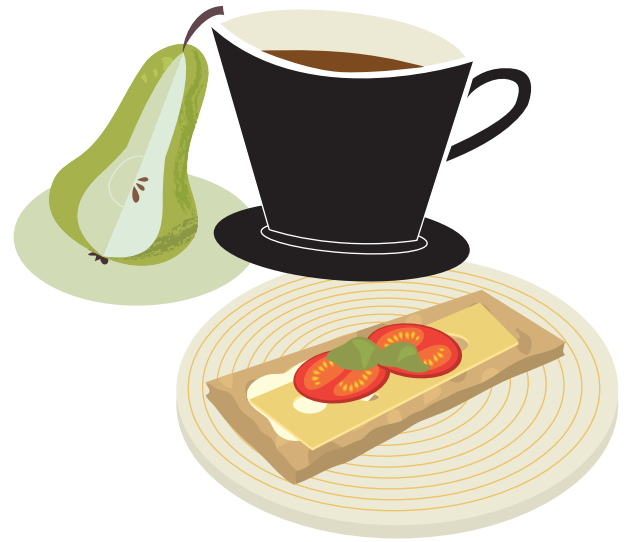
Water is an excellent drink that goes with all meals and whenever you are thirsty.

Coffee and tea contain antioxidants that have wholesome effects; one/a few cups a day is good. Cordials, fizzy drinks, low-alcohol drinks, rosehip soup and sweet yoghurts contain a lot of sugar, approx. 8 lumps of sugar per glass (200 ml).



# SNACKS

Take time to sit down, relax and put aside your phone and tablet when eating a snack. If you eat when you are in a hurry, or when you are focusing on the phone, tablet, computer or TV, you are not always aware of what – and how much – you are eating. Planning meals and between-meal snacks can make it easier to avoid general snacking and to eat just the right amount at the next main meal. How much you should eat depends on your energy/calorie requirements; 50–200 kilocalories (kcal) per snack is just about right for most people. Remember that sugar is not good for either your teeth or your body. Even small amounts of confectionery, cakes, ice cream and sweet drinks provide a lot of sugar and many ‘empty calories’ (calories without nutritional value), but without satisfying any hunger.



## WHAT YOU CHOOSE AS SNACKS IS IMPORTANT FOR YOUR HEALTH!

**50** kcal in different ways      **200** kcal in different ways

1 piece of fruit or 200 ml berries	1 light sandwich with topping and vegetables, 1 piece of fruit
1 crispbread with fresh cheese, vegetables	2 crispbreads with topping and vegetables, 100 ml yoghurt, 1 piece of fruit
100 ml yoghurt	200 ml yoghurt, 150 ml cereal
1 small egg	1 small hotdog with bread
1 chocolate-filled biscuit	½ muffin from kiosk/café
2 biscuits of type ‘Marie’ biscuit	100 ml ice cream
10 g chocolate	50 g sweets

Which foods provide only calories and no nutrition?  
Which foods best satisfy your hunger?



# A HEALTHY WEIGHT

## HOW TO CALCULATE YOUR BMI

$$\text{BMI} = \frac{\text{Weight in kg}}{\text{height in m} \times \text{height in m}}$$

### BMI (age 18–70)

Underweight	≤18.4
Normal	18.5–24.9
Overweight	25.0–29.9
Obese	≥30



## DO YOU KNOW YOUR WAIST MEASUREMENT?

An increased waistline means an increased risk of illness

### Waist measurement – women

Low risk	<80 cm
Increased risk	80–88 cm
Severely increased risk	>88 cm

### Waist measurement – men

Low risk	<94 cm
Increased risk	94–102 cm
Severely increased risk	>102 cm

## FOOD DIARY

A food diary can help you to be aware of your eating habits and meals. Write down everything that you eat and drink for the whole day. Describe the quantities and where you are eating, as well as whether you are doing something else at the same time, e.g. watching TV, driving, speaking on the phone. Take your food diary along to your healthcare provider if you want to discuss your eating habits, food choices and meals.

You can keep a food diary in whatever way suits you – loose sheets, a notebook, computer, mobile phone, apps, etc.

**Time**  
*(food, meal and quantities)*

**Meal**

**Place**

Time <i>(food, meal and quantities)</i>	Meal	Place

## FIND OUT MORE ABOUT EATING HABITS

[www.1177.se/Kronoberg/Tema/Halsa](http://www.1177.se/Kronoberg/Tema/Halsa)

[www.livsmedelsverket.se/matvanor-halsa--miljo/kostrad-och-matvanor](http://www.livsmedelsverket.se/matvanor-halsa--miljo/kostrad-och-matvanor)