

HEALTHY EATING

GUIDANCE NOTE FOR TRANSPORT WORKERS

The foods we eat have big effects on our health and quality of life. There's no one type of food that can provide all the nutrients a human body needs - so it is important that we eat a wide range of foods. Proper nutrition, along with adequate rest and sleep, regular exercise and good hygiene can help us to lead a healthy and happy life.

KEY FACTS

- Healthy eating helps to protect against malnutrition, as well as non-communicable diseases (NCDs), including such as diabetes, heart disease, stroke and cancer.
- Unhealthy eating and lack of physical activity are leading global risks to health.
- Switching to healthy eating does not have to be an all or nothing proposition. You do not have to eliminate foods you enjoy and you don't have to change everything all at once but to make a few small changes at a time.
- Focus on avoiding packaged and processed foods as manufacturers often hide large amounts of sugar or unhealthy fats in packaged food.
- Add more fruit and vegetables to your diet; they are low in calories and nutrient dense.
- Never skip breakfast. Good breakfast, which is high in fibre and low in fat, sugar and salt, can form part of a balanced diet.
- Limiting intake of free sugars and salt is part of a healthy diet.

WHY IS HEALTHY EATING IMPORTANT?

- A well-balanced diet provides all of the energy you need to keep active throughout the day. It also provides nutrients you need for growth and repair, helping you to stay strong and healthy and help to prevent diet-related illness, such as some cancers.
- Deficiencies in some key nutrients - such as vitamin A, B, C and E, and zinc, iron and selenium - can weaken parts of your immune system.
- Maintaining a healthy weight and healthy eating can help to reduce the risk of developing type 2 diabetes.
- A healthy diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains and low-fat dairy can help to reduce the risk of heart disease.
- High blood pressure and cholesterol can be a symptom of too much salt and saturated fats in your diet.
- Vitamin D helps body absorb calcium; make sure your body gets vitamin D from sun. Eat plenty of foods containing vitamin D such as oily fish and fortified cereals.

HOW MUCH DO I NEED TO EAT?

A healthy diet should provide us with the right amount of energy (calories), from foods and drinks to maintain energy balance. Energy balance is where the calories taken in from the food are equal to the calories used by the body. On an average, women need around 2000 calories a day, and men around 2500 calories. It's not just about counting calories but to eat the right types of food and in the right proportions for good health.

- Moderation is very important to healthy eating. It means eating only as much food as your body needs. However, it doesn't mean eliminating the foods you love. You should feel satisfied at the end of a meal, but not stuffed.
- Try not to think of certain foods as "off-limits." When you ban certain foods, it is natural to want those foods more, and then feel like a failure if you give in to temptation. Start by reducing portion sizes of unhealthy foods and not eating them as often.
- Think smaller portions. By serving your meals on smaller plates or in bowls, you can trick your brain into thinking it's a larger portion. If you do not feel satisfied at the end of a meal, add more leafy greens or round off the meal with fruit.
- Take your time. It is important to slow down and think about food as nourishment rather than just something to gulp down in between work.
- Eat with others whenever possible. Eating alone, especially in front of the TV or computer, often leads to mindless overeating.
- Control emotional eating. We do not always eat just to satisfy hunger. Many of us also turn to food to relieve stress. things worse.

PRACTICAL TIPS FOR HEALTHY EATING

- Do not skip breakfast. A healthy breakfast high in fibre and low in fat, sugar and salt can form part of a balanced diet.
- Starchy carbohydrates should make up just over a third of the food you eat. They include potatoes, bread, rice, pasta and cereals.
- Eat at least five portions of a variety of fruit and veg every day. They can be fresh, frozen, canned, dried or juiced.
- Fish is a good source of protein and contains vitamins and minerals. Aim to eat at least 2 portions of fish a week, including at least 1 portion of oily fish which are high in omega-3 fats to help prevent heart disease. Oily fish include: salmon, trout, herring, sardines and mackerel.
- Cut down on saturated fat. You need some fat in your diet, but too much saturated fat, which is found in many foods, such as fatty cuts of meat, sausages, butter, cheese and processed food can increase cholesterol in blood and the risk of heart disease. When you are having meat, choose lean cuts and cut off any visible fat.
- Keeping salt intake to less than 5 g per day helps to prevent hypertension, and reduces the risk of heart disease and stroke in the adult population. Even if you do not add salt to your food, you may still be eating too much.
- Cut down Sugar. Regularly consuming foods and drinks high in sugar increases your risk of obesity and tooth decay.
- Water helps flush our systems of waste products and prevents dehydration causing tiredness, low energy, and headaches. Drink 6 to 8 glasses every day. All non-alcoholic drinks count, but water, lower fat milk and low sugar drinks, tea and coffee are healthier choices.

You can be in touch with the ITF through free ITF Wellbeing app or ITF Wellbeing Facebook page to get guidance on healthy eating.



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