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Swiss Food Pyramid

Sweets, Salty Snacks & Alcohol

In small quantities.

Oils, Fats & Nuts

Oils and nuts in small quantities daily. Butter/margarine sparingly.

Dairy Products, Meat, Fish, Eggs & Tofu

3 portions of dairy products and 1 portion of meat/fish/eggs/tofu ... per day.

Grains, Potatoes & Pulses

3 portions per day. Grains should preferably be wholegrain.

Vegetables & Fruit

5 portions per day of different colours.

Beverages

1-2 litres of unsweetened beverages per day. Preferably water.



At least 30 minutes of physical activity daily and sufficient relaxation.



Swiss Food Pyramid Recommendations for a healthy and enjoyable adult diet

Beverages

1–2 litres per day, preferably in the form of sugar-free drinks, e.g. tap/mineral water or fruit/herbal tea. Beverages containing caffeine, such as coffee, black and green tea, can contribute to liquid intake.

Vegetables & Fruit

5 portions per day of different colours, at least 3 portions should be vegetables and 2 fruit. 1 portion = 120 g. One daily portion of fruit or vegetables can be replaced by 2 dl of vegetable or fruit juice (with no added sugar).

Grains, Potatoes & Pulses

3 portions per day. Cereals should preferably be whole grain. 1 portion = ► 75–125 g bread/pastry or ► 60–100 g pulses (dry weight) or ► 180–300 g potatoes or ► 45–75 g crisp bread/whole-grain crackers/flakes/flour/pasta/rice/corn/other grains (dry weight).

Dairy Products, Meat, Fish, Eggs & Tofu

3 portions per day of milk or dairy products. 1 portion = ► 2 dl milk or ► 150–200 g yoghurt/fresh cheese (quark)/cottage cheese/other dairy products or ► 30 g semi/hard cheese or ► 60 g soft cheese.

In addition, 1 daily portion of another protein-rich food (e.g. meat, poultry, fish, eggs, tofu, quorn, seitan, cheese or fresh cheese[quark]). Alternate between these sources of protein. 1 portion = ► 100–120 g meat/poultry/fish/tofu/quorn/seitan (fresh weight) or ► 2–3 eggs or ► 30 g semi/hard cheese or ► 60 g soft cheese or ► 150–200 g fresh cheese (quark)/cottage cheese.

Oils, Fats & Nuts

2–3 tablespoons per day (20–30 g) of vegetable oil, of which at least half should be rape-seed oil.

1 portion per day (20–30 g) of unsalted nuts, seeds or kernels. In addition, butter, margarine, cream, etc. can be used, however, **sparingly** (approx. 1 tablespoon = 10 g per day).

Sweets, Salty Snacks & Alcohol

Consume sweets, sweetened drinks, salty snacks and alcoholic beverages **in moderation**.



Swiss Food Pyramid

Further information about the recommendations

► *A well-balanced diet is vital in promoting a healthy lifestyle. It influences our mental and physical well-being and helps in the prevention of illnesses.*

The recommendations of the Swiss food pyramid are for adults. Other recommendations may apply for specific age groups and population categories (e.g. children, pregnant women, athletes), as well as for those suffering from illnesses or requiring weight reduction. The food pyramid depicts a balanced diet and is based on the following core principles:

► Food groups

Food is summarised in groups according to its respective compositions. Typical examples of the individual groups are illustrated in the food pyramid.

► Quantities

Food in the lower levels of the pyramid should be consumed in larger quantities, whereas those from the upper levels should be consumed in smaller quantities. All foods are allowed, but correct food combinations and proportions are essential for a balanced diet.

► Diversity

A balanced diet is a diverse diet that takes different food groups, as well as different foods within the food groups into consideration.

The food pyramid is not a rigid diet; it allows for the individual composition of food, beverages and meals according to personal likes and dislikes and habits. The listed food quantities serve as a guideline. Smaller or larger portions apply according to energy requirements (depending on age, gender, height, physical activity, etc.). The recommendations are meant to be observed on a long-term basis, i.e. in the course of a whole week, and not just on a daily basis. Recommendations regarding liquid intake are an exception, and should be observed daily.

A diet that follows the food pyramid ensures a sufficient supply of nutrients and protective compounds – with a few exceptions. One of these exceptions is vitamin D. As food sources only contain small amounts of vitamin D, it is also important to regularly spend time outdoors so that the body can produce its own vitamin D from sunlight. In winter, when the body's production of vitamin D is reduced, a supplement (e.g. from fortified foods or a dietary supplement) can counteract the deficit.

Careful preparation of food also helps to retain beneficial nutrients. Use salt with added iodine and fluoride but only in limited quantities. Other sea-seasoning containing salt, such as seasoning sauce, soya sauce, stock, etc. should also be kept to a minimum. Herbs and spices are a creative way to flavour dishes.

Mealtimes are not just about the intake of energy and nutrients; they are also about pleasure, relaxation and social contact. Taking time, switching off and eating and drinking in peace and quiet help to promote the enjoyment of eating.

In addition to a balanced diet, the following also contribute to a healthier way of life: ► at least 30 minutes of daily physical exercise ► going outdoors every day ► taking regular breaks and relaxing ► avoiding smoking and excessive alcohol consumption.

What we eat impacts not only our own health but also our environment (humans, animals, nature). Sustainable eating habits comprise: ► preference of plant-based foods ► foods that are environment- and animal-friendly, seasonal, regional and in compliance with fair trade principles ► avoiding food waste.

► *Old habits die hard! In order to achieve a healthier and sustainable lifestyle, it helps to set small and realistic goals and implement them step by step. Even small changes can make a difference.*



Swiss Food Pyramid

Additional recommendations for adolescents

► *In addition to the principles of well-balanced nutrition for adults, as represented by the food pyramid, the following also needs to be considered for adolescents:*

► For growth and development

Adolescents are still in their growth and development phase. Therefore they have a greater need of energy and individual nutrients than adults, depending upon age and sex. This requirement can be well covered by balanced nutrition.

► Fast Food? Vegetarian?

Fast food and snacks frequently contain high amounts of energy, fat and/or sugar, but few dietary fibres, vitamins or minerals. Therefore, high-energy fast foods and snacks should only be eaten occasionally and in small portions and be combined with salads or fruit. Water is recommended as opposed to sweet beverages. And last but not least, meals should be enjoyed slowly and in a sitting position.

With a vegetarian diet, the conscious selection of foods is particularly important to ensure an adequate supply of nutrients (e.g. vitamin B₁₂). Meat should be regularly replaced by other sources of protein such as tofu, legumes, cheese or eggs.

► Beverages & Co.

Ideal beverages are tap/mineral water, unsweetened fruit or herbal teas and strongly diluted juices. Soft and energy drinks are unsuitable thirst-quenchers as due to their high sugar content, these beverages provide too much energy without giving a genuine feeling of satiety. This can lead to becoming overweight. Additionally, sugar and acids in these beverages attack the teeth. Light beverages also contain acids and, like sugared beverages, can lead to a strong preference for sweet tastes.

Alcoholic beverages (beer, wine, liqueurs and drinks manufactured from a mix of these) should not be drunk at all by people under 16 years of age and only exceptionally, if at all, by adolescents over 16. The risks of alcohol consumption are generally underestimated (e.g. danger of road and sports accidents, increased aggression, risky sexual behaviour, alcohol poisoning).

► Eat regularly – with pleasure

Regular meals, such as three main meals a day and, if necessary, two small intermediate meals are recommended. A balanced breakfast or morning tea provide a good start to the day and promote concentration and efficiency at school and during training. Unfortunately, regular meals are ever more frequently replaced by constant and unconscious intermediate snacking which confuses normal feelings of hunger and satiety. In addition, there is the fact that snacks are usually very energy-rich and poorly balanced. Over the long-term, this eating pattern can lead to becoming overweight. Peace and time to concentrate on the meal without any distractions (TV, computer) contribute to conscious, pleasurable meals.

► Too fat? Too thin? Or normal?

Many adolescents are dissatisfied with their body. Both extreme crash diets and the uncontrolled consumption of muscle-developing supplements can lastingly disturb the metabolism. Such behaviour can result in eating disorders such as bulimia and anorexia.

► *A positive perception of one's body and self-determined, healthy ways of treating the body such as a balanced diet and regular exercise form the basis for the development and well-being of adolescents.*



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Additional recommendations for the elderly

► *The recommendations for healthy elderly people are basically the same as those contained in the food pyramid for adults. However, in old age, special attention must be paid to the following:*

► Protein

Ensuring adequate protein intake is particularly important in order to preserve muscle and bone mass and maintain various body functions (e.g. immune defences). The easiest way to meet protein requirements is through the daily consumption of food rich in protein such as legumes, milk products, tofu, meat, fish or eggs.

► Calcium and vitamin D

These nutrients are vital for the maintaining the strength of bones. Milk and milk products are excellent sources of calcium, as are mineral water that is rich in calcium (over 300 mg per litre), dark green vegetables and nuts.

Not many foods contain vitamin D, which is why a supplementary intake of vitamin D is recommended for people over the age of 60.

► Fluids

As the sensation of thirst decreases with age, the elderly must take extra care to drink a sufficient amount of liquid each day, i.e. 1–2 litres. Amongst other things, fluids support intellectual capacities.

► Energy

Energy requirements depend on physical activity. People who do not exercise much need correspondingly less energy, but their bodies still require at least the same amount of protein, vitamins and minerals as they did when they were younger. Those who continue to exercise in old age have higher energy requirements and live a healthier life. They can eat more and provide their bodies with all the essential nutrients, and their weight is more likely to remain stable.

► Underweight and overweight

Being either under- or overweight can impair quality of life and increase the risk of disease (e.g. malnutrition, heart disease or circulatory problems). Elderly people without much appetite may find it helpful to eat several small portions spread throughout the day to prevent becoming underweight. For those who are overweight, a balanced, low-calorie diet and regular exercise can help.

► Food supplements

Protein, fibre, vitamin and mineral requirements are not always covered adequately by our diet. Enriched foods (e.g. multivitamin juices) can help to meet the body's requirements. In some situations it may be advisable to take food supplements (e.g. vitamin tablets), but only after consulting a specialist.

► Exercise

Daily exercise such as walking, climbing stairs or gymnastics helps to keep fit, reduces the chances of becoming overweight and helps preserve bones and muscle mass.

► *A healthy lifestyle consisting of a balanced diet and sufficient exercise is the best way to ensure that you will stay fit into old age.*