



# A nutrition and recipe book for Black African and Caribbean families

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This book includes information on how families from an African and Caribbean backgrounds can achieve a healthy, balanced diet without having to give up their traditional foods or foods that they are familiar with.

This book also provides delicious, easy and quick recipes and tips that can be tailored to meet your nutritional, health, social and cultural needs.

There are links to websites and resources for additional information on various nutrition-related topics.

Black African and Caribbean individuals should always be encouraged to speak to their doctor or a registered dietitian for individualised medical and dietary advice, respectively.

Date published: July 2022  
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Commissioned by Lewisham Council

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# Healthy eating for African and Caribbean communities

Healthy eating is about having a variety of foods and nutrients in your diet and having the right amount of food and drinks to support your health and wellbeing. You do not need to give up on your favourite traditional foods to be healthy, they can still fit into a balanced diet.

The African and Caribbean Eatwell Guide gives a visual representation of how much of what you eat overall should come from each food group. The aim is not to achieve this balance with each meal, but to get the balance right over a day or even a week.

It is important to ensure that you and your family are eating a healthy, balanced diet to reduce risk of long-term chronic conditions such as type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, stroke, heart disease and cancer. In the next few pages, we will look at how to achieve a healthy diet using the African and Caribbean Eatwell plate, including information on portion sizes.









Many staple foods in the traditional African and Caribbean diets are good for your health, like leafy green vegetables, sweet potatoes, yams, pulses and legumes.

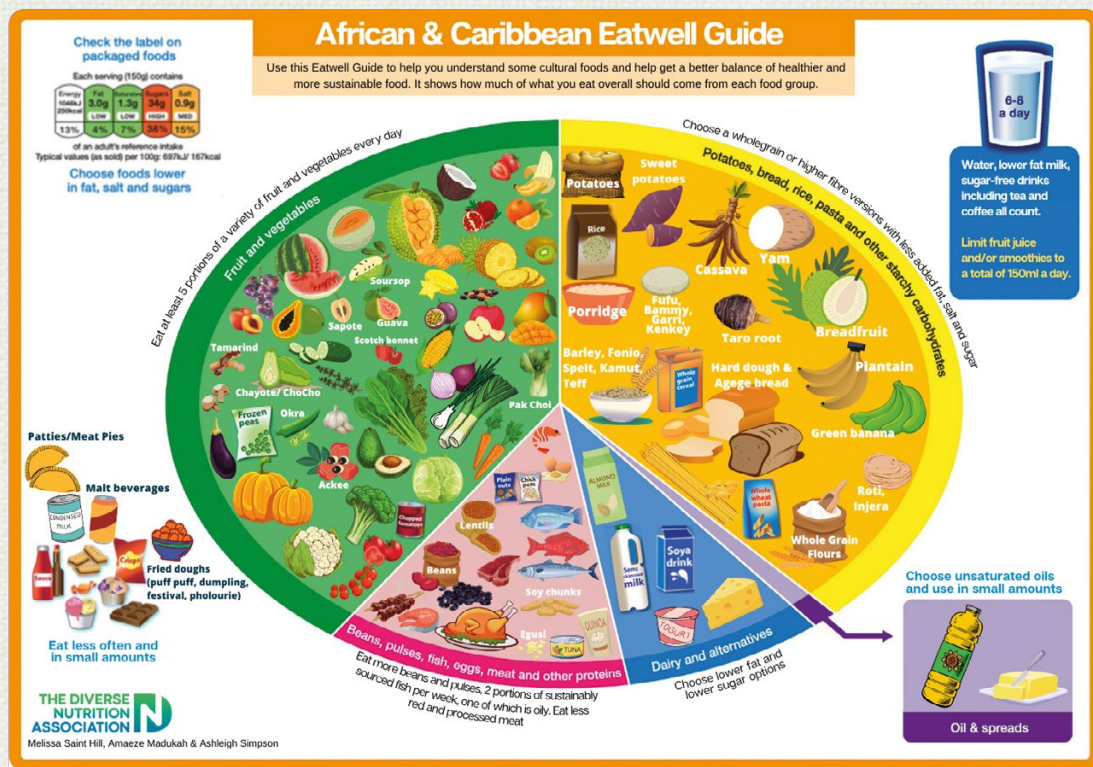
**The World Health Organisation (WHO) and the Department of Health (DoH) recommend that people eat at least 5 portions (400g) of a wide variety of fruits and vegetables every day.**

Fruits and vegetables are a good source of vitamins and minerals like Vitamin C and fibre, which is important for gut health.

They also contain nutrients that act as antioxidants, protecting the body from free radicals (substances that can damage cells and cause disease).

## Some examples of 1 portion (equivalent to 80g):

-  **One** banana, orange, pear or apple or a similar sized fruit.
-  **Half** an avocado or grapefruit.
-  **Two** satsumas, plums or similar sized fruit
-  **A slice of large fruit** such as melon or pineapple.
-  **Three heaped tablespoons** of peas, carrots, sweetcorn or mixed vegetables.
-  **Three heaped tablespoons** of beans, peas or lentils.
-  **One cereal bowl** of lettuce, callaloo or spinach.
-  **30g portion** of dried fruit, such as dates, sultanas



Source: Public Health England in association with the Welsh Government, Food Standards Scotland and the Food Standards Agency in Northern Ireland

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### Tips to get your 5 portions a day:



**Eat a rainbow** - try to eat one portion from each colour group.



**Go for fresh, frozen or tinned fruit and veg** in natural juice or water, with no added sugar or salt.



**Check nutrition information on labels** and look out for the '5-a-day' logo



**Bulk up on veg and pulses** by adding them to stews, curries and casseroles.



**Go for produce in season and locally grown** as better value for money.

### Base meals on potatoes, bread, rice, pasta or other starchy carbohydrates

Starchy carbohydrates are a good source of energy and nutrients like calcium, iron and B vitamins. Wholegrain versions are a good source of fibre which can be beneficial to your digestive system, help stabilise blood sugar levels and lower cholesterol levels.

### We should aim for 3-4 portions per day.

#### Some examples of 1 portion:



**Two slices** of wholewheat bread or one slice of hard-dough or agege bread.



**50g** uncooked or 2 handfuls of 150g cooked) rice.



**75g** uncooked or 2-3 handfuls of (150g cooked) pasta.



**Three tablespoons (40g)** of porridge oats or cornmeal porridge.



**One cup (240g)** of pounded yam or fufu.



**One** plantain or green banana.



**180g** of boiled potatoes or yam (size of fist).

### Eat beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat and other proteins

These foods are good sources of protein, which is important for the body to grow and repair itself. They also contain vitamins and minerals including iron, zinc and B vitamins.

Red meat (like beef, goat, lamb and pork) is a great source of these nutrients, but it is important to consume these in moderation.

The current recommendation is to eat no more than about 3 portions of red meat a week, which is around 350g cooked weight a week and lower intake of processed meats like bacon, ham and salami in the diet to reduce risk of bowel cancer.

If you eat fish, try to aim for at least 2 portions of fish every week, one of which should be oily (e.g., salmon, mackerel, sardines and pilchards).

Oily fish is also a source of omega 3 fatty acids which has benefits to the heart and vitamin D, which helps to keep bones and teeth healthy as well as support immune function.

Black African and Caribbean people are at a higher risk of vitamin D deficiency.

Including vitamin D rich foods like oily fish in the diet as well as taking a daily supplement containing 10 micrograms (mcg) or 400 international unit (IU) all year round may help to ensure good vitamin D levels.

### We should aim for 2-3 portions of protein a day.

#### Some examples of one portion of protein:



**70g** cooked red meat (equivalent to a deck of cards)



**140g** cooked white fish like cod fish or canned fish (equivalent to size of palm of hand)



**140g** cooked oily fish (equivalent to size of palm of hand)



**Two medium sized** eggs



**Four tablespoons (140g)** of baked beans



**Four tablespoons (150g)** of red kidney beans, butter beans or black-eyed peas



**Four tablespoons (150g)** of pulses like lentils and chickpeas



**Four tablespoons (100g)** of soya/tofu or plant-based meat alternatives



**One tablespoon** of nut butter

### Have some dairy or dairy alternatives (such as soya drinks and yoghurts)

Milk, cheese, yoghurt and fortified dairy alternatives like soya drinks are good sources of protein and some vitamins. They're also an important source of calcium, which helps keep your bones healthy.

Try to go for lower-fat and lower-sugar products where possible, like 1% fat milk, reduced-fat cheese or plain low-fat yoghurt instead of evaporated/condensed milk or full fat options.

**Try to aim for 2–3 portions a day.**

### Some examples of one portion of dairy or dairy alternative:



**One glass (200ml)** of dairy milk or plant-based milk



**One standard pot (125g)** of yoghurt



**A small matchbox size (30g)** of cheese

### Choose unsaturated oils and spreads, and eat in small amounts:

We all need fats in our diet. They provide us with energy, some essential vitamins and fatty acids that the body cannot make by itself.

However, it is vital to try to keep an eye on the type of fat that's in the food you eat and oil or spread you use.

Having too much food high in saturated fat can increase the risk of heart disease, while food containing unsaturated fat (like olive oil) can help reduce your risk.

Use small amounts of oils and spreads and measure out. Choose unsaturated vegetable oils such as olive oil, rapeseed oil, sunflower oil.

### Some examples of one portion of fat:



**One tspn (5g)** of butter



**One tspn (5ml)** of olive oil, rapeseed oil, sunflower oil.



**One tspn (5ml)** of coconut oil or palm oil (**high in saturated fats**)

## Fat, salt and sugar

### Limit saturated fat intake:

Saturated fats are mainly found in animal products like fat on meats, meat products, butter, ghee, lard and some dairy products. You may also find these types of fats in cakes, biscuits, patties, pastries, palm oil and coconut oil.

Having too much saturated fat in the diet is linked with higher cholesterol levels which can increase risk of heart disease. Lowering intake of saturated fat and replacing with a smaller amount of unsaturated fats (good fats found in olive oil, avocado, nuts and seeds) may help to maintain normal blood cholesterol levels.

### You can reduce saturated fat intake by:

**Removing any visible fat** and take the skin off meat, offal, chicken and turkey.

amount you use. Alternatively, you can use an oil spray.

**Choose low-fat dairy products** like semi-skimmed or skimmed milk or dairy alternatives.

**Choose unsaturated fat oils** like olive oil or rapeseed oil instead of coconut or palm oil where possible but still be mindful of how much you use.

**Try different cooking methods** like grilling, baking, microwaving or steaming food instead of deep-frying or roasting to reduce fat content.

**Be snack aware.** Have snacks that are high in saturated fat like cakes and biscuits in small amounts and less often.

**Do not free-pour oil from the bottle when cooking.** Measure a small amount with a teaspoon to control the

**Take time to check out food labels** on packaged food when shopping and compare with similar product.

### Websites and resources for further information on saturated fat:

#### Heart UK

Heart healthy African and Caribbean diets:  
[www.heartuk.org.uk](http://www.heartuk.org.uk) 'Search' African and Caribbean diets

#### NHS

How to eat less saturated fat:  
[www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk) 'Search' eat less saturated fat



### Limit salt intake:

We all need a tiny amount of salt as it plays a key role in transporting water around the body. It also helps send messages between the brain and the rest of the body. However, Black African and Caribbean people are very sensitive to the effects of too much salt in the diet and are therefore at higher risk of associated health conditions like hypertension and stroke. The NHS advises the public to reduce salt intake to less than 6g per day (equivalent to 1 teaspoon) for adults and children aged 11+.

7–10 years should eat no more than 5g salt a day; 4–6 years should eat no more than 3g salt a day and 1–3 years should eat no more than 2g salt a day.

Most foods do not taste ‘salty’, but they can contain high amounts of hidden salt. About 75% of the salt, we eat is already added to the food we buy. Most of this comes from salt added to foods like processed meat products, snacks (such as plantain crisps, patties, and biscuits), ready meals, soups and pasta sauces. Even some breads and breakfast cereals can contain a lot of salt.

### You can reduce salt intake by:

**Using fresh herbs and spices** to boost flavour like turmeric, coriander, parsley, cayenne pepper, basil, ginger and garlic instead of regular salt or gourmet salt (e.g., pink Himalayan salt or Sea salt).

**Be mindful of the salt content of some convenience foods** like instant noodles especially if they come with salt or mixed spices sachets.

**Make your own stock** rather than using ready-made stock cubes or liquid seasonings that are usually very high in salt. If you want to use stock cubes in cooking, try to **choose the low-salt or low-sodium options** but still be mindful of how much you use. Boil vegetables, any meat or fish bones with spices and herbs to make your own stock.

**Cut down on salted meat and fish** like salt fish, salted mackerel, salted cod, bacon or salt pork or soak in water for 24hrs (changing the water a number of times).

**Look out for words on labels** like sodium, salted, brine, cured, pickled, corned, smoked - and only eat these less often and in small amounts.

**Cut down on salted snacks** like salted plantain chips, salted popcorn and salted nuts or choose unsalted alternatives instead.

**Read nutritional information on food labels** to compare food products and choose those that are lower salt or sodium.

### Websites and resources for further information on salt:

#### Better Health, Healthier Families

Salt: [www.nhs.uk/healthier-families/food-facts/salt/](http://www.nhs.uk/healthier-families/food-facts/salt/)

#### NHS

Tips for a lower salt diet: [www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well/how-to-eat-a-balanced-diet/eight-tips-for-healthy-eating/](http://www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well/how-to-eat-a-balanced-diet/eight-tips-for-healthy-eating/)



### Limit sugar intake:

Free sugars are sugars added to food like table sugar, or those naturally present in honey, syrups and unsweetened fruit juices, but exclude lactose in milk and milk products as well as those sugars contained in fruit that is still intact (not juiced).

They should not make up more than 5% of the total energy we get from food and drink each day which is equivalent to:

**No more than 30g of free sugars (equivalent to 7 sugar cubes) a day for adults and children aged 11+**



**No more than 24g of free sugars (equivalent to 6 sugar cubes) a day for children aged 7–10.**



**No more than 19g of free sugars (equivalent to 5 sugar cubes) a day for children aged 4–6.**



Free sugars are found in foods such as biscuits, puff puff, fried sweet dumplings, festivals, cakes, puddings, sweets and chocolate. Some drinks can also be a major source of free sugars like malted drinks, fizzy drinks, fruit punches, squashes and juices.

### You can reduce free sugar intake:

**Reading the nutrition labels** – try to compare products and go for lower sugar or sugar-free versions where possible.

Having free sugars like honey or brown sugar added into food or drinks like tea and coffee less often and in very minimal amounts (less than a teaspoon).

**Considering making snacks and desserts yourself if possible** as you'll have more control of how much sugar you use.

**Having no more than one small glass (150ml) of fruit juice and smoothies a day.**

**Having no more than one portion of dried fruits (30g) a day** as concentrated source of free sugars.

**Lowering intake of sugary food and sugary drinks** and consuming in small amounts.

Sugars found in dairy products (i.e., lactose) and whole fruits and vegetables are not considered as free sugars – you don't need to cut down on these sugars.

### Websites and resources for further information on free sugars:

#### British Heart Foundation

How to spot sugar on an ingredients list:  
[www.bhf.org.uk/information-support/heart-matters-magazine/nutrition/sugar-salt-and-fat/names-for-sugar-infographic](http://www.bhf.org.uk/information-support/heart-matters-magazine/nutrition/sugar-salt-and-fat/names-for-sugar-infographic)

#### NHS

How to cut down on sugar:  
[www.nhs.uk/healthier-families/food-facts/sugar/#how-to-cut-down](http://www.nhs.uk/healthier-families/food-facts/sugar/#how-to-cut-down)

It's not always easy to spot sugar on the ingredients lists. Sugars added to food or drink can be described and listed in various ways like agave syrup, blackstrap molasses, coconut sugar, dextrose, fructose (added in food and drinks), fruit

juice concentrate, glucose, hydrolysed starch, invert sugar, maltose, sorghum syrup, sucrose and treacle. The higher up on the ingredients list sugar is, the more added sugar is in the product.

## Look at labels

When shopping, check the labels of products to see how much salt, fat and sugar they contain and how much they will add to the daily maximum intake. Many foods have labels on the front of pack or if not, it should be on the back.

When food labels are colour-coded with red, amber and green (traffic lights), go for green and amber as much as possible. Green is low in a particular nutrient, amber means medium and red is high in a nutrient per 100g of a product.

The traffic lights food label guide below

is a great resource for you to refer to when you and your family are doing food shopping. Some cultural food packaging may not have the colour-coded labels on them, so knowing some of these numbers can be very beneficial in choosing a healthier alternative.

Action on Salt has fun exercises and games that you and your child can get involved to learn to read food labels better when doing food shopping as well as help your child to practice maths in a light and fun way: [www.actiononsalt.org.uk/resources/food-flips-game](http://www.actiononsalt.org.uk/resources/food-flips-game)

### Traffic lights food label guide

		Fat	Saturated fat	Sugar	Salt
Healthier choice	Low	3g or less	1.5g or less	5g or less	0.3g or less
Ok most of the time	Medium	3.1g to 17.5g	1.6g to 5g	5.1g to 22.5g	0.31g to 1.5g
Just occasionally	High	More than 17.5g	More than 5g	More than 22g	More than 1.5g

All measures as 100g/ml

## Healthy recipes Breakfast







## Millet porridge

Millet porridge is low in saturated fat and high in dietary fibre. Fibre is important for your gut to work normally, lowers cholesterol levels and stabilises blood sugar levels too. This fibre-rich breakfast porridge can help you and your family feel fuller for longer.

2-3 servings    10 minutes prep    15 minutes cooking

### Instructions

1. Combine millet flour, milk, and a cup of water in saucepan and mix until smooth.
2. Add ginger, cloves, cinnamon, and salt, stir, and cook over medium heat.
3. Continue stirring to avoid any lumps, sticking, and burning, let it thicken and come to a boil.
4. Lower the heat and check the consistency. You can add more water or milk for to match your preferred consistency.
5. Stir and cook for a few more minutes then turn the hob off.
6. Serve warm with a pinch of sugar and top it with nuts, seeds or fruits of your choice.

**Each 150g serving contains**  
(excludes serving suggestions)

Kcal	Carbs	Fibre	Protein	Fat	Saturates	Sugars	Salt
176	28g	28g	7.5g	3.5g	1.5g	6.5g	0.41g

**Contains:** Milk

### Ingredients

- 1 ½ cup of millet flour.
- 1 cup of semi-skimmed, skimmed or plant-based milk (e.g. soya milk)
- 1 cup of water
- ½ tspn ginger, ground
- ¼ tspn cloves, ground
- 1 pinch of cinnamon
- Any nuts, seeds or fruits of your choice for topping

## Sardines on toast with tomatoes

Sardines are a type of oily fish and are great sources of omega 3 fatty acids, which has been linked to lower risk of heart disease. It is a source of calcium and vitamin D to help maintain healthy bones and teeth.

4 servings    10 minutes prep    10 minutes cooking

### Instructions

1. Put sardines into a bowl and break them up with a fork.
2. Rinse cherry tomatoes and cut them in half
3. Toast the bread and once done, spoon the sardines onto the toast and place the sliced tomatoes on top.
4. Add watercress on top and squeeze over the lemon for taste if you like.

**Each 173g serving contains**  
(excludes serving suggestions)

Kcal	Carbs	Fibre	Protein	Fat	Saturates	Sugars	Salt*
327	30g	6g	23g	11g	2.5g	3.3g	0.8g

**Contains:** Gluten, fish, may contain soya

### Top tip

\*Breads can contain hidden salt. When shopping, always check the labels and compare products to find a lower salt option. You can also consider making bread without the salt either by hand or using a breadmaker. Breadmakers will make a loaf from start to finish in around 3 hours and you don't need to do anything except add the ingredients and set the controls. This can also help you save money too.



### Ingredients

- 8 slices of wholemeal bread (2 slices each for 4 people)
- 3 tins (120g each) of sardines in olive oil, drained
- 1 cup (140g) of cherry tomatoes, halved
- A handful of watercress
- ½ lemon (to squeeze)



## Vegetable omelette

This nourishing and filling vegetable omelette will contribute towards your 5-a-day and is a good source of protein which can keep you and your child feel satiated. Protein also helps repair and build body's tissues.

3-4 servings    15 minutes prep    10 minutes cooking

### Instructions

1. Brush non-stick frying pan with the oil, add the bell peppers, onions and mushrooms and cook for 3–4 minutes, until softened.
2. Beat the eggs and add a pinch of pepper and garlic powder.
3. Pour the eggs into the pan, and cook for a few minutes, until the mixture starts to firm up.
4. Add the spinach and use a spatula to ease the edges away from the pan, then fold the omelette in half and cook for another 1–2 minutes or until golden brown underneath.
5. Slide it out of the pan and serve to your family in portions. It can be served with 2 slices of wholemeal toasted bread or 1 slice of hard dough or agege bread.

### Each 178g serving contains

(excludes serving suggestions)

Kcal	Carbs	Fibre	Protein	Fat	Saturates	Sugars	Salt
153	5.8g	1.6g	12g	12g	2.3g	3.8g	0.09g

Contains: Eggs

## Mango and coconut pancakes

Deliciously, quick and easy to make pancakes with a Caribbean twist, made healthier by using wholemeal flour for extra fibre.

6 servings    10 minutes prep    15 minutes cooking

### Instructions

1. Put mango slices in a bowl and mash with a fork and set aside.
2. Put the flour into a large bowl and add the egg, coconut dairy-free milk alternative and vanilla extract.
3. Beat together using a hand whisk to make a smooth batter. Stir in the desiccated coconut and the mashed mango.
4. Heat a non-stick frying pan and add 1 tspn of oil. Cooking in batches, ladle in the batter to make small pancakes.
5. Cook until the batter just sets on the surface, then flip over to cook the other side for about 1–2 minutes. Continue until all the batter is used up.
6. Serve the pancakes with the remaining mango slices on the side if you like.

### Each 115g serving contains

(excludes serving suggestions)

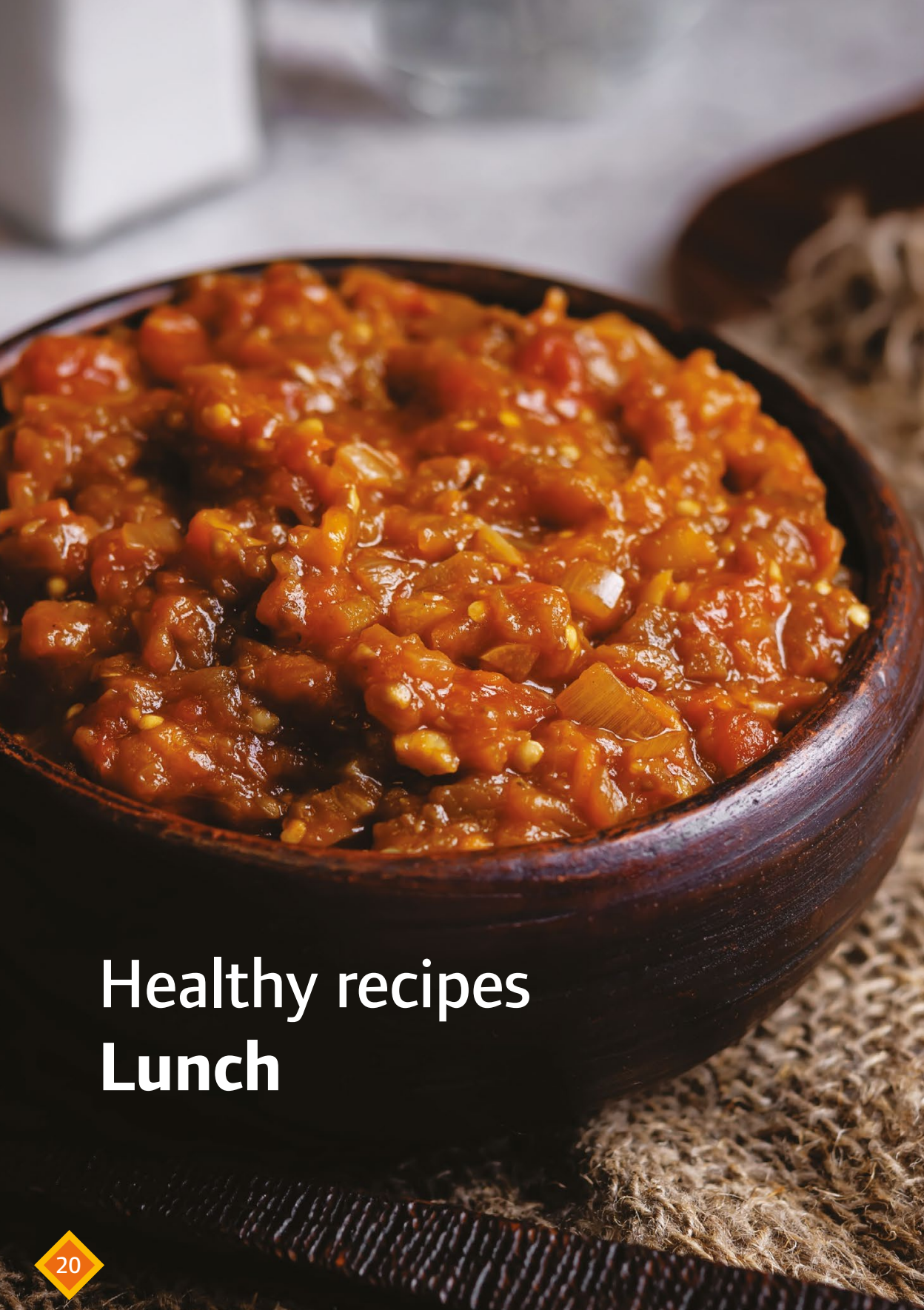
Kcal	Carbs	Fibre	Protein	Fat	Saturates	Sugars	Salt
161	23g	5g	4.9g	2.9g	1.4g	4.8g	0.2g

Contains: Eggs, gluten



### Ingredients

- 300g frozen mango slices
- 150g plain wholemeal flour
- 1 egg
- 175 ml coconut dairy-free milk alternative
- ½ tspn vanilla extract
- 15g desiccated coconut
- 1 tspn of vegetable oil



# Healthy recipes

## Lunch

### Okra soup

Okra is a nutritious food with many health benefits. It's rich in magnesium, folate, fibre and vitamin A, C and K. Okra soup is sometimes made with palm oil, which is a source of saturated fat but in this recipe no oil is used.

5-6 servings   10 minutes prep   25 minutes cooking

#### Instructions

1. Rinse and cut the okra into huge chunks. Put the okra and chili pepper into the food processor until you reach desired texture.
2. Then blend the sweet red peppers, onion and chilli pepper in a food processor until coarse in texture.
3. Place a pan on medium heat, add 2-3 cups of water, add the blended pepper mix, reduced salt vegetable stock cube and bring to boil for about 5 minutes.
4. Then add the blended okra. Stir in for about 5 minutes, and the okra will start to turn a bit 'gooey' texture. Add the mackerel fish to the mix and simmer for about 5 minutes.
5. Add dried crayfish (optional) into the mix as well as spinach to make it more filling and let it cook for a further 5 minutes. It can be served with pounded yam, eba or fufu (about a small fist size).

**Each 140g serving contains**  
(excludes serving suggestions)

Kcal	Carbs	Fibre	Protein	Fat	Saturates	Sugars	Salt
120	4.2g	3.2g	10g	4.4g	1g	3.1g	0.4g

**Contains:** Fish, crustaceans, celery



#### Ingredients

- 21 pieces of okra
- 80g of spinach (fresh, frozen or canned)
- 1 chilli peppers, chopped
- 2 sweet red peppers, chopped
- 1 small onion
- 70g of dried crayfish (optional)
- 80g of mackerel fillets, chopped
- 1 reduced salt vegetable stock cubes
- Add fresh herbs and spices of your choice for taste



## Zaalouk (cooked eggplant and tomato salad)

Zaalouk is a simple yet delicious salad well known in North Africa. It can be served as a vegetarian or vegan dip, salad or side dish. This is an easy way for you and your family to increase vegetable intake and get the important vitamins, minerals, fibre and antioxidants your body needs too.

3-4 servings    10 minutes prep    20 minutes cooking

### Instructions

1. Add all ingredients to a pot and mix everything with a large spoon.
2. Cook on medium heat covered for about 20 minutes or until all ingredients are soft, ensure that you stir every few minutes.
3. Can be served with a wholemeal crusty bread or as a side dish with your main meal.

**Each 384g serving contains**  
(excludes serving suggestions)

Kcal	Carbs	Fibre	Protein	Fat	Saturates	Sugars	Salt
102	13g	6.8g	3.6g	2.1g	0.4g	11g	0.03g

**Contains:** Salt

## Caribbean-style curried chickpeas

Chickpeas are good alternatives to meat because they're lower in fat, higher in fibre and are a source of protein too. This tasty dish can be served warm with wholemeal chapatti, wholemeal pitta bread, brown rice, couscous or bulgur wheat.

3-4 servings    10 minutes prep    20 minutes cooking

### Instructions

1. Spray olive oil on a medium pot over medium to low heat for 1 minute.
2. Add onion and sauté for 1 minute to soften them up, then add garlic, cumin, and scotch bonnet pepper and stir to combine. Sauté for 2 minutes on medium-low heat. Then add curry powder and turmeric and stir to combine and allow to cook for 2 minutes.
3. Drain and rinse chickpeas then stir into the curry base. Allow this to simmer for 3 minutes. Then stir in coconut milk and tomato and increase heat to medium and cook for 2 more minutes.
4. Reduce heat and add spinach. Cover pot and cook spinach until wilted 5-6 minutes. If using frozen spinach, stir to combine making sure they're submerged in the liquid. Allow spinach to defrost and heat all the way through. Once wilted down stir and combine with chickpeas.
5. Stir dry parsley and allow mixture to simmer for 1 minute, taste and adjust as necessary.

**Each 178g serving contains**  
(excludes serving suggestions)

Kcal	Carbs	Fibre	Protein	Fat	Saturates	Sugars	Salt
173	19g	6.1g	8.5g	4.1g	2g	3.1g	0.03g



### Ingredients

- 400g tinned chickpeas, drained
- 100ml reduced fat coconut milk
- 2 cups of spinach (fresh, canned or frozen)
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 medium tomato, chopped
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 tspn of cumin
- 1 tspn of curry powder
- ½ tspn of turmeric powder
- 1 scotch bonnet
- 1 tspn of dried parsley
- 3 sprays, olive oil spray, light



## Jerk chicken wraps

Typically, jerk seasonings that are shop-bought tend to be high in salt but you can make your own without having to worry about the salt content. Wraps are normally a great go-to lunch meal for children and busy parents.

3-4 servings    10 minutes prep    20 minutes cooking

### Ingredients

#### For jerk seasoning:

- 1 tbsp garlic powder
- 1 tspn cayenne pepper
- 1 tspn black pepper
- 2 tspns dried thyme
- ½ tspn brown sugar
- 1 tspn dried parsley
- 1 tspn paprika
- ½ tspn ground cinnamon
- ½ tspn ground nutmeg
- ¼ tspn ground cumin

#### For the wrap:

- 3 chicken breast (without skin), sliced
- 4 tortilla wraps, warmed
- 2 tbsp reduced fat natural yogurt
- Lettuce leaves
- ½ red onion, thinly sliced
- 3 tomatoes, thinly sliced

### Instructions

1. Heat the grill to medium.
2. Then put all the ingredients for the jerk seasoning in a bowl and mix up.
3. Marinate the chicken breast slices with the 'jerk seasoning' and put on a baking sheet lined with foil and grill for 8 minutes on each side until cooked through (leave for more if needed to be further cooked).
4. Then gently warm the tortilla wraps under the grill and spread with natural yoghurt. Top each with lettuce, sliced red tomatoes and onions and the jerk chicken pieces.
5. Wrap to serve.

### Each 271 g serving contains (excludes serving suggestions)

Kcal	Carbs	Fibre	Protein	Fat	Saturates	Sugars	Salt*
324	37g	4g	29g	5.5g	2.1g	6.9g	0.8g

### Top tip

\*Breads and wraps can contain hidden salt. When shopping, always check the labels and compare products to find a lower salt option.

# Healthy recipes Dinner





## African fried rice (oil free)

Fried rice is a staple African dish but can sometimes be prepared with a lot of oil and added salt (from stock cubes). This version uses no oil, mixed vegetables and herbs and spices. It is a very simple and easy recipe that you and your family can enjoy.

4 servings    15 minutes prep    10 minutes cooking

### Instructions

1. Preheat a non-stick pan on medium heat. Once hot add the onions with a splash of water and cook until translucent and starting to brown for 3 minutes.
2. Then add another splash of water when they start to stick to prevent them from burning.
3. Then add mixed vegetables, spring onions, garlic and other spices. You may need to add another splash of water to prevent from burning for about 1-2 minutes.
4. Lower the heat and add cooked rice and stir occasionally. Once the rice is warmed through and mixed with the vegetables you can serve.
5. Can be served with a side salad and a protein source of your choice such as baked or grilled stewed or lightly peppered chicken (with skin removed), fish, tofu or beans.

**Each 178g serving contains**  
(excludes serving suggestions)

Kcal	Carbs	Fibre	Protein	Fat	Saturates	Sugars	Salt
202	31g	3.9g	5.3g	5.4g	0.5g	4.5g	0.1g

## Sweet potato and bean stew

This is a healthy and hearty stew that is filled with fibre, low in fat and contributes towards your 5-a-day. You can batch cook this wholesome stew recipe to store in the freezer, ready to defrost for lunch or dinner at a later time.

6 servings    15 minutes prep    20 minutes cooking

### Instructions

1. Heat the oil in a large pot, and add the chopped onion, spring onions, garlic, scotch bonnet, and diced sweet potato.
2. Cook everything over a medium heat for 5 minutes, stirring regularly, until the onion is almost soft.
3. Pour in the chopped tomatoes, vegetable stock and add the seasonings then stir well, and cover with a lid. Leave to simmer gently for 10 minutes.
4. Add the chopped cabbage and the two tins of beans, as well as the coconut milk. Cover again, and simmer for a further 10 minutes.
5. When the sweet potato is fully cooked and everything is piping hot, serve with brown rice.

**Each 289g serving contains**  
(excludes serving suggestions)

Kcal	Carbs	Fibre	Protein	Fat	Saturates	Sugars	Salt
236	35g	8.3g	8g	5.1g	1.9g	10g	0.17g

**Contains:** Celery



### Ingredients

- 1 tbsp of vegetable oil
- 1 medium onion, diced
- 3 spring onions sliced
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 scotch bonnet, chopped
- 1 large sweet potato, peeled and diced (1cm)
- 400g tinned chopped tomatoes
- 500ml vegetable stock (made with water and 1 reduced salt vegetable stock cube)
- ½ medium cabbage, cut into strips
- 400g tinned blackeye beans, drained
- 400g tinned kidney beans, drained
- 150 ml reduced fat coconut milk
- 1 tspn turmeric powder
- 1 tspn paprika
- 1 tspn black pepper



## Jollof bulgur wheat

In this recipe you will still be able to appreciate the jollof flavour while getting the nutritional benefits from wholegrains like your B vitamins, iron and fibre which are all important for general health and wellbeing.

4 servings    15 minutes prep    10 minutes cooking

### Instructions

1. Blend the bell peppers, tomatoes, scotch bonnets and one medium onion.
2. Spray oil in a pot, then add one onion and fry until translucent. Add garlic, curry powder, paprika and thyme and stir for around 30 seconds, then pour in the blended mixture and the bay leaves.
3. Add the tomato paste and stir the content of the pot with a spoon thoroughly. Then cover the pot and allow the sauce to simmer for about 10 minutes.
4. Pour 1 ½ cup of water into the pot, mix the content of the pot and allow the liquid to boil.
5. Add bulgur wheat in pot (you may add more water if needed) then reduce the heat, cover the pan and allow the bulgur wheat to steam until the liquid is absorbed.
6. Check the pot often and when the bulgur wheat is tender, remove the pan from the heat and serve (with baked plantain, grilled chicken or plant-based protein of choice)

**Each 264g serving contains**  
(excludes serving suggestions)

Kcal	Carbs	Fibre	Protein	Fat	Saturates	Sugars	Salt
336	62g	8.8g	11g	2.2g	0.3g	12g	0.12g

**Contains:** Gluten

## Salmon curry

Salmon is a great source of protein, omega-3 fatty acids, and vitamin D. This flavoursome salmon curry does not take a long time to prepare or cook, making it perfect for families with busy schedules. Tinned salmon is used as it is more convenient and inexpensive than fresh salmon.

4 servings    15 minutes prep    20 minutes cooking

### Instructions

1. Spray oil into pot and fry the chopped onions, garlic, red bell peppers and green chillies for about 3 minutes.
2. Add all the spices and stir for a minute then add the chopped tomatoes and cook for ten minutes.
3. Add the salmon and cook for ten minutes.
4. Can be served with roti, steamed brown rice, rice and peas, couscous or steamed vegetables.

**Each 259g serving contains**  
(excludes serving suggestions)

Kcal	Carbs	Fibre	Protein	Fat	Saturates	Sugars	Salt
187	10g	3.3g	21g	4.6g	0.8g	8.8g	0.42g

**Contains:** Fish



### Ingredients

- 1 large tin of pink salmon (415g) or 4 small tins (105g)
- 3 medium tomatoes, chopped
- ½ medium red bell pepper
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 2 green chillies, chopped
- 3 cloves of garlic, minced
- 2 tspn of curry powder
- 1 tspn of smoked paprika
- ½ tspn of ground coriander
- ¼ tspn of ground cumin
- 3 sprays of vegetable oil (oil spray)

## Healthy snacks and drinks

### Snacks

Snacks can provide you and your family with energy vitamins, minerals, protein and fibre. They may also help stop you overeating at the next meal by preventing you from becoming too hungry. However, some snack foods can be a major source of extra saturated fat, salt and sugar, therefore it is important and keep portion sizes sensible.

Consider choosing snacks from the four main food groups of the African and Caribbean Eatwell Guide:



Fruit and vegetables



Carbohydrates – bread, rice, potatoes, pasta and other cereals (being mindful of your portion sizes)



Protein – meat, fish, eggs and beans



Milk and dairy foods (or alternatives)

This is a great way to get plenty of vitamins and minerals and also gives you an opportunity to think about food groups you and your child may not be eating enough from meals and try to add some in as snacks. On the next page are some snack ideas that you can include in your

family's diet.

### Fruit and vegetables:

- chopped melon or pineapple (tinned or fresh)
- frozen pineapple slices or grilled tinned pineapple
- frozen grapes
- 1 medium sized orange, banana, apple, or pear
- fruit kebab
- sliced fruit (like apple) with nut butter
- vegetable sticks with salsa, low-fat hummus or low-fat cream cheese
- crunchy ladies fingers okra snacks
- sugar snap peas

### Carbohydrates:

- plain or fruit scone
- a slice of malt loaf
- small bag of no-added salt baked plantain crisps
- small bag of wholegrain crisps
- small bag of plain popcorn
- half a bagel with low-fat spread
- a small hot cross bun
- puff puff and chin chin (can be made using air-fryer)
- water crackers
- plain rice crackers
- oat cakes

### Protein:

- a small handful of unsalted nuts (e.g. cashew, groundnuts, almonds and walnuts)
- a small handful of sunflower or pumpkin seeds
- a hard boiled egg
- a tbsp of nut and seed mix on low-fat yoghurt
- low fat hummus with wholemeal pitta bread
- chicken suya, chicken skewers or chicken pieces
- crabsticks
- chickpea and bean snack mix

### Milk and dairy (or alternatives):

- a small glass of skimmed, semi-skimmed milk or fortified plant-based drink (e.g. soya drink)
- Milo (chocolate flavoured malted powder) with skimmed or semi-skimmed milk
- cottage cheese with plain crackers
- fruit smoothie made with skimmed, semi-skimmed or fortified plant-based drink
- low-fat yoghurt or fromage frais (preferably unsweetened)
- low-fat cheese triangles



## Drinks

Drinking plenty of fluids is very important to maintain good health, for example, to prevent constipation, urinary tract infections and kidney disease. Good hydration can also prevent symptoms from happening or getting worse such as a sickle cell crisis that some people with sickle cell disease experience.

Drinks provide 70–80% of our water needs; the remaining 20–30% comes from food e.g., soup, stews, some fruits such as melon and vegetables such as lettuce.

Below shows the recommended amount of water that should be taken as drinks per day (please note that these are average values and an individual's requirement will depend on many factors like temperature, body size and physical activity level).

- Children (2-3 years): 1040ml
- Children (4-8 years): 1280ml
- Children (9-13 years): 1680ml (for boys)
- Children (9-13 years): 1520ml (for girls)
- Children (14 years+): same as adults
- Adult male: 2000ml
- Adult female: 1600ml

Conversion: 1000ml = 1L



### What type of drinks should we have?

Water is a healthy and cheap choice for staying hydrated at any time. It has no calories and contains no free sugars that can damage teeth. Chilling or filtering tap water are cheap ways of making it taste more pleasant.

Tea and coffee can contribute towards your water fluid intake (but this not suitable for children). If you drink a lot of tea and coffee, you need to be aware of the amount of caffeine, you are consuming and try to go for decaffeinated versions.

Regular fizzy and still drinks contain a lot of free sugars and should only be consumed in small amounts. These sugars can lead to weight gain and can cause tooth decay if consumed in excess. Fruit juices and smoothies provide water and other nutrients but also contain free sugars so only have one small serving (150ml) per day; this counts towards your 5-a-day.

There are a lot of claims circulating online that drinking fruit and/or vegetable smoothies or raw juices can 'detox' the body. This is not the case as we have organs in the body such as the skin, liver, gut and kidney that continually detoxes our body and removes any waste products. There are no specific juices or smoothies that can do a magic job. Blending or juicing fruit and vegetables often strips away the fibre which is needed to help lower cholesterol levels, stabilise blood sugar levels and promote good gut health.

Having regular fluids throughout the day will help you stay well hydrated especially when it is hot or you are physically active. It is important to keep an eye on the colour of your urine to see if you are drinking enough; if it is dark, then that is a sign that you need to drink more. If your urine is a straw or pale yellow colour then it means you are drinking enough. Children are particularly vulnerable to dehydration and may need to be encouraged to drink more.

## Eating well with children

Children need regular meals and snacks in between to give them the energy and nutrients they need to grow, develop and stay healthy.

### Encouraging children to eat more healthily

The environment where children have their meals is just as important as the type of food they eat. When children eat with other members of the family and have the same meals, it enables children to enjoy a wide range of foods. Where possible, try to sit down and eat meals as a family, without the TV in the background or children distracted by computer/tablet games.

Try to get your child involved in the cooking and food shopping. You can ask them to write a shopping list. You can also take them to the shops to choose different foods from the 4 main food groups: fruit and vegetables, starchy carbohydrates, protein and dairy or dairy alternatives.

They can also get involved with the cooking by mixing ingredients together or putting foods in the pan (with supervision). This can also be a chance to educate your child on cultural and traditional foods and healthy eating and celebrate your culture.

You may also consider growing fruits,

vegetables, herbs and spices with your child too if you have a garden. Alternatively, there are organisations in Lewisham like Coco Collective that have a community garden where they grow culturally diverse foods and herbs. You can find out more about them on their website: [www.capitalgrowth.org/coco-collective](http://www.capitalgrowth.org/coco-collective)

### Types of meals a day

Children should be offered 3 meals per day with 2 small healthy snacks in between. Breakfast is an important meal as it a way to help children meet their daily nutritional requirements. Breakfast options such as porridge tend to have extra fibre, vitamins and minerals added. Breakfast cereals are also a great choice; however some are high in sugar (please refer to page 12 for more information on this).

Children who have breakfast have been shown to concentrate better throughout the morning in school. At lunch and evening meal time, offer your child a variety of different foods. You should offer different foods each mealtime if you have the time. By eating a variety of foods, children can get a range of different nutrients.

### Drinks

It is important that you and your children stay hydrated at all times. Putting a jug of water on the table at mealtimes may encourage the whole family to have a cup or glass of water.

Pure fruit juice and smoothies provide quite a lot of sugar and should only be offered once per day as a small glass (no more than 150ml). You can consider diluting any sweet drinks or juices with water. Tea or coffee is not recommended for children as it reduces iron absorption. Try to offer warm milk instead.

- The best drinks for children are water and milk as they will not damage teeth.
- Fizzy drinks, fruit punches and squash/cordial can provide excess calories, sugar and lead to weight gain.

### Does my child need a daily vitamin?

All children aged 6 months to 4 years should be given a supplement containing vitamins A, C and D, such as Healthy Start vitamin drops. You can find more information on the NHS website: [www.healthystart.nhs.uk/getting-vitamins](http://www.healthystart.nhs.uk/getting-vitamins)

It is recommended that children over the age of 1 should have a vitamin containing 10 micrograms (mcg) or 400IU of vitamin D, especially during autumn and winter. However, people from Black African and Caribbean backgrounds living in the UK are encouraged to supplement all year round as they are at higher risk of vitamin D deficiency.

More information can be found on this website: [www.lewisham.gov.uk/freeD](http://www.lewisham.gov.uk/freeD)



## Eating well on a budget

Eating a healthy, traditional and varied diet does not have to be expensive. Follow these tips to cut back on spending while still putting your and your family's health and nutrition first:

- Make a shopping list of what you need before you go to the supermarket or local market and stick to it.
- Go for tinned/canned fruit and vegetables like tinned spinach, callaloo, ackee and melon as they are cheaper and last longer than fresh versions.
- You can also consider buying fruit and vegetables that are local and in season as they are not only cheaper, but usually more flavourful too.
- If you have the freezer space, stock up on frozen mixed vegetables. They are just as healthy for you as fresh

and are more convenient as they are usually pre-cut.

- When you choose your fresh produce, take the pack with the latest sell-by date so it lasts longer. Fresher produce is usually packed at the back of the shelf and the older stock in the front.
- Look from top to bottom when scanning a shelf of food products. The most expensive items and ones being promoted the most are usually placed at eye level. More affordable products will usually be below knee height or set high above eye level.
- Ready-to-cook meat are more expensive than plain meat. Buy your meat plain, and skin, de-bone or season at home. Buy the family-sized or value pack and freeze what you don't use immediately.

- Meat is usually among the most expensive items on your shopping list, and you can save a lot of money by eating a more plant-based diet a few days a week.
- If you have a garden, try to grow your own fruit, vegetables and herbs or visit a local allotment or community garden as they may have some for sale.
- Buy less takeaway foods and find time during the week to batch cook more at home. Not only do takeaway foods and convenience meals tend to be high in salt, sugar and saturated fat, but they are also pricier than home cooked meals.
- Cook meals in bulk and freeze them so you can use these meals on busy days instead of ready-made convenience options.
- Save on electricity and gas costs by including more meals in your week that do not require much cooking, such as salads, wraps, sandwiches and soups.
- Re-invent dinner leftovers for lunch the following day.
- Some supermarkets offer 'points' cards that you can consider applying for. These cards help you get the best value from the supermarkets and you can use it to collect points on foods you've purchased. The points turn into vouchers to help you save on your weekly groceries.

## Supplements

Supplements are any products that aims to 'supplement' the diet with nutrients that might be missing. Common supplements include vitamins D, C and minerals like iron and calcium. There are herbal supplements as well as fish oil and probiotic supplements. Dietary supplements are available in different forms like tablets, capsules, gummies, spray and powders.

People take supplements for different reasons, with the most common one being to maintain or improve health. Supplements do not replace a healthy diet. Most people can get a wide range of nutrients they need through a healthy and varied diet.

However, there are some people who will benefit from taking supplements, including, but not limited to:

- women who are trying to conceive and women who are in the first 12 weeks of pregnancy taking a 400mcg of folic acid per day;
- Black African and Caribbean individuals taking a daily supplement containing 10mcg of vitamin D a day, all year round;
- people on a plant-based diet taking a daily vitamin B12 supplement.

It can be tempting to stock up on 'fancy' supplements, especially when there are a lot of people are promoting them online or making exaggerated health claims. It is also worth noting that most claims are not backed up by strong, scientific evidence



and you might be wasting your money.

Most herb-based supplements like Seamoss, Ashwagandha, or Alafia bitters sold online may not meet the UK standards and may have not have gone through rigorous checks. Some herb-based supplements are often promoted as 'natural' but may contain ingredients that can be harmful to health.

There may also be some drug-nutrient interactions that can cause adverse effects if you are taking certain medications or undergoing medical treatments, therefore it is important that you speak to your Dietitian or Doctor before taking any type of supplement.

Some websites or messages circulated on WhatsApp, or social media might encourage taking high doses of a particular supplement, but this could also be very dangerous. Some vitamins are 'water soluble' like vitamin C, meaning they dissolve in water. Any excess that your body doesn't need will leave your body when you urinate but may cause

some symptoms like stomach pain, diarrhea and flatulence.

The fat-soluble vitamins, A, D, E, and K, are stored in the body for long periods of time and generally pose a greater risk for toxicity than water-soluble vitamins when consumed in very high amounts.

With regards to vitamin D, it is recommended to take a daily supplement containing 10 mcg or 400 IU of vitamin D a day especially during the autumn and winter season as this is suitable for children aged 1+ and adults. The NHS recommends to not take no more than 100mcg or 4000IU a day as it may be harmful.

If you are worried that your diet will not provide you with all the nutrients you need, then you may consider taking a daily multivitamin supplement from a reputable source - for example, your local chemist, pharmacy or supermarket, and not from an unknown company on the internet. However, it's best to speak to your dietitian, doctor or pharmacist first for advice.

## Signposting to services

### Local (for Lewisham residents)

Free Vitamin D Supplements:  
[lewisham.gov.uk/FreeD](http://lewisham.gov.uk/FreeD)

Healthy Families programme HENRY (0-5's):  
[www.lewishamcfc.org.uk/healthy-families-right-from-the-start](http://www.lewishamcfc.org.uk/healthy-families-right-from-the-start)

The Lewisham Food Hub:  
[lewishamlocal.my.site.com/s/food-projects-and-community-meals](http://lewishamlocal.my.site.com/s/food-projects-and-community-meals)

Coco Collective – Ital Community Gardens:  
[www.capitalgrowth.org/coco-collective/#contact](http://www.capitalgrowth.org/coco-collective/#contact)

Up!Up! – Weight management programme tailored for people of Black, African and Caribbean heritage living in Lewisham:  
[www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk/our-services/healthy-weight-programmes/upup](http://www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk/our-services/healthy-weight-programmes/upup)

Slimming World – Weight management programme for adults:  
[www.lewisham.gov.uk/healthy-weight](http://www.lewisham.gov.uk/healthy-weight)

### National

Action on Salt:  
[www.actiononsalt.org.uk](http://www.actiononsalt.org.uk)

British Dietetic Association:  
[www.bda.uk.com/find-a-dietitian](http://www.bda.uk.com/find-a-dietitian)

British Heart Foundation:  
[www.bhf.org.uk](http://www.bhf.org.uk)

Diabetes UK:  
[www.diabetes.org.uk](http://www.diabetes.org.uk)

Heart UK - The Cholesterol Charity:  
[www.heartuk.org.uk](http://www.heartuk.org.uk)

NHS (Eating well):  
[www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well](http://www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well)

Sickle Cell Society:  
[www.sicklecellsociety.org](http://www.sicklecellsociety.org)

## Acknowledgements

Thank you to every organisation, group and parent based in Lewisham who contributed to the development of the nutrition and recipe book:

Lakhvinder Matharu  
*Public Health Officer, London Borough of Lewisham*

Niyah Drummonds  
*Community Connector, London Borough of Lewisham*

Alexandra McMillan  
*Founder, Legendary Community Club*

Maxine Asare  
*Director, Generations 4 Change*

Francine Daley  
*Director, 360 Lifestyle Support Network CIC*

Valerie Goode *Coco Collective*

Toni-Ann Gurdon *Kath's Place*

Nancy Cannon-Ikurusi *Come Out Of Hiding*

Jennifer W Parent      Caroline S Parent

Marlene B Parent      Michaela M Parent

Patricia O Parent      Yetunde A Parent

Naomi H Parent      Zuwena J Parent

Hodan A Parent      Saskia M Parent

Naa A Parent      Wonu I Parent

Thank you to the Diverse Nutrition Association for developing the African and Caribbean Eatwell Guide.