

# GOOD FOOD CHOICES

## for Managing your Family's Weight

If there are signs that a child or teenager at home is unhappy with their weight and it is visibly obvious that they are carrying extra weight, try and spend some private time together where they can feel comfortable discussing it.

Children and teenagers, like everyone else, will gain weight when their bodies take in more calories than they burn off. Those extra calories are stored as fat.

The amount of weight gain that leads to a severe weight problem doesn't happen in a few weeks or months, it usually takes years.



**Bord Bia**  
Irish Food Board  
www.bordbia.ie

**NDP**  
National Development Plan 2007-2013

Funded by the Irish Government under the National Development Plan, 2007 - 2013

**Irish Nurses Association**

**IRISH HEART FOUNDATION**

Sometimes weight gain can be so slow that parents can almost miss it and delay making changes. If you have noticed a steady creeping weight gain, you can make small but significant changes quietly at home without making a big issue of it.

Don't forget activity at home – get **all family members** to tackle household chores such as Hoovering, washing the car, brushing the patio or deck.

- Stock up on healthier snack foods your children and teenagers can grab for themselves – 100% wholemeal cereals, fresh and tinned fruit, low fat yoghurts, low fat hummus, tinned fish, light mayonnaise and rye or wholemeal crackers.
- Cut down on the take-aways and cook your own burgers at home with lean mince and serve on a soft wholemeal bun with lots of salad vegetables. Make your own chips by cutting potatoes into thick chips, lightly spray with oil and oven cook. If you're in a hurry buy a pizza base (wholemeal if possible) and lash on your own lower fat cheese and vegetable toppings over a tomato sauce.

- Less nutritious foods such as sugary fizzy drinks, sweets and biscuits should be kept as very occasional foods.
- Make your own popcorn at home with no added salt and very little oil. Flavour with pepper instead.
- Encourage your children to make smoothies, juices and their own shakes as a treat using any soft fruit, peaches or raspberries, low fat milk or a scoop of frozen yoghurt.
- Protein-rich foods are not only vital for building and repairing healthy muscle and tissues, they are also very satisfying and help us to efficiently regulate our appetite. Try to eat a portion of lean protein (e.g. meat, eggs, beans or pulses) at two meals during the day.
- Involve older children and spark ideas: what would they like to help prepare this week?
- Different flavoured bagels are a better alternative to doughnuts or biscuits when they come in from school and they're starving.



## SMALL STEPS TO EATING AND DRINKING LESS

### Choose "slim" glasses.

- Studies show that we unknowingly will pour over 30% more into a short wide 300ml glass than a tall narrow 300ml glass.

### Have your fruit bowl on your countertop, not the biscuits.

- Behavioural studies show that we can eat twice as many chocolate biscuits (7 vs 3) when they are accessible (as opposed to when they are out of sight).

### Choose smaller packs or containers.

- We serve ourselves more from larger packs, be it cereals or crisps. When you buy large economy packs, dispense into smaller containers or packs for home use. Given a large bucket, we can eat up to 50% more popcorn than when we eat from a medium bucket!
- Use smaller plates or dessert bowls to control portion sizes

## IT DOESN'T HAVE TO COST MORE TO EAT WELL

You may need to explore a little to find the cheaper shops and markets in your area. It's helpful to stick to a shopping list to avoid ending up with lots of bitty things, but no fresh ingredients for main meals.

- Try to buy fresh produce such as meat, fish, dairy and vegetables more frequently and in smaller quantities, so you don't end up with a lot of unused food.
- Find out who's in what nights for dinner to minimise waste.
- Put your teenager's dinner in the fridge so that they can re-heat if they're late.
- You can often make tasty soups out of vegetables which are near the end of their shelf life.
- Learn which fruits, vegetables and foods are in season. They will be cheaper when there is a good supply.
- Take advantage of genuine special offers on fresh foods. You may be able to freeze what you can't use immediately.
- Beware of tempting 'two for the price of one' offers on less nutritious snack foods you really don't need.



## EATING OUT

If you eat out a lot, think about changing your restaurants or your habits and think "damage limitation"!

- Limit fizzy drinks and milkshakes and choose water or plain milk more frequently.
- Limit foods that are high in fat (creamy sauces, fried food, pastry) and foods with lots of added sugar (desserts and drinks).
- Limit oily dressings, mayonnaise and thickly spread butter or margarine. Go for lemon juice or chilli sauces for a tangy flavour instead of heavy sauces.
- Ask for dressings and sauces on the side.
- Keep the size of your burger and fries small or share with a friend.
- Look for lower fat options like grilled chicken and salad.
- Choose pasta with tomato-based sauce and not a creamy cheesy one.
- Choose dishes with lots of vegetables like chow mein or stirfrys.
- Choose noodles or steamed (not fried) rice.
- Limit masalas, kormas and pasanda as they can contain a lot of cream and fat. Choose rogan josh, bhuna, saag, and dhansak (with lentils) instead.

## HUNGER PANGS

It's a good idea to eat less crisps, chocolate and sweets and only buy the smaller portions like fun-sized chocolate bars, mini rolls and mini muffins.

Try other options where possible:

- Bowl of wholegrain or high fibre cereal with low fat milk.
- Scrambled eggs, mashed banana or beans on wholemeal toast.
- Fresh lentil or vegetable soups with brown roll.
- Low fat hummus, cherry tomatoes and lettuce in a pitta pocket.
- Bowl of tinned fruit and low fat yoghurt.
- A smoothie or fresh juice (just one a day).
- Oatcakes or high fibre crackers with low fat cheese and relish.
- Vegetable sticks or bread sticks with low fat dips
- Grilled wholemeal bread topped with tinned sardines.

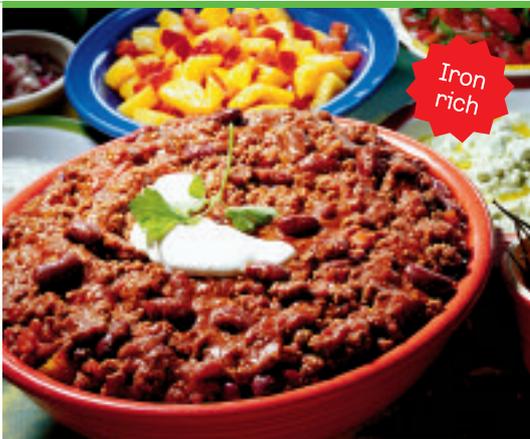
## GRAB AND GO

- Fresh fruit
- Small packs of dried fruit, nuts and seeds
- Muesli bars (check sugar levels!)
- Water bottle



## 2 HEALTHY DINNER IDEAS

### MEXICAN CHILLI



Iron rich

**A firm family favourite, both protein and iron rich for growing brains and bodies.**

**½ tablesp. oil**  
**450g very lean minced beef or lamb**  
**1-2 onions, chopped**  
**2-3 cloves garlic, crushed**  
**½ teasp. chilli powder**

**½ teasp. ground cumin**  
**400g can of tomatoes**  
**125ml beef stock or water**  
**ground black pepper**  
**400g can of red kidney beans**

**COMPLEXITY** easy  
**TIME** 60min  
**SERVES** 4  
**METHOD** pan

### Guideline Daily Amounts

	CALORIES	SUGARS	FAT	SATURATES	SALT
Women	2000	90g	70g	20g	6g
Men	2500	120g	95g	30g	6g
Children 5-10	1800	85g	70g	20g	4g

All GDAs are based on recommendations for an average adult/child of healthy weight and average activity level. It is important to remember that these are just a **guide**, not targets.

Heat the oil in a large frying pan. Add the meat and brown well. Add the onion and garlic and cook for 2-3 minutes. Add the chilli powder, cumin, tomatoes and stock. Stir well. Season and bring to the boil. Cook gently for 35 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add the beans and cook for a further 15 minutes. Serve with brown rice or tortillas and add salsas and toppings for extra flavour and variety.

### Salsas and Toppings:

- Low fat natural yoghurt.
- Finely diced red onion or shallot.
- Diced red pepper and mango mixed with a little olive oil.
- Chopped tomato, scallions, chilli mixed with coriander, lemon, olive oil and seasoning.
- Avocado mashed with a little low fat natural yoghurt, finely diced red onion and lime juice.

### Nutritional analysis per serving:

ENERGY	PROTEIN	FAT	IRON	CARBOHYDRATE
353KCAL	36.6G	13.5G	5.28MG	23.6G

### EGGY RICE WITH CHICKEN



Vitamin C source

**A quick ten minute delicious alternative to a high fat take-away, using fresh ingredients.**

**2-3 eggs**  
**2 tablesp. light soy**  
**1-2 tablesp. oil**  
**4 chicken fillets, cut into strips**  
**400g cooked brown rice**

**1 red pepper, seeded and diced**  
**1 chilli, chopped**  
**1 bunch scallions, chopped**  
**handful of coriander, chopped**

**COMPLEXITY** easy  
**TIME** 10min  
**SERVES** 4  
**METHOD** pan

Heat a wok or large pan, then add a little oil. Beat the eggs and soy together. Pour the mixture into the wok. Cook quickly, stirring as the egg cooks. Tip the cooked egg on to a plate. Reheat the wok and cook the chicken strips, then add in the red pepper, chilli and scallions. Stir-fry for another minute. Tip the mixture on to a plate.

Reheat the wok with remaining oil, add in the rice and stir-fry for 3-4 minutes. Add back the chicken and egg mixture, mix the lot. Check the seasoning, add more soy if necessary. Sprinkle some coriander over each plate and serve with a big bowl of mixed salad.

### Nutritional analysis per serving:

ENERGY	PROTEIN	FAT	IRON	CARBOHYDRATE
388KCAL	40.1G	10.5G	2.11MG	35.4G