

# Food Pyramid

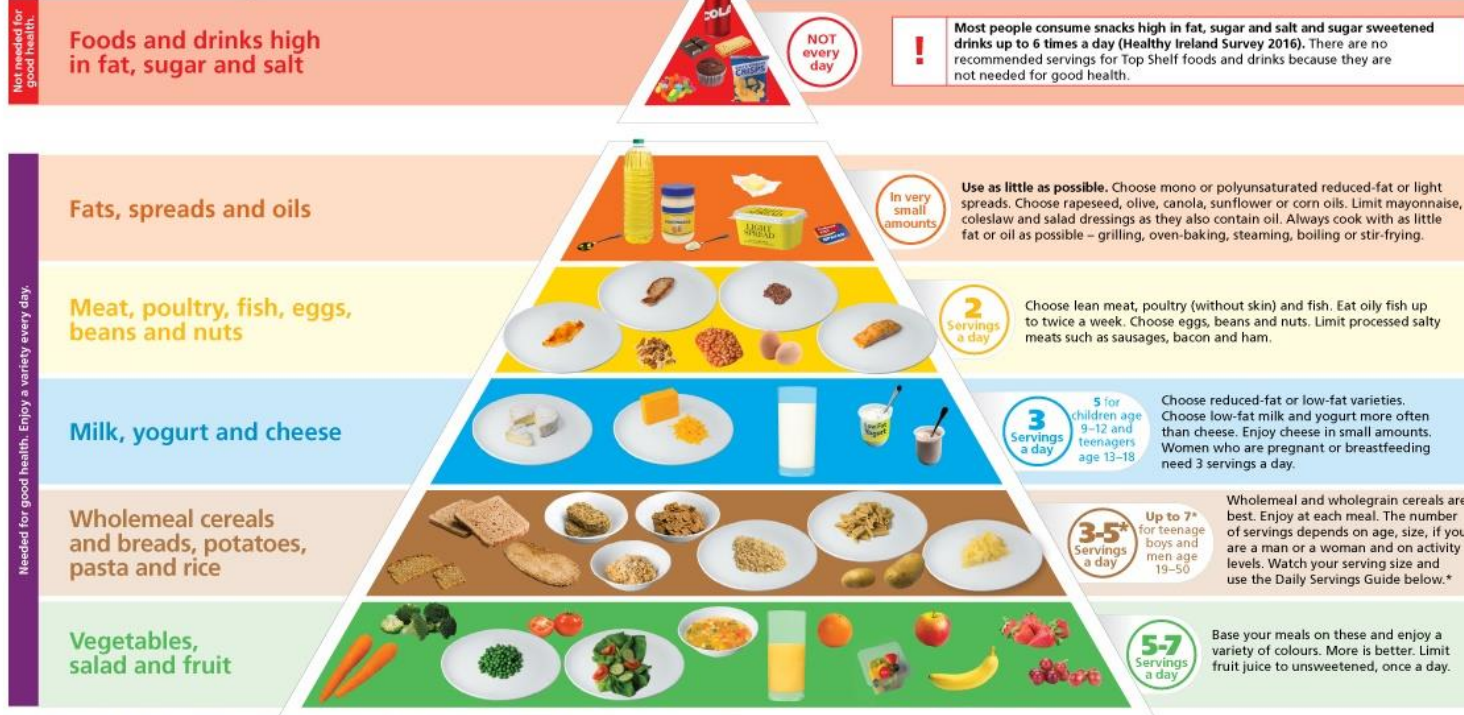
Healthy Food for Life

www.healthyireland.ie



## The Food Pyramid

For adults, teenagers and children aged five and over



Not needed for good health.

Foods and drinks high in fat, sugar and salt

NOT every day

Most people consume snacks high in fat, sugar and salt and sugar sweetened drinks up to 6 times a day (Healthy Ireland Survey 2016). There are no recommended servings for Top Shelf foods and drinks because they are not needed for good health.

Needed for good health. Enjoy a variety every day.

Fats, spreads and oils

In very small amounts

Use as little as possible. Choose mono or polyunsaturated reduced-fat or light spreads. Choose rapeseed, olive, canola, sunflower or corn oils. Limit mayonnaise, coleslaw and salad dressings as they also contain oil. Always cook with as little fat or oil as possible – grilling, oven-baking, steaming, boiling or stir-frying.

Meat, poultry, fish, eggs, beans and nuts

2 Servings a day

Choose lean meat, poultry (without skin) and fish. Eat oily fish up to twice a week. Choose eggs, beans and nuts. Limit processed salty meats such as sausages, bacon and ham.

Milk, yogurt and cheese

3 Servings a day

Choose reduced-fat or low-fat varieties. Choose low-fat milk and yogurt more often than cheese. Enjoy cheese in small amounts. Women who are pregnant or breastfeeding need 3 servings a day.

Wholemeal cereals and breads, potatoes, pasta and rice

3-5 Servings a day

Up to 7\* for teenage boys and men age 19-50. Wholemeal and wholegrain cereals are best. Enjoy at each meal. The number of servings depends on age, size, if you are a man or a woman and on activity levels. Watch your serving size and use the Daily Servings Guide below.\*

Vegetables, salad and fruit

5-7 Servings a day

Base your meals on these and enjoy a variety of colours. More is better. Limit fruit juice to unsweetened, once a day.

### \*Daily Servings Guide – wholemeal cereals and breads, potatoes, pasta and rice

Active	Child (5-12)	Teenager (13-18)	Adult (19-50)	Adult (51+)	Inactive	Teenager (13-18)	Adult (19-50)	Adult (51+)
		3-4	4	4-5		3-4		3
	3-5	5-7	5-7	4-5		4-5	4-6	4

There is no guideline for inactive children as it is essential that all children are active.

### Serving size guide

- Cereals, cooked rice and pasta, and vegetables, salad and fruit**  
Use a 200ml disposable plastic cup to guide serving size.
- Cheese**  
Use two thumbs, width and depth to guide serving size.
- Meat, poultry, fish**  
The palm of the hand, width and depth without fingers and thumbs, shows how much you need in a day.
- Reduced-fat spread**  
Portion packs found in cafes can guide the amount you use. One pack should be enough for two slices of bread.
- Oils**  
Use one teaspoon of oil per person when cooking or in salads.

### Average daily calorie needs for all foods and drinks for adults

Active 2000kcal   Inactive 1800kcal   Active 2500kcal   Inactive 2000kcal

Drink at least 8 cups of fluid a day – water is best

**Get Active!**  
To maintain a healthy weight adults need at least 30 minutes a day of moderate activity on 5 days a week (or 150 minutes a week), children need to be active at a moderate to vigorous level for at least 60 minutes every day.

Source: Department of Health, December 2016.