

Focusing on MORE



**NHS**

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# Moving toward more whole food

For better health & wellbeing



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# Contents

3

Introduction

4

What are whole foods?

5

Vegetables and whole fruit

9

Minimally processed plant proteins

14

Minimally processed animal proteins

15

Minimally processed whole grains

20

Healthier fats

23

Herbs, spices and flavour

26

Foods to be mindful of

27

Added sugars

29

Refined grains

30

Ultra processed foods

31

Glossary



# Introduction

This booklet has been designed to support and inspire you to make gradual steps towards eating more whole foods.

Throughout this booklet we have included more information on what whole foods are and we have provided tips and recipes to give you a taster of how to include more of these foods in your everyday life.

Whilst some of the foods in this book may sound unfamiliar, many of them can be found in your local supermarket or food store and a wider variety can be found online. A glossary is available at the back to help explain some of the less familiar terms in this booklet.

We encourage you to focus your efforts on what to eat more of when making healthier choices, whilst being mindful of foods which are linked with poor health.

Any change you make needs to be sustainable for you in the longer term, therefore try to take it one small step at a time. Every move you make towards including more whole foods in your way of eating is a step in the right direction towards better health and wellbeing.



# What are whole foods?



Whole foods consist of a single ingredient and are unprocessed or minimally processed.

Whole foods include:

- Vegetables and whole fruit
- Minimally processed plant proteins
- Minimally processed animal proteins
- Minimally processed whole grains
- Minimally processed healthier fats
- Herbs and spices for flavour

Why more whole foods?

A common theme within approaches to eating for good health and wellbeing is that they include more whole foods, especially plant-based foods. The foundation on which the traditional Mediterranean way of eating is based, is in the inclusion of whole foods, which is linked to lower risk of ill health and disease. Whole foods are packed with essential nutrients like fibre, vitamins, minerals, protein and phytonutrients that help protect against disease.



# Vegetables and whole fruit

These are important for vitamins, minerals, fibre and phytonutrients (which help protect against disease).

It is better to eat whole fruits, rather than drink fruit juice. When you eat a whole fruit, you get the beneficial fibre that is naturally present in the fruit. This can help you feel full and supports healthy digestion. Whole fruit has less natural sugar than fruit juice, which can be better for overall health.

When enjoying fruits, it is important to consider portion sizes, especially with sweeter and larger fruits like grapes, bananas, pineapple, and mango.

If you have tinned fruit, try to choose those in natural juice rather than syrup and drain the juices away.

For dried fruit, be mindful of the portion size. A portion would be equal to one piece of fruit, for example, 1-2 dried apricot, dates or figs, or 8-10 sultanas, cranberries, or sour cherries.



## Did you know?

The skins of vegetables and fruit contain important fibre and nutrients. Save time and reduce waste by keeping the skins on. The skins of pumpkin and squash are edible and taste great when roasted.



# Moving toward more vegetables & whole fruit

Improving the nutritional quality of a ready meal



Adding frozen peas to a ready meal can make your meal healthier. This simple addition of peas can increase the fibre, protein, and phytonutrient content of your meal, which is good for your body.

Making your own tomato sauce



Make your own tomato sauce to act as a base for meals, as a good alternative to ultra processed versions. Lightly fry chopped red onions with seed oil or olive oil, until softened (5-10 minutes). Add chopped garlic and fry for another minute. Then add a tin of chopped tomatoes and one tablespoon of tomato puree. Season with dried mixed herbs or fresh basil.





# Moving toward more vegetables & whole fruit

## Tips

- Use tinned, frozen or fresh, whichever is more available.
- Tinned tomatoes make a great homemade sauce for meals.
- Roasted red peppers are naturally sweet and make a great side dish for meals.
- Try roasting broccoli and cauliflower with plenty of seed oil or olive oil, some black pepper, garam masala and/or cinnamon.
- Courgette, broccoli, peas, carrot and peppers go well in curries and can help bulk out the dish and make it more filling.
- Peppers, courgettes, mushrooms and aubergine can be added to skewers and roasted or barbecued with seed oil or olive oil and garlic. Whole sweet corns can also be barbecued.
- Add chopped whole fruit to bean and grain salads, for example, orange or apple. Add the zest of orange for more flavour.
- Add chopped whole fruit to natural or Greek yoghurt, as an alternative to artificially flavoured yoghurt.



### What about potatoes?

Potatoes are classed as a starchy food. They offer some nutrition like fibre and nutrients, but they are often eaten in processed forms (e.g. peeled, mashed and fried). If you enjoy potatoes, try to eat them with their skins on and try different types too, for example, new potatoes and sweet or purple varieties.



# Mediterranean tray bake

4-6



An easy way to eat more vegetables and bring out their natural sweetness

## Ingredients

- 5 tablespoons of seed oil or olive oil
- 2 sweet potatoes with skins on, chopped into 2cm thick slices
- 1 leek, chopped into 5cm chunks
- 2 peppers (red, yellow or green), sliced
- 6-8 large tomatoes, halved
- 2 red onions, quartered
- 4 garlic cloves, whole
- A tablespoon of dried mixed herbs (e.g. rosemary, oregano or basil)

## Optional:

- 1 tablespoon of pesto
- Feta cheese (add a crumble of feta when serving)

## Method:

1. Preheat oven to 200°C/ 180°C fan. Add oil to a tray and heat in the oven. When the oil is hot, add chopped sweet potato, leek, peppers, tomatoes, onions and whole cloves of garlic.
2. Stir in the mixed herbs (and pesto if using) and coat evenly with the oil. Roast for 30-40 minutes (or 20 minutes in an air fryer).

## Tip

You can use any vegetables for this recipe, for example, cauliflower, broccoli or butternut squash. For variation, add a tin of chickpeas or halloumi, chicken or fish whilst roasting.





# Minimally processed plant proteins

Minimally processed plant proteins, such as pulses, were once the primary source of protein in human diets and meat, fish, and eggs were eaten occasionally. In the last century this trend has reversed, and very few pulses are now consumed in the UK.

Pulses are rich in beneficial fibre and protein, essential for a healthy gut. As they are wrapped in a fibre shell they are digested slowly, providing a slow release of energy. They also contain essential nutrients like iron, zinc, folate, magnesium, and protective phytonutrients.

Pulses include:

- Beans – kidney, barlotti, chickpeas, pinto, runner beans, broad beans, butter beans, mung beans, edamame (soy), and cannellini (white) beans.
- Peas – whole or split green peas, garden peas, marrow fat peas, black eyed peas, yellow peas and black badger (carlin) peas.
- Lentils – french green (puy), green, brown, red and yellow lentils.

Pulses are available dried, tinned or frozen and in some cases fresh. They are also very low cost. Choose a variety which works for you.



## Are you new to pulses?

See the tips and recipes on pages 10-13 for ideas on how to eat more pulses.



# Moving toward minimally processed plant proteins

Improving the nutritional quality of baked beans



Baked beans are an ultra-processed food. If you enjoy baked beans, you can make them healthier by adding a tin of tomatoes and cannellini beans, along with extra spices like paprika. This makes the meal go further and increases the nutritional value by adding more fibre and phytonutrients. Try different types of beans, or consider making your own beans in sauce from scratch, without the need for ultra-processed baked beans.

Money saving meat swap



Make meals more budget-friendly and nutritious by adding lentils to meat dishes. Lentils are a low cost source of protein and adding them to meals boosts the nutritional value and makes your meal go further. Don't forget to add healthier fats and herbs and spices for extra flavour. Consider batch cooking and refrigerating or freezing any leftovers to save time later on.



# Moving toward minimally processed plant proteins

## Tips



- Tinned and frozen pulses are readily available from supermarkets and food stores. They are already cooked so can be eaten cold or simply reheated.
- Increase your intake gradually to help minimise gut symptoms. Lentils or split peas are good starting pulses as they are usually a little easier to digest.
- Dried lentils are very cheap and do not require any soaking before cooking.
- Red, yellow and green lentils are softer when cooked and good for meals like casseroles, Dhal, curries, stews and soups.
- French (Puy) or green speckled lentils retain their shape and firmness and are ideal for salads.
- Chickpeas go well with spinach and kale and are great in curries with a tomato and/or a coconut milk base.
- Broad beans, garden peas, marrow fat peas, chickpeas or lentils can be mashed with garlic, seed oil or olive oil, lemon juice and tahini to make a less processed dip or hummus.
- Remember to add healthier fats, herbs and spices for flavour.

### Did you know?

Pulses contain pre-biotics. These are non-digestible carbohydrates which friendly strains of gut bacteria use as a 'fuel' source to make important chemicals for good health. Whole grains, vegetables, whole fruit and nuts and seeds contain them too.



# Fried butter beans with feta



A side dish for hot or cold meals

## Ingredients:

- 2 tins of butter beans
- 3 tablespoons of seed oil or olive oil
- 8 spring onions, both green and white parts, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, finely sliced
- Small red chilli or a pinch of chilli flakes (to taste)
- 1/2 lemon, zest and juice
- 1 teaspoon of sumac or smoked paprika

## Optional:

- 50g feta, crumbled

## Method:

1. Drain contents of butter bean tins, rinse and leave to dry.
2. Heat 2 tablespoons of oil in a frying pan until it starts to sizzle, add half of your butter beans and fry over a medium-high heat turning occasionally. Cook until the skin is golden brown and blistering. Empty onto a clean dish and set aside.
3. Add another tablespoon of oil to the pan, heat and repeat the process with remaining butter beans. When they are almost cooked add the spring onions, garlic, chilli, and lemon zest and fry for 1 minute. Add the cooked batch of butter beans, which were set aside and heat through for 1-2 minutes.
4. Serve with salad or spinach and drizzle with lemon juice. Crumble feta over the bean mixture (optional) and sprinkle with sumac or smoked paprika.

# Redentil Dhal



## Ingredients:

- 2 tablespoons of seed oil or olive oil
- 1 red onion, diced
- 2 cloves of garlic, crushed
- 1 tablespoon medium curry powder
- 2 teaspoon garam masala
- 1 teaspoon fennel seeds
- 1 cup dried red lentils
- 500ml chicken stock
- 1 tin of chopped tomatoes
- 1/2 block (approx 100g) of creamed coconut
- 1 tablespoon of dried coriander, or a handful of fresh, finely chopped coriander

## Optional:

- Roasted peppers to serve

Make as a side dish or  
main meal

## Method:

1. Heat oil in a pan, add onion and garlic and fry until soft. Add curry powder, garam masala and fennel seeds and fry for a couple of minutes. Add lentils and fry for a further 2 minutes before adding the chicken stock, chopped tomatoes and creamed coconut.
2. Simmer on medium heat until a soft Dhal is formed (approx. 25-30 minutes). You may need to add more water to achieve the right consistency but do this a couple of tablespoons at a time. Take off the heat and mix in the coriander.

## Tip

Serve with spinach or peas.

Alternatively bulk out this meal with a serving of whole grain rice.



# Minimally processed animal proteins

These foods are meat, oily fish, white fish, and eggs that have not been significantly processed or coated in batter and breadcrumbs. They contain protein, vitamins and minerals. Oily fish also contain healthier fats.

White meat includes chicken and turkey. Red meat includes beef, lamb, pork, goat and venison.

Eating too much red meat and especially processed meats can increase the risk of certain cancers and diseases. Processed meats are meats preserved by smoking, curing, salting, or using preservatives. For example, sausages, burgers, ham, bacon, and cured meats (e.g. salami and pepperoni).

Oily fish include pilchards, mackerel, sardines, salmon, sprats, trout, kipper, herring and carp. Some types of white fish, such as sea bass, sea bream, turbot, and halibut, also contain healthier fats, but in lower amounts than other oily fish.



## Did you know?

Meats and fish were eaten in small amounts in the traditional Mediterranean diet and pulses were the main source of protein.





# Minimally processed whole grains

Minimally processed whole grains may be cooked to make them digestible. They are naturally higher in fibre, protein, healthier fats and phytonutrients than refined and processed grains.

As minimally processed grains are wrapped in a fibre shell, they provide a slower release of energy (blood glucose) than grains which have been more processed or refined.

They are an important source of fuel to help feed the 'healthy' bacteria in your gut. They offer a complete package of energy, fibre, protein, healthier fats and nutrients (including calcium, iron, zinc, B vitamins) and protective phytonutrients.

Examples include:

- brown rice and wild rice
- quinoa
- buckwheat
- millet
- whole rye
- whole barley
- wheat grains (freekah, bulgur, spelt and farro)
- oat groats and pinhead oats



It is worth looking out for more commonly found grains like brown rice, quinoa, buckwheat, wild rice and bulgur wheat in supermarkets. A wider variety of grains can be bought online or in health food shops if desired.



# Moving toward minimally processed whole grains

Try to make small changes to include more minimally processed whole grains. For example:



Swap white rice for brown rice

- 1** Try swapping white bread to a bread made with wholemeal flour.
- 2** Then try swapping to a bread with added seeds and grains.
- 3** Then try swapping to a bread with fewer added ingredients e.g. a fresher bread with added seeds and grains.
- 4** Then try swapping some of your bread based meals for meals with minimally processed whole grains (see next page for tips).



# Moving toward minimally processed whole grains

## Tips

- Try a different minimally processed whole grain occasionally.
- Buckwheat, quinoa, bulgur, millet, brown rice and pinhead oats are helpful starter grains as they are quicker to cook.
- If you want to prepare whole grains, you can do so by cooking them on the hob for 10-45 minutes or in a rice cooker, slow cooker or an air fryer using the 'steam function' in half the time.
- All grains can be cooked using a low energy method too. Simply cover with water and bring to a boil for 1-3 minutes. Leave the lid on, turn off the heat, and let them soak in the residual heat for 3-4 hours or overnight.



Left to right: instant, jumbo, pinhead and whole groat oats

## Minimally processed

Oat groats

Pinhead oats

Coarse oatmeal

Jumbo oats

Porridge oats  
(flaked or rolled)

Instant oats

Breakfast oat biscuits &  
sugary cereals

## Ultra processed

Try to make gradual steps towards more minimally processed oats

# Tableh



An easy no cook side dish

## Ingredients:

- 1.5 cups coarse whole wheat bulgur
- 4 tablespoons of seed oil or olive oil
- 1 lemon, zest and juice
- 2 garlic cloves, crushed
- 1/2 teaspoon ground coriander
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/2 cucumber, diced
- 6 large tomatoes, diced
- 1 tablespoon of dried mint or a large handful of fresh mint, finely chopped
- 1 tablespoon of dried parsley or a large handful of fresh parsley, finely chopped
- 2 spring onions, chopped

## Method:

1. Bring 3 cups of water to a boil in a medium pot. Add bulgur, cover and remove from the heat. Let it sit for 20-25 minutes, or until the bulgur is tender. Drain any excess water, then fluff with a fork.
2. In a large bowl, add the oil, lemon juice and zest, garlic, ground coriander, and cinnamon and mix well with a fork or whisk. Add the cucumber, tomatoes, mint, parsley and spring onions. Add the cooked bulgur and mix well to combine all the ingredients then serve.

## Tip

This makes a great base for lunch meals. Simply add some pulses, boiled eggs, chicken or fish to make a filling balanced meal.



# Buckwheat & orange salad



## Ingredients:

- 1.5 cups dried buckwheat
- 2 large oranges and zest
- 1 large red onion, diced
- 2 cloves of garlic, crushed
- 10 cherry tomatoes
- 2 tins of beans e.g. chickpeas
- 6 tablespoons of seed oil or olive oil
- 4 tablespoons of vinegar e.g. apple cider or red/white wine vinegar
- 3 tablespoons of seeds e.g. sunflower or nigella seeds
- 1 tablespoon of sumac
- 1 tablespoon of dried parsley or a large handful of fresh parsley

An easy lunch which can be prepared in advance

## Method:

1. Bring 3 cups of water to the boil and add buckwheat. Cover and simmer for 8-10 minutes. Remove from heat. Add buckwheat and tinned beans to colander, drain and rinse.
2. Grate zest of oranges, then chop oranges into bite-sized pieces and add with zest to a large bowl. Add red onion, garlic and cherry tomatoes. Mix in the buckwheat and beans. Pour over oil, vinegar, seeds and sumac and toss all the ingredients together.
3. Stir in dried or finely chopped fresh parsley.

Tip  
Swap buckwheat for any grain in this recipe. Add a nut dukka (see recipe on page 22) for a crunchy topping.



# Healthier fats

There is evidence to suggest the type of fat we eat is more important for good health than the total amount of fat. Replacing fats from animal sources with healthier fats from minimally processed plant sources seems to be beneficial in reducing the risk of certain diseases.

Healthier fats help to carry flavour which makes eating healthier foods more sustainable. They also have nutrients that can protect against disease, and some of them contain protein and fibre too.

Try to have more plant-based fats, leaving less room for animal fats like red meat, butter and cream.

Healthier plant based fats include:

- nuts and nut oils
- seeds and seed oils
- olives and olive oils
- avocado



The following types of foods contain fats which appear to be beneficial to health.

- oily fish
- natural and Greek yoghurt
- dark chocolate in moderation (containing 70% or more cocoa solids)



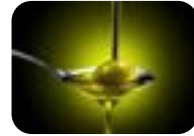
See pages 21 and 22 for tips on how to eat more healthier fats.





# Moving toward healthier fats

## Tips



- Drizzle roasted vegetables and salads with plenty of seed oil or olive oil.
- Make an easy dressing using seed oil or olive oil, apple cider vinegar (or red/white wine vinegar), a squeeze of lemon or lime and a tablespoon of mustard or chopped/dried herbs. Add to salads and cooked lentils or grains for extra flavour.
- Add texture toppers to foods using nuts and seeds for extra crunch and flavour - see the Hazelnut Dukka recipe on page 22.
- Natural or Greek yoghurt can be added to lentils, grains, eggs and salads as an alternative to processed sauces. Add a sprinkle of paprika or sumac for extra flavour and colour.
- Tinned sardines in either sunflower oil, olive oil, spring water or tomato sauce are a low cost source of oily fish.
- Swap crisps and processed snacks for raw or lightly roasted nuts. Try roasting nuts with healthier oils and herbs and spices e.g. rosemary, harissa or cinnamon spices, for extra flavour.

### What about calories?

All foods contain calories but evidence suggests the nutrient quality of the food is more important than the calories. Healthier fats appear to be helpful for weight management. They are also really important for brain function and skin health.





# Hazelnut Dukka

## Ingredients:

- 200g hazelnuts
- 1 tablespoon cumin seeds
- 1 tablespoon fennel seeds
- 1 tablespoon coriander seeds
- 2 tablespoons sesame seeds

This makes a crunchy topper for meals

## Method:

1. Preheat oven to 180°C/160°C fan. Add all ingredients to a baking tray and cook for 8-10 mins until they are lightly golden.
2. Tip into a food processor and pulse a few times until the nuts are roughly chopped. Alternatively, allow ingredients to cool and place in a zip log bag (expelling the air) and bash with a rolling pin or crush with a pestle and mortar.
3. Serve over salads, lentil and egg dishes.

## Tip

You can swap the hazelnuts for walnuts, peanuts or any other preferred nuts for variation.

Store cooled ingredients in an empty jar or airtight container.



# Herbs, spices & flavour

These are important for adding flavour to foods and work well with healthier fats. They also contain important phytonutrients.

Useful store cupboard ingredients for flavour include:

- onions (red and white)
- garlic
- ginger
- black pepper
- garam masala (savory spice blend)
- curry powder (savory spice blend)
- dried mixed or fresh herbs
- paprika /smoked paprika
- mixed spice (sweet spice blend)
- cumin
- sumac
- harissa
- pesto
- cinnamon
- lemon
- lime
- orange
- apple cider vinegar
- red wine vinegar
- white wine vinegar



## Did you know?

Herbs and spices have been used for thousands of years for both cooking and medicinal purposes.

As well as adding flavour they also contain important phytonutrients.



# Moving toward more herbs, spices & flavor

## Tips



- Try adding herbs and spices to your existing meals as an easy introduction.
- Lightly fry onions and garlic in seed oil or olive oil and add spices to build a flavourful base for chillies, curries, casseroles and soups.
- Add most of your spices at the beginning of cooking so they have time to release their flavours. Finish with a sprinkle of spices and a scattering of fresh herbs for added flavour.
- Garam masala and curry powder are savoury spice blends and bring out the flavours of pulses and vegetables in meals.
- Mixed spice is a sweeter spice blend which adds natural sweetness to meals. Add to porridge and roasted vegetables.
- Add 1 tablespoon of pesto or harissa to 4 tablespoons of natural or Greek yoghurt to make a less processed sauce for hot or cold meals.
- Citrus fruits like lemon or lime as well as vinegar (e.g. apple cider, red or white wine vinegar), can enhance flavours of salad, vegetable and grain dishes. Add as a dressing or squeeze lemon or lime juice over the meal before serving. Just like healthier fats, the acidity from these foods helps to enhance flavour in meals.

### Are all spices hot?

Only a small number of spices are hot, for example, black pepper, chilli and cayenne peppers are 'hotter' spices. Most other spices are fragrant or sweet scented.



# Chimichurri



A flavourful sauce which goes well with pulses, chicken & fish

## Ingredients:

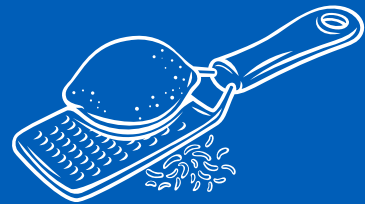
- small bunch of coriander
- small bunch of parsley
- 2 garlic cloves
- 1 small red onion or a shallot
- 1 small chilli
- 5 tablespoons of seed oil or olive oil
- 2 tablespoons of red wine vinegar

## Method:

1. Finely chop the herbs, garlic, onion and chilli and add to a bowl.
2. Stir in the oil and vinegar and mix to combine all the ingredients.
3. Serve on top of beans, lentils, chicken or fish.
4. Store any remaining sauce in an empty jar in the fridge for up to 5 days. Cover contents with a layer of oil to retain freshness and colour.

## Tip

Try adding zest and juice of lemon or lime to add a bit of zing to your sauce.



## Foods to be mindful of



### Foods to be mindful of

- Added sugar
- Refined grains
- Ultra processed foods

### Why?

For good health and wellbeing it is widely agreed that reducing added sugar, refined grains, and ultra-processed foods is recommended. These foods are strongly linked with poor health outcomes and a higher risk of diseases such as type 2 diabetes, cancer and Alzheimer's.





# Be mindful of added sugar

Added sugar includes sugar which has been added to food and drink and includes natural sugar sweeteners like honey and fruit juice.

There is strong evidence to suggest eating too much added sugar, particularly in sugary drinks, increases the risk of obesity, type 2 diabetes, certain cancers, and Alzheimer's. It is important to be aware of the amount of added sugar in our diets in order to protect our health.

Added sugars do not provide any nutritional benefit and more importantly they displace room for nutritious foods in our diet.

Added sugars are often found in processed foods. Examples include:

- table sugar
- honey
- high fructose corn syrup
- agave nectar
- maple syrup
- cakes, biscuits, pastries
- syrups and sauces
- processed breakfast cereals
- chocolates (particularly white and milk chocolate)
- ice cream, lollies and sorbets
- sugary drinks, for example, cola, energy drinks, fruit juice, lemonade, cordials, smoothies and shakes.



## Did you know?

Sugar naturally present in whole fruit, vegetables and unsweetened milk and yoghurt is not classed as added sugar.

# Adding natural sweetness without added sugar

## Tips



- Swap fruit flavoured yoghurt for natural or Greek yoghurt and add whole fruit.
- Add naturally sweet spices to foods in place of added sugar. For example, cinnamon, nutmeg, ginger, allspice and mace.
- Add whole fruit or a little dried fruit to oats, yoghurt, cooked grains and salads.
- If you drink squash or cordials, add a slice of lemon or lime for natural flavour, reducing the amount of squash or cordial.
- Swap milk chocolate or white chocolate for dark chocolate (containing 70% or more cocoa solids) to reduce your added sugar intake.
- Try reducing the amount of sugar you add to meals and drinks. Taste buds change over time and often you will not even notice the difference.
- Try roasting vegetables to bring out their natural sweetness. Red onions, carrots, peppers, butternut squash, beetroot, tomatoes and garlic add subtle sweetness to meals.

## What about artificial sweeteners?

Artificial sweeteners are considered an ultra processed food substance. The World Health Organisation recommends avoiding the use of artificial sugars for weight control. There is evidence they are linked with a higher risk of type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease. There is also some limited evidence linking them to increased risk of cancer.



# Be mindful of refined grains

Refined grains are grains which have been milled or processed changing the structure and/or nutrient quality of the whole grain. This can result in a loss of important nutrients like protein, fibre, healthier fats, and phytonutrients.

Many of the grains we eat today are refined and the energy they provide is often released very quickly.

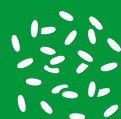
Examples of foods made of refined grains are cakes, biscuits, breads, pasta, white rice, cous cous, packaged breakfast cereals, crackers, flaked and instant oats.

Bread, pasta and crackers made with whole grain flours and added grains and seeds are a better choice than types made with white flour.

Packaged breakfast cereals often contain a lot of added sugar and salt and some grains are more refined than others. Jumbo oats, no added sugar muesli, shredded and whole wheat type cereals are a better choice of refined grain than corn flakes, instant oats, granola and other sugar coated cereals.



Try to include more minimally processed whole grains. They are nutrient dense and they release energy more steadily. See page 16 and 17 for tips on moving towards minimally processed grains.



# Be mindful of ultra processed food

Many of today's foods are highly processed or ultra-processed. These types of foods are often made from substances extracted from foods, like starches, unhealthy fats, sugars, and hydrogenated fats. They usually contain additives such as artificial flavours, colours, emulsifiers, stabilisers, and preservatives. They often contain a lot of added salt too.

As with added sugar, there is growing evidence that ultra processed food and drinks raise the risk of obesity, type 2 diabetes, certain cancers and other diseases.

Examples of ultra processed foods include:

- artificial sweeteners e.g. aspartame, sucralose and saccharine
- biscuits, pastries, buns and cakes
- breakfast cereals
- carbonated (fizzy) drinks
- crisps
- fruit-flavoured yogurts
- ham
- ice cream
- instant soups
- mass-produced bread or pre-packaged bread
- pre-prepared chips or fries
- pre-prepared meals, pizzas and pies
- sausages, burgers and nuggets
- sweets and chocolates



Try swapping ultra processed snacks like crisps and sweets for healthier options like nuts, whole fruit and dark chocolate (containing at least 70% cocoa).



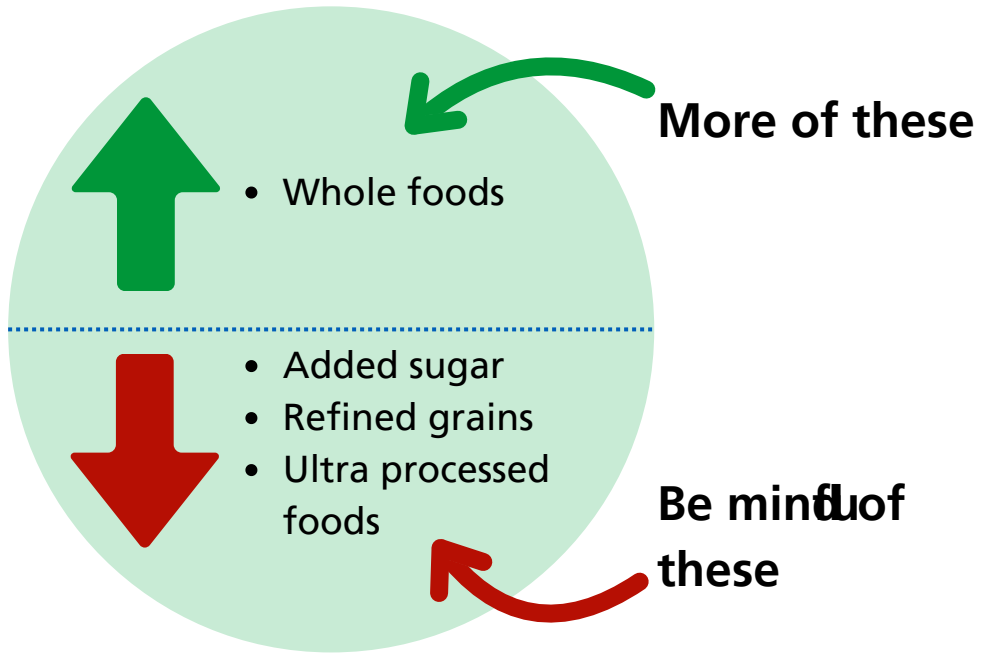
# Glossary

This glossary explains some of the terms in this booklet

- **Phytonutrient** - nutrients which are found in plant foods which appear to be protective against ill health and disease. The word 'phyto' is the Greek word for 'plant'.
- **Pulse** - the seeds of edible plants, they are an umbrella term for different types of peas, lentils and beans.
- **Fibre** - found in plant foods and the main fuel for the health promoting microbes in our gut.
- **Sumac** - a citrus flavoured spice made from dried berries.
- **Garam masala** - a blend of spices which bring flavour and warmth to meals.
- **Harissa** - a blend of roasted peppers and spices which add a peppery and smoky flavour to meals.
- **Tahini** - a sesame seed paste.
- **Quinoa, buckwheat and millet** - edible seeds, classified as whole grains because of their similar nutritional properties. They are all gluten free.
- **Bulgur, freekah, farro and spelt** - types of wheat grain. Bulgur and freekah are a type of cracked wheat which are quicker to cook.
- **Oat groats and pinhead oats** - these are minimally processed oats. Pinhead oats are cracked whole oats (groats) which make them quicker to cook. You can make overnight oats with pinhead oats by soaking them in boiling water (or cold water) for a few hours or overnight.



# Foundations of healthier eating



Notes:

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