

The Balanced Guide to
Healthy Eating



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Fighting Heart Disease & Stroke



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Croi works to improve the quality of life for all through the prevention and control of heart disease, stroke, diabetes and obesity.

Our specialist health team equip people with lifesaving skills; provide rapid access cardiac diagnostics; and develop and deliver innovative cardiovascular health care in the areas of prevention and rehabilitation, helping thousands of people throughout the region make measurable improvements to their cardiovascular health and wellbeing.



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Contents

Look after yourself - be healthy!	2
Healthy Eating is necessary for good health	3
The Food Pyramid	4
How healthy are your eating habits?	7
Are you in shape?	8
What is the best way to achieve a healthy weight?	9
If your cholesterol is high	10
Some healthy meal suggestions	11

Healthy Eating is all about getting the balance right and enjoying your food. This booklet shows you how to eat a variety of healthy foods that will help keep you and your heart in better shape.

Look after yourself - be healthy!

- ✓ **Healthy eating** can reduce your risk of developing Heart Disease, Stroke or Diabetes. It is essential for maintaining a healthy body weight, healthy cholesterol and blood pressure levels as well as enhancing your overall general well-being.
- ✓ **Exercise** - Aim for a minimum of 150 minutes of moderate intensity aerobic activity per week. One way of achieving this is a 30 minute brisk walk 5 days per week.
- ✓ **Stop Smoking**
- ✓ **Alcohol** - You should spread your alcohol intake over the week, keep some days alcohol free and do not drink more than the recommended upper limits: for men 17 standard drinks a week. For women 11 standard drinks a week.

Recommended upper limits



Men

17 standard drinks spread out over a week



Women

11 standard drinks spread out over a week

1 standard drink is...



one half pint of beer, stout or lager



a small glass of wine (100ml)



one Irish pub measure of spirits (whiskey, vodka or gin)

Healthy Eating is necessary for good health

Shopping is the first step to Healthy Eating.

Here are some golden rules to follow:

- 1 Always shop after you have eaten. If you shop when hungry you are more likely to buy high fat and high sugar foods.
- 2 Avoid shopping on impulse, plan your meals and snacks for the week.
- 3 Buy lots of fresh fruit and vegetables in a variety of colours.
- 4 Frozen vegetables are a useful and nutritious alternative to fresh vegetables.
- 5 Buy more fresh foods than processed.
- 6 Read food labels carefully and buy low-fat or low-sugar varieties where possible.
- 7 Use herbs and spices to add taste to meals instead of salt.
- 8 Make a shopping list and keep to it.
- 9 Contact Croí for information on supermarket tours for healthy shopping.

How you eat is important:

- Eat regularly, three main meals with one or two small snacks daily.
- Watch your portion sizes.
- If eating out, choose either a starter or a dessert with a main meal, not both.
- Eat slowly, chew your food and swallow each bite before taking another.
- Pause and put down your knife and fork in the middle of a meal.
- Always sit down when eating.
- Avoid eating when watching T.V., reading or listening to the radio.

How you cook is important:

- Oven-bake, grill, boil, poach, stir-fry or microwave food instead of frying.
- Boil, steam, dry-roast or bake potatoes.
- Try a light cooking spray instead of cooking oil.
- Use a perforated tray or wire rack for roasting.
- Choose lean cuts of meat and chicken.
- Drain fat off meat and sauces when they are cooked.
- Choose tomato-based sauces instead of creamy sauces for pasta and rice dishes.
- Bulk-up stews and soups with lentils.
- Do not add salt when cooking.
- Use oils such as olive oil or rapeseed oil instead of lard, dripping or butter.
- Health grills or ridge pans can be useful for draining off fat when cooking.

The Food Pyramid

Variety is the key to healthy eating.

The Food Pyramid can be used as a guide to help you eat a wide variety of foods to make sure that you get all the vitamins, minerals and nutrients you need.

The Food Pyramid is simple to use:

Choose most foods from the bottom two shelves, smaller amounts from the next three shelves and a very small amount from the top shelf.

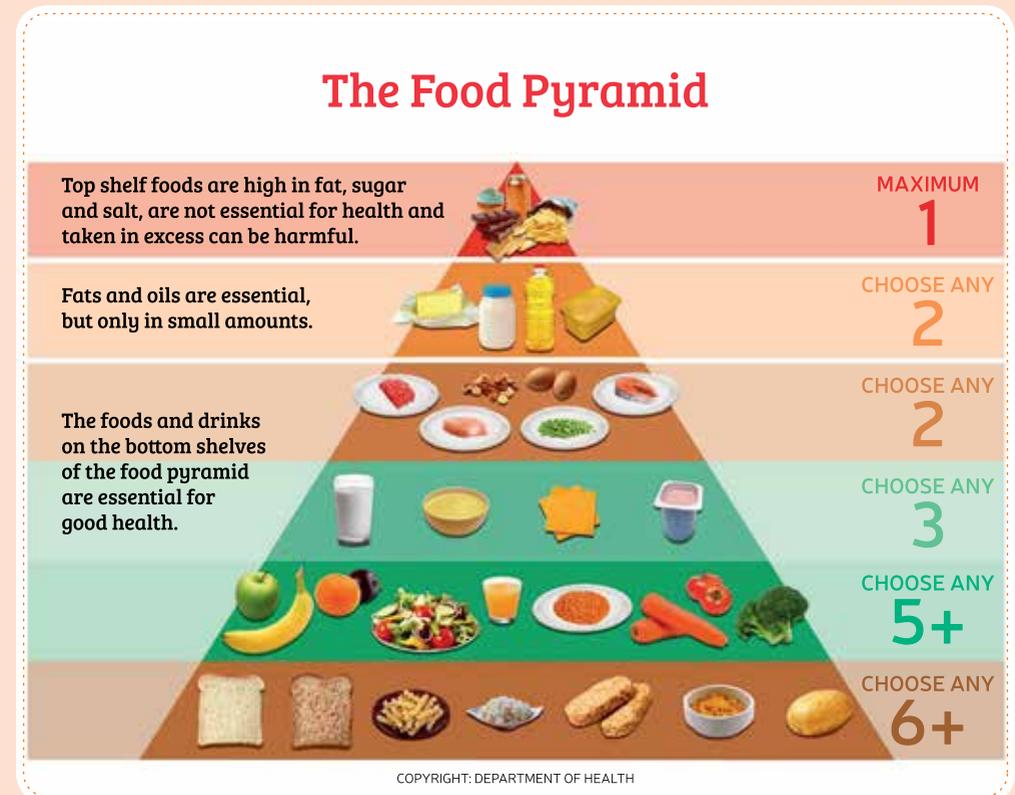
- **Breads, cereals, potatoes, pasta and rice**
(6 or more servings a day)

These foods are high in energy and low in fat. Choose wholegrain and wholemeal varieties of bread, rolls, pasta, rice and breakfast cereals, as often as possible. Avoid adding fat, such as butter or low-fat spreads to potatoes/pasta/rice.

Use the Food Pyramid to plan your healthy food choices every day and watch your portion size

- **Fruit and vegetables**
(5 or more servings a day)
Fruit and vegetables contain almost no fat and are packed with vitamins, minerals and fibre. Frozen vegetables are a good alternative to fresh ones if

you are caught for time. Fruit can be enjoyed in a number of ways: fresh, dried, stewed, tinned in its own juice or as pure fruit-juice. Fruit juice should only count for one serving per day.



- **Milk, cheese and yogurt**
(Children aged 9-18 years need 5 servings a day. Women who are pregnant or breastfeeding need 3 servings a day.)

These foods are good sources of calcium and vitamin D, necessary for strong bones and teeth. If you are overweight or have high cholesterol, choose low-fat varieties, which have the same amount of calcium as full fat varieties.

- **Meat, poultry and fish**
(2 servings a day)

These foods are a good source of protein and iron. Choose a variety of protein sources each week e.g. poultry, red meats, fish, eggs or beans. Choose fish twice per week, with at least one day being oily. Examples of oily fish include sardines, mackerel, trout, herring or salmon. These foods are high in omega 3 oils which are good for your heart.

- **Fats and Oils**
(2 servings a day)

Choose a low-fat polyunsaturated or monounsaturated spread and spread it thinly. 1 heaped

teaspoon or the size of 1 mini-pack is enough for 2 slices of bread.

Choose a pure polyunsaturated or monounsaturated oil such as olive oil or rapeseed oil. Remember all oils are 100% fat, are very high in calories and should only be used in small amounts.

- **The top shelf of the food pyramid**
(maximum one serving a day)

Crisps, savoury snacks, biscuits, cakes, sweets and chocolate - These foods are high in saturated fat, which can increase your cholesterol. Many savoury snacks such as crisps are also high in salt, which may cause high blood pressure.

Salt - Too much salt in your diet can increase your blood pressure. About 80% of the salt we eat comes from processed foods, fast food, canteen and restaurant food. To reduce your salt intake, add less salt to your food, eat less snacks and processed foods and eat more fresh foods.

How healthy are your eating habits?

- Write down everything you had to eat and drink yesterday.
- Add up the number of servings for each shelf and compare them with the recommended servings on the Pyramid.
- How did you do?
- What changes could you make?

	Number of servings you had	Recommended servings
Bread, Cereals & Potatoes		6+
Fruit & Vegetables		5+
Milk, Cheese & Yogurt		3
Meat, Fish, Eggs and Alternatives		2
Fats and Oils		2
Sugar Snacks, Foods and Drinks		1

Are you in shape?

Apple or Pear Shape!

Where your body stores your extra fat can affect your risk of heart disease.



An apple shape is where fat is stored around your waist - this shape gives you a higher risk of heart disease, high blood pressure or diabetes.



A pear shape is where fat is stored around your hips - this shape is less harmful to your health.

To see which shape you are, measure your waist mid-way between your hip bone and the bottom of your rib cage.

	Women	Men
Healthy waist measurement	Less than 80cm (32")	Less than 94cm (37")
Increased risk measurement	Between 80cm & 88cms (32"-35")	Between 94cm & 102cms (37"-40")
Substantial risk measurement	More than 88cm (35")	More than 102cm (40")

What is the best way to achieve a healthy weight?

The HEALTHY EATING WAY is the best way to be a healthy weight.

- Focus on what you can eat rather than on what you can't eat.
- Eat regularly. Research shows that people who eat breakfast regularly are more likely to keep their weight down.
- Limit your food choices from the top shelf and choose low-fat foods from the other shelves of the food pyramid.
- Look carefully at the size of your food portions.
- Increase your fibre intake – choose five portions from the fruit and vegetable shelf.
- Chew your food slowly and put your knife and fork down between bites.
- Always sit down to eat.
- Aim for a gradual weight loss of one to two pounds a week.
- Exercise: aim for 30-60 minutes most days of the week.



If your cholesterol is high, you need to:

- Follow the Food Pyramid guidelines for healthy eating.
- Be a healthy weight.
- Choose fish twice per week, with at least one day being oily. Examples of oily fish include sardines, mackerel, trout, herring or salmon.
- Choose wholegrain varieties of cereals, breads, rice and pasta.
- Trim-off visible fat on meat, skin-off chicken and choose lean meats.
- Drain oil from cooked dishes such as minced meat.
- Choose low-fat dairy products *e.g. low-fat milk, low-fat cheese, etc.*
- Use low-fat spreads made from sunflower or olive oil.
- Use low-fat healthy ways of cooking, like grilling or oven-baking, instead of frying.
- Eat no more than 4-6 eggs per week.
- Choose heart healthy oils such as rapeseed or olive oil.
- Choose healthy snacks such as walnuts, pecan nuts, almonds, unsalted peanuts or hazelnuts, which in small amounts can help lower cholesterol.



For further information visit
www.croi.ie

Some healthy meal suggestions

Enjoy three main meals a day with healthy snacks in between if you are hungry.

Suggestions for Breakfast

- ✓ One bowl of wholegrain cereal with low-fat milk
 - ✓ One slice of wholemeal bread or toast
 - ✓ Tea, coffee or water
- OR**
- ✓ 1 bowl of porridge with sultanas and linseeds
 - ✓ 1 glass of pure fruit juice



Suggestions for Lunch

- ✓ Wholemeal sandwich with tinned salmon, onions, lettuce & tomato
- OR**
- ✓ Baked beans and toast
- OR**
- ✓ Roast chicken salad with lettuce, tomato, beetroot, onion and grated carrot
- AND**
- ✓ Low fat yoghurt or a glass of low fat milk
 - ✓ Fresh fruit
 - ✓ Tea, coffee or water



Suggestions for Main meal

- ✓ Grilled pork or lamb chops or roast chicken or baked salmon
- ✓ Large portion of carrots and broccoli
- ✓ 1 - 2 medium baked potatoes
- ✓ 1 bowl of fresh fruit salad
- ✓ Water



Healthy Snacks

- ✓ 1 piece of fresh fruit
- ✓ Dried fruit (sultanas, raisins)
- ✓ Nuts and seeds (linseeds, walnuts)
- ✓ Low-fat yogurt
- ✓ Tea or water

Drink 2 litres of water per day



Do you want to live a longer and healthier life and reduce your risk of heart disease, stroke and diabetes?

A range of specialised health & lifestyle courses are now available at the Croi Heart and Stroke Centre, Galway and in some other locations throughout the West of Ireland.

- Cardiac Fitness Assessments & Exercise Programmes
- Active Hour – lower intensity exercise class
- Risk Factor Screening
- Specialised Cardiac Dietetic 1:1 Consultations
- Weight Management Programmes
- Yoga
- Heart Smart Shopping Tours



For further information contact 091 544310 or email reception@croi.ie

All Croi Cardiac Health & Lifestyle programmes are operated on a not for profit basis and are subsidised through the charity's fundraising campaigns. Accordingly, each programme has a recommended contribution towards costs – all funds are re-invested in the development of future programmes.



Fighting Heart Disease & Stroke

Croi is a not-for-profit charity dedicated to fighting heart disease and stroke in the region. We are an independent organisation, totally funded through our own fundraising activities and voluntary contributions. We are at the heart of communities working with people to make sustainable and life-changing improvements to their cardiovascular health and wellbeing; supporting patients and their families, teaching the lifesaving skills of CPR; and providing health professionals with the knowledge and skills to translate best evidence into daily preventive care.

Your donation can be sent:

By post: Croí Heart & Stroke Centre
Moyola Lane, Galway

Online: www.croi.ie
By phone: 091 544310

Our donors, supporters and volunteers continue to give generously of their time and resources. We are deeply grateful for this support and endorsement of our mission. Using this generosity to the best benefit in a meaningful and measurable way is central to everything we do. Croí adheres to the Code of Governance for Charities and the Statement of Guiding Principles for Fundraising. All personal information provided is held in accordance with the Data Protection Acts 1988 and 2003.

Registered Charity CHY 7500





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