Mind, body and working at home - *Nutrition*

Hints, tips and links to keep you and your teams calm, connected and well

Nutrition plays a key role in how well we feel so it's important that along with exercise and hydration, we properly nourish our bodies so they can help us be at our best, physically and mentally.

Eating a well-balanced diet with a wide variety of foods will help you feel healthy. Food affects every cell and organ in your body so healthy eating also helps reduce your disease risk, supports brain function and can improve your physical performance.

Finding the balance

The [Eatwell Guide](#) is a good reference to show the proportions of each food group that should be part of a healthy daily diet. As a guide, here's what you should be aiming to include:

- At least 5 portions of fruit and vegetables every day

- Meals based on higher fibre starchy foods like potatoes, bread, rice or pasta

- Some dairy such as milk, cheese, yoghurt or dairy alternatives like soya drinks

- Some beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat or other proteins

- Small amounts of oil or spreads - choose unsaturated varieties

- Plenty of fluid to make sure you're hydrated properly – ideally 6 – 8 glasses a day

Eating like Royalty

Remember the saying 'eat breakfast like a king, lunch like a prince and dinner like a pauper'? Well although not scientifically proven, there's certainly some sense in it.

Eating a proper nutrient filled breakfast helps kick start your metabolism, gives you energy and gets your body ready for the day. Breakfast foods also tend to be good sources of calcium, iron, vitamin B, protein and fibre which our bodies need. Eating large or heavy meals close to going to sleep could also have negative effects on your ability to get a good night's rest.

Taking time to eat

Making time to enjoy meals is an important part of the day and can be a social event too (even in lockdown you could have 'virtual' meals with family and friends). Now we're getting used to being at home we may be falling into bad habits and forgetting to take a lunch break, but your body needs replenishing with nutrients to see it through the afternoon. It's always best not to eat at your desk and that's even more important when working from home as your 'desk' may be your dining table. Moving away from your screen and sitting somewhere else will make you feel like you've had a proper break and some down time.

Afternoon snack?

If you get the 3pm energy lull and like to have something to snack on that'll keep you going until dinner time, here are some healthier options you could have to hand:

- Mixed nuts
- Hummus and crudités
- Fresh fruit and berries
- Yoghurt
- Apple slices with peanut butter
- Boiled eggs
- Granola bars
- Edamame beans

There are of course additional challenges to maintaining a well-balanced diet right now. Being able to find a home delivery slot, or finding the food you want when you manage to get to a supermarket, are just two of them. However, it's really important to give yourself the best chance by eating as healthily as you can and if you're stuck for ideas and low on supplies, why not try websites like Supercook which can create recipes for you from the ingredients you have available, or get creative in the kitchen (if you have children get them involved too!) and make up a new dish.

Useful links and further reading

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-eatwell-guide

https://www.nutrition.org.uk/healthyliving/healthydiet.htm

https://www.foodafactoflife.org.uk

https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well/

https://www.nhs.uk/news/food-and-diet/should-we-eat-breakfast-like-a-king-and-dinner-like-a-pauper/

https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/healthy-eating-for-beginners#section1

https://www.supercook.com/#/recipes