

# A healthy lifestyle during pregnancy

## Food groups and recommended servings

| Food group   | Foods included  | Main nutrients supplied   | Recommendation during pregnancy  | Average serving sizes (cooked weights/ready to eat)   |
|--|---|---|--|---|
| <b>1. Bread, rice, potatoes, pasta and other starchy foods</b> | Bread, chapatti, breakfast cereals, rice, couscous, pasta, millet, potatoes, yam, and foods made with flour such as pizza bases, scones and pancakes  | Carbohydrate<br>B vitamins (excluding B <sub>12</sub> )<br>Fibre<br>Some protein, iron, zinc and calcium  | <b>Base each meal and some snacks on these foods</b><br>Using wholegrain varieties will increase fibre intake to address constipation in susceptible women   | 2-3 slices bread (70-100g)<br>1-2 chapattis/1 large tortilla<br>150-200g rice/pasta<br>100-150g potatoes<br>40g dry breakfast cereal<br>150g cooked porridge<br>1 large scone (50g) |
| <b>2. Fruit and vegetables</b>                                 | Fresh, frozen, tinned and dried fruit and vegetables  | Vitamin C<br>Phytochemicals<br>Fibre<br>Carotenes in brightly coloured fruit and veg  | <b>Include one or more of these at each meal and aim for at least five servings per day</b>  | One serving is about 3oz (80g) of any fruit or vegetable  |
| <b>3. Milk, cheese and yogurt</b>                              | Whole, semi-skimmed and skimmed milk, flavoured milk drinks such as lattes, yogurts and cheese  | Calcium<br>Iodine in milk, cheese and yogurt<br>Riboflavin<br>Vitamin B <sub>12</sub><br>Protein  | <b>Three servings of milk, cheese or yogurt per day</b><br>Use low fat varieties if overweight or obese prior to or during pregnancy   | One serving is:<br>200-250ml milk/yogurt<br>40g cheese<br>200ml custard/milk pudding  |
| <b>4. Meat, fish eggs, nuts and pulses</b>                     | Meat, white and oily fish, eggs, nuts and pulses including dhal, hummus, falafel, chick pea/gram flour for example in bhajis  | Iron<br>Iodine in fish and eggs<br>Omega 3 long chain fatty acids: DHA (docosahexaenoic acid) and EPA (eicosapentaenoic acid) from oily fish<br>Protein<br>Zinc<br>Magnesium<br>B vitamins including vitamin B <sub>12</sub> in meat, fish and eggs | <b>Two servings per day or three for vegetarians</b><br>Two servings of fish per week, at least one of which should be oily fish e.g. salmon, mackerel, trout, herring or sardines<br><br>Eat a food high in vitamin C at the same time as eggs, nuts and pulses to enhance iron absorption from these foods | One serving is:<br>3oz (90g) lean meat<br>3-4oz (90-120g) fish<br>2 eggs<br>50g nuts<br>250g cooked dhal<br>200g mixed bean salad<br>1 small pot (200g) hummus                      |
| <b>5. Oils, butter and fat spreads</b>                         | Cream, butter, fat spreads (margarine), cooking and salad oils and mayonnaise   | Vitamins A and E in butter, fat spreads and cream<br>Vitamin E in oils<br>The omega 3 fatty acid alpha-linolenic acid in rapeseed, walnut, soya and olive oils  | <b>Use small amounts in food and meal preparation</b><br><b>Limit these to small quantities and do not eat in place of the other four food groups. For women who are overweight or obese, these foods are best avoided.</b>  | 2 teaspoons (10g) butter<br>2 teaspoons (10g) oil for cooking or frying<br>2 tablespoons (30g) cream<br>2 tablespoons (30g) mayonnaise  |
| <b>Sugary food and packet snacks</b>                           | Chocolate, confectionery, jam, honey, syrup, sugar, sugar sweetened drinks, crisps and other high fat savoury snacks  |   |  | If used:<br>2 teaspoons jam/honey/syrup<br>1 teaspoon sugar<br>2-3 squares chocolate<br>1 fun sized chocolate bar<br>10-12 crisps   |
| <b>Fluid</b>   | Water, all flavoured drinks, milk, tea, coffee and soup   | Water<br>Fluoride in areas with fluoridated tap water   | <b>About 6-8 drinks per day</b> (1½-2 litres) will provide adequate fluid to prevent dehydration<br>More drinks may be needed in hot weather and after physical activity. Limit caffeinated drinks and avoid alcohol   | 200-250ml/drink   |
| <b>Vitamin supplements</b>                                     | <b>1. Folic acid</b> before and up until 12 weeks gestation<br><b>Either:</b> 400µg (0.4mg)/day for most women<br><b>Or:</b> 5 milligram (5mg)/day on prescription for those women with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• spina bifida</li> <li>• a history of a previous child with a neural tube defect</li> <li>• pre-existing diabetes, epilepsy or obesity</li> </ul> <b>2. Vitamin D:</b> 10µg/day throughout pregnancy |   | Only buy supplements from a reliable company with good quality control i.e. brands on sale in pharmacies   |   |