



Eating Well in Lockdown!

These are unprecedented times we're living through; putting pressure and strain on all of us in different ways. You probably know it's important to eat well during this time; nutrients in food are the building blocks of life and good health. Eating well can support your immune system, protect against infection, keep energy levels up, and improve your mood and concentration.

But there's so much information out there; where to start? Here at GCDA, we've put together some simple tips and guidance on meals and snacks that may help.

- **Don't worry too much.** Be a food realist, not a food perfectionist and keep it simple. These are challenging times, so be flexible and balanced when it comes to feeding yourselves; nutritious meals can be quick and easy to prepare, for example beans on toast or tinned soup is fine.
- **Plan meals in advance.** With shopping such a challenge, it's helpful to know what you plan to eat and ensure you have everything on your shopping list, reducing trips to the shops. Planning can also ensure you use up all the ingredients at home before buying more, preventing waste and saving money. Click this link to find our [meal planning sheet](#). Find ideas to use up leftovers with [Love Food Hate Waste](#)
- **Variety; it's the key to a healthy diet.** Whilst this has been challenging due to food shortages during Lockdown, luckily, we're starting to see an increased range of foods in the shops. Choose tinned, frozen and dried foods when possible. For example, tinned fruit (buy in juice, rather than syrup if you can), tinned veg, pulses and fish and frozen fruit, veg, meat and fish. These are just as nutritious, more affordable, and don't spoil.
- **Hydration.** So important for mental and physical health, but easy to forget. Try keeping a bottle close by and challenge yourself to drink it all throughout the day. And great news, coffee and tea count too, but be aware that caffeine can aggravate stress and disrupt sleep. Minimise sugary drinks, as these fill you with energy that's hard to burn off, and terrible for your teeth.
- **Routine.** Spending endless days at home, it's hard to keep a schedule. But having 3 regular meals, with a healthy snack or 2 can help keep energy levels up. Try to structure your day by setting aside times for meals rather than eating on the go.

So, how do I eat a balance with variety?

Try combining the following food groups throughout the day:

1. Plenty of fruit and vegetables.
2. Starchy carbohydrates such as potatoes, bread, rice, pasta, yam, plantain, noodles, oats. Wholegrain is best and keeps you fuller for longer.
3. High protein foods such as beans, lentils and chickpeas (these are low cost and a great source of fibre to keep energy levels stable), nuts and seeds, fish, eggs and meat.
4. A small amount of dairy or alternatives e.g. cheese, natural yoghurt, milk or non-dairy alternatives.





One-pot meals are a great, easy approach. For example, soups, stews, curries, casseroles and stir-frys.

If you've got the energy and are feeling motivated, maybe try a new recipe? Check out <https://.gcda.coop/recipes/> for videos showing really simple, healthy, delicious recipes .

Take up our [recipe challenge](#) of trying one new recipe each week, or every two weeks – and please tell us about it on social media - @foodingreenwich or @GFLewisham on twitter. We'd love to see & hear from you.

What counts as a healthy snack?

Snacks can help to keep energy levels up between meals. Try to make snacks similar to foods you serve at mealtimes. To create good habits in children, give them the same snacks you have. Most shop bought snacks are full of salt, sugar and/or fat so, best to limit them. Whilst a little bit of what you fancy does you good, balance it with some of the following:

1. Fruit and veg. Try some carrot and cucumber sticks or a bit of fruit – cut it up and put it in a bowl to keep by your side. Dip veg into hummus for added protein goodness or add some fruit to a bowl of natural yoghurt. [Try and get 5 portions a day](#)
2. Nuts and nut butters. Try peanut butter on rice cakes, crackers, toast, celery or carrot sticks. Any type of nuts (preferably not salted) are a great snack.
3. Toast, crackers or rice cakes with cheese and some veg e.g. tomatoes.
4. Plain popcorn – great fun to make with kids, easy and cheap.

If you have kids, try putting a range of healthy snacks in a box for the day; they have control over them, but when they're gone, they're gone.

Finally, have fun! It's essential during this time that food brings us joy as well as nourishment. Do what you can with what you've got; remember, your body is extremely good at making do with what's on offer.

And if you want any more help or advice, please get in touch or have a look at these links.....

- <https://lewisham.gov.uk/myservices/socialcare/health/diet-and-exercise/healthy-eating>
- <https://www.goodfoodlewisham.org/>
- <https://www.goodfoodingreenwich.org/>
- [NHS Eat Well](#)
- [Greenwich Live Well](#)
- [Snacking at home](#)
- [Nutrition tips when working from home](#)
- [Making Food go Further](#)
- [Staying well during lockdown](#)

Rest assured, all the info has been checked by dieticians and nutritionists, so you know its reliable.

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