

Healthy Eating: Sample Menus

It's all well and good knowing what sorts of foods we *should* be eating, but *how* do we actually do that?
What does a healthy diet look like in practice?

We've created some sample menus which show how you can eat a balanced, varied diet through the day.

They all contain:

- ✓ at least 5 portions of fruit and veg per day
- ✓ plenty of protein, spread throughout the day
- ✓ a portion of slow-release carbohydrates in most meals
- ✓ small portions of healthy fats in at least one meal

These are just guides – we hope they will inspire you to adapt them to your preferences and schedules.

A few things to help you make them work for you:

- It's **okay if you don't snack** between meals – that's fine! Try to have a piece of fruit with your main meals instead, just to keep those goodies coming in.
- It's also **okay if you have more or fewer meals** – some people like eating larger meals less often, some prefer smaller meals more often. Either is fine! It's the **quality of food** that counts, not the frequency.
- We've tried to show a **variety of dietary preferences**, but we cannot cover everything. Feel free to get in touch if you have specific questions about dietary substitutions and we'll do our best to help you.
- Of course, you can still make space for your **favourite treats every now and again!** It's perfectly okay to enjoy a biscuit on a Friday afternoon, or a packet of crisps with a film on a Sunday – just try not to eat these foods too often, or in large amounts.

Description of each menu:

- Menu 1 is based on a 'typical' healthy diet with no particular requirements. It is designed to show food choices for a typical weekday, which may be busier than a weekend.
- Menu 2 is based on a 'typical' healthy diet, but with changes based on the extra time at home that you may have during the weekend.
- Menu 3 is a vegetarian option
- Menu 4 contains vegan choices which are also suitable for anyone following a dairy-free diet

A list of alternative snack ideas are also included at the end.

HYDRATION:

Hydration is crucial and it's very easy to forget to drink enough. All fluids count, but ideally they should be sugar free. Try drinking a glass of water before or with every meal and snack, or carry a water bottle and aim to drink it all twice a day.

You can get in touch with any questions or ideas at OneLifeSomerset@somerset.gov.uk or find plenty more of our ideas on...



Menu 1 – ‘Typical’ Weekday

Breakfast: Overnight Oats

30-50g porridge oats, 75-100ml milk of choice, spoon of plain yoghurt
 + tsp cocoa powder, coffee granules or cinnamon
 + sliced banana, stewed apples, mixed berries, or grated carrot
 Top with chopped nuts or seeds



Slow-release carbohydrates and protein keep you fuelled all morning

Snack: 1 portion of Fruit

Bananas, apples and pears are great for on-the-go. Other options include oranges, berries or grapes.



Add a sprinkle of seeds or drizzle of olive oil for extra unsaturated fats



Lunch: Chicken with Roasted Veg

70-100g cooked chicken with roasted veg of choice
 Add extra pulses like chickpeas to bulk out

Snack: 1 portion of Fruit + Yoghurt

Either a whole piece of fruit and a small yoghurt, or chopped fruit mixed with yoghurt.



Yoghurt adds protein and calcium to the carbs from fruit

Lentils are a cheap way to add fibre and protein to your meal.



Dinner: Spaghetti Bolognese

70-100g of pasta per person (wholewheat if possible for extra fibre)
 70-100g of mince per person
 Handful of lentils per person
 Onions, carrots, peppers and tinned tomatoes (add as many veg as you can here – peas and sweetcorn will even work)

Menu 2 – ‘Typical’ Weekend

Breakfast: Eggs on Toast

2 eggs per person, scrambled or poached

Wholegrain toast

Tomatoes and avocado slices



Avocados are rich sources of unsaturated fats

More variety = better range of vitamins and minerals



Snack: 1 portion of Fruit

Melon slices, pineapple chunks or kiwi ‘bowls’ (halved, eaten with a spoon) are a great weekend option

Lunch: Fish Finger Sandwiches

3-4 fish fingers per person, baked or grilled

Wholegrain bread where possible

Add salad for extra texture and juiciness



Source of omega 3 and protein

A great way to get more vitamins and minerals – essential for immune function



Snack: Veggie Sticks and Dips

Sweet and crunchy pepper, carrot and cucumber sticks

Hummus or yoghurt (spiced with cumin/garam masala)

Dinner: Chicken Curry with Rice

70-100g chicken per person

Onions, peppers, mushrooms and tinned tomatoes (add as many veg as you can here – mangetout and broccoli are perfect!)

Bulk it up with chickpeas or lentils

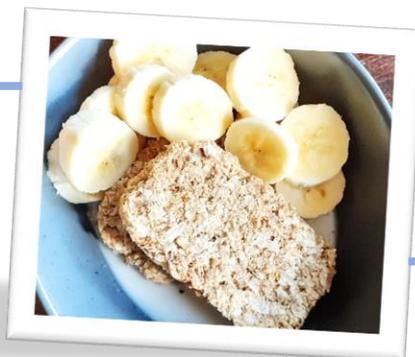


Try out some other fakeaways! You could make posh fish and chips, or homemade pizzas.

Menu 3 – A Veggie Day

Breakfast: Porridge or Wheat Biscuits

With sliced fruit and peanut butter



Peanut butter is a good source of unsaturated fats (be mindful of portion size if calories are on your agenda)



Snack: 1 Portion of Fruit + Yoghurt

Either a whole piece of fruit and a small yoghurt, or chopped fruit mixed with yoghurt.



*Eggs contain protein and fats, but will **not** raise your cholesterol!*



Lunch: Boiled Egg Salad

1-3 boiled eggs with salad or roasted veg
Add boiled potatoes for extra carbs
Top with seeds for extra unsaturated fats

Snack: Pitta Bread and Dip

Toasted pitta bread with hummus – a great energy booster

Pitta breads are perfect for freezing – pop straight into the toaster for a quick snack or light lunch

Also vegan and dairy free!



Dinner: Quick Bean Chilli

Chopped veg (onion, carrots, leek, peppers...)
Tinned tomatoes, baked beans and kidney beans
Serve with rice or jacket potatoes

Menu 4 – Vegan and Dairy Free

Breakfast: Overnight Oats

30-50g porridge oats, 75-100ml almond/soya/oat milk, spoon of dairy free yoghurt (optional)

+ tsp cocoa powder, coffee granules or cinnamon

+ fruit of choice, handful of nuts



Walnuts contain omega 3

Soya yoghurt is a good source of protein and vitamin B12

Snack: Roasted Chickpeas

Rinse and pat dry cooked/tinned chickpeas

Season to taste – spices and curry powder work well

Roast on baking tray for approx. 30 mins, until crispy and golden (shake 2-3 times during cooking)

Great source of plant protein!

Lunch: Hummus, Carrot and Sultana Sandwich

Grated carrot and a handful of sultanas/raisins, topped with hummus



Wholemeal/granary breads are good sources of protein and fibre, as well as carbs

Great energy boost with extra protein and fats



Snack: Fruit with Nut Butter

Sliced apple or banana, topped with nut or seed butter (e.g. peanut butter)

Dinner: Stuffed Peppers

Mix veggie mince with beans and rice

Stuff into pepper shells and bake

Serve with salad or steamed greens



Filling and packed with protein, carbs and fibre

Alternative snack ideas

- **Low sugar popcorn**

- Aim for lower-fat versions if shop bought
- Try making at home! Easy and quick to make - [Popcorn video - YouTube](#)



- **Low fat crisps or rice cakes**

- Aim for baked, not fried
- Versions made with lentils/chickpeas etc may also contain more protein

- **Yoghurt pot or cottage cheese**

- High in protein, low in fat and sugar

- **Homemade granola/cereal bars**

- Generally lower sugar than shop bought - [Cereal bars video - YouTube](#)



- **Handful of nuts and/or dried fruit**

- Be mindful of portion size if calorie-conscious

- **Homemade egg cups**

- High in protein and great for on the go - [Mini quiche - YouTube](#)



- **1-2 squares of dark chocolate**

- Aim for 70% cocoa solids or more if you like it
- If dark chocolate isn't your thing, enjoy 1-2 squares of regular chocolate. A small amount is **not** unhealthy!

- **Homemade hummus**

- Plenty of protein and fibre, lower in fat than shop bought.