

**bowel
canceruk**

**give you
simple steps
for good
bowel
health**



This booklet contains simple steps you can take to help achieve good bowel health.

This is important to everyone, as these small changes will help your digestive system to work well, and help reduce your risk of bowel cancer.

This advice is intended for people who do not currently suffer from any bowel conditions. Before making any drastic changes to your lifestyle and/or diet you should always speak to your doctor.

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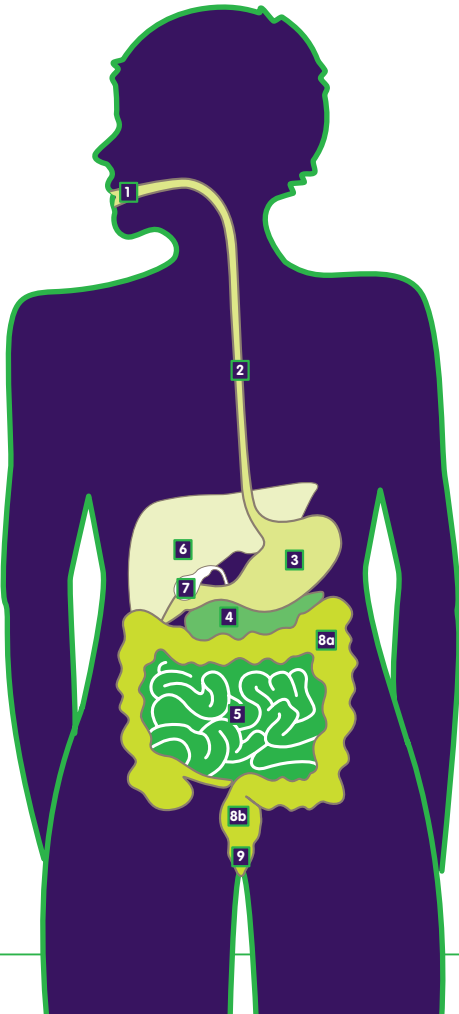
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How your digestive system works ?

Our digestive system is set up to give us water, energy, vitamins and minerals from the food we eat and the liquids we drink. When there's a problem our body suffers and we do not work at our best. The more we take care of our diet and help our digestive system, the better we feel.

- 1 Mouth** Food and water enter via the mouth. As we chew, we start to break down the food.
- 2 Oesophagus** The oesophagus carries the food and liquids to the stomach for digestion.
- 3 Stomach** The stomach produces acid and enzymes that break down the foods when they are in the stomach. The muscles in the stomach walls also helps this process by mixing up and breaking down the food. The partly digested food is then released into the small bowel.
- 4 Pancreas** The pancreas produces enzymes that are important for digestion.
- 5 Small bowel** Here the food is broken down further. The nutrients are then absorbed into the body. As the digested waste leaves the small bowel it enters the colon.
- 6 Liver** The liver produces bile which helps to break down the fats in the food. This bile is stored in the gall bladder.
- 7 Gallbladder** The gallbladder releases bile into the small bowel when food is eaten. Bile helps to break down fats in the food.
- 8 Large bowel (a. colon & b. rectum)** The large bowel is made of the colon and the rectum. The colon absorbs water, and the muscles of the colon move the waste towards the rectum. The waste is held in the rectum until it is ready to leave the body.
- 9 Anus** The waste is passed through the anus as it leaves the body.



Eating for you



Top tip

Chew your food well

The Eatwell Plate

This plate shows how much of what you eat should come from each food group. This includes everything you eat during the day, including snacks.



Bread, rice, potatoes, pasta and other starchy foods

Fruit and vegetables

Meat, fish, eggs, beans & other non-dairy sources of protein

Milk and dairy foods

Foods and drinks high in fat and/or sugar

Be aware of portion sizes

- Don't overload your plate. If you are still hungry, why not have some fruit after your meal.
- A healthy breakfast is the best way to start the day.
- Be wary of 'large' or 'value-sized' offers, often they give you more food than you need.

Fact

The energy in the food we eat is measured in calories.

Recommended daily calorie intake is around **2000** calories per day for women and **2500** for men.

Fabulous fibre



Top tip
To get a daily dose of fibre try a baked potato with baked beans

Fibre is an important part of a healthy diet. It keeps everything moving through your digestive system.

- Choose **wholegrain** or **brown bread** for sandwiches and toast. Choose **brown rice** or **brown pasta** over white.
- Start the day with a **high fibre meal**. Porridge and wholegrain cereals are good examples.
- Don't forget **fruit** and **vegetables** are a great source of fibre. Another good reason to get your 5 A DAY.

Top tips

Seeds - not just for birds! Sprinkle pumpkin seeds on your cereal or salad.

Nuts - always go for the unsalted variety. Try these in your stir fries or pasta bake.



Five for good health



Top tip
Frozen,
juiced,
canned,
and dried
fruit and
vegetables
all count

We all know eating five portions of fruit and vegetables a day forms part of a healthy, balanced diet, but do you know how to get your five a day?

Fruit and vegetables can make great snacks.

Aim for 2-3 per day. Try these:

- Carrot sticks
- Cherry tomatoes
- A handful of grapes
- Fruit skewers – great for kids!
- A couple of apples

Ways to get your 5 A DAY

Meal ideas:



Breakfast -

A banana chopped up and added to your cereal



Lunch -

Vegetable soup



Dinner -

Add a side salad to your meal



Dinner -

Include some carrots or peppers in your pasta sauce

Top tip
Fruit salad
works for
breakfast,
lunch and
dinner



Budget

Blend your left over fruit salad to create a delicious smoothie

Budget

Add your left over veg to some stock = instant soup

Did you know

Variety is key - have as many different types and colours of fruit and veg every day

Did you know

Potatoes don't count as one of your five a day

Did you know

Fruit juice only counts as one of your five a day no matter how many glasses

Positive protein

Budget

Don't forget tinned and frozen fish. They have longer use-by dates plus they are tasty and cheap!

Avoid processed meats as much as possible.

These are meats that have been preserved by smoking, curing, salting or adding preservatives. This includes: **bacon, ham, salami, sausages and burgers**. These should be an occasional treat rather than every day!

Limit your red meat intake. Have no more than 500g (cooked weight) per week. This includes: **beef, pork, lamb and goat**.

How much is that?

One portion of spaghetti bolognese with **minced beef = 140g red meat**
and a **pork chop = 75g red meat**

Try having chicken, fish or a vegetarian option instead.

Peas, beans and lentils are a source of protein and are high in fibre too!

Try grilling fish instead of frying it.

Check out our website for recipe ideas: www.bowelcanceruk.org.uk



Keep hydrated

Top tip
Keep
a bottle
of water
with you

Keep hydrated
by drinking water
throughout the day.

Why not try:
Herbal teas
Fruit juices

Alcohol

Know your limits. Have alcohol free days every week and make sure you have no more than:

2-3 units a day for women

3-4 units a day for men

Alcohol units



A pint of average strength of beer or larger = 2.8 units



1 standard glass of wine (175ml) = 2.3 units



1 measure of spirits = 1 unit

Keep active

Exercise helps you to maintain a healthy body weight and makes you feel good.

Get started

Ideally, try to do 30 minutes exercise at least five times a week. Try starting with 10 minutes and enjoy doing more and more.

Exercise doesn't have to be about working out in a gym. Enjoy it!

Don't forget if you miss a day don't give up, just start again tomorrow.

Top tip

These all count:

Climbing

Dancing

Swimming

Cycling



Symptoms



Symptoms of bowel cancer can include:



Bleeding from your bottom and/or blood in your poo

3+

A change in bowel habit lasting for 3 weeks or more especially to looser or runny poo



Unexplained weight loss



Extreme tiredness for no obvious reason



A pain or lump in your tummy

You may experience one, some or none of these however if you have any concerns or if things just don't feel right, go and see your doctor.

For more information please see:

NHS Change4Life

www.nhs.uk/Change4Life

Drink aware

www.drinkaware.co.uk

NHS Live Well

www.nhs.uk/livewell

World Cancer Research Fund

www.wcrf-uk.org

Bowel Cancer UK aims to save lives by raising awareness of bowel cancer, campaigning for best treatment and care and providing practical support and advice.

Get involved

There are many ways in which you can get involved in helping to raise funds and awareness for Bowel Cancer UK.

To find out more visit:

www.bowelcanceruk.org.uk

Donate

To make a donation online visit

www.bowelcanceruk.org.uk/donate

or call

020 7381 9711

How we can help?

If you would like to find out more about helping to improve your bowel health visit our website or call our Bowel Cancer Information and Support Service on freephone:

0800 8 40 35 40
support@bowelcanceruk.org.uk

To find out more about this product, or tell us what you think, please call us on 020 7386 4007 or email feedback@bowelcancer.org.uk

The printing of this booklet has been kindly funded by Yakult UK Ltd.

Information correct at time of publication: October 2011 To be reviewed by: October 2014 Good Bowel Health Booklet V11

Registered charity number 1071038 (England & Wales) and SC040914 (Scotland) and a company limited by guarantee number 3409832

