

## The food pyramid

### QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE BALANCE



The food pyramid is an illustration that helps us balance our diet.

First notice that it is made up of all of the food groups. In other words all of the food groups need to be included in our diet.

**Keywords > Qualitative balance**

The pyramid also illustrates the idea of proportion. The wider the band is, the more this group should be included in our diet. We should eat larger quantities of the food at the bottom of the pyramid than of the food at the top. For example, it is a good idea to drink a lot of water and to eat only a few sweets.

**Keywords > Quantitative balance**

## YOUR DIET: A SOURCE OF PLEASURE

Having said that, eating is also a form of pleasure. Meals are moments to relax and to share with others. A balanced diet does not need to be about excluding anything. It is just about eating a good combination of food in the right proportions.

**Keywords > Adapting your diet to your needs.**

The quantities will vary from one person to another and must be adapted according to each person's energy needs. Naturally, there are a few benchmarks that you will often hear about, such as 'You should drink 1 to 2 litres of water a day,' or the famous '5-a-day' when talking about fruit and vegetables.

## WHAT'S ON YOUR PLATE

It is perhaps easier to visualise a well-proportioned meal on a plate.



Ideally, fruit and vegetables should take up two fifths of the plate, starch should represent another two fifths and proteins such as meat, fish, eggs or dairy products only one fifth. The glass of water beside the plate represents drinks. Fats are not represented as they are included during cooking. Sweets have also been left out as they are not necessary for a balanced meal and they should definitely not be included in every meal.

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These proportions give you an idea of scale, but should not be followed to the letter. You can achieve a balanced diet in a single meal, but it is easier to do so taking into account all of the meals in a day, or even a week. Over several meals, you should easily be able to eat all of the food groups in a varied way and in suitable quantities to meet your needs.

## RECOMMENDATIONS PER COUNTRY

Each country has its own recommendations and the food pyramid can vary from one to another. Some versions include the idea of **physical activity**.



These suggest that you must practice a physical activity alongside a balanced diet. This idea is often added at the bottom of the pyramid, so you can do as much physical exercise as you like!



The goal of NUTRIX is to move the red cube towards the green cube while balancing your diet. All of the food groups on the level have to be represented... in the right quantities. You can exceed the recommended quantities but, in this case, the food in the over-represented group will give you minus points. So to progress, you have to find a way to follow the proportions in the food pyramid.