

Teacher's notes

The statistics

- In the most official **recent survey**, doctors found 16.6 per cent of boys and 16.7 per cent of girls aged under ten are obese
- Three in ten boys and four in ten girls aged two to 15 are not doing the amount of physical activity recommended by the chief medical officer
- On current trends, 22 per cent of girls and 19 per cent of boys between the ages of two and 15 will be obese by 2010

Healthy eating

Eating a diet that contains fruit and vegetables has many health benefits, it can

- Reduces the risk of coronary heart disease
- Protects against many cancers
- Provides a great source of energy and nutrition
- Protects against asthma
- Keeps skin, teeth and hair healthy

The UK has one of the lowest fruit and vegetable intakes in Europe.

Many of our attitudes to health and the influences on our lives are set in childhood and research suggests that food consumption patterns are established early in life. It is clearly important then, that any attempts to produce long-term improvements in the nation's diet should start with children.

People should

Eat at least 5 portions of fruit and vegetables every day, Fruit juice can count as one portion of fruit (200ml glass)

Fresh fruit and vegetables are most nutritious when eaten within 3-4 days of purchase

Tinned fruit and frozen vegetables are also nutritious

Buying fresh fruit and vegetables loose is often cheaper than buying them pre-packed.

A healthy and balanced diet in childhood can help prevent ill health in later life.

A healthy balance of foods provides the energy and nourishment everyone needs to survive and to enjoy life. Eating too little food soon leads to illness, but eating too much or the wrong balance of foods can lead to problems in the long term. So it's important to get the balance right - both in the amount and in the type of foods eaten. A healthy and balanced diet in childhood can reduce the risk of anaemia and dental decay. In the longer term, it can help to prevent ill health later in life. For example, it can reduce the risk of heart disease, obesity, stroke and some cancers.

For more information please see

<http://www.wiredforhealth.gov.uk/home.php?catid=872>

<http://www.foodstandards.gov.uk/>