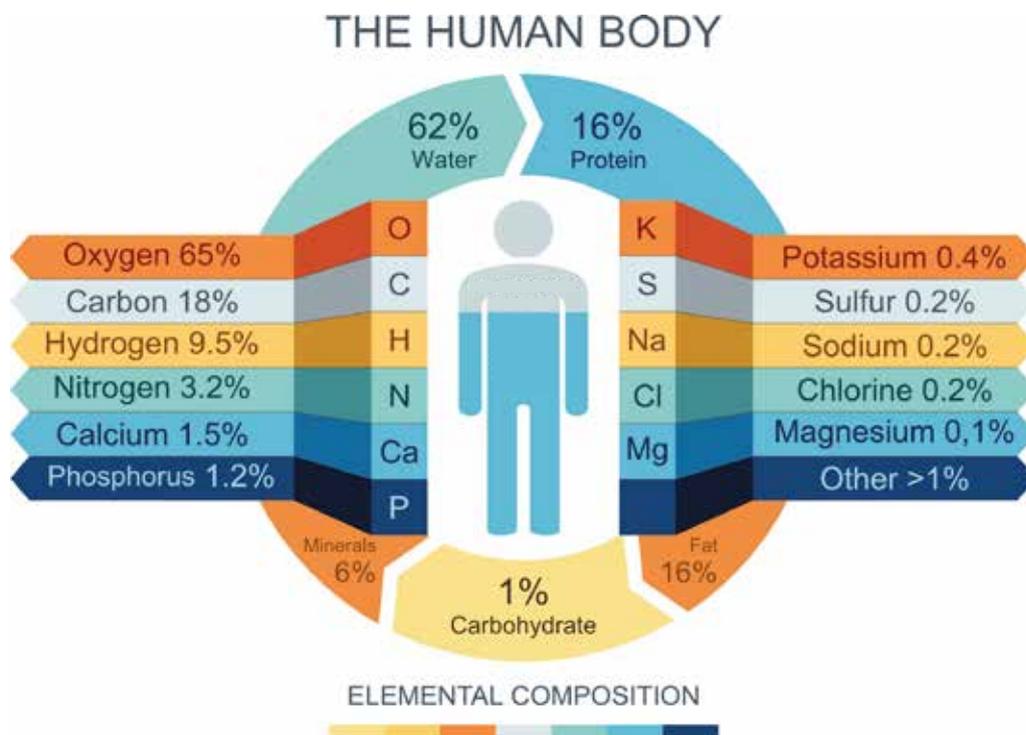


Optimum nutrition: your diet basics

A human being is made up of roughly 62% water, 16% protein, 16% fat and 6% minerals and vitamins. Every single molecule comes from the food you eat and the water you drink. Eating the highest quality food in the right quantities helps you to achieve your highest potential for health, vitality and freedom from disease.



Fat (approx. 35%-50% of diet)

There are two basic kinds of fats: natural ones and unnatural ones. The natural ones are good for us, the unnatural ones are not. Natural fats are required for the brain and nervous system, immune system, cardiovascular system, joints and skin. We need fats in our diet to be able to absorb the fat-soluble vitamins A, D, E and K.

There are different kinds of fats and they all have a role in health. Two kinds - omega-3 and omega-6 - are essential. The body cannot make them. Therefore, they need to come from food. The optimal diet should provide a balance of these two healthy fats but actually most of us are getting too much omega-6 and not enough omega-3.

Chia and flaxseeds are good sources of omega-3, as are walnuts and pumpkin seeds. Omega-3 fats are converted in the body into EPA and DHA, which are also found in sardines, herring, mackerel, salmon and tuna. These essential fats are easily destroyed by heat, light or exposure to oxygen, so having a fresh daily source is important. Although not essential, mono-unsaturated fats – e.g. olive and avocado oil – also have many health benefits as well. Saturated fat has long been suspected to promote heart disease, but we now know that it doesn't. The wrong kinds of fats are damaged fats, which are harmful. Those are hydrogenated (hardened) vegetable fats called trans fats – also found in anything deep-fried such as crisps and chips – as well as processed vegetable oils.

Eat:

Fish, nuts, avocados, olives & coconut oil.

1 tablespoon of crushed seeds or seed oil a day.

Avoid:

fried foods, burnt, browned foods and hydrogenated fats, processed vegetable oils.

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Protein (approx 15 - 25% of diet)

The 21 amino acids (building blocks of protein) are essential for the growth and repair of body tissue. They are also used to make hormones, enzymes, antibodies and neurotransmitters and help transport substances around the body.

Both the quality and quantity of the protein you eat is important. The average breast-fed baby receives just 1% of its total calories from protein and manages to double its birth weight in 6 months. That is because the protein from breast milk is very good quality and easily absorbed. The best quality protein foods in terms of amino acid balance include eggs, quinoa, soya, meat and fish. Grains and pulses do not contain all essential amino acids but when combined they do: for example rice with beans.

Make sure to get your animal protein from the best sources you can afford, ideally organic, free range and grass-fed. Non-organic dairy can be high in hormones. Grass-fed beef has a better fat composition than conventional meat. Fat from organic animals is less likely to be contaminated with toxins, so you can eat it, whereas it is better to drain or cut off the fat from conventionally raised animals. Protein sources that have been processed to lower the fat content – such as skimmed milk, low-fat yoghurt or cheese – are higher in carbohydrates and not recommended.

Eat:

3 - 5 daily servings of beans, lentils, quinoa, tofu or other vegetable protein or 2 - 3 servings of meat, fish, cheese, eggs. Choose organic animal protein where possible. If you choose vegetable protein, remember to count the carbs with your GL allowance.

Avoid:

Too much animal protein from factory-farmed sources. 'Low-fat' protein sources.

Carbohydrate (approx. 25%-40% of diet)

Carbohydrates are the main fuel source for the body. Included in this macronutrient category are bread, potatoes, rice, pasta, all vegetables and all fruits. They range from being very fast releasing or high GL: sugar, honey, white bread, refined foods, to very slow releasing or low GL: non starchy veg, e.g. green leafy veg and low sugar fresh fruits such as berries.

Fast releasing carbs give a sudden burst of energy, followed by a slump, whilst slow releasing carbs provide more sustained energy and are therefore much better. This is a key distinction that you will come to understand whilst working through this Nutrition Success Formula.

Fruit: max. 2 servings of low-GL fruit a day.

Vegetables: 5 or more servings of non-starchy veg/day (e.g. green veg, salad, mushrooms, peppers, onions, etc.).

Starchy carbs (e.g. bread, pasta, rice, potatoes, parsnips): choose whole grain, unrefined options and limit intake, see tables later in this guide.

Eat:

Low GL fruit and veg, most of our carbs should come from this source.

Avoid:

Sugars, white flour products and refined foods.

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Fibre (no less than 35g a day)

Rural Africans eat about 55g of dietary fibre a day (compared with the UK average intake of 22g) and have the lowest incidence of bowel diseases.

Fibre absorbs water in the digestive tract, making the food contents bulkier and easier to pass through the gut. Fruit and vegetable fibre helps slow down the absorption of sugar into the blood, helping to maintain good energy levels.

Eat:

Whole foods, whole grains, lentils, beans, nuts, seeds, fresh fruit and vegetables.

Avoid:

Refined, white and overcooked foods.

Water (2 litres a day)

Two thirds of the body consists of water, which is therefore our most important nutrient. We lose 1.5 litres of water a day through the skin, lungs, gut and via the kidneys as urine, ensuring that toxic substances are eliminated from the body.

We also make about a third of a litre of water a day when glucose is 'burnt' for energy. Therefore our minimum water intake from food and drink needs to be more than 1.5 litres a day to stay healthy and support your kidneys. When your mouth feels dry, you are already dehydrated.

Drink:

6-8 glasses of water, herbal or fruit teas per day.

Minimise:

Your intake of alcohol, coffee and tea.