



A balanced diet

How to lose weight permanently



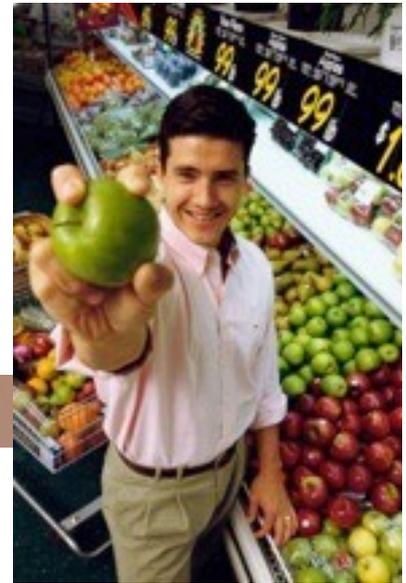
Simple and healthy meals

We all know that we eat too much and eat badly! The supermarket shelves are packed with an incredible variety of food and we are the victims of an equally incredible bad diet: fast food, fizzy drinks, ready meals, snacks and all kinds of confectionery flood the market and are the root cause of public health enemy No. 1: obesity!

However, it is not difficult to eat properly while still enjoying tasty dishes and not feeling hungry. You need simply follow a few basic rules to benefit from a balanced diet.

First of all, take carbohydrates or more simply sugars. This category includes all kinds of food with a high sugar content such as cakes, ice creams, creams, jams, chocolate sandwich spreads, honey and confectionery like sweets, chocolates, chocolate bars as well as fizzy drinks such as colas, fanta, sprite, red bull, ice tea and, last but not least, starchy foods including bread, rusks, pasta, rice, couscous, quinoa and potatoes, to say nothing of breakfast cereals from Swiss muesli to cornflakes and choco pops; then the final group is that of fruit which contains plenty of sugar, depending on how ripe the particular fruit is. Sugars are our main source of energy and provide the “empty” calories by which is meant those with no added nutritional value. They contain energy and energy alone with very little or none of the vitamins (except for fruit), minerals, oligo-elements or proteins that are needed for our metabolism to function smoothly.

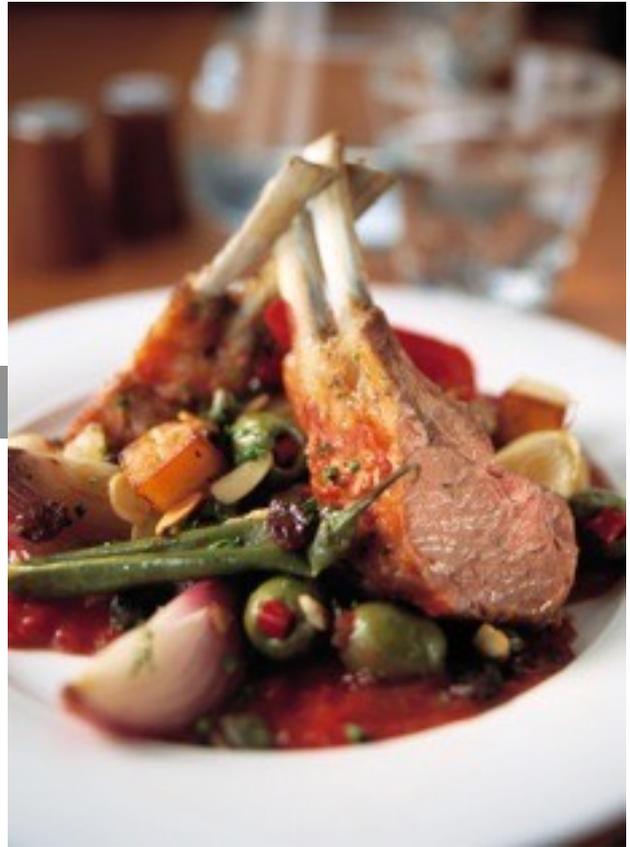




Logically then we should eat most of these foods at the time of day when we need the most energy, in other words at breakfast when we are about to start our day. After that their intake should preferably be reduced as time goes by to arrive at zero at the evening meal. But not all carbohydrates are the same. To eat as healthily as possible and maintain our energy level throughout the day, carbohydrates that are absorbed slowly (with a low glycemic index) should be chosen for preference. These consist for the most part of whole grain cereals with no added sugar and fruit. That is why it is better to eat wholemeal bread, oatmeal, durum wheat pasta (cooked al dente) or husked rice and steer clear of everything which contains industrially processed cereals such as cornflakes as well as products based on white flour and/or containing refined sugar. In general, the more natural the products you eat the better that will be for your health and fitness!



Fats are the second group of foodstuffs. These are the second most important source of energy for our organism and contribute twice the number of calories per gram as carbohydrates. That is why their contribution to our diet should be monitored. But the quality of the fats that are eaten is just as important as the quantity! You should prefer polyunsaturated fats such as omega 9 contained in olives or omega 3 found in fish and oilseeds. Meat is rich in saturated fat which tends to cause atherosclerosis and omega 6 which enhances the inflammatory processes. That is why their quantity in your diet should be reduced. A balanced diet will consist in consuming the equivalent of 2 soup spoonfuls of omega 3 and omega 9 a day in the form of fish or walnut oil and in reducing your meat intake to two or three times a week.



Finally proteins are the last category. These are not so much a source of energy as the building blocks of our organism. That is why we must eat enough of them to keep our body in good shape. But here again you must look at the package which surrounds the proteins. Egg white is the only food protein in the pure state. All the others are accompanied by fats: in the case of meat and dairy produce these will be saturated fats first and foremost, for fish essentially omega 3 fats and for legumes (chickpeas, beans, lentils etc.) not fats but mainly fibres. Ideally then it is advisable to eat vegetarian meals twice a week, fish on another two occasions and meat (preferably lean) or poultry on three. A 100 g steak is quite big enough. There is certainly no need to eat a big T-bone steak at every meal!

Alongside these three groups, do not forget vegetables. Eating 5 portions a day reduces the frequency of cancer and cardiovascular diseases. So remember to fill your plate with vegetables first before adding meat and starches.



Last but not least, a word about alcohol: in chemical terms alcohol is a solvent. Like all solvents it has a close affinity with fats and will therefore be concentrated essentially in the fattier organs of our body, namely the liver and the brain. That explains the logical consequence of excessive indulgence: drunkenness and cirrhosis of the liver. Consumed in reasonable quantities (not more than 2 units a day!) the adverse effects will not occur but alcohol has a high calorie content and takes the same path through the metabolism as sugar. If you want to lose weight you would therefore do well to eliminate alcohol completely from your menu!



In general, when it comes to beverages, the best solution is to drink water and nothing but water. Nobody needs a “high energy” drink saturated with sugar! You should also be careful with fruit juices and milk. The fact that they contain vitamins does not mean that they have a low calorie count! In terms of calories, a glass of milk or fruit juice is the equivalent of a glass of a fizzy drink! So stick to water if you want to lose weight! Drinking a glass of freshly squeezed fruit juice replaces a fruit in your daily menu!

Finally, here is an example of a balanced diet for a day which will enable you slowly but surely to lose a few excess kilos in the long run:

Morning: a slice of wholemeal bread with butter and jam, 1 natural yogurt supplemented by a fresh fruit of your choice, a freshly squeezed fruit juice without sugar, tea or coffee WITHOUT sugar OR a sweetener.

Lunch: a plate of raw vegetables (crudités) seasoned with olive oil as your starter followed by a grilled fish with lemon, an average-sized potato and a few steamed vegetables; then a fresh fruit for dessert.

Evening: a good mixed salad or a good vegetable soup, both of them without any starch! Do not snack between meals and take as much exercise as possible! Once you have reached your ideal weight, maintain a healthy and balanced diet. The advice given above is not a slimming diet, but rather the basis for a rich and varied diet which will keep you fit and healthy. Once you have lost those spare kilos, to maintain your weight you can still enjoy a gastronomic meal or a pizza from time to time. The main thing is to avoid making this a daily habit,