

South Warwickshire



NHS Foundation Trust

Warwickshire Dietetic Service

**A Guide to Healthy
Eating for People with
Gall Stones**

This information can be issued to patients by Dietitians, Doctors, Practice Nurses, District Nurses, Community Nurses, Community Rehab Teams and Allied Healthcare Professionals.

A Guide to Healthy Eating for People with Gallstones

Gallstones are hard crystals of various substances that can form in the gallbladder. The main function of the gallbladder is to help digest foods by storing and releasing bile into the small bowel. The bile breaks down fats and other nutrients so that they can be digested and absorbed.

Many people who have gallstones have no symptoms but others suffer from abdominal pain, bloating, nausea and vomiting. In some people, gallstones can cause pain in the upper-right side of the abdomen or indigestion after eating foods high in fat.

Studies have shown that being overweight or obese can increase your chances of having gallstones, especially if you are female. Those who carry a large amount of fat around their waist are also more likely to develop gallstones than those who carry fat around their hips and thighs.

For people who are overweight or obese, even a small amount of weight loss of 10% of body weight over a 6 month period can improve health. Adopting a very low fat or a fat-free diet to achieve rapid weight loss (more than 1.5 kg or 3 lb. per week) is not advised as this may increase your chances of developing gallstones or increase the size of gallstones.

There is no specific diet for treating symptoms. However eating a healthy balanced diet low in fat may help.

Use the 'Eatwell Guide' on the following page to ensure you have a balance of healthier and more sustainable food. This includes:

- eating plenty of fruit and vegetables; at least 5 portions a day
- eating some potatoes, bread, rice, pasta and other starchy carbohydrates at each meal especially the high fibre varieties
- having small portions of beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat and other proteins every day
- choosing some dairy products each day
- using unsaturated oils and spreads in small amounts
- having small portions of foods and drinks high in fat and/or sugar very occasionally
- eating food without adding too much salt
- drinking at least 6—8 cups of fluid each day.

If you lose too much weight or find your condition difficult to control while following the advice in this leaflet, ask your doctor to refer you to a Registered Dietitian for specialist advice.

Eatwell Guide

Use the Eatwell Guide to help you get a balance of healthier and more sustainable food. It shows how much of what you eat overall should come from each food group.



Water, lower fat milk, sugar-free drinks including tea and coffee all count.

Limit fruit juice and/or smoothies to a total of 150ml a day.

Check the label on packaged foods

Each serving (150g) contains	
Energy 1046kJ 250kcal	Saturates 3.0g LOW
Fat 3.0g LOW	Sugars 34g HIGH
Salt 0.9g MED	
13%	7%
4%	38%
15%	

of an adult's reference intake
Typical values (as sold) per 100g: 697kJ / 167kcal

Choose foods lower in fat, salt and sugars

Choose wholegrain or higher fibre versions with less added fat, salt and sugar
Potatoes, bread, rice, pasta and other starchy carbohydrates

Eat at least 5 portions of a variety of fruit and vegetables every day
Fruit and vegetables

Beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat and other proteins
Eat more beans and pulses, 2 portions of sustainably sourced fish per week, one of which is oily. Eat less red and processed meat

Dairy and alternatives
Choose lower fat and lower sugar options

Oil & spreads
Choose unsaturated oils and use in small amounts



Eat less often and in small amounts

Per day 2000kcal 2500kcal = ALL FOOD + ALL DRINKS

Source: Public Health England in association with the Welsh government, Food Standards Scotland and the Food Standards Agency in Northern Ireland

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Fruit and Vegetables

This group includes: all fresh, frozen, dried and tinned fruit and vegetables and salad. Aim for **at least** five portions of a **variety** of vegetables and fruit every day.

How much is a portion?

Vegetables e.g. cauliflower, cabbage, peas, carrots, swede, courgettes, broccoli, green beans	3 tablespoons
Salad	1 dessert bowl
Whole fresh fruit	1 apple 1 pear 1 orange 1 banana 1 peach
Tinned fruit, fruit salad, stewed fruit	3-4 large tablespoons
Large fruit and vegetables	1 slice melon or pineapple ½ grapefruit , avocado or pepper
Small fruit	2 plums 2 kiwi 1 cupful grapes, cherries, strawberries
Dried fruit	1 tablespoon
Fruit juice, smoothie	1 small glass or carton (150ml)

Tips for eating more vegetables and fruit

- Add fruit such as banana or berries or a handful of dried fruit on breakfast cereal.
- Add salad to your sandwich fillings.
- Have a healthy dessert: try whole fruit, fruit salad, fruit tinned in juice or stewed fruit.
- Have at least one portion of vegetables or salad with your main meal.
- Try home-made vegetable soups.
- Add extra vegetables to stews, casseroles, curries and sauces.
- Fruit and raw vegetables can make a healthy snack if you are hungry between meals.

Useful facts about fruit and vegetables

- They contain antioxidants, vitamins and minerals, which can help protect your heart.
- They contain soluble fibre which can help reduce cholesterol levels.
- They are low in calories.
- Steaming vegetables rather than boiling helps reduce the loss of vitamins in cooking.
- Frozen vegetables can contain as many vitamins as fresh.
- Soaking vegetables in water is not a good idea as vitamins are lost.

Potatoes, bread, rice, pasta and other starchy carbohydrates

This group includes: All breads, breakfast cereals, pasta, grains, rice, flours, potatoes and chapattis. Choose at least one food from this group **at every meal**.

Tips for eating more starchy carbohydrates

- Choose wholegrain or high fibre varieties such as:
 - ◆ wholemeal, granary, high fibre white bread, crispbreads or wholemeal pitta
 - ◆ porridge oats and oat bran cereals, e.g. Oat Crunches, Common Sense Oat, Oats So Simple, Oatibix, oat biscuits, wholegrain breakfast cereals, e.g. Bran-flakes, Weetabix, Wheat-flakes, Fruit and Fibre, Shredded Wheat
 - ◆ brown rice
 - ◆ wholemeal pasta or noodles.
- Avoid sugar, honey-coated or chocolate based breakfast cereals.
- Use spreading fats or a low fat spread sparingly on bread.
- Use tomato-based sauces instead of creamy or cheese based ones.
- Do not add fat to potatoes, chapattis or noodles.
- Choose boiled rice instead of fried rice.

To increase your fibre intake, other suggestions include:

- Kidney beans in chilli con carne
- Butter beans in stews or casseroles
- Lentils in soups and dhals
- Baked beans in shepherds pie
- Baked beans on toast
- Mixed beans in salads.

Useful facts about starchy carbohydrate

- High fibre foods can help you to feel fuller for longer
- High fibre foods help prevent constipation, but only when you drink plenty of fluid as well.
- This group is high in essential B vitamins

Dairy and alternatives

This group includes: Milk, cheese, yoghurt, fromage frais, milky puddings e.g. custard, semolina, tapioca, rice pudding; and sauces such as parsley, cheese or bread sauce. It also includes milk substitutes that are unsweetened and fortified with calcium (e.g. soya or almond milk).

Aim for 3 portions a day.

Tips about dairy and alternatives

- Choose lower fat alternatives of milk, cheese, yoghurts, fromage frais.
- Choose varieties with no added sugar.
- Use skimmed milk to make sauces and milky puddings.
- Grate cheese to reduce the amount you use or use smaller amounts of strong flavoured cheese.

Useful Facts about Dairy and alternatives

- Dairy foods are good sources of calcium.
- Skimmed, semi-skimmed milk and 1% milk contain just as much calcium as whole milk.
- Lower fat cheeses include cottage cheese, reduced fat Cheddar, Edam, Brie, Camembert, Quark and low fat cheese spread.

Beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat and other proteins

This group includes: all types of beans, lentils, dhal, poultry, fish, eggs, meat, nuts and other meat alternatives such as Quorn, soya or tofu.

Aim for 2—3 portions a day.

Tips about proteins

- Eat more beans, lentils and pulses.
- Eat less red and processed meat, aim for no more than 70g (just under 3oz) per day.
- Try to eat 2 portions of sustainably sourced fish a week, one of which is oily
- Trim off any visible fat on meat and take skin off chicken, turkey and duck.
- Do not add oil in cooking. Grill, bake, steam, microwave or dry fry instead.
- Add peas, beans and lentils to casseroles, soups and stews.
- Choose fish canned in tomato or water rather than oil or brine.

Useful facts about proteins:

- Red meat is an excellent source of iron and zinc.
- The soluble fibre in beans and pulses may help reduce blood cholesterol.
- Omega-3 fatty acids found in oily fish have a beneficial effects for heart health. Aim to eat at least one portion of oily fish per week, e.g. mackerel, sardines, salmon.

Foods and drinks high in fat

High fat foods include: butter, margarine, low fat spread, oils, mayonnaise, oily salad dressing, cakes, chocolate, ice-cream, tarts, pies, pastries, crisps.

Fat is the most calorific nutrient. Some fat is essential, so **oils and spreads** are the only fats included in the Eatwell guide (see page 3). All other foods and drinks high in fat should be eaten in small amounts and only occasionally.

The fat in most food is a mixture of three main types - **saturates, monounsaturates** and **polyunsaturates**. It is important to limit **all** types of fats, but particularly saturated fats.

Saturated fats are more likely to increase your risk of heart disease. Saturates are found in:

- **Butter, hard margarine, lard, dripping, suet, coconut oil, palm oil** and any foods made from these including biscuits, cakes, pastries or cooked using them, e.g. chips, crisps
- **Fatty meat and meat products** such as burgers, sausages, pepperoni, pâté, meat pies, especially pork pies
- Cheese especially hard cheese and some cheese spreads.

<p>Monounsaturated fats are found in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rapeseed oil• Olive oil• Groundnut oil	<p>Polyunsaturated fats are found in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Vegetable oils, e.g. sunflower, corn oil or soya oil• Oily fish, e.g. mackerel, kippers, herrings• Nuts and seeds
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Other types of fat

Omega-3 Fatty acids are found in oily fish. They have beneficial effects for heart health. Eat at least one portion of oily fish per week, e.g. mackerel, sardines, salmon. The darker the colour of the fish the more Omega-3 fatty acids it is likely to contain.

Trans fatty acids (trans fats) are found in small quantities in some foods from animal sources, including meat and dairy products. They can also be found in foods containing hydrogenated vegetable oil.

Like saturated fats, trans fats raise cholesterol levels in the blood so increasing the risk of coronary heart disease. Most people in the UK do not eat a lot of trans fats. On average, we eat about half the recommended maximum. Food manufacturers in the UK have lowered the levels of hydrogenated vegetable oil they use, which means that trans fat levels have been reduced as well.

Oil and spreads

Try to choose **monounsaturated** or **polyunsaturated** oils and spreads, but still use them in moderation. Look for spreads containing the least saturated fat and most unsaturated.

Examples include:

Monounsaturated - Rapeseed and olive oil spreads, such as Bertolli, Olive Gold, Carapelli, and supermarket own brands

Polyunsaturated - Sunflower oil and spreads, such as Flora, Vitalite and supermarket own brands.

Tips for reducing fat:

- Avoid deep fried foods.
- Have pastries, pies, crisps, or cream for occasional treats only
- Measure the oil you add to a pan using a teaspoon rather than just pouring it in
- Foods containing 'Plant Sterols', e.g. Benecol, Flora ProActiv or supermarket own brands are designed to reduce cholesterol levels but are not essential.

Foods and drinks high in sugar

This group includes: biscuits, cakes, chocolate, ice-cream, jam tarts, sweets, sugary drinks (including fruit juice), jam, marmalade and honey.

Sugary foods are not essential for health so eat less often and in small amounts.

Sugar can be listed in lots of ways on food labels.

- Check ingredient lists. The nearer sugar comes to the start of the list, the more sugar it contains (see page 10 for more information on reading food labels).
- Look out for honey, treacle, molasses, syrup, sucrose, maltose, invert sugar, fructose, maltodextrin. These are all sugar.

Tips for reducing sugar

- Aim to cut out or reduce sugar in tea and coffee. You could use an artificial sweetener instead.
- Use diet, zero or sugar-free squashes and fizzy drinks.
- Choose fruit or sugar free yogurt and have sweet pastries, pies, puddings, cake and biscuits for occasional treats only.

What about salt?

Salt is the common name for sodium chloride. Too much sodium in the diet contributes to high blood pressure and therefore heart disease and strokes. Six grams of salt per day is the recommended maximum daily intake for adults. Children need less.

Tips for reducing salt

- Avoid adding salt to your food at the table and only add a small pinch when cooking.
- Limit salty foods such as salted nuts, crisps, jars and packets of soups and sauces, ready-made meals and processed meats such as bacon, sausages and tinned meat.
- Salt substitutes are not recommended as they do not reduce the taste for salt and can be harmful in some conditions.
- Sea salt has no major benefit over common salt. Despite containing some extra minerals, it still contains sodium so therefore should be kept to a minimum.
- Try using herbs, spices, lemon juice or pepper to flavour your food.

What about drinks?

As your body is made up of approximately two thirds water, it is essential for good health to keep your body well hydrated. An average adult needs about 3 pints or 1.5 litres of fluid every day; this is about 8-10 cups. Try plain water, low fat milk, squash, tea and coffee.

If you drink alcohol, follow the low risk national guidelines. There is no evidence that drinking alcohol can be absolutely safe, but by sticking within the guidelines, you can lower your risk of harming your health. The guidelines state:

- Men and women are advised not to regularly drink more than 14 units a week.
- Spread your drinking over three days or more if you drink as much as 14 units a week. A good way to keep to the low risk guidelines is to have several drink-free days each week.

Guide to Food Labelling

Look at the nutritional label and use the tables below to help you to make healthier choices.

Drink per 100ml	High levels	Low levels
Sugars	11.25g	2.5g
Fat	8.75g	1.5g
Of which saturates	2.5g	0.75g
Salt	0.75g	0.3g

Food per 100g	High levels	Low levels
Sugars	22.5g	5g
Fat	17.5g	3g
Of which saturates	5g	1.5g
Fibre	3g	0.5g
Salt (Sodium)	1.5g (0.6g)	0.3g (0.1g)

Equality Statement

At South Warwickshire NHS Foundation Trust we are fully committed to equality and diversity, both as an employer and as a service provider. We have a policy statement in our Equality Strategy that clearly outlines our commitment to equality for service users, patients and staff:

You and your family have the right to be treated fairly and be routinely involved in decisions about your treatment and care. You can expect to be treated with dignity and respect. You will not be discriminated against on any grounds including age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

You have a responsibility to treat other service users, patients and our staff with dignity and respect.

Our information for patients can also be made available in other languages, Braille, audio tape, disc or in large print.

PALS

We offer a Patient Advice Liaison Service (PALS). This is a confidential service for families to help with any questions or concerns about local health services.

You can contact the service by the direct telephone line on 01926 600 054 by email:

Pals@swft.nhs.uk or by calling in person to the PALS Office which is located in the Lakin Road Entrance to the hospital.

If you have any queries about your diet, please contact us:

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Published	August 2016
Review	August 2021
Version no	3
SWH No	00791



Approved by
SWFT Patient
Information
Group