

# THE WHAT, WHY, AND HOW OF NCDs

## WHAT ARE NONCOMMUNICABLE DISEASES?

Noncommunicable diseases, or NCDs, are conditions that are not infectious or contagious. This means you cannot catch them from someone else or spread them to others. NCDs can damage your health throughout your lifetime. Things like age and genes can affect whether NCDs develop, but certain lifestyle choices, like what you eat and how much physical activity you get, can also increase your risk of developing a chronic illness. Some examples of NCDs are type 2 diabetes and heart disease.

## WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO LEARN ABOUT NCDs?

Noncommunicable diseases cause 41 million deaths a year globally.<sup>1</sup> With the right education and changes in behaviour, there is an opportunity to reverse that trend. Healthy habits can last a lifetime, especially when they are established early. The earlier your family can learn about the causes of NCDs and how to reduce their risk of developing them, the sooner they can begin to build a healthier future.

## HOW CAN I REDUCE MY FAMILY'S RISK OF DEVELOPING NCDs?

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the best way to reduce your family's chance of developing NCDs is to reduce the major risk factors.<sup>2</sup> The following list of recommendations can help your family make the healthiest choices possible.

- ❑ Make nutritious food choices.
- ❑ Be active.
- ❑ Don't smoke.
- ❑ For those over 18 years of age, if you drink alcohol, always drink responsibly and in moderation. Never drink and then drive.

Need more information about nutrition and activity guidelines? Check out the [Family Webpage \(www.FutureWellKids.com/Families\)](http://www.FutureWellKids.com/Families)!

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/noncommunicable-diseases>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.who.int/activities/preventing-noncommunicable-diseases>

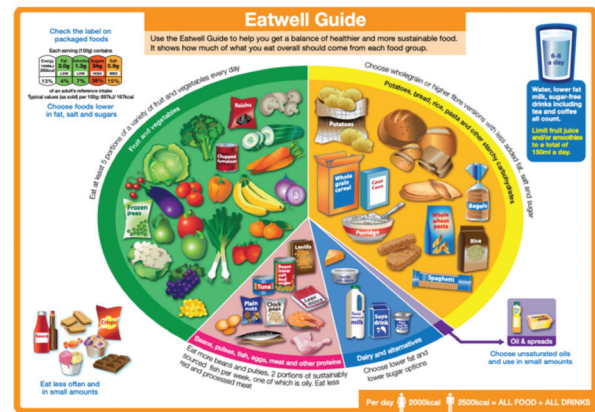
# NUTRITION GUIDELINES

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the best way to reduce your family's chance of developing noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) is to reduce the major risk factors.<sup>1</sup> One of these major risk factors is a lack of proper nutrition.

The Department of Health and Social Care recommends fitting your food choices into the five food groups of the Eatwell Guide.<sup>2</sup> Review the [Eatwell Guide](#) with your family to discover new ways to make each meal healthy and nutritious. A few examples of each food group include:

- **Fruits and Vegetables (~5 portions everyday):**  
Try bananas, apples and dried fruit like raisins.  
Vegetables include dark green vegetables like spinach, tomatoes and carrots.
- **Starchy Carbohydrates (~1/3 of your meals):**  
These include bread, rice, potatoes and pasta.
- **Dairy (~Daily):** Milk, cheese, yoghurt, quark, and cream cheese.
- **Protein (~No more than 70g):** Beef, pork, chicken, fish, eggs, nuts and seeds, soy products like tofu, and beans.
- **Oils and Spreads (~Sparingly):** Unsaturated oils like vegetable, olive, and sunflower.

A noncommunicable disease (NCD) is any disease that is not contagious and cannot be spread to others.



However, it isn't just about what you try to put *on* your plates. It's also about what you try to keep *off* your plates! The WHO also recommends limiting the following<sup>3</sup>:

- Added sugar
- Salt
- Saturated and trans fats

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.who.int/activities/preventing-noncommunicable-diseases>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-eatwell-guide>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/healthy-diet>

# RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the best way to reduce your family's chance of developing noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) is to reduce the major risk factors.<sup>1</sup> One of those major risk factors is a lack of physical activity.

The Department of Health and Social Care reports regular physical activity can help reduce the risk of developing NCDs. They recommend 60 minutes (or more!) of moderate to vigorous activity each day for people ages 5–18.<sup>2</sup>

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- **Moderate:** Moderate exercise raises your heart rate and gets your blood moving through your body. It can help boost your mood, increase your energy levels, and lower your blood pressure.
- **Vigorous:** Vigorous exercise raises your heart rate to a level that is most beneficial for your body. It reduces your risk of heart disease and can help boost your mood, increase your energy levels, and lower your blood pressure.

The following checklist can help your family incorporate physical activity into your daily lives. Talk about it with your family and mark your favourites. Feel free to add to the list!

- ☐ Take a long walk
- ☐ Enjoy a family dance party to your favourite music
- ☐ Go for a bike ride
- ☐ Do star jumps during the ad breaks of your favourite TV show
- ☐ Play a football match as a family
- ☐ Swim laps
- ☐ Train for and run a race like a virtual/in-person 5k



<sup>1</sup> <https://www.who.int/activities/preventing-noncommunicable-diseases>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/physical-activity-guidelines-infographics>