If we don’t eat food, then our bodies don’t work.
If we don’t eat the **right** food, our bodies don’t work as well as they can.

Healthy food gives our bodies the tools they need to:

- do what we want to do
- build bones and muscles
- repair and replace worn out cells
- keep all systems working
- keep us healthy.

So it is really important that we give our bodies the right kinds of food to do the job.

**What are the right kinds of food?**

Look at the **pie chart** (it looks like a plate of food doesn’t it?)

Can you see that some pieces are bigger than others?

This is because your bodies need lots of these foods to be able to do their work.

**Let's have a look at them.**

**Bread, cereal, rice, pasta and noodles group**

This is the biggest group because you need to choose most of your daily food from here.

**You get:**

- carbohydrates (car-bow-hide-rayts), the food your body uses for energy.
- B vitamins
- some calcium (cal-see-um)
> iron
> fibre, which helps move the food along through your gut (intestines).

You need **5-9 servings** of these every day (to find out more about servings have a look at the topic **Balanced diet**).

**Vegetables and legumes**

Look at the pie chart to find out what they are.

Lots of vegetables are very good for you, and there are lots of different ones around.

**You get:**
> vitamins
> minerals
> carbohydrates
> fibre

You need **4 or 5 servings** of these every day.

**Fruit**

There are heaps of different fruits, including canned and dried, so it is pretty easy to eat plenty.

**You get:**
> vitamins
> carbohydrates
> fibre
> minerals.

You need **2 or 3 servings** every day.

**Milk, yoghurt and cheese group**

This group (sometimes called dairy products) is pretty important for growing kids.

**You get:**
> calcium
> protein
> vitamins

You need **2 to 4 servings** every day.

**Meat, poultry, fish, beans, eggs, nuts and legumes**

Did you notice that some of these foods were also in another group?

Well done!
This group is just as important to keep you healthy, but you can see from the size of the serving on the plate that your body doesn't need as much from this group as the others.

‘Poultry’ just means chicken, turkey and other birds.

You get:

> protein
> iron
> vitamins
> minerals

You need a **half to 2 servings** from this group each day.

You will notice that two groups of foods have been left off the plate (Aaah, shame).

They are:

**Fats and oils**

Fats and oils are not in the healthy food circle. They are down in one corner as foods that you need a bit of but not too much.

Your body still needs them, but they can be found in other foods like meat and dairy products.

**Cakes, chips and lollies**

Of course most kids like these foods, but the truth is your body is not too keen on having lots of them. It only needs to use a little bit and the rest just sits around in all the wrong places!

So you should only eat a little bit and **not very often** - maybe at special times like parties or once a week.

**Dr Kate says:**

To eat a healthy diet:

Eat enough food from each group every day.

> choose different kinds of foods from each group every day (it gets boring eating the same thing all the time doesn't it?)
> eat plenty of plant foods (the three biggest groups).
> eat some animal foods (meat and dairy products) or nuts and legumes if you are vegetarian.
> eat little of the 'sometimes' foods.
> drink lots of WATER!

Here are some thoughts about food that some kids want to share with you.

> "Don't look in the pantry for a snack when you come home, look in the fridge for healthy snacks like fruit, cheese and crispy vegies." Alex, age 7
> "Sometimes kids really hate vegies but I think you get to like them when you're older. I think it's okay if you eat a lot of fruit." Natasha
See if you can write a poem like this one.

Haunting hamburger
Enjoyable egg
Agile asparagus
Lavish lemon
Terrific tomato
Harassing hashbrown
Youthful yoghurt
By Danny

OR have a go at writing a tongue twister like this.
"Cathy Carrot can cook a chunky chicken and cheese casserole."

'Go for 2 & 5 website'
Here you can find out about the benefits of fruit and vegies, nifty ways to get more fruit and vegies into your day, plus some super simple tasty recipes.