

THE PATTERN OF LONGEVITY



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THE PATTERN OF LONGEVITY: (UN)HEALTHY LIFESTYLE THROUGHOUT EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

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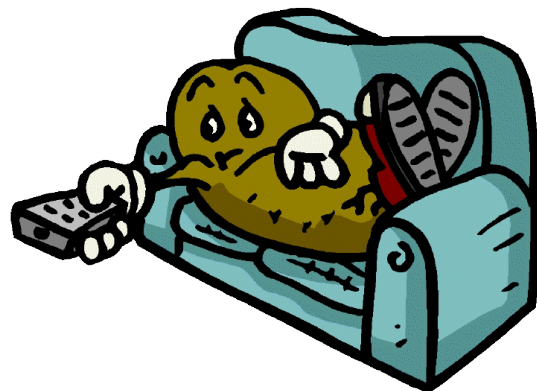
INTRODUCTION

Dear students,

we decided to prepare this manual on healthy habits to give you some background on how the diet and regular exercise can affect your life and give you long and happy life. This e-book is made by students for students (who like adults to tell them what to do). It's always good to know what to do to support good health, good looks, or good mood and mental well-being.

Have you ever thought how much fast food you have in your everyday diet? Have you ever considered what sweet drinks can cause in your body? Have you ever realized how much salt and sugar you have in your diet every day? Do you think that it doesn't matter? You don't know how wrong you are.

If you want to know and do something about it, here is some advice.



HEALTHY DIET

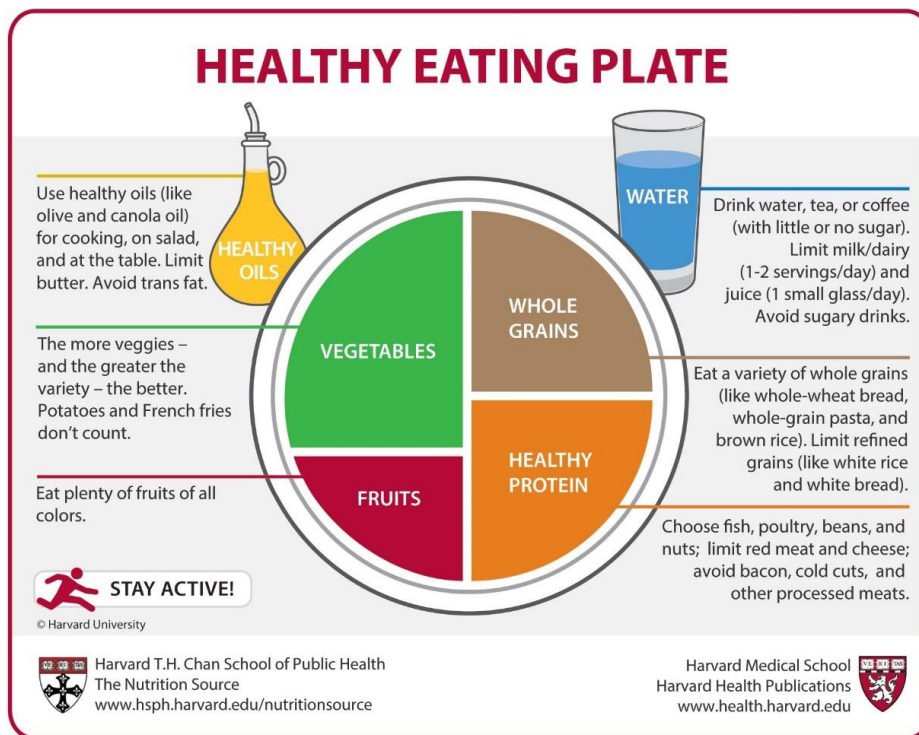
In these hectic times we are usually very happy to eat some readymade meal or hamburger or pizza. And of course top it off with a large glass of “cola”-like drink. And the best of it is that we don’t have to cook! But is it really so beneficial? Should we really be so happy not to have to cook anything? Why is fast food so criticised? And what should we eat?

Well, let’s have a look at what the healthy diet is. It contains the word “diet” but what is it? Does it mean we should avoid food? The word healthy usually sounds a bit suspicious, doesn’t it? Okay, healthy diet generally means balanced diet. And what should be balanced? Basic nutrients, of course, which are **carbohydrates** (we need them for energy), **proteins** (we need them for cell building, basically), **lipids** (insulation and energy store) and **vitamins and minerals**.

Why is there so much fuss about healthy eating? Because! This balanced diet helps us to stay healthy, slim, prevent some diseases (cardiovascular problems, diabetes, bowel problems and skin and immune problems).

So if you want to improve your eating habits you should eat more **wholegrain food** (brown rice, wholegrain pasta, wholegrain wheat, rye, barley, etc.) You should eat at least 400g of vegetables and fruits a day (according to WHO) because they are a rich source of **vitamins and minerals** but also **fibre**, which helps us to clean our intestines and thus prevent a lot of troubles – constipation, bloating, slow metabolism. Try to avoid eating processed meat like sausages and bacon. In fact it is good to have meat twice a week and replace it with **fish** or **pulses** (beans, peas, chickpeas, lentils) on other days. And some experts advise us to use local sources and eat seasonally. It will help not only your health but also ecology :D Milk and dairy products are very good source of proteins but we should limit them to 1- 2 servings a day.

This scheme about food plate may help you:



What it wants to say is that your plate should contain:

- ½ of fruits and vegetables
- ¼ of whole grains
- ¼ of proteins

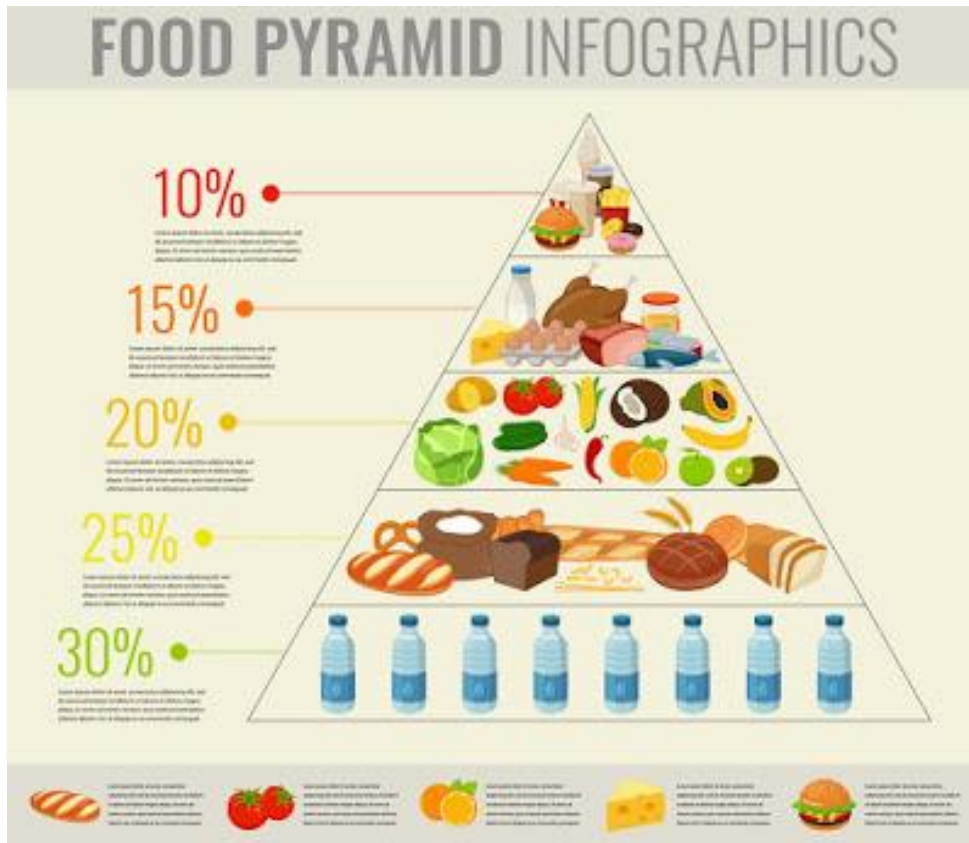
And season it all with plant oils (olive, sunflower, peanut or other), which contain healthy unsaturated fats and they are good for our cardiovascular system.

And the last but not least, we mustn't forget water. Tap water is the best (in all European countries, the drinking water standards are very high), we should totally avoid sugary drinks and unfortunately black tea and coffee as well. Another vital point is to avoid salty foods, as hidden salt occurs in lots of dishes, especially fast food and ready-made meals. Excessive intake of salt can result in high blood pressure, swollen lower limbs or problems with kidneys.

And the really last question is: How often is it good to eat? The general rule is not to eat excessively. You will not only prevent wasting food but also help your organism and give it enough time to **process** all you've eaten and not to "**store fat depots**" which may be quite difficult to get rid of. So always start your day with breakfast, have decent lunch and moderate dinner. Between the meals

have a fruit or vegetable snack and don't forget to drink **enough water** (remember your body consists of approx. 70 % of water)!

Another picture for some inspiration:



Sources:

<http://www.foody27health.info/2018/09/The-Healthy-Eating-Pyramid.html>

<https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/healthy-eating-plate/>

MEDITERRANEAN DIET

What is the “Mediterranean Diet”? Several authors recognise that this diet is based on the following dietetic pattern: a) high intake of vegetables, pulses (beans, lentils etc.), fruit and cereals; b) medium-high intake of fish; c) low intake of meat and saturated fat; d) high intake of unsaturated fat (particularly olive oil); e) medium-low intake of dairy produces (mainly yogurt and cheese), f) a moderate intake of wine. Populations that follow the Mediterranean diet pattern show a 50% lower rate of cardiovascular mortality due to cardiovascular disease and show highest longevity.



The Mediterranean diet is not only a diet: it is a culture, a tradition, a high quality and sustainable “art”. There is evidence that the traditional Mediterranean diet is a dietary model mainly followed in rural zones and mainly by older age classes, due to both a higher attention to their health status and to their bonds with traditional foods. So, the aim is to achieve the highest adherence to this type of diet by younger age groups, and this goal must be reached using all the tools we have available now and in the future, at the European level: the research, the training, the health care, the prevention, through the use of specific nutritional campaigns, in order to divulge the Mediterranean Diet really as a cultural patrimony for humanity.

LIQUID INTAKE

Drinking regimen, or replenishment of fluids into the body by drinking, which should cover daily fluid dispensing as well as loss during sleep. The daily intake of water (including that contained in food) should correspond to about 2-3 litres of water depending on the individual's weight and age.

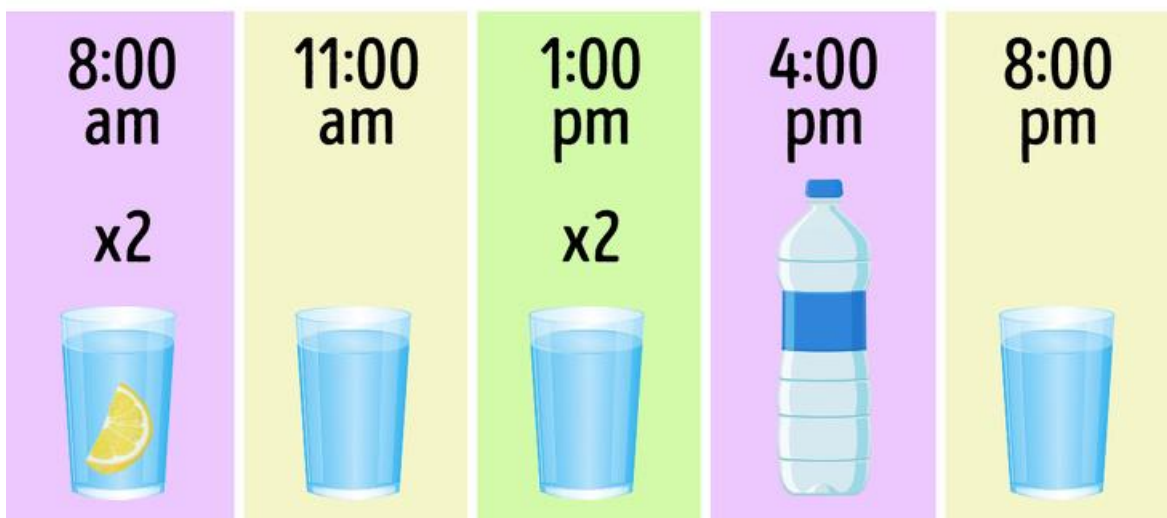
Without water, we are usually able to survive 2-4 days, so we have a protection system against water scarcity that reports to the brain and gets thirsty.

In demanding physical activities, it is necessary to adjust the drinking regime to avoid dehydration. In adulthood our body contains 70% water.

And if you want to figure out how much water you have to drink daily. You must multiply your weight by number 0.035. For example:

$$85 \text{ (kg)} \times 0.035 = 2.9 \text{ l}$$

HEALTHY DRINKING REGIMEN



PHYSICAL EXERCISE

We all know that exercise is important in our daily lives but we may not know why or what exercise can do for us. Did you hear that physical exercise improves brain function? Or that it helps reduce the risk of cognitive degenerative diseases, such as Alzheimer's disease? If you haven't heard about it before, now you will know all important things.



Let's start with losing weight. It's the most popular benefit of physical exercise. The more you exercise, the more calories you burn. In addition, the more muscles you develop, the higher your metabolic rate becomes, so you burn more calories even when you're not exercising. Then you will lose your weight and feel better. Physical exercise makes you more tired so you're more ready to sleep. Good quality sleep helps improve overall wellness.

It's good to know that exercise increases blood flow and oxygen levels in the brain. When we do physical exercise, our brain better controls memory and learning. It also helps reduce the risk of cognitive degenerative diseases such as Alzheimer's. Regular physical activity can improve your muscle strength and boost your endurance. Exercise can help prevent excess weight gain or help maintain weight loss. It can make you feel happier.

Exercise has been shown to improve your mood and decrease feelings of depression, anxiety and stress. It produces changes in the parts of the brain that regulate stress and anxiety. It can also increase brain sensitivity for the hormones serotonin and norepinephrine which relieve feelings of depression.

HEALTH RISKS

Obesity is a condition in which the natural energy reserve of a human being stored in adipose tissue has risen above normal levels and is harmful to health. For the European population, according to the criteria of the World Health Organization - WHO, a body-mass index is defined - a BMI of more than 30. For Asian and Pacific populations, obesity is defined as a BMI higher than 25, sometimes greater than 27. is referred to as being between 18.5 and 25 is healthy weight. Between 30 and first-degree obesity. What can people do to prevent this condition? Well, it's obvious. Start with balanced diet full of whole grains, legumes and fruit and vegetables. Reduce the intake of fats and sugar. Start doing some physical exercise, begin with long walks which can do a miracle!



Do you want to calculate your Body Mass Index (BMI)? Click on:

<https://www.smartbmiccalculator.com/>

Do you want to calculate your waist-to-hip ratio (WHR)? Click on:

<https://www.thecalculatorsite.com/health/whr-calculator.php>

Bulimia and anorexia

Not only overeating is a problem among the youth. Another serious threat is a problem with receiving food caused by wrong mental setting. It mostly affects young girls who want to be slim under pressure of media that always show what is the ideal, however, this unifying feature destroys individuality and self-esteem of lot of young people.

Anorexia is said to be a mental disease as the person doesn't eat enough, in fact, they eat only a little and in the end their body breaks down. This can be fatal and shouldn't be underestimated. Another problem with accepting food is a condition called **bulimia**. People suffering from this condition eat food, however, as they feel guilty eating, they want to get rid of the staff in stomach. They either throw up or they use laxatives. This can lead to digestive problems,

problems with gullet and stomach and these people often suffer from the lack of vitamins and minerals – malnutrition.

We need to be very careful about any experiments regarding eating habits. First, we should consult some specialists, get some advice and then we can reach our goal – healthy body and healthy mind.

Diabetes

Diabetes is a disease that manifests itself in a disorder of carbohydrate metabolism. There are two basic types: diabetes type I, resulting from the genetic predispositions and occurs at a young age, and diabetes type II, which results from insulin deficiency that is caused by the unhealthy lifestyle and, therefore, is much more widespread.

It has been found out that intake of simple sugar increases the risk of malfunctioning of pancreas as it produces little insulin or the body is insulin resistant and act as if no insulin is released. Insulin is responsible for keeping the sugar in blood at the level that is good for our body. In case of a high level of sugar in blood, the body collapses and it's a life-threatening condition.

If you want to know what to eat, find out about foods with low glycemic index (GI). These foods take long to metabolize, they don't require high doses of insulin and pancreas isn't overloaded that often. These foods include all wholegrain products (bread, pasta, rice), vegetables. Preparation and cooking techniques can change the GI, too. Generally, the longer a food is cooked, the faster its sugars will be digested and absorbed, raising the GI.

Teeth and sugar

Lots of types of bacteria occupy our mouth cavity. If we feed some special types with sugar, they begin to make an acidic environment leading to enamel demineralization. In contrast, saliva helps to naturally restore minerals. However, repeated mineral loss results in enamel damage and caries. High sugar foods and drinking of sweet and acidic beverages contributes to developing caries.

For healthy teeth, we should eat a balanced diet, include enough fruits and vegetables to increase the amount of saliva in the mouth. Some suggestions? Make sure drink clean water and ensure good hygiene. Brush your teeth at least twice a day and go for regular check-up to your dentist.

HEALTHY DIET PLAN

It's always good to know what we eat and making the diet plan can help us a lot. When making a diet plan, we know how much we eat, we make sure that composition of foods is correct and that we don't overeat. It's suggested that we eat 3 main meals and 1 or 2 snacks, depending on our physical or mental load. Snacks should contain only fruits or vegetables. Here is an example of a healthy diet plan.

Breakfast

[Apple & linseed porridge](#)

Why it's good for you...

Seeds are packed with vitamins and minerals. Linseeds are especially healthy, being a good source of omega-3 as well as fibre.



Lunch

[Sweet potato & lentil soup](#)

Why it's good for you...

Sweet potatoes are rich in immune-friendly beta-carotene. We've used olive oil in this recipe, which helps the body absorb fat-soluble nutrients like beta-carotene. Adding lime juice boosts the vitamin C content of this soup, while its high fibre content will keep you full through the afternoon.



Vegetarian club

Why it's good for you...

Wholegrain bread makes this a filling veggie-packed sandwich to take to work.



Dinner

Roast fish with Puy lentils

Why it's good for you...

Known for their immune-boosting properties, shiitake mushrooms have more recently been found to help protect against atherosclerosis (furring of the arteries) which makes them good for the heart as well.



Bon appetite!



SUMMARY

We need to know that we are fully responsible for how healthy and happy we are in our life. It starts early in teen age when we consciously pick up foods that we eat and we decide how much we are going to burden our body. We can affect functioning of our organs, we can slow down degeneration of the internal organs and, moreover, we could look much younger and we will definitely have a healthy and happy future.

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