**Five important things to improve your health……**

With so much dietary advice around it is easy to get confused about what constitutes a healthy diet. We are used to being told to reduce our intakes of fat and sugar, but should we be eating meat? What about bread; is that good for us? Some of the guidance we get is hard to relate to the foods we eat. Would you know if you had gone above your maximum 6g daily salt allowance today?

There is some advice that all the experts are clear on. It doesn’t change, and is not confusing. If you follow it, you will reduce your risk of getting cancer, heart disease, strokes and cataracts. You will improve your blood pressure, and will increase your chances of keeping your weight down. For five ways to improve your diet, think fruit and vegetables. Five a day - at least.

Recent studies suggest ten a day is desirable. However only one in four adults manage their five a day, so it was felt to be an unrealistic recommendation. Just have a quick count, are you on track for five portions today? How many portions did you eat yesterday?

If you want to do better, and get a clearer idea of what a portion is, along with some suggestions to help you achieve your five (or ten) a day, have a look at NHS choices [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk) 5 a day advice, or download the excellent British Dietetic factsheet at [bda.uk.com](http://bda.uk.com). I have just started using an app ‘Eat Five’ to keep track of my intake.

If you don't like websites, there will be some BDA factsheets in the waiting rooms at Derrydown Clinic and Whitchurch surgery. Get munching for a healthier life!

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