

# Learning Journey

## Food and the Family

### Learning About Healthy Food 1 - What is Healthy Food?

#### DAY 1 - Tape script

Hi and welcome to day 1 of What is Healthy Food?

At the end of this bite-size course you and your family will be better able to explain what is meant by Healthy Food.

You will also be much more aware of what a balanced diet is and how to attain one.

So, what is 'health food'? Many people answer this question by giving the names of specific foods, and then confusion arises because you read in one newspaper, for example, 'eggs are healthy' then in a different paper, or a different author says, 'no eggs cause cholesterol, which can lead to a heart attack'.

And confusion follows.

Today we are going to be looking at what exactly we mean by 'healthy food' and why the idea of a balanced diet is important.

The confusion about '**healthy food**', is partly due to contradictory information in the media, but also because marketing teams in the food industry use the word 'healthy' very differently from the way scientists or nutritionists do.

'**Healthy foods**' are really foods that **nourish** us and give us the nutrition we need to function.

However, many processed foods are marketed as 'healthy' (for example fruit yoghurt or many breakfast cereals), when in fact they are full of things that government guidelines tell us we should be reducing; such as salt, sugar, and saturated fats.

Now, if you search the phrase 'health eating' in Google, you will notice the focus is very much on individual foods.

However, the key to healthy eating and having nourishing healthy food is probably looking beyond individual foods (i.e. going beyond the hype of so-called Superfoods, where individual foods are tagged as being the new magical solution to health) and actually looking at an overall **balanced diet**.

So first up today, I want you to write down on a piece of paper what you think are the main types of food, not so much individual food items, but types of food, you think you should be eating regularly over a typical week to be eating healthily. (Clue - there are 5 main types that are usually referred to).

You may, if you like, want to stop the recording and go ahead and do that right now.

If you did stop and you are back, welcome back! Next, watch the [video](#) from the **USA My Plate** guidelines, and make a note of the food types, you can then compare them to your list; are they the same?

Finally, check out the [webpage](#), based on the **UK Eatwell** guidelines, again make a note of the food types.

Comparing the UK and USA guidelines, can you see any differences in the guidelines? More importantly, what are the common recommendations?

In case you are not entirely certain, you can see a summary table below to check your answers.

That's it for today, this is a simple introduction to the idea of a balanced diet and what that means in two different countries.

Actually, you will find many dietary guidelines from governments around the world have very similar themes.

If you are interested in this, and you want to explore what's happening in other countries you can explore more from the link below too.

A final note as I wrap up for today, I will add that not everyone agrees with the exact same notion of a balanced diet. As you will know, different people follow different diets or lifestyles and often for a multitude of reasons, including religious, health and other reasons. If you already follow a specific diet or lifestyle and it's working for you, that's great. This is not an attempt to swing you away, but rather an opportunity to share information about the options available. You can find out a lot more about *diets* in another learning journey of the very same name.

In the meantime,

Have a great, and balanced day!