

No single food contains all the nutrients we need for good health so it is important to eat a wide variety of different foods each day. By choosing a variety of food groups you will get all the nutrients your body needs.

There are five food groups:

- FRUIT & VEGETABLES
- BREAD, OTHER CEREALS AND POTATOES
- MEAT, FISH AND ALTERNATIVES
- MILK & DAIRY FOODS
- FOODS CONTAINING FAT, FOODS & DRINK CONTAINING SUGAR

### Here are some facts about red meat and nutrition

Lean red meats can play an important part in a healthy balanced diet as they have a high nutrient density. This means that they contain a wide variety of nutrients in a relatively small amount of food.

#### PROTEIN

Meat is a good source of protein which helps to improve satiety and fills you up for longer. Protein-rich foods help to control weight.

#### IRON

Iron is a vital mineral for red blood cell formation. A deficiency of iron in the diet is the most common dietary cause of anaemia. The type of iron found in red meat (haem iron) is more easily absorbed and used by the body than the iron in plant foods such as pulses, nuts, seeds and leafy green vegetables (non-haem iron).

#### ZINC

Red meat is a good source of readily absorbable zinc, which is important for the healthy functioning of the immune system, growth, wound healing and fertility. We get about 30% of our dietary intake of zinc from red meat and meat products.

#### OTHER MINERALS

Red meat also provides other minerals such as potassium and selenium. Selenium is an important antioxidant, which has been linked to reducing the risk of heart disease and certain cancers.

#### VITAMINS

Red meat is a significant source of B vitamins, including B12, which is not naturally in foods of plant origin and is important for healthy red blood cells, growth and the production of energy.

It has also recently been found to make an important contribution to vitamin D intakes. Vitamin D works with calcium and phosphorous to build strong bones and teeth.

#### FAT

Red meat is far lower in fat now than it was 20 years ago. On average fully trimmed raw lean beef contains just 5% fat and fully trimmed raw lean lamb 8%.

These reductions have been achieved by breeding techniques on the farm and new butchery techniques, which trim off most of the fat.

About half of the fat found in red meat is in the unsaturated form, which is believed to be healthier.

Red meat contains small amounts of Omega-3 fats, which help keep the heart healthy.

#### SALT

Fresh meat is naturally low in salt.