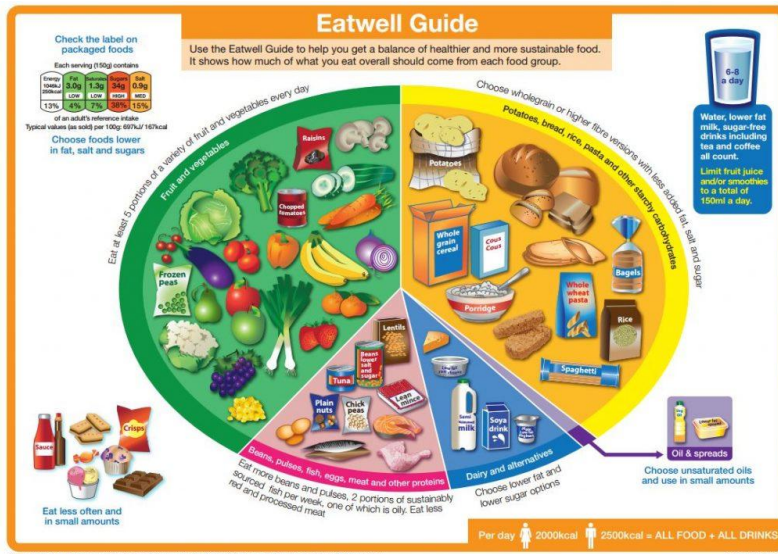


# Nutrition for Good Health as We Age

Presented by: Mariam Majidi, NHS Community Dietitian



Source: Public Health England in association with the Welsh government, Food Standards Scotland and the Food Standards Agency in Northern Ireland

© Crown copyright 2016

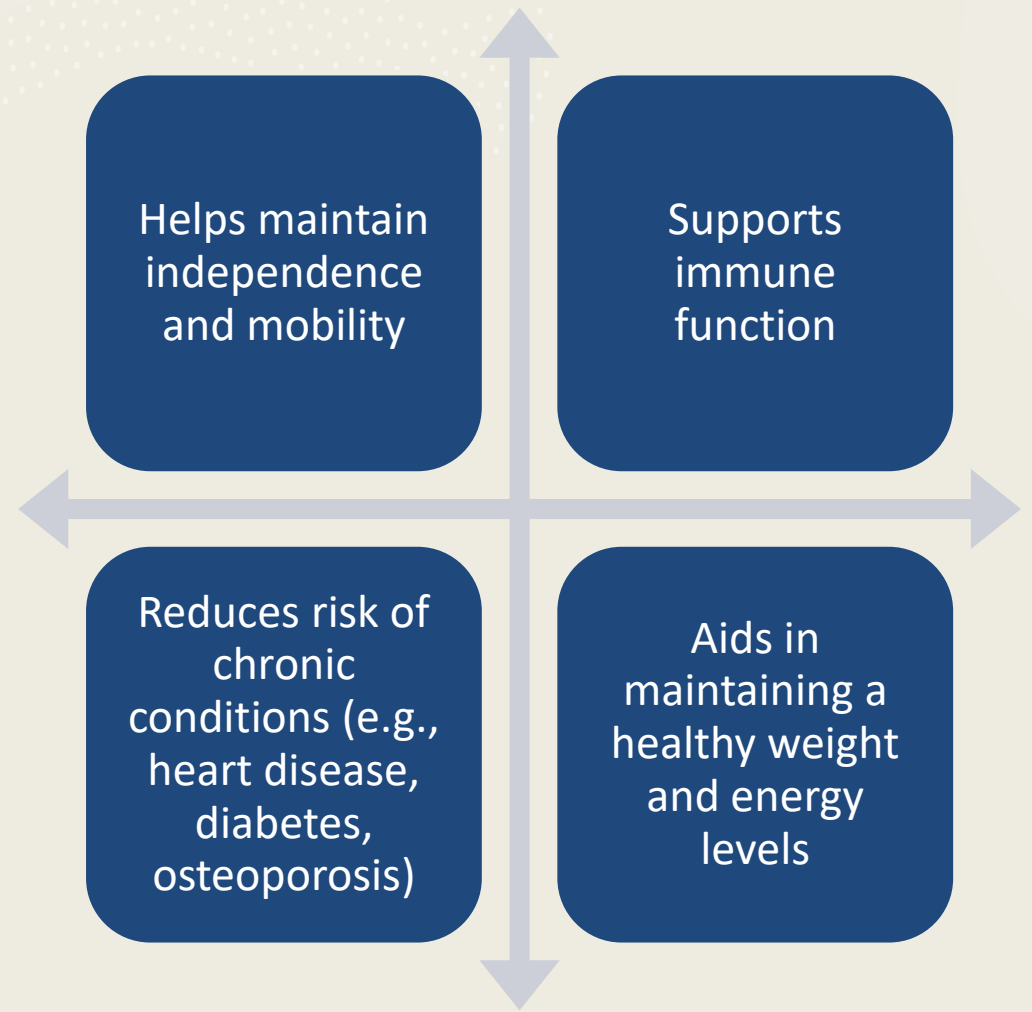
**NHS**  
**Whittington Health**  
NHS Trust

**What we  
will  
cover:**

How good nutrition  
can reduce the risk of  
common age-related  
conditions

Important nutrients to  
focus on as we age to  
help us stay healthy

**Good nutrition plays a vital role in maintaining health and well-being as we age.**





## Heart Disease

## How nutrition helps:

- **Reduces blood pressure:** Eating less salt and more potassium-rich foods (e.g., bananas, beans, leafy greens).
- **Lowers cholesterol:** Foods high in soluble fibre (like oats, beans, apples) help reduce "bad" LDL cholesterol.
- **Supports healthy arteries:** Omega-3 fats (in oily fish like salmon, or flaxseeds) help reduce inflammation and keep blood vessels flexible.

# Type 2 Diabetes

## How nutrition helps:

- **Controls blood sugar:**

Choosing high-fibre carbs (wholegrains, lentils, veg) slows sugar absorption.

- **Promotes healthy weight:**

Eating balanced, portion-controlled meals can prevent excess weight gain - a major risk factor for Type 2 Diabetes

- **Reduces insulin resistance:**

Healthy fats (like olive oil, nuts, avocado) improve how your body uses insulin.

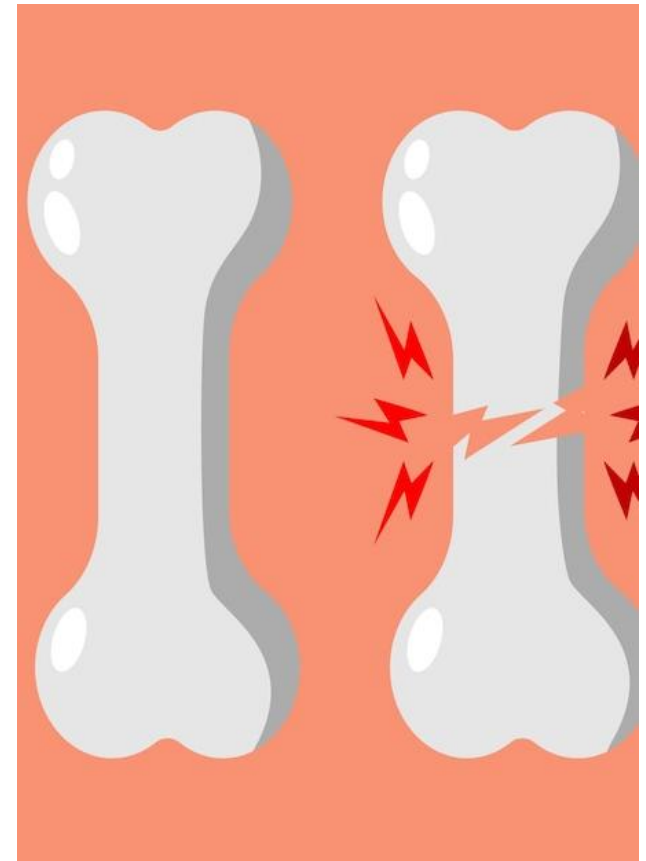


# Osteoporosis

## How nutrition helps:

---

- Calcium-rich foods:** Dairy, fortified plant milks, leafy greens, and fish with bones strengthen bones.
- Vitamin D:** Needed to absorb calcium properly. Supplements and sunlight are important, especially in older adults.
- Protein and magnesium:** Found in eggs, lentils, nuts - both support bone structure and muscle, reducing fall risk.



# Memory and Mood Changes

## How nutrition helps:

---

- **B Vitamins (especially B12):** Important for brain and nerve health. Found in meat, dairy, and fortified cereals.
- **Omega-3 fats:** Help maintain brain cell function and may protect against cognitive decline.
- **Stable energy levels:** Regular, balanced meals prevent dips in blood sugar, which can affect concentration and mood.
- **Hydration:** Dehydration can worsen confusion, especially in older adults.



# Nutrients of Importance

---

Protein – supports muscle health

Calcium & Vitamin D – for bone strength

Fibre – for gut health and preventing constipation

B Vitamins (especially B12) – support energy and brain function

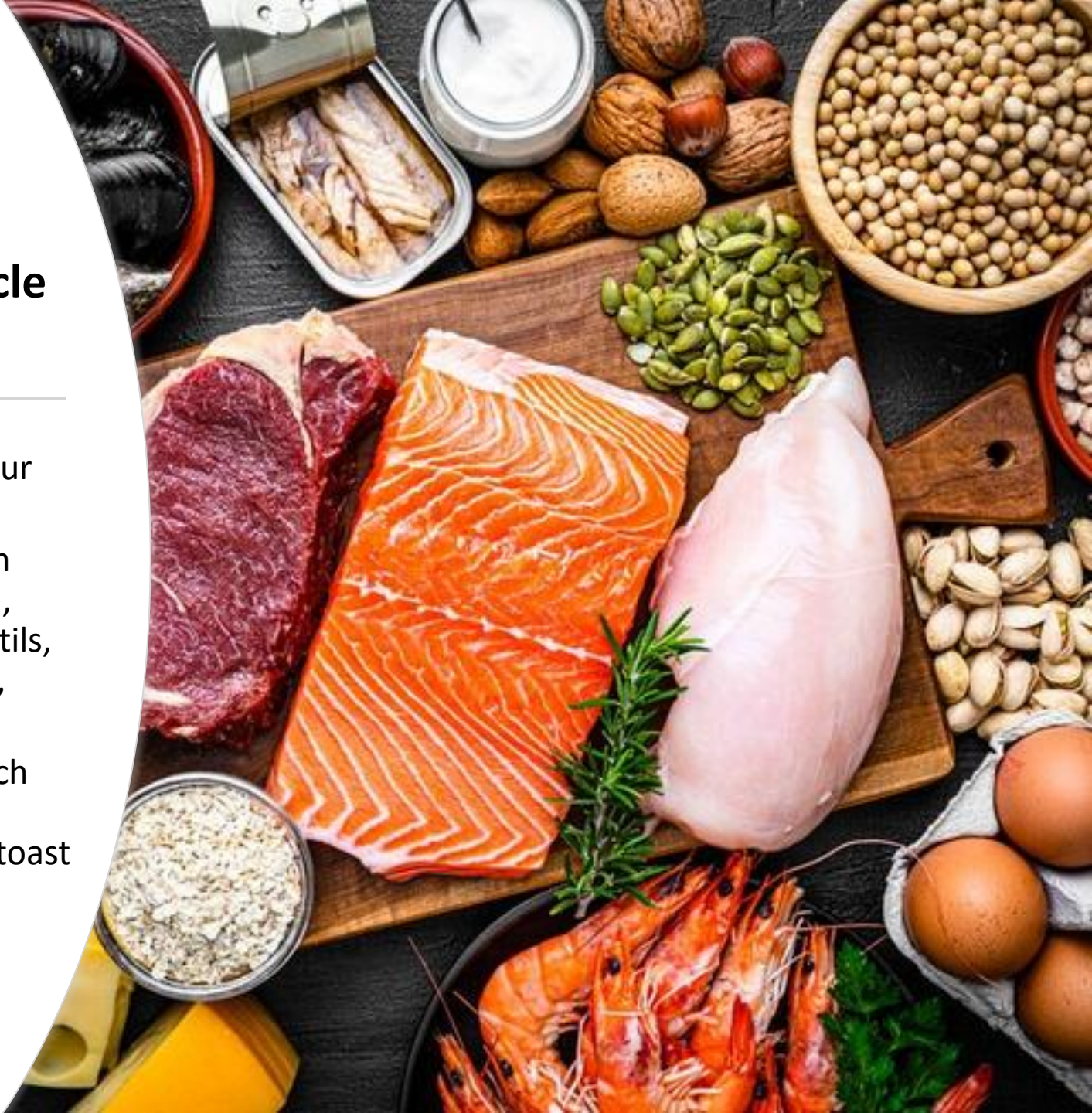
Iron – helps prevent tiredness and fatigue

Fluids – hydration is essential for all body functions



## Protein for Muscle Health

- Muscle loss can occur with age (sarcopenia)
- Aim for protein with every meal: meat, fish, eggs, dairy, beans, lentils, tofu, nuts/nut butters, seeds
- Include a protein-rich breakfast: e.g., eggs, yogurt, nut butter on toast



# Strong Bones: Calcium & Vitamin D

Calcium: dairy,  
fortified plant milks,  
leafy greens, tinned  
fish with bones

Vitamin D: sunlight  
(Apr–Sept in UK),  
supplements,  
fortified foods

Adults over 65 are  
advised to take a 10  
microgram Vitamin  
D supplement daily





## Fibre and Gut Health

- Benefits: bowel regularity, lower cholesterol, control blood sugar
- Aim for wholegrains, fruit, vegetables, pulses, nuts, seeds
- Gradually increase fibre and drink enough water

# Staying Hydrated

- Older adults may feel less thirsty
- Aim for 6–8 drinks a day (water, tea, milk, soup all count)
- Signs of dehydration: dry mouth, fatigue, dizziness, confusion



# Eating Enough: Preventing Malnutrition



Malnutrition affects energy, mood, immunity



Warning signs: clothes/jewellery feeling loose, reduced appetite



Tips: small frequent meals/snacks, nutrient-dense foods (e.g., full-fat dairy, nut butters, fortified drinks)

# Practical Tips for Healthy Eating



Batch cook or use frozen veg for convenience



Eat with others – social meals boost appetite



Explore community meal services or lunch clubs



Keep favourite healthy snacks at hand

# Summary – Key Takeaways

1

Eat a variety of foods: balance and colour on your plate

2

Include protein, calcium, fibre, and fluids daily

3

Stay active and social – both support healthy ageing

4

Ask for help if eating becomes difficult - your GP or dietitian can help



# Resources and Further Support

- NHS Eat Well: [www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well/](http://www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well/)
- British Dietetic Association: [www.bda.uk.com](http://www.bda.uk.com)
- Age UK Nutrition: [www.ageuk.org.uk/information-advice/health-wellbeing/healthy-eating/](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/information-advice/health-wellbeing/healthy-eating/)
- Vitamin D info: [www.nhs.uk/conditions/vitamins-and-minerals/vitamin-d/](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vitamins-and-minerals/vitamin-d/)
- Malnutrition advice: [www.malnutritiontaskforce.org.uk /](http://www.malnutritiontaskforce.org.uk/)



# Thank You!

Any questions?

