**NAME:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Gloucestershire Hospital Education Service (GHES)**

**Wellbeing**

**Summer Challenge**

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**Small Change: Big Difference**

**A Physical Wellbeing Challenge**

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**Helping every child and young person thrive and reach their potential**

Dear Students, Parents, GHES staff and GHES Management Committee,

**PHYSICAL WELLBEING SUMMER TERM CHALLENGE**

Schools in Gloucestershire take part in the Gloucestershire Online Pupil Survey. Students were confidentially asked questions relating to factors that can have an impact on health. Some of the results were expected but some of them were surprising and we feel it’s important to address some of the issues that the pupils with GHES have indicated that they need help with. The following are the areas that were highlighted in the pupil survey for GHES pupils:

* **Sleep:** 60% of GHES students go to bed at 11pm or later.
* **Physical Activity:** 50% of GHES students get less than 2 hours exercise a week and 47% of GHES students didn’t feel that they were doing enough exercise/physical activity to keep themselves healthy (in some cases this is due to medical conditions, but in a lot of cases the medical conditions do not impact on the capacity to exercise).
* **Nutrition and eating habits:** 45% of GHES students don’t usually eat breakfast.

In response to the outcomes of the last online pupil survey we have agreed that this term should be devoted to looking at everyone’s **physical wellbeing** as part of our ‘Wellbeing’ curriculum. How we treat our bodies can dramatically impact on how we feel. How we look after ourselves, whether we have a medical condition or not, will impact on our overall wellbeing. We need to be smart about the choices we make if we want to feel and be the best we can be. As adults we are role models to the children and young people around us, whether we are GHES staff or parents/carers. We feel that it is therefore important for the **whole GHES community** to get involved in this summer challenge. By doing this together we hope we can all encourage each other and make some small but significant steps forward together.

Most of the ideas we will suggest for this challenge are part of general advice for healthy living. You can refer to Change4Life (simply search for Change4Life online), which is the current NHS health and wellbeing campaign. However, please consult with your medical professional if you are thinking about making any significant changes if you do have a medical condition.

As everyone will be doing something (even if it is just drinking more water) we should all be able to encourage each other. All tutors will discuss with families how they are getting on and, families, please feel free to ask the tutors about their progress!

We often neglect ourselves as our lives are so busy and it is hoped that we can change or develop some good habits that will enhance our physical wellbeing and address some of the issues that our young people feel are important.



***There are prizes/rewards on offer for this challenge in the following categories:***

* The **family** that made the biggest changes overall from their starting point.
* An individual pupil who made the biggest change from their starting point.
* An individual pupil who overcame the greatest barrier to make some small but important lifestyle changes.
* The staff member who made the biggest changes to their lifestyle.
* The management committee member who made the biggest change to their lifestyle.
* Pupil nominated staff member who has been the greatest role model in this challenge.
* An individual from any category that stands out in relation to this challenge.

**Starting the Challenge:**

**STAGE ONE:** You will have received and read this booklet. Please read through it to help decide which specific challenge (or two) you will undertake.

**STAGE TWO:**  Once you have chosen your challenge or challenges use the relevant log/diary section of this booklet to track your progress and how you might be feeling as a result. We would like you to aim to keep this diary and your chosen change/development for 21 days. It is said that it takes 21 days to maintain a (good!) habit so that is why we have picked 3 weeks. Obviously we would love you to keep up the change beyond the 21 days. Don’t worry if you have some days that are better than others. Even a few days difference are the first steps in the right direction. Mentally think of each day as a fresh start.

**STAGE THREE:** We will ask everyone to fill in a final evaluation to gauge how their chosen developed area has changed their health and wellbeing and how successful they have been so far.

Thank you for taking part and we look forward to hearing about all the success stories. We will also announce the prizes at the end of the challenge. For pupils we will collect the booklets back in at the end for marking (they will be returned afterwards). For adults we will ask you to fill in the evaluation form which we will provide separately. Here’s to a healthier and happier GHES! Best wishes and good luck,

*Annalise Price-Thomas (Head of Service), Hillary Masardo (Wellbeing lead at the GRH schoolroom) and Fiona Jupp (Wellbeing lead for the GHES Outpatient Team).*

**Choosing your challenge:**

We have identified 5 key physical wellbeing areas which are covered in this booklet.

1. **SLEEP**
2. **HYDRATION**
3. **PHYSICAL ACTIVITY**
4. **NUTRITION – 5 A DAY**
5. **NUTRITION – SUGAR SWAPS and REDUCING REFINED SUGARS**

Each section of this booklet has some ideas for challenges for each focus area. There is also a blank diary or record sheet for each section. Please start filling in the diary once you have chosen one or two challenges. Share your choice with others and ask for their encouragement. Seek professional help from you GP or medical professional if you feel you need it. Perhaps you can think of some milestones and rewards you might give yourself (or persuade someone else to sponsor you/reward you) if you achieve your challenge. Write your challenge (one or two maximum) below:

**MY PHYSICAL WELLBEING CHALLENGE:**

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I have chosen this challenge or challenges because:
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 What help or support might I need? What might help me achieve this challenge?

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**MY PHYSICAL WELLBEING CHALLENGE (evaluation)**

**TO COMPLETE AT THE END**

1. **What did you achieve as a result of this challenge?**
2. **What barriers did you have to overcome? How difficult did you find the challenge?**
3. **Did you manage to measure the difference between where you started and where you are now? What is this difference? Please explain the progress you made.**
4. **Did you notice any difference to your wellbeing and how you feel as a result of the challenge which you undertook? What were those differences?**
5. **How many days did you manage to undertake the challenge(s)/do something differently for this task?**
6. **Will you try to continue to maintain or improve on this change?**
7. **Is there another area of physical wellbeing mentioned in this booklet that you might tackle next? Which area would it be?**
8. **Was this Wellbeing Challenge helpful? Y/N**
9. **Any other comments/feedback:**

**CHALLENGE AREA 1: SLEEP**

Why Is Sleep Important?

![MCj04343770000[1]]()Sleep plays a vital role in good health and well-being throughout your life. Getting enough quality sleep at the right times can help protect your mental health, physical health, quality of life and safety.

The way you feel while you are awake depends in part on what happens while you are sleeping. During sleep, your body is working to support healthy brain function and maintain your physical health. In children and teens, sleep also helps support growth and development.

Setting a regular bedtime schedule can really help you get the right amount of sleep.

Winding down is a critical stage in preparing for bed. There are many ways to relax:

* A warm (not hot) bath will help your body to reach a temperature where it's most likely to rest.
* Relaxation exercises, such as light yoga stretches, will help to relax your muscles.
* Relaxation CDs work by relaxing the listener with carefully chosen words and gentle hypnotic music and sound effects.
* Reading a book or listening to the radio will relax your mind by distracting it from any worries or anxieties.

The bedroom should be a relaxed environment.

Experts say that bedrooms are strongly associated with sleep, but that certain things weaken the association. These include tablet computers, mobiles/smartphones, TVs and other electronic gadgets, light or noise, and a bad mattress or uncomfortable bed.

The light from screens can also affect how easily you get to sleep. Try to keep your bedroom a screen-free zone and charge your phones and other devices downstairs. That way you won't be tempted to respond to friends getting in touch late in the evening.

**Healthy Brain Function, Emotional Well-Being and Physical health:**

Sleep helps your brain work properly. While you are sleeping, your brain is preparing for the next day. Studies show that a good night's sleep improves learning. Sleep also helps you pay attention, make decisions, and be creative. Getting enough quality sleep at the right times helps you function well throughout the day. Sleep plays an important role in your physical health. For example, sleep is involved in healing and repair of your heart and blood vessels.

Advice for when you can't sleep:

* Try to go to bed and get up at the same time every day.
* Don't stay in bed because you've had a bad night's sleep. Get up so that you don't disturb your internal clock.
* If you wake at night, relax in bed for a while. If that doesn't work, get up and try some quiet activity until you are sleepy again.
* Chocolate, coffee, tea and soft drinks that have caffeine in them may keep you awake. Your body needs four to five hours to halve the amount of caffeine in your blood.
* Give yourself some time to write down worries or concerns about what you will do the next day.
* Don't eat too much just before bedtime.
* Regular exercise during the day will help you sleep.

 

Sleep is very important to wellbeing. Evidence shows that night time sleep is just as important as healthy eating and exercise for children to develop.

**Getting help with sleep problems**

If you have tried these tips, but you keep having problems getting to sleep or sleeping through the night, you may feel you could do with more support. You can speak to your GP about these worries. Good sleep habits last a lifetime.

MAKE SURE YOU LEARN GOOD SLEEP HABITS EARLY AND THEY WILL LAST A LIFETIME.

Choose from the following challenges, if you would like to improve your sleep

1. I will go to bed at ……… every night and get to up at ……… every morning

to establish a routine and aim to get ……… hours sleep.

1. I will keep all electronic gadgets and screens e.g. phones, tablet computers, and laptops out of the bedroom /or switched off.
2. I will stop having drinks with caffeine in them at least 4 hours before bedtime.
3. I will only have a light snack just before bedtime.
4. I will relax before bedtime by reading a book, listening to music, having a warm bath or doing some relaxation exercises.

**My sleep challenge/target:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

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| **Day (insert date)** | **Did I manage my challenge?****Yes ☺/ No☹/ sort of ?** | **What did I achieve today? (try to be specific e.g. what time did you go to bed)** | **How did I feel today? Did it make any difference?** |
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**Overall summary:**

**CHALLENGE AREA 2: HYDRATION**



**The importance of Hydration**

ww.eufic.org (European food information council) and NHS website

**Dehydration is a lot more than just not drinking enough water. The side effects of being dehydrated involve numerous body systems and symptoms can range from mild to life threatening. Hydration is critical for physical health and mental wellbeing.** Water is essential for life, and maintaining hydration is important for physical and mental performance. The human body is largely made of water; even our brain cells. Although we can live for up to 50 days without food, without water we will survive only a few days, even in a cool climate.

Symptoms of dehydration can begin quickly because the body does not store water. Once it is used, it is gone and must be replaced**. If the water is not replaced, the body starts taking water from the cells in the body and brain.** Mental effects of dehydration occur because the brain tissues shrink when the body removes water from the brain cells in an attempt to survive.

Essential systems throughout the body can become impaired if the body does not receive a continuous, safe and reliable supply of water. Dehydration long-term can cause health conditions to develop.

Did you know:

* Not drinking enough fluid has implications for mental health. The early effects of even mild dehydration can affect our feelings and behaviour.
* We lose approximately water daily through the lungs as water vapour, through the skin as perspiration and through the kidneys as urine. If you don’t drink enough fluids to replace this loss then you will get symptoms of mild dehydration, which can include irritability, loss of concentration and reduced mental functioning.
* Even mild hydration can alter mood.People can be mildly dehydrated and not know it. This is because they are drinking fluids throughout the day, but not as much as their bodies need. In mild cases of dehydration, irritability, [anxiety](http://www.therapists.com/fundamentals/anxiety), and fatigue can develop. People who are dehydrated may feel anxious for no apparent reason. They may have difficulty thinking clearly and solving everyday life problems. Minor dehydration can also cause people to perceive tasks as harder than they actually are, according to a 2012 study published in the "Journal of Nutrition." Mild dehydration can be treated by increasing fluid intake but don’t drink too much either.
* Mild to moderate dehydration can cause headaches, diminish memory and impair one’s ability to think clearly. Proper hydration is essential for nerve function throughout the body. Exam performance can be impacted by dehydration.
* Dehydration can result in the sensation of pain, fatigue, low energy, loss of muscle strength and poor endurance.
* Dehydration can cause overall blood volume to fall and this can cause blood pressure to fall too. Low blood pressure is a leading cause of dizziness and feeling like you may faint when you stand up. A rapid heart rate can also be a sign of dehydration. The heart rate increases in attempts to maintain and elevate blood pressure.

Some people get their only water intake through the foods that they eat. It’s important to avoid high-protein diets if one does not drink water or eat enough fruits and vegetables. Protein has significantly less water, especially highly processed and dried meats.

While it may be difficult to drink eight glasses water per day, water does play a significant role in maintenance of health and the prevention of disease.

**Hydration challenge**s – try drinking more fluids each day (especially water) to see if you are more alert and function better?

How much do you drink now? Do you drink eight glasses or water per day?

Can you start a habit of having a bottle of water with you every day and drinking it? Can you drink little and often throughout the day?

**MY HYDRATION CHALLENGE:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

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| **MY HYDRATION CHALLENGE/target: Remember each day is a fresh start!****...........................................................................................................................................** |
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**Overall summary:**

**CHALLENGE AREA 3: PHYSICAL ACTIVITY**

**Getting Moving!**

There are many benefits to physical activity. The most important fact is that it is good for you and it can be very enjoyable. Everybody can make little changes to their everyday lives, which can have life improving results! There are physical activities that everybody can participate in. The earlier a child gets into regular exercise the less likely they are to suffer from illnesses and diseases. Here are a few examples:

* It can be fun and you can meet people.
* It strengthens the heart, keeping it healthy.
* It helps keep arteries and veins clear, preventing heart disease.
* It strengthens the lungs, enabling you to uptake more oxygen.
* It reduces blood sugar levels, which can prevent diabetes.
* It controls weight, as you burn more calories.
* It strengthens bones, preventing osteoporosis in later life.
* It can help prevent cancer.
* It regulates blood pressure and reduces stress.
* It improves energy levels.
* It enhances emotional well-being, raises self-esteem and boosts self-confidence.

**Types of Physical Activity**

There are many types of physical activity that would be suitable for working towards a fitter and healthier body and mind. Any activity that raises the heart rate sufficiently to make you sweat will prove beneficial.

You can improve your fitness in simple ways like, taking the stairs instead of going in the lift, or using simple equipment you may have at home, like a skipping rope. **Small changes** can make a **big difference!**

The recommended amount of exercise for children and young adults is one hour, five times a week. Below is a list of suitable activities.

* Walking
* Jogging
* Swimming
* Bike Riding
* Gym programmes
* Aerobics/Exercise to music classes
* Circuit training
* Team sports, netball, football etc.
* Trampolining
* Dance
* Badminton
* Table tennis

**Useful Internet Links and Apps**



 [**1. GARMIN FIT**](http://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/gadgets-and-tech/features/the-10-best-fitness-apps-8750925.html?action=gallery)

This app uses the GPS tracker on your phone to track your speed, distance and elevation. It will also calculate how many calories you've burnt using your weight, height and age, and you can listen to your own music while you run



Want to get fit but don't know where to begin? The Nike Training Club app provides you with a range of workout routines based on your own fitness level and targeting specific areas of the body. Working out for set periods ranging from 15-45 minutes will unlock bonus regimes, recipes and fitness tips.



**[COUCH TO 5K](http://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/gadgets-and-tech/features/the-10-best-fitness-apps-8750925.html?action=gallery&ino=7" \t "_blank)**

Believe it or not, this promises to get you running 5km with ease in nine weeks. Starting with walking and light jogging, its step-by-step programme aims to gradually increase your fitness as you go from a beginner to a confident runner in only three training sessions a week.

**Parkrun for Families, adults, children or young people**

What is Parkrun? Visit [www.parkrun.org.uk](http://www.parkrun.org.uk) to discover all the information you require.

Parkrun is a national weekly timed 5km run. You can challenge yourself every Saturday at 9am at locations near where you live. It is free, but you need to register, so that you can find out your time. It does not matter how fit or fast you are (you can walk if you cannot run) and it is a great way to challenge yourself with others. Locations near you are:

Pitville Park, Cheltenham

Kingsway Sports Pavillion, Gloucester

Newent Community School/Forest Leisure Centre, Newent

Forest of Dean, Coverham Enclosure, Five Acres

Visit [www.parkrun.org.uk](http://www.parkrun.org.uk) to discover all the information you require. Parkrun is brilliant!

**Physical Activity, Mental Health and Wellbeing**

**Benefits of Physical Activity**

The benefits of physical activity are endless. For children or adults it can dramatically improve quality of life, mental health and feeling of self- worth.

* The chemicals released when you exercise are the same chemicals that are in antidepressants. Physical activity is as effective as psychological treatments like cognitive behavioural therapy. (Young Minds 2015)
* Exercise can give people back control of their bodies which is the first step to feeling in control of other events. (NHS UK Exercise for depression)
* Exercise makes you feel good and boosts your self-esteem, fosters confidence helping you to concentrate, sleep, look and feel better. It can give you a goal to aim for and a sense of purpose. (Mental Health Foundation)
* If you keep active you are less likely to be depressed, anxious or tense. The mind can’t function if your body is not working properly and the state of mind affects your body. (Royal College of Psychiatrists)

**Creating the Plan**

The following questions can be answered in order to establish which activities will be most suitable.

1. What physical activities do you enjoy doing?
2. What sport or activity have you done before?
3. Have you ever belonged to a sports club?
4. Which activities would you like to improve upon?
5. Do you have a friend or family member that you can exercise with?
6. Would you like to try something new?
7. Do you have suitable clothes for the activities you like?
8. How do you feel about carrying out a physical activity?
9. Do you have any concerns?

**Targets**

Setting yourself fitness targets are a brilliant way to motivate yourself into getting fit. Answering the following questions will help you to set clear achievable goals for the next 3 weeks.

* How long can I carry out this activity before I need a rest?
* What is my pulse rate immediately after exercising?
* Can I attempt to extend the physical activity by 2-5 minutes each time I exercise?
* How can I challenge myself next time? (Run a longer distance, perform more exercises, recover more quickly etc...)

**For GHES pupils if you choose physical activity as your challenge area then please discuss with your tutor the possibility of arranging a special session with a specialist physical education teacher who can work with you on an appropriate plan. We can also help you access appropriate equipment (e.g. a pedometer) or the opportunity to try a new sport or activity.**

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| **MY PHYSICAL ACTIVITY CHALLENGE- MY TARGET IS (remember each day is a fresh start)** |
| **Day (insert date)** | **Did I manage my challenge?****Yes ☺ /No ☹/ sort of ?** | **What did I achieve today? (try to be specific e.g. how many minutes of physical activity)** | **How did I feel today? Did it make any difference?** |
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| **Overall Summary:** |

**CHALLENGE AREA 4: NUTRITION (5 a DAY)**

**Why 5 A DAY?**



Fruit and vegetables are part of a balanced diet and can help us stay healthy. That's why it's so important that we get enough of them.

The 5 A DAY message highlights the health benefits of getting five 80g portions of fruit and vegetables **every day**, which is roughly a handful.

5 A DAY is based on advice from the World Health Organization, which recommends eating a minimum of 400g of fruit and vegetables a day to lower the risk of serious health problems, such as heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes and obesity.

Five reasons to eat five portions of fruit and vegetables:

* Fruit and vegetables are a good source of [vitamins and minerals](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vitamins-minerals/Pages/vitamins-minerals.aspx), including folate, vitamin C and potassium.
* They're an excellent source of dietary fibre, which helps maintain a healthy gut and prevent constipation and other digestion problems. A diet high in fibre can also reduce your risk of [bowel cancer](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/Cancer-of-the-colon-rectum-or-bowel/Pages/Introduction.aspx).
* They can help reduce the risk of [heart disease](http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Coronary-heart-disease/Pages/Introduction.aspx), [stroke](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/Stroke/Pages/Introduction.aspx) and some cancers.
* Fruit and vegetables contribute to a healthy and [balanced diet](http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/Goodfood/Pages/Healthyeating.aspx).
* Fruit and vegetables taste delicious and there's so much variety to choose from.

Fruit and vegetables are also usually low in fat and calories (provided you don't fry them or roast them in lots of oil). That's why eating them can help you maintain a healthy weight and keep your heart healthy.

**What counts towards you 5 a day?**

To get the most benefit out of your 5 A DAY, your five portions should include a variety of fruit and vegetables. This is because different fruits and vegetables contain different combinations of fibre, vitamins, minerals and other nutrients.

Almost all fruit and vegetables count towards your 5 A DAY.

They can be fresh, frozen, canned, dried or pure juices.

*Potatoes and cassava don't count because they mainly contribute*[*starch*](http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/Goodfood/Pages/starchy-foods.aspx)*to the diet.*

Sweet potatoes, parsnips, swedes and turnips do count towards your 5 A DAY, because they are usually eaten in addition to the starchy food part of the meal.ir own: they also count if they're part of a meal or dish.

Fruit and vegetables also cooked in dishes such as soups, stews or pasta dishes count towards your 5 a day.

Beans and pulses. These only count as one portion a day, no matter how many you eat. That's because although they are a good source of fibre, they contain fewer nutrients than other fruits and vegetables.

If you buy tinned or canned fruit and vegetables, buy the ones tinned in natural juice or water with no added sugar or salt.

Dried fruit, such as currants, dates, sultanas and figs count

**Drinks and 5 A DAY**

One glass (150ml) of unsweetened 100% fruit or vegetable juice counts as one of your 5 a day. However, juice counts as a maximum of one portion a day, even if you have more than one glass. This is mainly because juice contains less fibre than whole fruits and vegetables. Crushing fruit into juice also releases the sugars contained in the fruit, which can cause damage to teeth. Even unsweetened fruit juice is sugary, so try to drink no more than one glass (about 150ml) of fruit juice each day.

Links:- <http://www.nhs.uk/livewell/5aday/Pages/5ADAYhome.aspx>

<http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/5ADAY/Documents/Downloads/5%20A%20DAY%20z%20card.pdf>

**FOR PUPILS**: IF YOU CHOOSE THE 5 a DAY challenge please ask you tutor who will be able to provide you with a pocket sized leaflet to help.

**Possible challenges:**

* **Eat a ‘rainbow ‘(of fruit and vegetables) every day. Aim for as many different coloured fruit and vegetables each day (at least 5).**
* **Eat five a day**
* **If you are already eating 5 a day, aim for more. Perhaps 7 or 8 a day.**
* **Combine eating 5 day with the sugar swap challenge**

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| **MY NUTRITION 5 A DAY CHALLENGE- MY TARGET IS:****..................................................................................................................................** |
| **Day (insert date)** | **Did I manage my challenge?****Yes ☺/No ☹/sort of?** | **What did I achieve today? (try to be specific e.g. how many portions of fruit and vegtables?)** | **How did I feel today? Did it make any difference?** |
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| **Overall summary:** |

**CHALLENGE AREA 5: SUGAR SWAPS/ REDUCING REFINED SUGAR**

**The Facts About Sugar**



**Most adults and children in the UK eat too much sugar. Ideally you should try and cut down by eating fewer sugary foods, such as sweets, cakes and biscuits, and drinking fewer sugary soft drinks.**

Sugars occur naturally in foods such as fruit and milk, but we don't need to cut down on these types of sugars. These are naturally occurring sugars.

Sugars are also added to a wide range of foods, such as sweets, cakes, biscuits, chocolate, and some fizzy drinks and juice drinks. These are the sugary foods that we should cut down on as they contain **refined sugars** which have little nutritional value and yet are very high in calories.

**Why cut down on sugars?**

Evidence from the National Diet and Nutrition Survey shows that most adults and children eat more sugar than is recommended as part of a healthy balanced diet.

Many foods that contain added sugars (and often have few other nutrients) are also high in energy, which is measured in either kilojoules (kJ) or calories (kcal**). Eating these foods often can contribute to you becoming overweight.**

Being overweight can increase your risk of health conditions such as: [heart disease](http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Coronary-heart-disease/Pages/Introduction.aspx) and [type 2 diabetes](http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Diabetes-type2/Pages/Introduction.aspx).

To eat a healthy, balanced diet, we should eat these types of foods only occasionally, and get the majority of our calories from other kinds of foods such as [starchy foods](http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/Goodfood/Pages/starchy-foods.aspx) and [fruits and vegetables](http://www.nhs.uk/LiveWell/5ADAY/Pages/5ADAYhome.aspx).

Sugary foods and drinks can also cause [**tooth decay**](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/Dental-decay/Pages/Introduction.aspx), especially if you eat them between meals. The longer the sugary food is in contact with the teeth, the more damage it can cause.

The sugars found naturally in whole fruit are less likely to cause tooth decay because the sugars are contained within the structure of the fruit. But when fruit is juiced or blended, the sugars are released. Once released, these sugars can damage teeth, especially if fruit juice is drunk frequently. Even unsweetened fruit juice is sugary, so **try to drink no more than one glass (about 150ml) of fruit juice each day.**

Fruit juice is still a healthy choice, and counts as one of your recommended daily five portions of fruit and vegetables. But it is best to drink fruit juice at mealtimes in order to minimise damage to your teeth.

**The reason people reach for sugary foods** is the instant energy boost they receive from simple sugars, meaning sugars that break down quickly to be converted into energy. Increased energy, alertness and giddiness have all been associated with a sugar rush. Unfortunately, the initial stages of a sugar rush do not last. The energy from simple sugars can last from 15 to 40 minutes, and once it's gone you feel even more tired than you were before you ate.

The sugary food takes energy to digest, meaning you are left with less energy than before you ate. Since simple sugars give you no nutritional benefit, your body gets nothing from the food you ate. All of this causes the fatigue or sleepiness you feel after the sugar rush is over.

**Hunger**

When you eat foods that are high in sugar, your body creates a high dose of insulin to combat the sugar high. Once the sugar rush is over, the high dose of insulin leaches additional sugar from the body, consequently causing low blood sugar. Low blood sugar or hypoglycaemia can make you feel hungry even if you just ate.

**Sugar Cravings**

Evidence from a Princeton (USA) study indicates that reactions in the brain cause you to crave more sugar once you have eaten some. In the study, rats were given a sugary drink and a piece of wholewheat bread. Within a month, the rats doubled their consumption of the drink and went without the nutrients from the bread. The professor overseeing the study concluded that humans react in much the same way. The last symptom of a sugar rush is the craving for more sugar. Sugar cravings can be just as intense as the craving for coffee or drugs, and they can induce withdrawal symptoms

**Nutrition labels and sugars**

Nutrition labels often tell you how much sugar a food contains. You can compare labels and choose foods that are lower in sugar.

Look for the "Carbohydrates (of which sugars)" figure in the nutrition label.

* high – over 22.5g of total sugars per 100g
* low – 5g of total sugars or less per 100g

If the amount of sugars per 100g is between these figures, then that is a medium level of sugars.

The sugars figure in the nutrition label is the total amount of sugars in the food. It includes sugars from fruit and milk, as well as the sugars that have been added.

A food containing lots of fruit or milk will be a healthier choice than one that contains lots of added sugars, even if the two products contain the same total amount of sugars. You can tell if the food contains lots of added sugars by checking the ingredients list (see below).

**Labels on the front of packaging**

There are labels containing nutrition information on the front of some food packaging.

This includes labels that use red, amber and green colour-coding and advice on reference intakes (RI) of some nutrients, which can include sugar.

Labels that include colour-coding allow you to see at a glance if the food is high, medium or low in sugars.

* red = high
* amber = medium
* green = low

**Ingredients list**

You can get an idea of whether a food is high in added sugars by looking at the ingredients list. Added sugars must be included in the ingredients list, which always starts with the biggest ingredient. This means that if you see sugar near the top of the list, you know the food is likely to be high in added sugars.

Watch out for other words used to describe added sugars, such as sucrose, glucose, fructose, maltose, hydrolysed starch and invert sugar, corn syrup and honey.

**Tips on sugar swaps**

For a healthy, balanced diet, cut down on foods and drinks containing added sugars.

These tips can help you cut down and to make sugar swaps:

* Instead of sugary fizzy drinks and juice drinks, go for water or unsweetened fruit juice (remember to dilute these for children to further reduce the sugar).
* If you like fizzy drinks, try diluting fruit juice with sparkling water.
* Swap cakes or biscuits for a currant bun, scone or some malt loaf with low-fat spread or eat fruit for something sweet. A perfectly ripe peach can be a sweet treat.
* If you take sugar in hot drinks or add sugar to your breakfast cereal, gradually reduce the amount until you can cut it out altogether.
* Rather than spreading jam, marmalade, syrup, treacle or honey on your toast, try a low-fat spread, sliced banana or low-fat cream cheese instead.
* Check [nutrition labels](http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/Goodfood/pages/food-labelling.aspx) to help you pick the foods with less added sugar, or go for the low-sugar version.
* Try halving the sugar you use in your recipes – it works for most things except jam, meringues and ice cream.
* Choose tins of fruit in juice rather than syrup.
* Choose [wholegrain breakfast cereals](http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/Goodfood/Pages/healthy-breakfast-cereals-low-in-sugar-fat-salt.aspx), but not those coated with sugar or honey.

These are just some ways you can cut down on your sugar intake. Think about a couple of ways you could make changes in your diet now you have read this information. **On the diary page for this section, record how you are doing each day, including how you feel.** Perhaps you may notice you feel less tired or are not craving sugary things so much. You may not feel anything! Just note it down and see if you note any changes over the three week period.



Write down here, what challenge/s you think you might tackle over the 21 days. Agree this with your tutor and parents/carers. **If you have a medical condition which means you should be careful about restricting your diet in any way, seek advice from a medical professional before starting this challenge. Cutting down sugar doesn’t mean eating less it can involve sugar swaps - eating more nutritious food rather than largely empty calories that are in sugar.**

**My challenge/s is/are; (e.g. Gradually cutting down on the amount of sweets I have every day or cutting out fizzy drinks. I will drink water instead)..........................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................**

**HELPFUL LINKS:**

<http://www.nhs.uk/livewell/goodfood/pages/how-to-cut-down-on-sugar-in-your-diet.aspx>

<http://www.nhs.uk/chq/pages/1139.aspx?categoryid=51&subcategoryid=167>

<http://www.nhs.uk/chq/pages/which-foods-and-drinks-containing-sugar-cause-tooth-decay.aspx>

**My Sugar Swap/Sugar reduction challenge:**

**My target is: .......................................................................................................**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Day (insert date)** | **Did I manage my challenge?****Yes☹/No☹/sort of?** | **What did I achieve today (be specific) e.g. ate fruit instead of chocolate at lunchtime.** | **How do I feel?****(Comment on how you feel physically and mentally** **e.g. Less tired, more energy etc) What sugar swaps did I make?** |
| **1** |  |  |  |
| **2** |  |  |  |
| **3** |  |  |  |
| **4** |  |  |  |
| **5** |  |  |  |
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| **18** |  |  |  |
| **19** |  |  |  |
| **20** |  |  |  |
| **21** |  |  |  |

**Overall summary:**

 **Remember……**

**Each day is a fresh start.**

**Even if you can’t see or feel the difference right now, small changes and developing the right habits will improve your health and wellbeing in time.**