

The application of eatwell plate advice to weekly food intake in the UK

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The eatwell plate provides consumers and organisations in the UK with consistent visual messaging on the requirements for a healthy balanced diet. To assist in translating and applying this advice, a new resource, the *eatwell week*, was designed to present a practical example of a 7-day menu which meets UK Dietary Reference Values (DRVs) and dietary targets, with a daily energy intake of around 8368 kJ (2000 kcal/d). Market research data on meals and snacks commonly consumed by UK adults (Taylor Nelson Sofres, UK) guided the development of the illustrative 7-day menu. Analysis used the nutrient databank from year 1 of the UK National Diet and Nutrition Survey rolling programme. Portion sizes were based on typical packet and portion sizes in the UK.

Each day comprised three main meals plus 2 snacks, which were presented as interchangeable within the week and weekend days to achieve adult food and nutrient recommendations. Main meals were based on potatoes, rice or pasta with fish (2 meals; one oily), red meat (2 meals) poultry or vegetarian accompaniments. The 5-a-day target for fruit and vegetables was achieved daily (Table 1). Mean salt content did not exceed recommended maximum levels (<6 g/day). All key macro and micro-nutrient values met DRVs. Mean energy provision was 8577 kJ (2050 kcal). Daily energy intake ranged from 7669–9125 kJ/d (1833– 2181 kcal/d) (Table 1). The *eatwell week* achieved all micronutrient RNI's with the exception of selenium.

Table 1. Daily Energy and macronutrient content of the *eatwell week*

DRV/dietary target	kJ		Protein	Fat	Saturated Fats	CHO	NMES	Fibre	Fruit & veg.	
	8368	15% energy	35% energy	11% energy	50% energy	≤ 11% energy	24 g	400 g	5 portions	
Saturday	8717.7	96.0	71.9 g	19.3 g	281.2	24.8 g	28.5 g	540.0 g	6.0	
% energy	.	18.4	31.1	8.4	50.6	4.5				
Sunday	8239.9	75.9 g	81.0 g	22.3 g	249.6 g	55.5 g	20.7 g	610.0 g	5.8	
% energy	15.4	37.0	10.2	47.5	10.6					
Monday	7669.6	59.9 g	67.1 g	21.8 g	263.9 g	35.5 g	24.5 g	720.0 g	8.0	
% energy	13.1	32.9	10.7	54.0	7.3					
Tuesday	8737.0	84.4 g	73.1 g	16.5 g	291.9 g	49.1 g	21.9 g	515.0 g	6.5	
% energy	16.2	31.5	7.1	52.4	8.8					
Wednesday	8636.1	83.2 g	82.1 g	28.6 g	265.1 g	73.9 g	20.0 g	434.0 g	6.5	
% energy	16.1	35.8	12.5	48.2	13.4					
Thursday	9125.7	85.3 g	85.9 g	23.9 g	284.8 g	24.9 g	26.2 g	545.0 g	6.7	
% energy	15.6	35.5	9.9	49.0	4.3					
Friday	8909.8	72.1 g	73.2 g	24.0 g	315.6 g	67.5 g	23.9 g	524 g	5.9	
% energy	13.5	31.0	10.1	55.6	11.9					

Foods that are widely consumed by British adults can be incorporated within a sample 7-day healthy balanced menu comprising meals and snacks. The *eatwell week* shows promise as a resource to support the implementation of the principles of the eatwell plate. Future research should investigate the effect of using the *eatwell week* on adults' dietary habits and health-related outcomes.

Foods Standards Agency Scotland commissioned this work