



FUNDACIÓN
EROSKI
contigo



SCHOOL OF
NUTRITION

2/

The healthy food pyramid and the food groups



Energy to grow



Every day, we eat a lot of different types of food that provide our bodies and brains with the fuel they need. But not all kinds of food supply us with the same amount of energy and we should eat some things more often than others.

So we can learn to eat properly, our new friends Tix and Loy are going to teach us all about each kind of food, what group it belongs to and how often we should eat it. Then we can follow a healthy, balanced diet!

Are you ready to learn all these things? Off we go then!

1/ The healthy food pyramid

Have you ever heard of the healthy food pyramid? The word “pyramid” might remind you of buildings in Egypt, but there are other types of pyramid as well; there is also a food pyramid.

But what is the healthy food pyramid? What is it for?

This picture can help us find out how often we should eat each kind of food. But it is not only about food! As you can see, there are also drawings of physical exercise in the pyramid, because exercise is essential if you want to live a healthy life.





The base of the pyramid is green. That means you should eat all the types of food at the base every day.

The next part of the pyramid is orange and includes all the food groups that you should eat every week.

And then, at the top, the smallest section is red and shows the kinds of food that you should only eat every now and then, and in small quantities.

And don't forget water! It's an essential part of our everyday lives!

*Do you know
why water is so
important?*



*Because 65-75% of the
human body is water.
That is why we need
to hydrate ourselves
properly every day.*

*Particularly after doing
sport and on hot days!*

2/ The food groups

Milk, cocoa, bread, olive oil... There are lots of different kinds of food around. Each kind contains nutrients and properties that make it unique. That is why it is very important to follow a varied diet which combines them all if you want to grow up to be strong and healthy like we do.

In order to put all the kinds of food that exist into some kind of order, we need to classify them into different groups according to their characteristics. We call these **“the food groups”**, a classification which allows us to split all the different sorts of food up into 6 groups. Let’s find out about them!



GROUP 1

MILK AND DAIRY PRODUCTS

Includes:

Milk and everything made from milk: yoghurt, cheese, junket and other dairy desserts.

Characteristics:

The things in group 1 provide proteins, which your body needs in order to grow and repair tissues, carbohydrates and fats. They also contain a lot of calcium and vitamin D, which you need in order to keep your bones strong.



GROUP 2

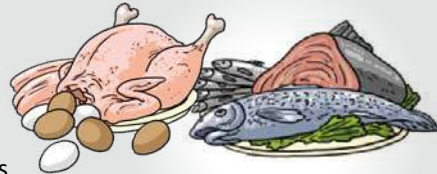
PROTEIN FOODS

Includes:

Meat, fish, eggs and nuts.

Characteristics:

The things in group 2 contain proteins, B-group vitamins and minerals, mainly iron, which is essential if you want to have a quick mind and not get tired easily.



GROUP 4

VEGETABLES

Includes:

Vegetables like peppers, lettuce, onions, carrots, etc.

Characteristics:

Vegetables contain a lot of antioxidants, which are very good for our health, and a lot of water (up to 80-90%). This water contains minerals and vitamins. They also provide a lot of fibre. In order not to lose all the minerals and vitamins in vegetables, you should boil them in a small quantity of water just before eating them or eat them raw as salad.



GROUP 3

HIGH-CARBOHYDRATE FOODS, PULSES, CEREALS AND TUBERS

Includes:

Pulses, cereals (like rice or wheat) and everything made from them (like pasta, flour, bread and corn), and tubers (like potatoes).

Characteristics:

Pulses provide us with a lot of proteins, fibre, which is vital for our health, carbohydrates, minerals, like iron and calcium, and B-group vitamins. They also have another advantage: they contain very little fat. Cereals provide us with a lot of carbohydrates and tubers not only contain a lot of carbohydrates, but also fibre, proteins, vitamin C and iron. We recommend cereals be wholemeal.



GROUP 5

FRUIT

Includes:

Citrus fruit (like oranges and lemons), tropical fruit (like pineapple and bananas), berries (like strawberries) and dried fruit (like almonds and chestnuts).

Characteristics:

Fruit is essential to our diet. It provides a lot of vitamins and minerals. Most types of fruit contain a lot of water (between 80% and 90%) and, consequently, few calories. Some types of fruit contain more carbohydrates (bananas, grapes) or fat (avocado pears) than others, providing us with more energy. Fruit is perfect for when you feel thirsty or just before doing your favourite sport.



GROUP 6

FATS, OILS AND BUTTER

Includes:

Fats (which are found in ice cream and pastries), oil and butter.

Characteristics:

These things give you a lot of energy. They also give food a lot of flavour, which means they are important in our meals.

Olive oil contains vegetable-based fat. It is a very important part of our food culture. We know that it is very beneficial to the health, and particularly good for the heart, veins and arteries.



What have we learned today?

Tix and Loy have taught us that there are lots of different types of food and the best way to organise them is to divide them up into 6 groups:

- *Milk and dairy products.*
- *Protein foods.*
- *High-carbohydrate foods, pulses, cereals and tubers.*
- *Vegetables.*
- *Fruit.*
- *Fats, oil and butter.*

Each group has its own specific characteristics and is beneficial to us in its own way, so we need to eat them all, in the right proportion, as part of our diet.

The best way to know how often we should eat each type of food is to see where it is in the food pyramid. If it is at the bottom, we can eat it every day. If the type of food is in the middle, we can eat it every week. And if it is at the top of the pyramid, then it is best to control ourselves and only eat it occasionally.

And don't forget to drink plenty of water and do physical exercise either!

Activities

The healthy food pyramid and the food groups

1 Today you are the teacher

You are already experts in healthy eating. So now it's time for you to become a teacher and share your knowledge with younger students. They will love listening to you and learning from you. Surely they'll listen closely and pay attention to everything you do and say.

You are going to prepare an oral presentation about the different food groups.

Your presentation must be well organized and very clearly structured.

- 1 You will be placed in **groups of 4 or 5 students**.
- 2 Each one will be responsible **for a certain group of foods**.
- 3 In the presentation **you must include which part of the nutritional pyramid the foods are in**.
- 4 **You can use visual aspects** such as a poster, a script or a PowerPoint presentation.
- 5 Try to **speak in an appropriate voice and try not to read directly from a script**.



Activities

The healthy food pyramid and the food groups

2

How much have we learned today?

It's time to write down a few questions to ask the younger students and check their level of understanding. They will enjoy participating and trying to get the answer right.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____



Activities

The healthy food pyramid and the food groups

Use this activity tab to do the activities

Group 1. Milk and dairy products.

This group includes milk and everything made from milk, like yoghurt, cheese, junket and other dairy desserts. The things in group 1 provide proteins, which your body needs in order to grow and repair tissues, carbohydrates and fats. They also contain a lot of calcium and vitamin D, which you need in order to keep your bones strong.

POSITION IN THE PYRAMID: GREEN SECTION. BASE (EAT EVERY DAY).

Recommended quantity: 1-3 servings a day.

A serving is equivalent to:

- 1 glass of milk.
- 2 yoghurts.
- 1 individual portion of fromage frais.



Group 2. Protein foods.

This group includes meat, fish, eggs and nuts. The things in group 2 contain proteins, B-group vitamins and minerals, mainly iron, which is essential if you want to have a quick mind and not get tired easily.

POSITION IN THE PYRAMID: ORANGE SECTION. MIDDLE (EAT SEVERAL TIMES A WEEK).

Recommended quantity:

- The intake of cold meats should be occasional (chorizo, salami, etc.) because it contains a lot of saturated fat and salt.
- Meat and fish: 3 to 4 servings a week.

A serving is equivalent to:

- 1 fillet or breast of chicken
- 1 slice of ham.
- 1 fish fillet/2 fish steaks.

- Eggs: 2 or 3 a week
- Nuts: 3-7 servings a week

A serving is equivalent to:

- 4-5 walnuts.
- 10-15 almonds.



Activities

The healthy food pyramid and the food groups



Group 3. High-carbohydrate foods, pulses, cereals and tubers.

Nutritionally, pulses are a very important type of food because they provide us with a lot of proteins. They can be even more nutritious if you combine them with cereals and eat lentils with rice for example. They also provide a lot of fibre, which is vital for our health, and carbohydrates. Pulses contain minerals, like iron and calcium, and B-group vitamins too. And they contain very little fat! Cereals, like rice or wheat, and everything made from them, like pasta, flour, bread and corn, provide us with a lot of carbohydrates. The most important tuber in this part of the world is the potato. Tubers not only contain a lot of carbohydrates, but also fibre, proteins, vitamin C and iron.



POSITION IN THE PYRAMID: GREEN SECTION. BASE (EAT EVERY DAY).

- **Group 3:** bread, rice, pasta, breakfast cereal, biscuits and potatoes.

Recommended quantity: 4 servings a day.

A serving is equivalent to:

- 2 slices of bread.
- 1 large potato.
- 1 plate of pasta.
- 30 g of breakfast cereal.

ORANGE SECTION. MIDDLE (EAT SEVERAL TIMES A WEEK)

- **Group 3:** pulses.

Recommended quantity: 3-5 servings a week (normal individual bowl).

Activities

The healthy food pyramid and the food groups



Group 4. Vegetables.

Vegetables contain a lot of water (up to 80-90%), which contains minerals and vitamins. They also provide a lot of fibre.

In order not to lose all the minerals and vitamins in vegetables, you should boil them in a small quantity of water just before eating them or eat them raw as salad.

They are also important because they contain a lot of antioxidants, which are very good for our health.

POSITION IN THE PYRAMID: GREEN SECTION. BASE (EAT EVERY DAY).

The slogan says “5 a day”, counting fruit as well. If you eat “5 a day”, then you eat enough vitamins, minerals, fibre and antioxidants. Enough means eating three pieces of fruit, varying the type of fruit you eat, and two servings of vegetables, making sure that one of these servings is raw (salad), because raw vegetables are richer in minerals and vitamins.

A serving is equivalent to:

- 1 plate of mixed salad.
- 1 plate of boiled vegetables.
- 1 large tomato.
- 2 carrots.



Activities

The healthy food pyramid and the food groups

Group 5. Fruit.

Fruit provides a lot of vitamins and minerals. Most types of fruit contain a lot of water (between 80% and 90%) and, consequently, few calories. Some types of fruit contain more carbohydrates (bananas, grapes) or fat (avocado pears) than others, providing us with more energy. Fruit is perfect for when you feel thirsty or just before doing your favourite sport.



POSITION IN THE PYRAMID: GREEN SECTION. BASE (EAT EVERY DAY).

The slogan says “5 a day”, counting vegetables as well. If you eat “5 a day”, then you eat enough vitamins, minerals, fibre and antioxidants. Enough means eating three pieces of fruit, varying the type of fruit you eat, and two servings of vegetables, making sure that one of these servings is raw (salad), because raw vegetables are richer in minerals and vitamins.

A serving is equivalent to:

- 1 medium-sized apple, pear or banana.
- 2 mandarins.
- 2 slices of melon.
- 1 bowl of strawberries or cherries.

Group 6. Fats, oil and butter.

These things give you a lot of energy. They also give food a lot of flavour, which means they are important in our meals. Olive oil contains vegetable-based fat. It is a very important part of our food culture. We know that it is very beneficial to the health, and particularly good for the heart, veins and arteries.



POSITION IN THE PYRAMID: GREEN SECTION. BASE (EAT EVERY DAY).

Olive oil to cook and dress salads.

Recommended quantity: 2-4 servings (soup spoon).

Activities

The healthy food pyramid and the food groups



*Soft drinks, cake, pastries, sweets, crisps...
are not really food*

POSITION IN THE PYRAMID: RED SECTION.
TOP (ONLY EAT OCCASIONALLY).

This is the smallest part of the pyramid and it's red, meaning that you should only eat these things every now and then.

The things in this section give you lots of energy, but contain fats that are not good for you, like saturated fat. They also have a lot of sugar, which can cause tooth decay and make you overweight, and often contain a lot of salt. You do not need to eat the things in this section because they do not have a lot of nutrients.

