

# Top tips for MORE sustainable healthier eating

## 1. MORE Health Gain

Everyone one of us can be healthier, regardless of our shape, size, age or gender. We can all make small steps to being healthier to reduce our risk of chronic disease. Read our [health gain](#) leaflet for more information on health gains.

## 2. MORE Fibre

Friendly strains of bacteria which live at the end of our gut, thrive on fibre within our food, and use it to make important molecules which help to regulate appetite; blood glucose; and energy levels; hormone production and immune function. Fibre is also really important for building and maintaining a protective gut barrier, which is essential in regulating inflammation. Chronic inflammation is a major factor in the development of chronic diseases, including diabetes, cancers, and Alzheimer's.



Fibre is found in whole grains, pulses (peas, beans and lentils), vegetables, fruit, nuts, seeds, herbs and spices. A **minimum of 30g fibre/day** is recommended, however research tells us more fibre (especially from minimally processed foods), offers even greater benefit. Remember, when introducing more fibre, **start low and go slow** to minimise gut symptoms.

Leftover Brussel sprouts from Christmas? [Check out this air fryer sprout and butter bean recipe.](#)

## 3. MORE Nutrient Quality

The nutrient quality of a food is of greater importance than the energy (calorie) content, when it comes to our gut health and our long-term health. For example, nuts, although energy dense (high in calories), are packed with fibre and other essential nutrients, and research tells us they have favourable effects on weight regulation and in reducing our risk of chronic disease. Simple swaps might include swapping salted crisps for salted peanuts or salted popcorn, swapping milk chocolate for a 'darker' chocolate (nudging towards one with a higher cocoa content and less added sugar). [Check out these digital recipe cards](#), produced by Somersets' healthier lifestyle team, to support with making simple low-cost meals with more nutrient quality.

## 4. MORE Minimally Processed

Research tells us that the more minimally processed our food, the greater the benefits for both our gut health and our long term health. More minimally processed foods have also been shown to offer greater benefit for regulation of appetite, weight, and blood glucose (energy levels) and reducing inflammation. See [Tamara's no cook couscous mix and match recipe card](#) – this can be a helpful starting point to support a move away from ultra-processed foods and it includes tips for nudging towards more minimally processed whole grains and introducing low-cost pulses.

# Focusing on MORE

## 5. MORE Diversity

Different plant foods contain different fibres and phytonutrients (plant-nutrients), which help to feed different strains of friendly bacteria in our gut, in turn producing a variety of important molecules which help to keep us healthy. Eating a broad range of plants foods in our diet increases the diversity of microbes within our gut which is associated with better health. Check out this [variety checklist](#), to support with increasing the diversity of foods in our diet. Additionally, take a look at this [Blue Zone article](#) for 5 easy ways to add more beans.

## 6. MORE Natural Flavour

If we want to be healthier for longer, the food we eat needs to taste good. Fat is not only important for carrying flavour, but it also helps us to absorb important fat-soluble vitamins. Over the past five decades, our food environment has become increasingly ultra-processed and artificially flavoured. Additionally, our modern lifestyles mean many of us have missed out on basic cooking skills which would have been either handed down by parents, carers or Grandparents or taught in schools. If you are not a confident cook, easy wins include experimenting with herbs and spices as a good start and then perhaps trying a new recipe every so often. See our [Recipes and good books](#) leaflet, which includes QR codes for free online recipes, a list of good books and useful free blogs and websites to inspire you.

## 7. MORE Sustainable Habits

Science tells us that tiny habits, when sustained, can lead to big changes over time. Aiming for 'healthier' rather than 'healthy' can seem less overwhelming and be more achievable. For example, adding that pinch of herbs and spices to your existing meal can be an easy win (adding more phytonutrients and more flavour). Watch this [Ted talk](#) on the power of tiny habits and view our [Basic kitchen ingredients](#) leaflet for guidance with shopping to help include more foods which benefit us most.

## 8. MORE Accessible

Our Focusing on MORE messaging includes something for everyone. For example, Somerset's healthier lifestyle team have developed [Kettle recipes](#) for people in transient accommodation or who may only have access to a kettle, or those concerned about rising energy costs. As well as [Traditional recipe ideas tailored for the elderly](#).

We have lots of free resources about what to include MORE of and why, to support you to be healthier. Resources include shopping guides, recipes (including no-cook recipes), variety checklists and much much more.... They are all available on the Somerset council [Focusing on MORE](#) web page.



Visit [www.healthysomerset.co.uk/starting-well/focusing-on-more/](http://www.healthysomerset.co.uk/starting-well/focusing-on-more/) for more information and resources or scan the QR code on the right.

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