



# NUTRITION & HEALTH FROM SCIENCE TO PRACTICE

## ADVICE & FACT SHEETS FOR HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

Aprifel is pleased to present these information sheets aimed for health professionals and focused on the scientific evidence on diet and disease prevention. We also take this opportunity to share knowledge on nutrition and health, focusing on fruit and vegetables (F&V), which are key elements of a healthy diet.

We present F&V recommendations unified and guided by the overall scientific evidence on which they are based.

The content of these information sheets is largely based on the Egea 2018 conference which was part of the European program "Fruit & Veg 4 Health" – 2018-2020.

Egea 2018 has been accredited by the European Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (EACCME®) and by the Lyon University College of General Practice.

By 2020, this folder will enclose 14 information sheets aimed to engage and facilitate the dialogue with patients to meet their expectations.

Every sheet is validated by:

- Lyon University College of General Practice (*CUMG Lyon 1*)
- European Childhood Obesity Group (*ECOG*)
- European Society for general practice/family medicine (*WONCA Europe*)

[www.aprifel.com](http://www.aprifel.com) - [www.egeaconference.com](http://www.egeaconference.com)



ENJOY  
IT'S FROM  
EUROPE



---

## OUR PARTNERS

---



**CUMG** - University College of General Practice - [www.univ-lyon1.fr](http://www.univ-lyon1.fr)

The University College of General Practice (CUMG) of the Claude Bernard Lyon 1 University is in charge of the organization and delivery of the diploma of specialized studies in general practice. The CUMG is composed of lecturers in the discipline and representatives of general practice interns, deans, academics from other disciplines and hospital practitioners. The CUMG organises and implements theoretical and practical training in general practice. It carries out research in fields related to the discipline, including teaching aspects, clinical or epidemiological research, public health and the humanities. It also supervises general practice theses.



**ECOG** - European Childhood Obesity Group - [www.ecog-obesity.eu](http://www.ecog-obesity.eu)

ECOG is a pan-European group of professionals dealing with childhood obesity and overweight. ECOG brings together experts from across the board including pediatricians, psychologists, nutritionists, geneticists, physical activity experts, economists and many more. The group was founded in 1991 and its mission is to help the European community at large to fully understand the health, social, psychological and economic impacts of childhood obesity, and work together to take this growing problem off the menu in Europe.



**WONCA Europe** - European Society for general practice/family medicine - [www.woncaeurope.org](http://www.woncaeurope.org)

WONCA Europe is the academic and scientific society for general practice/family medicine in Europe. We represent 47 member organisations and more than 120,000 family doctors in Europe. We are the European Regional Branch of WONCA - the World Organization of National Colleges, Academies and Academic Associations of General Practitioners/Family Physicians, which represents 500,000 family doctors in 102 countries. Our Mission is to improve the quality of life of people through fostering high standards of care in general practice/family medicine by: providing a forum for exchange of knowledge and information; supporting the development of the academic organisations in our discipline; and, working on, and advocating for, educational, research and service provision activities of family doctors.



**About Aprifel:**

Aprifel, the French Agency for Research and Information on Fruit and Vegetables, is an association created in 1981 under the 1901 law. It acts as an interface between scientists, civil society and F&V professionals. APRIFEL seeks to popularize and transmit scientific data on F&V to health professionals, the F&V sector, consumer associations, the press and the general public. To this end, it mobilizes the national and international scientific community, produces and distributes publications and organizes information symposia and international conferences. To carry out its missions, APRIFEL relies on a Scientific Board composed of external experts and a Consumer Board composed of about ten national consumer associations.



# KEY ROLE OF HEALTH PROFESSIONALS IN HEALTHY DIET PROMOTION

## Why is nutrition education a priority in medical training?

- **Unhealthy diet** is considered as one of the **main risk factors for health**, alongside with tobacco or alcohol<sup>1</sup> and a leading cause of noncommunicable diseases (NCDs)<sup>2</sup>
- There is a shift in health care from disease management to health promotion and prevention, areas that need a solid foundation in clinical nutrition<sup>3</sup>.
- Patients need help to interpret and act on the confusing, and often contradictory, nutrition messages found through internet and in the media<sup>3</sup>.

## Health professionals have a key role to play

- According to patients, family doctors (FDs)/general practitioners (GPs) are the most reliable and credible source of information regarding diet and nutrition<sup>4</sup>.
- More than **70% of patients expect nutritional advice** from their FDs/GPs<sup>5</sup>.
- A 59.3% increase of F&V consumption was seen following nutritional advice provided by a health professional<sup>6</sup>.

However, nutritional advice remains a difficult topic for FDs/GPs. About 56.02% out of 2082 FDs/GPs from eleven European countries reported that carrying out prevention and health promotion activities is difficult because of:

- **time constraint**, due to heavy workload<sup>7</sup>,
- **limited nutrition knowledge in medical courses** and limited nutritional education of patients,
- **visible short-term impact of nutritional changes** is lacking given the current sub-optimal food environment with intense marketing and promotion of unhealthy foods<sup>7,8</sup>.

## Counselling by a FD/GP or pediatrician and a dietitian: The most effective policy intervention

A number of policies set in different countries to tackle NCDs have shown to be effective and cost-effective to reduce the burden of NCDs. These policy options include regulatory policies, communication policies, school-based and work-site interventions, interventions in the primary care setting, reformulation of products, and changes in portion sizes.

- **The most effective policy intervention** – but also with the highest implementation cost – is the **counselling done by a FD/GP or pediatrician and a dietitian**. The implementation of this intervention in Europe would produce a gain of one year of life in good health in one person out of every ten. The intervention would become cost-effective in about 10 years after its implementation<sup>9</sup>.
- The foundation of healthy nutrition and development is laid during the first thousand days of life, which are thus a window of opportunity for primary health care professionals<sup>10</sup>.

### Awareness

**At a global level:** the United Nations General Assembly declared “2016/2025- A Decade of Action on Nutrition” as part of the efforts to translate their previous commitments into actions, with a particular attention on the need for a healthy and optimal diet for mothers and their children during the first 1,000 days of life – from conception until the age of 2 years old<sup>11</sup>.

**In Europe:** the European Food and Nutrition Action Plan 2015-2020 aims one of its goals on the reinforcement of health systems to promote a healthy diet<sup>12</sup>.

**In France:** the National Public Health Plan, launched by the government in March 2018, reaffirms the crucial role of prevention. A sanitary service was created in the 2018/2019 academic year and will entrust each year 50,000 health students with prevention missions<sup>13</sup>.



Photo cvredit : © UE/Interfel/Amélie Roche  
© UE/MAAF/Interfel/Amiel/Leteuré  
© Ana Teixeira/Interfel - © Shutterstock





### What is a portion of F&V?

Giving the high nutritional quality of F&V, it's recommended to consume at least 5 portions of a variety of F&V per day. One portion of F&V is the equivalent of **80 to 100 g**, corresponding to the size of a fist or 2 tablespoons.

**Fruit juice shouldn't replace fruit.** Fruit juice contains high amount of sugars and low amount of fibers. It's recommended to drink not more than a 150 mL glass of unsweetened fruit juice per day<sup>1-4</sup>.

