Functions of foods

**FACT**
Foods are necessary to make the body function well. In particular, they:

° provide energy
° help the growth and repair of the body
° protect the body against illness.

**Most foods have more than one function**
All foods provide energy but some provide more than others. Most foods help the body to grow and repair and protect the body against illness. Some foods are particularly good at this.

° **Staple foods** (cereals and starchy roots) mainly provide energy. Cereals also help body growth and repair.
° **Vegetables and fruits** mainly protect the body against illness.
° **Legumes, oilseeds and nuts** mainly help the body to grow and repair. They also help to protect the body against illness. Oilseeds, nuts and groundnuts provide extra energy, too.
° **Animal foods** (e.g. milk, eggs, meat, fish, offal) mainly help the body to grow and repair. They also provide energy and protect against illness.
° **Fat and oils** mainly provide energy. If added to vegetables, they improve the protective function of vegetables. Red palm oil also protects the body against illness.
° **Sugar and sugary foods** only provide energy.
° **Breast milk** provides everything that a baby needs up to the age of 6 months.

**ACT**
Eat a variety of foods every day so that your body gets enough energy and everything it needs to be active, to grow and to be protected against illness.

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