Food Gives Us…

Food gives us the energy and nutrients the body needs to maintain health and life, to grow and develop, to move, work, play, think, and learn.

The body needs a variety of nutrients—proteins, carbohydrates, fats, vitamins, and minerals—and these come from the foods we eat.

◆ **Proteins** are needed to build and maintain muscle, blood, skin, bones, and other tissues and organs in the body.
◆ **Carbohydrates and fats** mainly provide energy, although some fats are also needed as building materials and to help the body use certain vitamins.
◆ **Vitamins and minerals** are needed in smaller amounts than protein, fat and carbohydrates, but they are essential for good nutrition. They help the body work properly and stay healthy. Some minerals also make up part of the body's tissues; for example, calcium and fluoride are found in bones and teeth and iron is found in the blood.
◆ **Fiber** (or roughage) and **clean water** are also needed for a good diet.

No single food provides all of the nutrients we need in the proper balance. A healthy diet includes some foods from each of the groups below.

◆ **Foods rich in proteins** include all types of meat, poultry, fish, beans, peas, soybeans, groundnuts, milk, cheese, yogurt, and eggs.
◆ **Foods rich in carbohydrates** include rice, maize, wheat and other cereals, all types of potatoes, yams and starchy roots, and sugars.
◆ **Foods rich in fats** include oils, some meat and meat products, lard, butter, ghee and some other milk products, margarine, some types of fish, nuts, and soybeans.
◆ **Foods rich in vitamin A** include dark-green vegetables, carrots, dark-yellow sweet potatoes, pumpkins, mangos, papaya, eggs, and liver.
◆ **Foods rich in B vitamins** include dark-green vegetables, groundnuts, beans, peas, cereals, meat, fish, and eggs.
◆ **Foods rich in vitamin C** include fruits and most vegetables, including potatoes.
◆ **Foods rich in iron** include meat, fish, groundnuts, beans, peas, dark-green leafy vegetables, and dried fruits.