

Enjoy a wide variety of nutritious foods

- Eat plenty of vegetables, legumes and fruits
- Eat plenty of cereals (including breads, rice, pasta and noodles), preferably wholegrain
- Include lean meat, fish, poultry and/or alternatives
- Include milks, yoghurts, cheeses and/or alternatives. Reduced-fat varieties should be chosen, where possible
- Drink plenty of water

and take care to:

- Limit saturated fat and moderate total fat intake
- Choose foods low in salt
- Limit your alcohol intake if you choose to drink
- Consume only moderate amounts of sugars and foods containing added sugars

Prevent weight gain: be physically active and eat according to your energy needs

Care for your food: prepare and store it safely

Encourage and support breastfeeding

Enjoy a wide variety of nutritious foods



Prevent weight gain

Prepare and store food safely



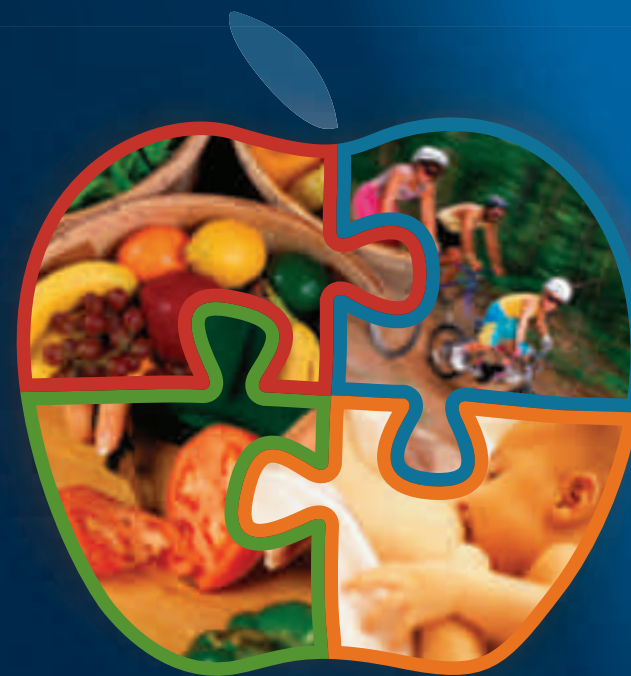
Encourage and support breastfeeding

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Australian Government
Department of Health and Ageing
National Health and Medical Research Council

Food for health



Dietary Guidelines for
Australian Adults

A guide to healthy eating

Dietary Guidelines for Australian Adults

Nutritious foods and an active lifestyle can help achieve optimal health throughout life. Recently the Australian government asked the National Health and Medical Research Council to review the scientific links between nutrition and health. Many of Australia's leading nutritionists worked on the task. The result is the new Dietary Guidelines for Australian Adults – sensible advice about food and nutrition that you can trust.

The Dietary Guidelines highlight the groups of foods and lifestyle patterns that foster good nutrition and health. No guideline is more important than another. Each guideline is like a piece of a puzzle. When all the pieces come together, the puzzle of good nutrition and health is solved.

Nutritional needs differ at different stages of life and these are reflected in the Dietary Guidelines. For the

new-born, there is no better food than breast milk. Older children need a balance of foods to ensure good growth and development.

The scales are tilted differently for adults who often need to balance eating and physical activity to prevent weight gain. For both children and adults, some principles always remain the same – the need to enjoy a wide variety of nutritious foods and to ensure that food is well handled and safe to eat.

The Dietary Guidelines for Australian Adults are your best guide to food, nutrition and health. The guidelines for children and adolescents are in an accompanying pamphlet

The picture to the right shows the Australian Guide to Healthy Eating which is a guide to daily food choices. More details are given inside the pamphlet.



Dietary Guidelines for Australian Adults

Enjoy a wide variety of nutritious foods and drink plenty of water

How many serves of these foods should we eat on average each day? This depends a little on your body size and activity level but aim for the following:



Women						
19–60 years	4–9	5	2	2	1	0–2½
60+ years	4–7	5	2	2	1	0–2
Pregnant	4–6	5–6	4	2	1½	0–2½
Breast feeding	5–7	7	5	2	2	0–2½
Men						
19–60 years	6–12	5	2	2	1	0–3
60+ years	4–9	5	2	2	1	0–2½

What is a serve? Here are some examples

Cereals, breads etc		
2 slices of bread	1 medium bread roll	1 cup cooked rice, pasta, noodles
1 cup porridge	1 cup breakfast cereal flakes	or ½ cup muesli
Vegetables and legumes (choose a variety)		
Starchy vegetables		
1 med potato/yam	½ medium sweet potato	1 medium parsnip
Dark green leafy vegetables		
½ cup cabbage, spinach, silverbeet, broccoli, cauliflower or brussels sprouts		
Legumes and other vegetables		
1 cup lettuce or salad vegetables	½ cup broad beans, lentils, peas, green beans, zucchini, mushrooms, tomatoes, capsicum, cucumber, sweetcorn, turnips, swede, sprouts, celery, eggplant etc	
Fruit		
1 piece medium sized fruit eg apple, orange, mango, mandarin, banana, pear, etc		
2 pieces of smaller fruit (apricots, kiwi, plum, figs)	About 8 strawberries	
About 20 grapes or cherries	½ cup fruit juice	¼ med melon (eg. rockmelon)
Dried fruit (4 dried apricots)	1½ tblspn sultanas	1 cup diced pieces/canned fruit
Milks, yoghurt, cheese & alternatives		
250 ml glass or one cup of milk (can be fresh, longlife or reconstituted milk)		
½ cup evaporated milk	40g (2 slices) cheese	250ml (1 cup custard)
200g (1 small carton) of yoghurt, plain or fruit, <i>or, as an alternative try:</i>		
cup of calcium-fortified soy milk	1 cup almonds	½ cup pink salmon with bones
Meat, fish, poultry & alternatives		
65–100gm cooked meat/chicken (eg ½ cup mince/2 small chops/2 slices roast meat)		
80–120g cooked fish fillet, <i>or, as an alternative try:</i>		
2 small eggs	½ cup cooked dried beans, lentils, chick peas, split peas or canned beans	1/3 cup peanuts/almonds
Extras Foods which we can occasionally include for variety. They are generally higher in fat and/or sugar, kilojoules, salt etc		
1 med piece of plain cake/1 bun	3–4 sweet biscuits	Half a chocolate bar
60g jam, honey (1 tablespoon)	30g potato crisps	Slice pizza = 2 extras
1 can soft drink/2 glasses cordial	2 scoops icecream	1 meat pie/pasty = 3 extras
2 standard glasses of alcohol (for adults only)		
1 tablespoon (20g) butter, margarine, oil		

Prevent weight gain: be physically active and eat according to your energy needs

There has been a dramatic increase in the number of overweight people in Australia over the last 20 years. Overweight places a strain on the body, raising blood pressure and triglycerides and increasing the risk of type 2 diabetes, heart disease, back problems and some cancers. Losing just a small amount of weight can improve health significantly.

Why are we getting fatter? The natural balance between food intake and physical activity has been lost. Falling levels of physical activity and more time spent sitting watching computer and television screens are major underlying causes. Modern foods and drinks are part of the problem too. Sugary drinks have become increasingly popular. Many fatty foods are rich in kilojoules too. Foods and drinks are now very tasty and portion sizes have increased. The combination of too little activity and too much food has inevitable effect – increasing body fat.



Be active every day

There is no secret to preventing weight gain. It's a matter of finding the balance between food intake and physical activity. The best approach is to make permanent changes to both food and activity habits. Increasing physical activity burns off body fat. Aim to be active every day. A minimum of 30 minutes of moderate physical activity each day is recommended. Many people find walking easy and enjoyable.

Eat smart

Not putting too much fuel in your body is vital to getting the balance right. The guide to eating a variety of nutritious foods is a good place to start when planning your meals. Include plenty of wholegrains, vegetables and fruits. Pay special attention to fats, alcohol and sugar. Cutting back on these will limit your fuel intake. Sugary and alcoholic drinks are sometimes called 'empty kilojoules' – they provide plenty of fuel without many essential nutrients to go with them. Needless to say, keep portions moderate in size and leave excess food on your plate.

Care for your food: prepare and store it safely

Australia has one of the safest food systems in the world. Nevertheless, care still needs to be taken to ensure food does not become contaminated with bacteria. The effects of eating infected food vary widely. Healthy adults may simply get an upset stomach. However, the health risks to the young, the sick and the elderly can be severe.

Food may be contaminated if the raw ingredients are 'off' to start with, if kitchen equipment is unclean, if food is poorly cooked or if food is kept warm for long periods. Poor personal hygiene is also a hazard.

Careful storage handling and preparation of food and high standards or personal hygiene will help keep risks to a minimum.



Encourage and Support Breastfeeding

Breast milk is the best and most natural food for infants. It is ideally suited to their needs. Breast milk provides hygienic food and drink as well as special growth factors and protection against infection and disease. Breastfeeding has the added advantage of being convenient and inexpensive. The ideal nutritional start to life is breast milk, and nothing else, for the first six months of life.

Although most Australian mothers start breastfeeding, few do so exclusively for six months. New mothers need support to maintain breastfeeding, not just from health workers but from workmates, friends and family members. Encouragement and support from the father of the child is especially important.

