

The Australian Guide to Healthy Eating

<http://www.healthyactive.gov.au/internet/healthyactive/publishing.nsf/content/eating>

The Australian Guide to Healthy Eating, the national food selection guide, provides consumers, health and education professionals and the food industry with information about the amounts and types of food that need to be eaten each day to get enough of the nutrients essential for good health and well-being. The Guide is designed to suit most healthy people but may not be appropriate for people with certain health problems. If you want advice that is individualised just for you, you should see a dietitian.

A diet consistent with the *Australian Guide to Healthy Eating* recommends people consume a variety of foods across and within the five food groups and avoid foods that contain too much added fat, salt and sugar. The Guide aims to promote healthy eating habits throughout life, which will assist in reducing the risk of health problems in later life, such as heart disease, obesity and Type 2 Diabetes.

The Guide aims to encourage the consumption of a variety of foods from each of the five food groups every day in proportions that are consistent with the Dietary Guidelines for Australians. The five foods groups are:

- Bread, cereals, rice, pasta, noodles
- Vegetables, legumes
- Fruit
- Milk, yogurt, cheese
- Meat, fish, poultry, eggs, nuts, legumes.

It is expected that small amounts of unsaturated fats and oils will be consumed with breads and cereals but additional fats and foods such as cakes, biscuits, hot chips and sugary drinks should be consumed only occasionally.

Foods have been grouped together primarily on the basis of their nutrient similarity. The main nutrients for each food group are shown in the table below.

The Australian Guide to Healthy Eating food selection guide indicates the recommended proportion of each food group to be eaten. The plate proportions are based on recommended minimum serves of the food groups. The bread, cereal, rice, pasta and noodles group was given a surface area based on seven serves; fruit, a surface area based on two serves; vegetables and legumes, a surface area based on five serves; milk, yoghurt and cheese, a surface area based on two serves; and meat, fish, chicken, eggs, nuts and legumes, a surface area based on two serves (however, normally 1 serve is recommended depending on the population group). It is, however, important to note that the number of serves differs according to age, gender and whether or not the person is pregnant or breastfeeding. Refer to the **Recommended Daily Serving** table below.

Nutritional characteristics of the five food groups

FOOD GROUP NAME	BREAD, CEREALS, RICE, PASTA, NOODLES	VEGETABLES , LEGUMES	FRUIT	MILK, YOGURT, CHEESE	MEAT, FISH, POULTRY , EGGS, NUTS, LEGUMES
Main distinguishing nutrients	carbohydrate , iron, thiamin	vitamin A (beta-carotene)	vitamins, especially vitamin C	calcium, protein	protein, iron, zinc
Other significant dietary components	energy, protein, fat, fibre, magnesium, zinc, riboflavin, niacin equivalents, folate and sodium.	carbohydrate, fibre, magnesium, iron, vitamin C, folate and potassium.	carbohydrate , fibre, and folate.	energy, fat, cholesterol, carbohydrate , magnesium, zinc, riboflavin, vitamin B12, sodium and potassium.	fat, cholesterol, niacin equivalents and vitamin B12.

To learn more about the Australian Guide to Healthy Eating see the following link: www.health.gov.au/internet/wcms/publishing.nsf/Content/health-pubhlth-strateg-food-recommend.htm

Australian Dietary Guidelines

The Department of Health and Ageing has funded the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) to produce several publications based on the best scientific evidence, to improve the health of Australians and reduce the burden of preventable diet-related disease. Jointly known as the Australian Dietary Guidelines they are:

- *Dietary Guidelines for Australian Adults,*
- *Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia (incorporating the Infant Feeding Guidelines for Health Workers),* and
- *Dietary Guidelines for Older Australians*

These guidelines are designed for different population groups but all have a clear emphasis on enjoying a wide variety of nutritious foods and actively promote the increased consumption of breads, cereals, legumes, vegetables and fruits. They also recommend that Australians ‘consume only moderate amounts of sugars and foods containing added sugars’ and ‘choose foods low in salt’. These guidelines are designed to make it easier for everyone to understand how to eat a healthy diet to improve quality of life and reduce illness.

Materials are available for both the general public as well as health and education professionals and the food industry to promote good nutrition in their work by calling toll free 1800 020 103 and asking for Ext 8654 or emailing: phd.publications@health.gov.au

Further information can also be found on the internet at <http://www.health.gov.au/internet/wcms/publishing.nsf/Content/health-publth-strateg-food-recommend.htm>

The *Dietary Guidelines for Australian Adults* (2003) are:

- **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

The *Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents* (2003) are:

Encourage and support breastfeeding

Children and adolescents need sufficient nutritious foods to grow and develop normally

- Growth should be checked regularly for young children
- Physical activity is important for all children and adolescents

Enjoy a wide variety of nutritious foods

Children and adolescents should be encouraged to:

- 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, cheese and/or alternatives. Reduced-fat milks are not suitable for young children under 2 years, because of their high energy needs, but reduced-fat varieties should be encouraged for older children and adolescents
- Choose water as a drink. Alcohol is not recommended for children

and care should be taken to:

- Limit saturated fat and moderate total fat intake. Low-fat diets are not suitable for infants
- Choose foods low in salt
- Consume only moderate amounts of sugars and foods containing added sugars

Care for your child's food

- Prepare and store it safely