



Healthy eating is all about enjoying a variety of foods from each of the five food groups:

- vegetables and legumes/beans
- fruit
- grain foods such as breads, cereals, rice and pasta
- lean meat, fish, poultry and nuts
- milk yoghurt and cheese or alternatives.

The Australian Guide to Healthy Eating provides an easy guide to the types of food we should be eating every day for good health. To make things even easier the guide also outlines how many serves of each food group we should be aiming for each day.

Vegetables and legumes/beans

Eating a wide variety of vegetables every day is a great way to make sure that you are getting the nutrients you need to stay healthy. As well as providing an important nutrient hit and loads of fibre, vegetables are very low in kilojoules meaning they are great food to fill up on without having to worry about your waistline.

For good health, we should all be eating at least 5 serves of vegetables every day.

A serve of vegetables is equal to 1 potato, ½ a cup of cooked vegetables, 1 cup of salad vegetables or ½ cup of lentils or other legumes.

Types of vegetables include:

- Carrots, broccoli, peas, corn, zucchini
- Potato, sweet potato, pumpkin
- Lettuce, cucumber, tomato
- Chickpeas, kidney beans, lentils.

Canned, frozen and dried varieties of vegetables are great alternatives for fresh vegetables and are just as nutritious. These foods are often cheap, easy to prepare and may be easier to access in remote areas. Just, make sure you choose no added salt varieties.

Finding it hard to reach your 5 serves of vegetables?

Try these tips to get more veggies into your day:

- Eat a variety of colours of vegetables every day including, red, green, orange, white choices
- Cut up vegetables into sticks and store in the fridge for an easy and healthy snack
- Add vegetables to every meal. Add grated or chopped vegies into soups, casseroles or pasta dishes
- Add beans to meat dishes such as Bolognese sauce or taco mince
- Buy vegetables in season or from local sources such as farmers markets for best value for money and long lasting freshness.

Fruit

In Queensland we are blessed with a huge variety of delicious fruit all year round. Like vegetables, fruit provides



loads of important nutrients and are packed with fibre. Fruit provides a little more kilojoules than vegetables though, which is why we suggest 2 serves of fruit a day.

Canned, dried and frozen fruit are also great choices for quick and healthy snacks or to add to your favourite meals. Make sure you choose canned fruit in natural juices rather than in syrup.

Example serves of fruit include:

- 1 medium apple, pear, banana or orange
- 2 small apricots, plums or kiwi fruits
- 1 cup of canned fruit
- ½ cup of juice
- dried apricots or 1 ½ tablespoons of sultanas

Tips to enjoy more fruit every day:

Buy fruit in season or from local sources such as farmers markets for best value for money and long lasting freshness

- Choose fruit more often than fruit juice for added fibre
- Try fruit as a dessert with low fat yoghurt or custard
- Fruit is great for an active lifestyle and provides a sustained energy

source for sport and other activities. So why not swap a sports drink for a banana and a bottle of water.

Grain foods such as breads, cereals, rice and pasta

Grain foods should make up the majority of our diet, so try to eat these foods at every meal. Go for wholegrain varieties, like multigrain bread, wherever possible to make sure you get long lasting energy and plenty of fibre.

The grain foods group includes food like:

- breads
- breakfast cereal
- oats
- rice
- pasta
- noodles
- crispbreads
- crumpets
- polenta
- couscous
- quinoa

Often people are concerned about eating too many foods from this food group, particularly if they are

trying to lose weight. But these foods tend to be very low in fat and will keep you fuller for longer, particularly if you choose wholegrain options.

Keep an eye on your portion sizes and try to reduce the amount of butter, margarine or other high fat spreads that you add to these foods.

A serve of grain foods is equal to:

2 slices of bread

1 cup of cooked rice or pasta

1 ⅓ cups of breakfast cereal

Great grain tips:

- For variety, experiment with different grain foods like couscous or polenta. They are very quick to prepare and delicious served with casserole dishes
- Add pearl barley to soups for an extra burst of energy
- Try different types of breads for your lunch time sandwiches including Turkish bread, pita bread or wraps.

Lean meat, fish, poultry and nuts

This food group is the main source of protein, iron and vitamin B12 for our bodies. Iron is particularly



important for women and the iron in meat is more easily absorbed than the iron from other foods such as vegetables and legumes.

Meat is an important part of the Australian diet but we tend to eat bigger servings than we require.

A serve of meat is equal to:

- approximately 100g of cooked meat or chicken
- ½ cup lean mince
- 80-120g of fish
- 2 small eggs
- ⅓ cup of nuts
- ½ cup of lentils, chickpeas or other beans

For those who don't eat meat, alternatives such as lentils, chickpeas or other beans are important sources of protein. However everyone could benefit from eating these types of foods more often.

The fat in meat tends to be saturated fat so be sure to choose lean cuts of meat wherever possible and remove all visible fat from your meat before you cook it.

Tips:

- Try low fat cooking methods such as grilling or stir frying

- Flavour your meat with low fat marinades and herbs such as a mixture of mixed herbs, garlic and lemon juice
- When cooking casseroles and stews allow them to cool slightly and skim the fat off the top before serving
- Try to eat more fish every week, grill or bake your fish rather than deep frying
- To save money and boost the fibre and nutrients in your meal, reduce the amount of meat you use in a meal and add extra legumes like kidney beans or chickpeas.

Milk yoghurt and cheese or alternatives

Dairy foods such as milk, yoghurt and cheese are an important source of calcium and protein. Most adults are recommended to eat about 2 serves of dairy each day. For good health try choose low fat or skim varieties of milk, yoghurt and cheese.

An example serve from this food group is:

- 1 cup of milk
- 40g of cheese

- 200g tub of yoghurt
- ½ cup evaporated milk
- 5 sardines
- 1 cup almonds.

If you don't eat food from this group calcium fortified soy milk or yogurt are great alternatives.

Tips to include more dairy in your day:

- Have a glass of milk at breakfast time
- Snack on low fat yogurt
- Try to drink plain milk instead of flavoured milk to avoid the extra sugar in these drinks
- Add cheese to your sandwiches
- If you don't like eating dairy foods you can still meet your requirements by adding milk or milk powder to soups or sauces or adding cheese to pasta or vegetable dishes
- While soft cheeses like ricotta and cottage cheese are low in fat and kilojoules they cannot be counted towards your serves from this food group as they only contain very small amounts of calcium.