

Healthy eating

What you need to know

Healthy eating is an essential part of maintaining your body's health and preventing disease. It is also a basic part of the enjoyment of life.

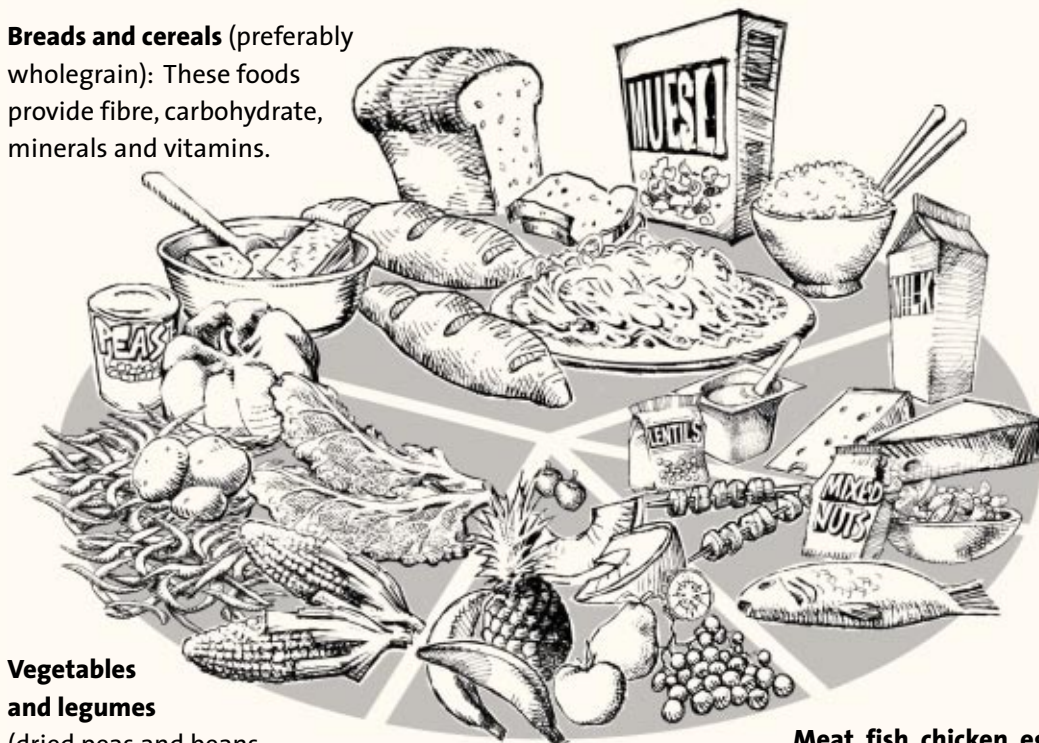
It is not difficult to eat in a healthy way, if you understand a few simple principles.

- Variety is important. Eating lots of different types of healthy foods is a type of insurance that you will get all the different nutrients your body needs.
- It is important to achieve a good balance between regular physical activity and food intake, to help you maintain a healthy weight.
- Heart disease is one of the major nutrition-related diseases in Australia. Eating a diet low in saturated fat and using salt sparingly can help to prevent it.
- Iron and calcium are two nutrients which many Australians - particularly women - do not consume in adequate quantities.
- Alcohol in moderation can be an enjoyable part of life, but in excess can cause serious harm.

What to eat

Every day, eat foods from each of the following five food groups. Enjoy a wide variety of nutritious foods from within each group.

Breads and cereals (preferably wholegrain): These foods provide fibre, carbohydrate, minerals and vitamins.



Milk, cheese and yogurt: eat moderate amounts, choosing at least some from the reduced fat range available. They provide a rich source of calcium, plus protein and other vitamins and minerals. Calcium-fortified soy products (soy milk, cheese and yoghurt) are an alternative to dairy products.

Vegetables and legumes

(dried peas and beans, including foods such as baked beans, kidney and soy beans, tofu): these foods provide an important range of fibre, vitamins and minerals (including antioxidants), vitamins and minerals, sometimes differing from those in breads and cereals.

Fruit: provides vitamins (including antioxidants), some minerals (eg. potassium), carbohydrate and fibre

Meat, fish, chicken, eggs, nuts and legumes:

eat moderate amounts of these foods. They are rich in protein, as well as containing iron and other minerals and many vitamins. Trim the fat off meat and remove the skin from chicken. Eating fish (fresh or canned) several times a week provides omega 3 fatty acids and may help protect against heart disease.

What to eat

- Eat less saturated fat:
 - Choose lean cuts of meat, skinless chicken and low fat dairy foods (e.g. low or reduced fat milk, cheese, yoghurt). Alternatively, try a reduced fat calcium fortified soy beverage in place of milk if desired.
 - Use unsaturated spreads instead of butter. For cooking and salad oils, choose monounsaturated oils (olive, canola, peanut or macadamia) or polyunsaturated oils (corn, soy, sesame, grapeseed, sunflower or safflower).
 - Use healthy cooking methods (e.g. grilling, baking and stir-frying instead of deep frying).
- Avoid adding salt to meals and choose reduced salt products (e.g. reduced salt sauces, stock and canned products) where available.
- Eat fish (fresh or canned) at least twice a week.

Practical tips

- Food is the best source of nutrients, not supplements! For example, antioxidants can be found in a range of fruit, vegetables, nuts and wholegrain cereal products and oils.
- Water is the best thirst quencher.
- Make sure you have plenty of healthy foods for snacks e.g. fresh, dried or canned fruit, unsalted nuts, carrot sticks, crispbreads, low fat cheese. If you eat take-away and snack foods and drinks, try to make low-fat and low salt choices.
- Eating only a moderate amount of sugars and foods and drinks containing added sugars will help reduce tooth decay.
- Make it a habit to read food labels and food information panels to compare the saturated fat and salt in foods.
- Instead of salt, use a variety of herbs, spices, citrus juices, vinegars or wine in your cooking.
- Explore ways to increase your regular daily activity, such as walking the last kilometre to work, taking the stairs instead of the lift and participating in regular recreational exercise. Aim to do 30 minutes or more of moderate intensity physical activity on most, if not all, days of the week. This will benefit your health in many ways, including helping you maintain a healthy weight.

Your Goals

To eat a healthier diet, I will by/...../.....



The Dietitians Association of Australia endorses this nutrition guide and participated in its development as part of our work towards better food, better health and better living for all Australians. We are the largest professional nutrition-focused body in Australia. For general nutrition information, please visit www.daa.asn.au. For expert nutrition and dietary advice we recommend you contact an Accredited Practising Dietitian (APD). To find one near you, call our hotline 1800 812 942, visit www.daa.asn.au or look in the Yellow Pages under 'Dietitians'.