AUSTRALIAN DIETARY GUIDELINES 2013

The Australian Dietary Guidelines (2013) provide advice on the amounts and types of foods that should be consumed for health and wellbeing. They are based on the best available scientific evidence and apply to all healthy Australians, as well as those with common health conditions such as being overweight. They do not apply to people who need special dietary advice for a medical condition, nor to the frail elderly.

Following the guidelines will encourage a balanced food intake which will provide adequate amounts of essential nutrients, and reduce the risk of developing chronic, diet-related diseases.

How do the new guidelines (2013) differ from the old (2003)?

The 2013 Australian Dietary Guidelines have an increased focus on foods and food groups, instead of nutrients, making them more user-friendly. They also have an increased focus on the effect of food on health outcomes, in particular weight gain, heart disease and some cancers.

The new dietary guidelines have:

- an increased recommendation for serves per day of Milk, yoghurt, cheese and alternatives and Lean meat and poultry, fish, eggs, tofu, nuts and seeds, and legumes/beans food groups, and
- a decreased recommendation for serves per day of cereal (grain) foods.

Recommendations for the Fruits and vegetables food groups are relatively unchanged.

Guidelines have been included for children under 4 years old, so the guidelines now cover all ages, from 2 years to older adulthood. Separate infant feeding guidelines have been developed for children under 2.

Disclaimer: the above is based on average serves/day across all age groups. Differences in some age groups may vary from the averages listed above. To obtain accurate recommendations on number of serves per day for your age and gender, refer to the guidelines themselves on the Eat for Health website http://www.eatforhealth.gov.au/guidelines
The Australian Dietary Guidelines 2013

Guideline 1: To achieve and maintain a healthy weight, be physically active and choose amounts of nutritious food and drinks to meet your energy needs

- Children and adolescents should eat sufficient nutritious foods to grow and develop normally. They should be physically active every day and their growth should be checked regularly.
- Older people should eat nutritious foods and keep physically active to help maintain muscle strength and a healthy weight.

Guideline 2: Enjoy a wide variety of nutritious foods from these five food groups every day

- Plenty of vegetables of different types and colours, and legumes/beans
- Fruit
- Grain (cereal) foods, mostly wholegrain and/or high cereal fibre varieties, such as breads, cereals, rice, pasta, noodles, polenta, couscous, oats, quinoa and barley
- Lean meat and poultry, fish, eggs, tofu, nuts and seeds, and legumes/beans
- Milk, yoghurt, cheese and/or their alternatives, mostly reduced fat

And drink plenty of water

Guideline 3: Limit intake of foods containing saturated fat, added salt, added sugars and alcohol

A. Limit intake of foods high in saturated fat such as many biscuits, cakes, pastries, pies, processed meats, commercial burgers, pizza, fried foods, potato chips, crisps and other savoury snacks
   - Replace high fat foods which contain predominately saturated fats such as butter, cream, cooking margarine, coconut and palm oil with foods which contain predominately polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fats such as oils, spreads, nut butters/pastes and avocado
   - Low fat diets are not suitable for children under the age of 2 years

B. Limit intake of foods and drinks containing added salt
   - Read labels to choose lower sodium options among similar foods
   - Do not add salt to foods in cooking or at the table

C. Limit intake of foods and drinks containing added sugars such as sugar sweetened soft drinks and cordials, fruit drinks, vitamin waters, energy and sports drinks

D. If you choose to drink alcohol, limit intake. For women who are pregnant, planning a pregnancy or breastfeeding, not drinking alcohol is the safest option.

Guideline 4: Encourage and support breastfeeding

Guideline 5: Care for your food and store it safely
Foods to limit

Discretionary choices*

‘Discretionary choices’ are called that because they are not an essential or necessary part of our dietary patterns. Discretionary foods are high in kilojoules, saturated fat, added sugars, added salt or alcohol.

If chosen, they should be eaten only sometimes and in small amounts.

Examples of discretionary choices include:

- Sweet biscuits, cakes and desserts
- Processed meats and sausages
- Ice-cream, confectionery and chocolate
- Meat pies and other pastries
- Commercial burgers, hot chips, and fried foods
- Crisps and other fatty and/or salty snacks
- Cream and butter
- Sugar-sweetened cordials, soft drinks, fruit drinks and sports drinks
- Alcoholic drinks


Australian Guide to Healthy Eating

The Australian Guide to Healthy Eating is a food selection guide which visually represents the proportion of the five food groups recommended for consumption each day.