

It's easy to find a way to  
get some extra  
fruit and vegies in your day.



An Australian Government, State and Territory health initiative.



**Australian Government**  
Department of Health and Ageing

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## Why go for 2 and 5?

Most people know that fruit and vegetables are good for you. The fact is, eating more fruit and vegies may be the single most important dietary change needed to improve health and reduce the risk of disease.

Most Australian adults eat one or more serves of fruit per day. Half eat about 2-3 serves of vegies per day. You need 2 serves of fruit and 5 serves of vegies - so, you are already halfway there.

A lifetime habit of eating adequate fruit and vegetables every day can help protect against:

- Coronary heart disease
- Some forms of cancer
- Overweight and obesity
- Constipation

It can also help to:

- Reduce blood pressure and blood cholesterol levels
- Improve control of diabetes

Enjoying a wide variety of nutritious foods every day like vegetables, legumes; fruits; breads and cereals; lean meat, fish, poultry or meat alternatives; milk products; and water is essential for good health and well being.

For further information on healthy eating visit the healthy active website ([www.healthyactive.gov.au](http://www.healthyactive.gov.au)) or call 1800 020 103 for a free copy of *The Australian Guide to Healthy Eating*.



## How much is enough?

The Australian Government recommends that adults eat at least 2 serves of fruit and 5 serves of vegetables per day. The amount for children depends on their age.

Pregnant and breastfeeding women should aim to eat 4 to 5 serves of fruit and 6 to 7 serves of vegetables to meet the extra demands of the body.

## What is a serve?

One serve of VEGETABLES is 75 grams or:



1/2 cup cooked vegetables or cooked legumes

1 medium potato

1 cup salad vegetables

One serve of FRUIT is 150 grams of fresh fruit or:



1 medium piece (e.g. apple)

2 small pieces (e.g. apricots)

1 cup canned or chopped fruit

Choose fresh fruit instead of fruit juice or dried fruit. Juices have lower fibre content than fresh fruit. Dried fruit, if eaten in large quantities, can contribute to tooth decay because it contains a concentrated form of sugar that sticks to your teeth.

## Are you getting enough?

Recent research shows that most Australians would benefit from increasing their fruit and vegetable intake.

In 2001, 70% of Australians over 12 years usually ate less than 4 serves of vegetables per day. Half usually ate 2 or more serves of fruit<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> National Health Survey 2001, Australian Bureau of Statistics.



## Are you there yet?

Circle the answer which best describes your intake.

How often do you eat vegetables or salad as a snack?	
Never	3
Sometimes	2
Most days	1
Every day	0
How often do you eat vegetables or salad with your main meals?	
Never, or less than once per week	3
One to three times per week	2
Four to six times per week	1
Every day	0
How many serves of vegetables do you usually eat per day?	
Less than one per day	3
One to two per day	2
Three to four per day	1
More than five per day	0
How often do you eat fruit as a snack?	
Never	3
Sometimes	2
Most days	1
Every day	0
How often do you eat fruit with your main meals?	
Never, or less than once per week	3
One to three times per week	2
Four to six times per week	1
Every day	0
How many serves of fruit do you usually eat per day?	
None	2
One to two per day	1
More than two per day	0

## How did you score?

A score of 2 or 3 for any question means that you could easily improve your fruit and vegetable intake. Now we'll show you how you can do it.

## How to get there.

It's easy to 'Go for 2 and 5'. Simply add an extra serve to the meals and snacks you already eat. Here's how:

### Go for convenience.

Vegetables only take minutes to cook in the microwave, so add a variety to your main meals.

Fruit comes in its own convenient 'wrapper'. It makes the ideal snack to pop in your bag.

#### FRUIT

##### Breakfast

- Add to breakfast cereal or yogurt
- Top toast with sliced bananas
- Grate apple or pear into pancake mix
- Blend soft fruit like bananas, strawberries or canned fruit with skim milk, yogurt, and ice for a frothy fruit smoothie

##### Snacks

- Pack fresh fruit for a quick snack at any time
- Freeze bananas, grapes, strawberries and oranges for an icy snack
- Puree fruit and pour into ice-block moulds to add to drinks
- Add fresh or dried fruit to muffin or cake mixtures

##### Main meals

- Include dried fruit in recipes for stuffings
- Add fruit to savoury salads
- Add fruit to baked fish or chicken
- Add chopped dried fruit to couscous (eg. apricots or apple)

##### Desserts

- Chop fruit into bite-sized pieces and thread onto skewers for a colourful kebab
- Cut into pieces, add to a parfait glass with yogurt
- Serve fresh seasonal fruit for dessert
- Puree stewed fruit as a topping for desserts or swirl into yogurt



## VEGETABLES

### Breakfast

- Top toast with cooked mushrooms, tomatoes, capsicum or sweet corn
- Chop and add to an omelette or savoury pancake
- Heat chopped leftover vegetables and serve as a topping for toast; add an egg or reduced-fat cheese for a more substantial meal

### Snacks

- Top English muffins or crumpets with diced vegetables and sprinkle with reduced-fat cheese for a quick mini pizza
- Serve carrot and celery sticks, florets of broccoli and cauliflower, and strips of capsicum with a low fat dip
- Grate or dice onion, carrot, zucchini, potato and corn into a savoury muffin or pikelet mixture
- Grate beetroot and butternut pumpkin to add colour to your salad or sandwich

### Main meals

- Make meat go further by adding extra vegetables in a stir-fry or casserole
  - Add vegies in season or legumes (eg dried beans, peas or lentils) to soups for added flavour and taste
    - Add extra vegies, dried peas, beans or lentils to recipes for: meatloaves, patties and stuffings, stews and casseroles, pies, nachos, pasta and rice dishes, pizza and pancakes
    - Always serve main meals with cooked vegetables or a salad
    - Use capsicum, zucchini, pumpkin, eggplant, cabbage and lettuce leaves as edible containers with savoury fillings
- For easy wedges, cut potato, sweet potato, pumpkin and parsnip into wedges; microwave until cooked; mix with a teaspoon of vegetable oil, dried mixed herbs and seasoning, and grill until crispy

For more ideas and recipes visit [www.gofor2and5.com.au](http://www.gofor2and5.com.au)



## Food value.

By looking at the nutritional value of fruit and vegetables you can see why eating them regularly helps you feel better and protects the body from disease.

Remember to include some raw fruit and vegetables, high in vitamin A and vitamin C and cruciferous vegetables every day. Scientists are continually discovering why fruit and vegetables are good for your health.

### VITAMINS

Fruit and vegetables are good sources of vitamin A, vitamin C and folate.

**Vitamin A** is found in large amounts in dark green, yellow and orange fruit and vegetables, eg carrots, pumpkin, spinach and rockmelon. Beta-carotene is the main form of vitamin A in fruit and vegetables. Vitamin A keeps skin and eyes healthy and also defends the body against infection.

**Vitamin C** is found mainly in fruits and vegetables such as tomatoes, capsicum, broccoli, cabbage, citrus fruit (eg oranges), rockmelon and kiwi fruit. Vitamin C helps your body to absorb iron from food - another good reason to include fruits and vegetables at every meal!

Fruit and vegetables are rich in **antioxidants**. These include vitamins A, C, E and carotenoids such as beta-carotene.



## WHAT ARE ANTIOXIDANTS?

Oxidation occurs as part of the body's natural functions. Oxidation produces free radicals, which attack cell tissues. Further oxidation occurs through exposure to cigarette smoke and sun damage. Oxidation is linked with poor health and premature ageing.

Antioxidants protect the body from the damaging effects of oxidation, supporting the immune system and protecting against disease. While the body naturally provides antioxidants, it also relies heavily on antioxidants supplied through the diet.

Regular consumption of antioxidant rich fruit and vegetables can help protect against the risk of cancer and heart disease.

**Folate** is found in green vegetables, dried peas, beans and lentils. Folate has been found to prevent the birth defect spina bifida.

## CRUCIFEROUS VEGETABLES

The cruciferous family of vegetables (cauliflower, broccoli, Brussels sprouts and cabbage), along with vegetables rich in vitamins A and C, may help to protect against some types of cancer.

## DIETARY FIBRE

Fruit and vegetables are also a good source of dietary fibre. High fibre foods are filling, so they help to satisfy your appetite for longer. There are two main types of dietary fibre – soluble and insoluble. Soluble fibre, found in fruit, oats, barley, dried or canned beans and some vegetables, may help lower blood cholesterol levels.

Insoluble fibre, found in wholegrain breads, cereals and vegetables, can help to prevent constipation.

So it is important to eat a wide variety of high-fibre foods every day.



## ENERGY VALUES

All fruit and vegetables except olives and avocados are low in fat and this keeps their energy value low. Green leafy vegetables and those with a high water content such as cabbage, lettuce, cucumber, and celery have a low energy value.

## PHYTOCHEMICALS

Phytochemicals are plant chemicals, which are thought to protect against some diseases including heart disease and cancer.

## Five easy steps to make sure you always eat a variety of good food.

1. Plan all your meals and shopping list before you shop. Check that you have included lots of fruit and vegetables.
2. Once in the store, be flexible enough to take advantage of specials. Swap to fruit or vegetables in season if they are cheaper, eg grapes or nectarines may be 'in'.
3. When fresh fruit or vegetables are in limited supply, check the price of frozen or canned varieties. These may be a substitute at a better price.
4. Choose brands of frozen or canned fruits and vegetables with 'reduced' or 'no added' fat, salt or sugar.
5. Shop regularly – 2 to 3 times a week if you can. Less to carry, and fruit and vegies will be fresh, look good, taste good and keep their nutritional value.



## Go for more.

Many people think that fruit and vegetables are expensive. This is because they change price due to supply. Check the price per kilogram and you will find that fresh fruit and vegetables in season are always less expensive than other foods.

- Check the price and quality of bulk buckets or bags of fruits and vegetables. They are usually ripe and a good buy to use immediately.
- When one fruit or vegetable is out of season or expensive, substitute with another type.
  - Make the most of fruit and vegetables when they are plentiful. Buy extra and prepare for future use. For example, make vegetable soup, or stewed fruit to freeze for later.
- Plan meals around vegetables, rice and pasta first and then meat for flavour. Try capsicums stuffed with rice and minced meat or stir-fried vegetables and meat, fish or chicken served with noodles.
- Extend meat dishes with cheaper vegetables such as carrots, potatoes and cabbage.
- Add in a vegetarian dish once a week. Use vegetables with rice, pasta, and different types of dried beans and lentils.



## Go for value for money.

When we buy foods that are 'value for money' we achieve 'value for health'. Try spending in line with the Australian Guide to Healthy Eating.



**Spend most on foods you should eat the most of.** They include fruit, vegetables and legumes, and cereal and grain foods (eg. breads, cereals, rice, pasta, noodles). These foods contain vitamins, minerals and fibre and are the food nutritionists recommend you should eat the most of. Eat more of these foods every day.

**Spend moderately on foods you should eat in moderate amounts.** They include lean red meat, fish, chicken, eggs, cheese, milk and nuts. These foods contain protein, vitamins and minerals (such as iron and calcium). We need some of these foods every day in moderate amounts.

**Spend least on foods you should eat the least of.** They include chocolate, crisps, sweet biscuits, cordials, soft drinks, coffee, fatty meats (sausages, bacon), and pies. These foods are high in fat, sugar and salt and do not provide many nutrients. Only eat sometimes and in small amounts.

## How to handle your fruit and vegetables with care.

Keep fruit and vegetables fresh by protecting them from heat and light on the way home. Store them correctly as soon as possible.

## Always wash fruit and vegetables before you eat or prepare them.

### USE HEALTHY COOKING METHODS

Make the most of the nutritional value of fruit and vegetables by limiting the amount of added fat, salt and sugar. Try healthy cooking methods such as steaming, grilling, baking, dry roasting, microwaving, or barbecuing.

## Store to keep.

Look for storage tips on leaflets provided by the growers.

These are often near the display.

### GREEN LEAFY VEGETABLES AND SALAD VEGETABLES.

Store, unwashed, in the crisper, or in vented plastic bags in the refrigerator. Try using some of the products designed to extend the life of fruit and vegetables eg Special bags or 'ExtraLife' disk.

### CITRUS FRUIT, APPLES AND PEARS.

Best stored unwashed in the refrigerator. If this is not possible then store in a cool and well ventilated place.

### BANANAS.

Store at room temperature. Do not refrigerate.

Find a cool place if it is very hot.

### MUSHROOMS.

Best stored in paper bags in the refrigerator.

### ROOT VEGETABLES - CARROTS, TURNIPS, BEETROOT, PARSNIP.

Store in plastic bags or the crisper compartment of the refrigerator.

### ONIONS, POTATOES AND GARLIC.

Store in a cool, dark, dry and well ventilated place.

Try the following two quick and easy recipes to include more vegies into your day!

## The Five in Five Stir-Fry (Serves 4)



### INGREDIENTS:

- 2 cups uncooked rice
- 1 teaspoon vegetable oil
- 250g chicken breast (skin removed), cut into strips
- 1-2 cloves of garlic, crushed
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 2 medium carrots, sliced thinly
- 1 stick celery, sliced
- 1 red capsicum, sliced
- 125 g snow peas, trim ends
- 1 bunch bok choy or 1 cup of cabbage, roughly chopped
- 2 teaspoons cornflour
- 2 tablespoons reduced-salt soy sauce
- 1/2 cup chicken stock
- 1 tablespoon sweet chilli sauce

### METHOD:

Cook rice following directions on packet. Whilst rice is cooking, heat oil in a wok or large pan. Stir-fry chicken until almost cooked (3 to 4 minutes). Remove chicken and set aside. Cook garlic, onion, carrot, celery and capsicum for 2 minutes. Add chicken, snow peas and bok choy and cook for a further 2 minutes. In a small bowl mix cornflour and soy sauce to a smooth paste then stir in stock and chilli sauce. Pour sauce mixture to stir-fry and heat through. Serve over rice.

### VARIATION:

Use lean pork loin instead of chicken.  
Try noodles instead of rice.



## Tropical Pizza (Serves 4)



Quicker than picking up take-away pizza! Serve with a crisp green salad.

### INGREDIENTS:

25 cm pizza base or Turkish bread  
1/4 cup tomato pasta sauce  
100 g ham, chopped  
225 g can pineapple pieces (in natural juice), drained  
1 medium capsicum, red or green, chopped  
100 g mushrooms, sliced  
100 g mozzarella cheese, grated  
1 teaspoon chopped herbs (basil, oregano or parsley) or a pinch of dried mixed herbs

### METHOD:

Preheat oven to 200°C.

Spread pizza base with pasta sauce. Top with ham, pineapple, capsicum, mushrooms and cheese. Sprinkle with dried herbs. Bake for 10 to 15 minutes until heated through and browned.

### HANDY HINT:

Make 8 mini pizzas using 4 halved English muffins for the base.

