

## HELPFUL HINTS

EATING WELL DURING YOUR PREGNANCY HELPS YOUR BABY DEVELOP AND HAS HEALTH BENEFITS FOR YOU TOO!

Both you and your growing baby need extra nutrients.

Steady weight gain during pregnancy is normal and important for the health of the mother and baby. However, it is also important not to gain too much weight.

So choose foods from the Five Food Groups and limit discretionary foods and drinks high in saturated fat, added sugars and added salt such as cakes, biscuits and potato chips.

You can eat well by:

- Enjoying a variety of fruits and vegetables of different types and colours.
- Increasing your grain consumption to 8–8½ serves a day – mostly wholegrain – in preference to discretionary choices.
- Choosing foods high in iron, such as lean red meat or tofu, which are important for pregnant women.
- Making a habit of drinking milk, eating hard cheese and yoghurt, or calcium enriched alternatives. Reduced fat varieties are best.
- Enjoying a wide variety of vegetables, legumes, fruit and wholegrains and drinking plenty of water every day can assist with constipation – a common occurrence during pregnancy.



The *Australian Dietary Guidelines* provide up-to-date advice about the amount and kinds of foods that we need to eat for health and wellbeing.

**For more information visit:**  
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**Australian Government**  
**National Health and Medical Research Council**  
**Department of Health and Ageing**

# Healthy eating during your pregnancy

**ADVICE ON EATING FOR YOU AND YOUR BABY**



[www.eatforhealth.gov.au](http://www.eatforhealth.gov.au)

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## WHAT ARE THE DIETARY GUIDELINES?

The *Australian Dietary Guidelines* provide up-to-date advice about the amount and kinds of foods that we need to eat for health and wellbeing. They are based on scientific evidence and research.

The *Australian Dietary Guidelines* of most relevance during pregnancy are included below:

### 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.

### 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 meats 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.

- 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.
- 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.
- Limit intake of foods and drinks containing added sugars such as confectionary, sugar-sweetened soft drinks and cordials, fruit drinks, vitamin waters, energy and sports drinks.
- For women who are pregnant, planning a pregnancy or breastfeeding, not drinking alcohol is the safest option.

### GUIDELINE 4:

Encourage, support and promote breastfeeding.

### GUIDELINE 5:

Care for your food; prepare and store it safely.



## WHICH FOODS SHOULD I AVOID?

**PREGNANT WOMEN ARE AT GREATER RISK OF FOOD POISONING AND SHOULD PREPARE AND STORE FOOD CAREFULLY. THEY SHOULD ALSO AVOID ALCOHOL.**

**Pregnant women should avoid:**

- Foods which may contain listeria bacteria like soft cheeses (brie, camembert, ricotta, feta and blue cheese), sandwich meats, bean sprouts, pre-prepared salads and pâté.
- Raw eggs as they may contain salmonella.
- Alcohol – not drinking is the safest option.
- Fish that may contain high levels of mercury – Food Standards Australia New Zealand recommend consuming no more than one serve (100g cooked) per fortnight of shark/flake, marlin or broadbill/swordfish, and no other fish that fortnight, or one serve (100g cooked) per week of orange roughy (deep sea perch) or catfish and no other fish that week.
- Foods such as nuts during pregnancy only if they are allergic to the foods themselves – avoiding these foods has no impact on the infant's risk of developing allergy symptoms.

Want more information?  
[www.eatforhealth.gov.au](http://www.eatforhealth.gov.au)



Want more information about healthy eating when you are pregnant?

[www.eatforhealth.gov.au](http://www.eatforhealth.gov.au)

# SERVE SIZES



## Vegetables and legumes/beans

### Serves per day

	18 years or under	19–50 years
Women	5	5
Pregnant	5	5
Breastfeeding	5½	7½

A standard serve of vegetables is about 75g (100–350kJ) or:

- ½ cup cooked green or orange vegetables (for example, broccoli, spinach, carrots or pumpkin)
- ½ cup cooked, dried or canned beans, peas or lentils\*
- 1 cup green leafy or raw salad vegetables
- ½ cup sweet corn
- ½ medium potato or other starchy vegetables (sweet potato, taro or cassava)
- 1 medium tomato

\*preferably with no added salt



## Fruit

### Serves per day

	18 years or under	19–50 years
Women	2	2
Pregnant	2	2
Breastfeeding	2	2

A standard serve of fruit is about 150g (350kJ) or:

- 1 medium apple, banana, orange or pear
  - 2 small apricots, kiwi fruits or plums
  - 1 cup diced or canned fruit (with no added sugar)
- Or only occasionally:
- 125ml (½ cup) fruit juice (with no added sugar)
  - 30g dried fruit (for example, 4 dried apricot halves, 1½ tablespoons of sultanas)



## Grain (cereal) foods, mostly wholegrain and/or high cereal fibre varieties

### Serves per day

	18 years or under	19–50 years
Women	7	6
Pregnant	8	8½
Breastfeeding	9	9

A standard serve (500kJ) is:

- 1 slice (40g) bread
- ½ medium (40g) roll or flat bread
- ½ cup (75–120g) cooked rice, pasta, noodles, barley, buckwheat, semolina, polenta, bulgur or quinoa
- ½ cup (120g) cooked porridge
- ¾ cup (30g) wheat cereal flakes
- ¼ cup (30g) muesli
- 3 (35g) crispbreads
- 1 (60g) crumpet
- 1 small (35g) English muffin or scone



## Lean meats and poultry, fish, eggs, tofu, nuts and seeds, and legumes/beans

### Serves per day

	18 years or under	19–50 years
Women	2½	2½
Pregnant	3½	3½
Breastfeeding	2½	2½

A standard serve (500–600kJ) is:

- 65g cooked lean meats such as beef, lamb, veal, pork, goat or kangaroo (about 90–100g raw)\*
- 80g cooked lean poultry such as chicken or turkey (100g raw)
- 100g cooked fish fillet (about 115g raw weight) or one small can of fish
- 2 large (120g) eggs
- 1 cup (150g) cooked or canned legumes/beans such as lentils, chick peas or split peas (preferably with no added salt)
- 170g tofu
- 30g nuts, seeds, peanut or almond butter or tahini or other nut or seed paste (no added salt)

\*weekly limit of 455g



## Milk, yoghurt, cheese and/or alternatives, mostly reduced fat

### Serves per day

	18 years or under	19–50 years
Women	3½	2½
Pregnant	3½	2½
Breastfeeding	4	2½

A standard serve (500–600kJ) is:

- 1 cup (250ml) fresh, UHT long life, reconstituted powdered milk or buttermilk
- ½ cup (120ml) evaporated milk
- 2 slices (40g) or 4 x 3 x 2cm cube (40g) of hard cheese, such as cheddar
- ¾ cup (200g) yoghurt
- 1 cup (250ml) soy, rice or other cereal drink with at least 100mg of added calcium per 100ml

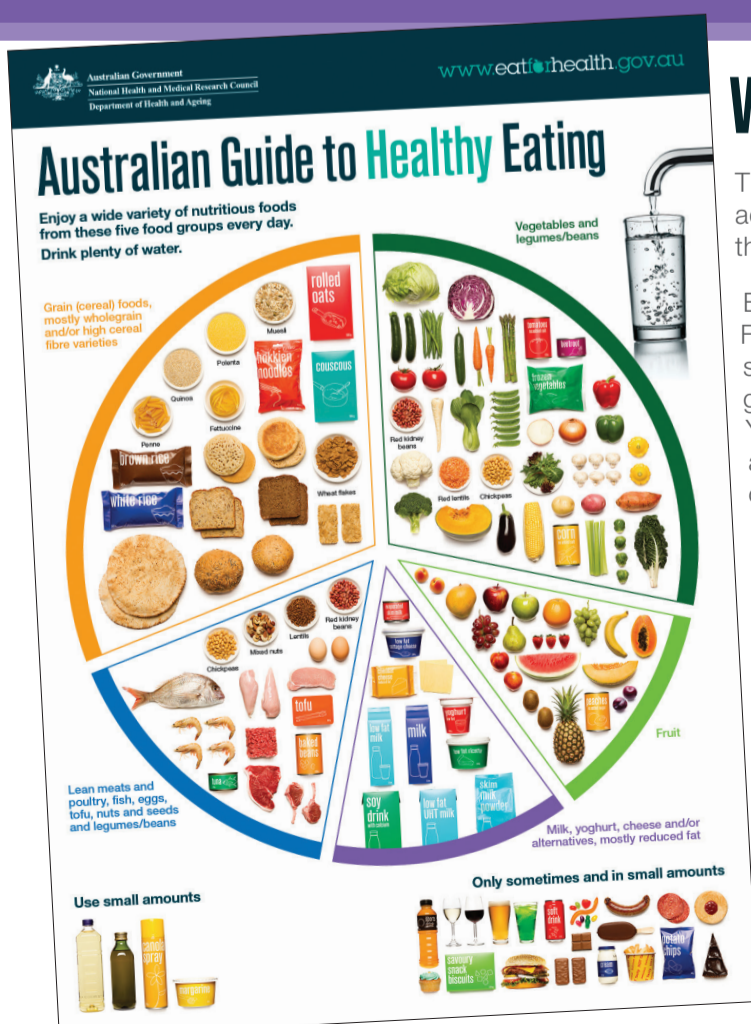
- To meet additional energy needs, extra serves from the Five Food Groups or unsaturated spreads and oils, or discretionary choices may be needed only by those women who are taller or more active, but not overweight.

- An allowance for unsaturated spreads and oils for cooking, or nuts and seeds can be included in the following quantities: 14–20g per day for pregnant and breastfeeding women.

- For meal ideas and advice on how to apply the serve sizes go to:

[www.eatforhealth.gov.au](http://www.eatforhealth.gov.au)

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION GO TO [www.eatforhealth.gov.au](http://www.eatforhealth.gov.au)



\*For pregnant women – not drinking alcohol is the safest option.

## WHICH FOODS SHOULD I EAT AND HOW MUCH?

The *Australian Dietary Guidelines* provide up-to-date advice about the amount and kinds of foods and drinks that we need regularly, for health and well-being.

By eating the recommended amounts from the Five Food Groups and limiting the foods that are high in saturated fat, added sugars and added salt, you will get enough of the nutrients essential for good health. You may reduce your risk of chronic diseases such as heart disease, type 2 diabetes, obesity and some cancers. You may also feel better, look better, enjoy life more and live longer!

The amount of food you will need from the Five Food Groups depends on your age, height, weight and physical activity levels, and also whether you are pregnant or breastfeeding. For example, if you're pregnant you should aim to eat at least 8½ serves of grain (cereal) foods a day. You might notice that the number of serves you need from the Five Food Groups changes when you are pregnant or breastfeeding – this is due to changes in your nutrient requirements for your growing baby's needs and to support breastfeeding.

For further information go to [www.eatforhealth.gov.au](http://www.eatforhealth.gov.au).

### HOW MUCH IS A SERVE?

It's helpful to get to know the recommended serving sizes and serves per day so that you eat and drink the right amount of the nutritious foods you and your baby need for health – as shown in the tables above. We've given you the serve size in grams too, so you can weigh foods to get an idea of what a serve looks like.

The 'serve size' is a set amount that doesn't change. It is used along with the 'serves per day', to work out the total amount of food required from each of the Five Food Groups. 'Portion size' is the amount you actually eat and this will depend on what your energy needs are. Some people's portion sizes are smaller than the 'serve size' and some are larger. This means some people may need to eat from the Five Food Groups more often than others.

### HOW MANY SERVES A DAY?

Few people eat exactly the same way each day and it is common to have a little more on some days than others. However, on average, the total of your portion sizes should end up being similar to the number of serves you need each day.

If you eat portions that are smaller than the 'serve size' you will need to eat from the Food Groups more often. If your portion size is larger than the 'serve size', then you will need to eat from the Food Groups less often.