

NGĀ KAI TŌTIKA MĀ TE HUNGA PAKEKE

# EATING FOR HEALTHY ADULTS



Everyone needs to be active and eat well to be healthy. Being healthy increases your quality of life and your sense of wellbeing.



This booklet has guidelines on:

- the types of food and drinks you need to eat and drink to be healthy
- how you can be active in everyday life
- how to safely prepare and store food.

This booklet is based on the Ministry of Health's *Food and Nutrition Guidelines for Healthy Adults*, available at [www.health.govt.nz](http://www.health.govt.nz). See also the back page of this booklet for further sources of information.

## ***Eat a variety of healthy foods each day***

Eat well by including a variety of healthy foods from each of the four major food groups.

1. Eat plenty of vegetables and fruit.
  2. Eat plenty of breads and cereals, preferably wholegrain.
  3. Have milk and milk products in your diet, preferably reduced- or low-fat options.
  4. Include lean meat, poultry, seafood, eggs or alternatives.
- Prepare foods or choose pre-prepared foods, drinks and snacks:
    - with minimal added fat, especially saturated fat
    - that are low in salt (if you use salt, choose iodised salt)
    - with little added sugar (limit your intake of high-sugar foods).
  - Drink plenty of liquids each day, especially water.
  - If you choose to drink alcohol, limit your intake.
  - Think about food safety when you purchase, prepare, cook and store food.
  - Maintain a healthy body weight by eating well and by daily physical activity.

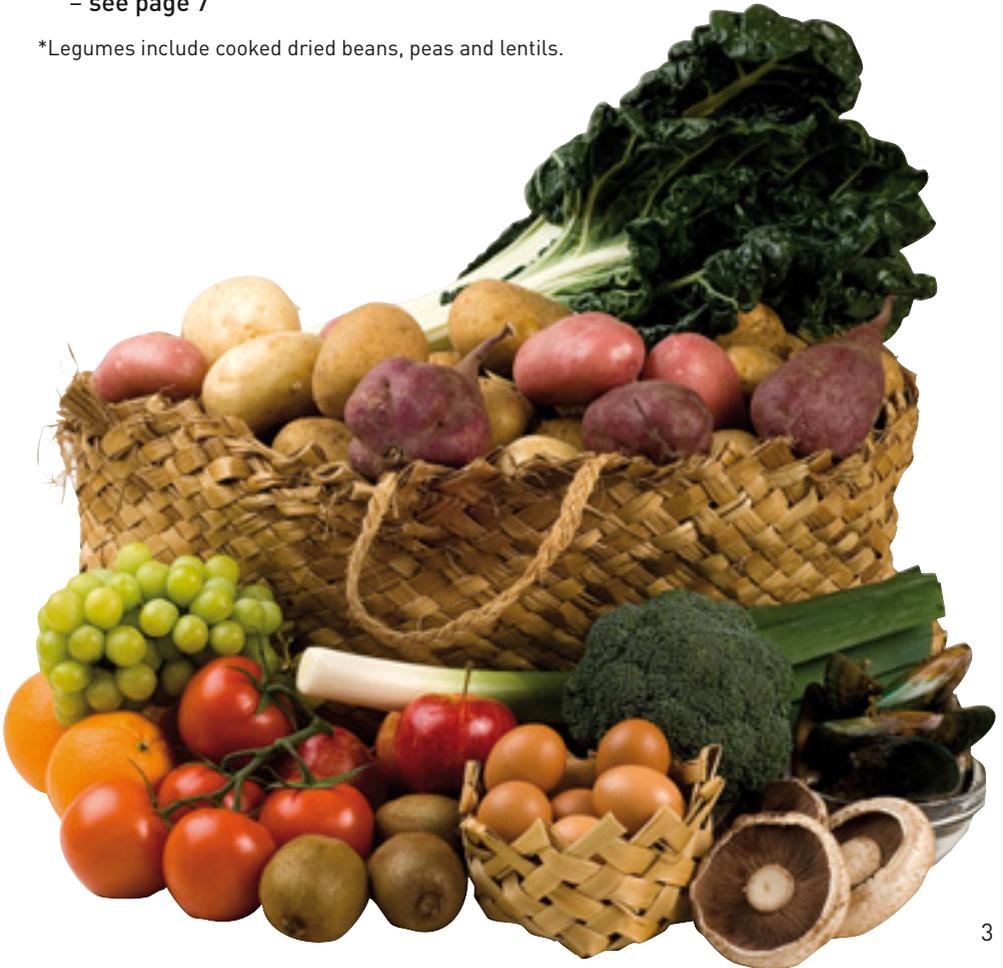
## *Eat many different foods*

You need to eat many different foods to be healthy. The four main food groups have a mixture of nutrients – carbohydrate, fat, protein, vitamins and minerals – all of which you need to stay healthy.

Choose a variety of foods from the four food groups every day:

- vegetables and fruit – **see page 4**
- breads and cereals – **see page 5**
- milk and milk products – **see page 6**
- lean meats, chicken, seafood, eggs, legumes\*, nuts and seeds – **see page 7**

\*Legumes include cooked dried beans, peas and lentils.





## Vegetables and fruit

Vegetables and fruit provide carbohydrate, fibre, vitamins and minerals and are low in fat. They should be eaten with most meals and are good snack foods.

- Choose well-washed, fresh, frozen or canned vegetables and fruit that are raw or lightly cooked.
- Eat many different coloured vegetables and fruit; for example, tomato or strawberry, broccoli or kiwifruit, carrot or mandarin, eggplant or plum, potato or pear.

### How much do I need?

At least **3** servings of vegetables and **2** servings of fruit every day.

#### What is 1 serving?

- 1 medium potato, kumara, yam, or taro
- ½ cup of cooked vegetables, eg, broccoli, peas, corn, spinach, pūhā, bok choy (go easy on butter and margarine) (50–80 g)
- 1 tomato
- ½ cup of salad (60 g)
- 1 apple, pear, banana or orange
- ½ cup of fresh or stewed fruit salad (135 g)
- 2 small apricots or plums

**Dried fruit and fruit juice** are not recommended because they have a lot of sugar. If you choose them, have only one serving of dried fruit (about 2 tablespoons or 25 g) **or** one serving of juice (1 cup or 250 mL) each day.



## Breads and cereals

Breads and cereals contain carbohydrate, which is an important source of energy and fibre and some vitamins and minerals. You need to eat breads and cereals every day.

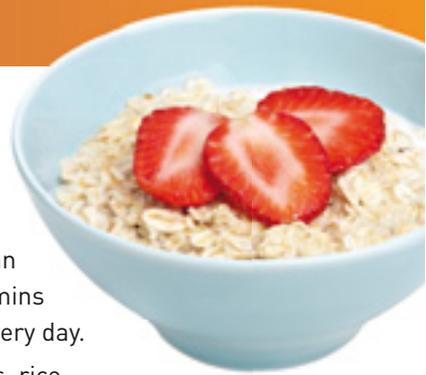
- These foods include breads and breakfast cereals, rice, noodles and pasta.
- Choose wholegrain breads and cereals (eg, rolled oats, brown rice, bread with whole grains) because they contain the most fibre, vitamins and minerals and help prevent constipation.

### How much do I need?

At least **6** servings every day – preferably wholegrain varieties.

#### What is 1 serving?

- 1 medium slice of bread or 1 medium slice of rēwena bread
- 1 roll
- 2 breakfast wheat biscuits
- ½ cup of muesli (55 g) or ½ cup of cooked porridge/rolled oats (130 g)
- 1 cup of cornflakes (30 g)
- 1 cup of cooked pasta or rice (150 g)
- 1 cup of cassava or tapioca (150 g)
- 1 muffin (80 g)
- 2 plain sweet biscuits





## *Milk and milk products*

These foods provide energy, protein and many vitamins and minerals, including calcium. Calcium is important for strong bones and teeth.

- Choose reduced-fat or low-fat milk, yoghurt and cheese.
- If you cannot drink cow's milk, choose a milk alternative with added calcium (check the label).
- Other foods such as wholemeal bread, peanuts, broccoli, canned salmon, sardines, spinach, baked beans and tofu also contain calcium, but in smaller amounts than milk and milk products.

### *How much do I need?*

At least **2** servings every day. Choose reduced-fat or low-fat options.

#### *What is 1 serving?*

- 1 cup (250 mL) of reduced-fat or low-fat milk
- 1 pottle of low-fat yoghurt (150 g)
- 2 slices (40 g) or ½ cup of grated cheese (eg, edam)



## Lean meats, chicken, seafood, eggs, legumes\*, nuts and seeds

These foods all contain protein, and vitamins and minerals, including iron and zinc.

- Choose lean meats, chicken and seafood.
- The body absorbs iron in lean meats, chicken and seafood more easily than iron from plants such as legumes.
- To help absorb iron, eat foods that are rich in vitamin C with your meals. Fresh fruits and vegetables, especially oranges, kiwifruit, tomatoes, peppers and broccoli are rich sources of vitamin C.
- Legumes, nuts and seeds are a good source of protein and other nutrients.

\*Legumes include cooked dried beans, peas and lentils.

For more information on vegetarian eating, see the booklet *Eating for Healthy Vegetarians* (code HE1519), available at [www.health.govt.nz](http://www.health.govt.nz)

### How much do I need?

At least **1** serving every day.

#### What is 1 serving?

- 2 slices of cooked meat (100 g) (eg, roast lamb, chicken, beef or pork)
- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup of mince or casserole (195 g)
- 1 medium fillet of fish (100–120 g)
- 1 medium fillet of steak (100–120 g)
- 2 chicken drumsticks or 1 chicken leg
- 1 medium pāua or kina (100–120 g)
- 1 egg
- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup of cooked dried beans (eg, baked beans)
- $\frac{1}{3}$  cup of nuts or seeds (50 g)
- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup of tofu (200 g)



# *Eat foods low in fat, salt and sugar*

**Give yourself time to get used to food with less fat and salt.**

## **How to reduce fat**

- Choose lean cuts of meat from your supermarket and butcher.
- Before cooking, cut off any fat you can see from meat and chicken and remove the chicken skin after cooking.
- Grill, bake, boil, steam, stir-fry or microwave your food instead of frying it.
- Skim off the fat from stews and gravies.
- Use only a little oil, margarine or butter for cooking and as a spread.
- Choose low-fat milk, cheese, yoghurt and salad dressings.
- Remove the skin from takeaway chicken and the batter from takeaway fish.
- When eating out, avoid meals that are cooked in fat or have creamy sauces or rich gravies.

## **How to reduce sugar**

- Sugar is often associated with high-fat food. Have cakes, biscuits, chocolate bars and health bars occasionally.
- Look out for sugar on food labels. Sugar is sometimes called fructose, glucose, sucrose or honey.
- If you are trying to reduce the amount of fat in your diet, make sure you don't increase the amount of sugar you eat.



## How to reduce salt

Most of the salt you eat comes from processed foods. Foods high in salt include potato chips, salted nuts, yeast-based spreads, pickled foods, soy sauce and processed meats such as luncheon, sausages and salami.

- Eat meals without adding salt. Use less or no salt during cooking and taste your cooked food before adding salt. If you do use salt, iodised salt is recommended.
- To add flavour, use herbs, spices and vegetable or fruit juice instead of stocks and sauce mixes.
- Cooking food in minimal water or in the microwave helps keep flavour so extra salt is not needed.
- Ask for “no added salt” if you are buying takeaways.
- Choose snacks without added salt.
- If you are eating canned vegetables or fish, choose those that are canned in water without salt.



## Eating when you are out and about

Most takeaways are high in fat and salt. Have them on special occasions and not as an everyday food. Some lower fat takeaways include:

- kebabs and wraps
- grilled fish instead of deep fried fish
- pizza with more vegetables than cheese
- sushi
- pasta with tomato-based sauces
- thick chunky chips or wedges instead of thin chips
- noodle-based takeaways (not fried) with lots of vegetables
- baked potatoes with meat, beans and salad.



## *Drink plenty of fluids every day*

You need about 6–8 cups of water or other drinks each day to keep your body working properly. Tea and coffee can be included, but limit the amount of cordial, energy and soft drinks that you have.

- **Water is best** – it's cheap and easy to get. Keep a jug of cold water in the fridge and carry a bottle of water with you when you are out and about.
- Low-fat milk (or soy or rice milk) is also a good drink because it contains energy and many vitamins and minerals.
- Drink more in warm weather and when you are doing lots of physical work or activity.



# Alcohol

Drinking too much alcohol can cause health problems as well as injury. Alcohol is also high in energy, so you should drink less if you need to lose weight.

There is no “safe” level of alcohol for all people at all times. The amount you can drink depends on your age, whether you are male or female, your body size, food intake and general health.

The standard drinks measure lets you work out how much alcohol you are

drinking. It measures the amount of pure alcohol in a drink. One standard drink equals 10 grams of pure alcohol. All bottles of wine, beer and spirits and all cans or casks have a standard drinks content on the label. This tells you how many standard drinks there are in what you’re drinking.

Examples of one standard drink are: one 330 mL can of beer, one 30 mL measure of spirits, or one 100 mL glass of wine.

## ***Points to remember if you decide to drink alcohol***

- Have some alcohol-free days each week.
- Drinks containing alcohol are high in energy (kilojoules or calories) and may contribute to weight gain.
- When serving alcohol, ensure non-alcoholic drinks and food are also available.
- Eat food when you drink alcohol.
- Don’t drink alcohol if you are going to drive. If you want to drink, arrange for someone sober to drive you home.
- Don’t drink alcohol when operating machinery or when swimming or boating.
- If you are pregnant, it is best not to drink alcohol as alcohol can harm your baby.



## *Be active every day*

For improved health and wellbeing, aim to do at least 30 minutes of physical activity every day.

Be active in as many ways as possible – take the stairs rather than the lift and get off the bus early and walk. **Move more and sit less.** If possible, add some vigorous activity for extra health and fitness (see the table on page 14).

**Thirty** minutes a day will help you to:

- have more energy
- lower your stress levels
- improve your posture and balance
- maintain a healthy weight
- keep bones and muscles strong and joints flexible
- feel more relaxed and sleep better
- reduce the risks of heart disease, obesity, strokes, type 2 diabetes, some cancers, depression and falls
- live independently for longer.

Your body needs food to give it energy for living and activity. If you eat more food than your body needs, the extra energy will be stored as body fat and you will put on weight. By eating less food than your body needs, stored fat gets used and you lose weight.

## Aim for mainly moderate and some vigorous activities

Moderate	Vigorous
<p>I'm breathing faster and my heart is beating a bit more.</p> <p>I can still talk!</p>	<p>I'm puffing and my heart is beating faster.</p> <p>I can only say a few words without taking a breath.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brisk walking</li> <li>• Biking on the flat</li> <li>• Ballroom dancing, line dancing</li> <li>• Raking the garden, trimming shrubs, hoeing</li> <li>• Aqua aerobics</li> <li>• Sports, eg, golfing (carrying your bag), kapa haka</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jogging</li> <li>• Biking faster than 16 km per hour</li> <li>• Dance aerobics</li> <li>• Heavy digging, mowing with a hand mower, splitting logs</li> <li>• Fast lap swimming</li> <li>• Sports, eg, waka ama, rowing, kilikiti</li> </ul>

### Getting started

Start slowly if you have been inactive for a long time.

Seek advice before you exercise if you're unsure about your health or have not exercised for a while. If you experience pain, dizziness, or shortness of breath during your activity, stop doing it and talk to your doctor.

Your doctor or practice nurse can provide a Green Prescription (written advice on getting active and feeling better). They can also put you in touch with people who can support and keep you motivated.

For extra health benefits (including weight loss), do at least 60 minutes of moderate aerobic physical activity on most days of the week.



# Food safety

## Prevent food-borne illnesses

Clean, safe and careful handling of food is important. You can prevent illness caused by food contamination by following sensible food safety practices. Thorough cooking will kill most harmful micro-organisms and chilling will slow their growth in cooked and ready-to-eat food.

### Food safety at home

- Always wash your hands before and after preparing food.
- Make sure reheated food is steaming hot right through and only reheated once.
- Use clean utensils to prepare foods and use clean dishcloths and tea towels.
- Use separate chopping boards for raw food (especially meat) and cooked food or scrub the board thoroughly and dry before using again.

### Buy safe food

- Check the “use by” date before you buy.
- When you buy pre-cooked food, make sure it is either chilled or steaming hot.

### Carry food safely

- Take chilled and frozen food home quickly and refrigerate or freeze it straight away.
- Use a chilly bin with an ice pack if you have a long trip or the weather is hot.
- Keep food chilled and covered when eating outdoors.

### Refrigerator safety

- The temperature should be between two and four degrees. You can check the temperature using a thermometer.
- Cover all cooked food and place away from raw meat.
- Cover raw meat and place on a low shelf where it will not drip onto other foods.
- Only store cooked food for two days. If you don't use it by then, throw it out.

#### Clean

Keep hands, utensils and work surfaces clean

#### Cook

Cook food thoroughly

#### Cover

Keep food covered

#### Chill

Always refrigerate food

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

### ***Speak to your:***

- doctor, practice nurse or public health nurse
- Local District Health Board and ask for the Public Health Service or a dietitian
- Dietitian (in the Yellow Pages) or registered nutritionist
- Marae-based health services and/or Māori health workers
- Pacific health workers

### ***For healthy meal ideas and recipes, look for these websites:***

- Healthy Food Guide:  
[www.healthyfood.co.nz](http://www.healthyfood.co.nz)
- Health Navigator:  
[www.healthnavigator.org.nz/keeping-well/smart-eating/healthy-recipes](http://www.healthnavigator.org.nz/keeping-well/smart-eating/healthy-recipes)

### ***On the Internet, look for these websites:***

- Ministry of Health:  
[www.health.govt.nz](http://www.health.govt.nz)

- Te Hotu Manawa Māori:  
[www.tehotumanawa.org.nz](http://www.tehotumanawa.org.nz)
- National Heart Foundation:  
[www.heartfoundation.org.nz](http://www.heartfoundation.org.nz)
- Pacific Heartbeat Programme:  
[www.pacificheart.org.nz](http://www.pacificheart.org.nz)
- 5+ a day: [www.5aday.co.nz](http://www.5aday.co.nz)
- Sport NZ: [www.sportnz.org.nz](http://www.sportnz.org.nz)
- Ministry of Primary Industries Food Safety:  
[www.foodsafety.govt.nz](http://www.foodsafety.govt.nz)

### ***Ask your doctor, practice nurse or public health nurse for:***

- *Everyday eating for health*  
– code HE1333
- *Healthy family food*  
– code HE1523
- *Healthy weight for adults*  
– code HE1324
- *Eating for healthy vegetarians*  
– code HE1519
- *Be active every day*  
– code HE2311

These brochures can also be downloaded or viewed online at [www.healthed.govt.nz](http://www.healthed.govt.nz)



[New Zealand Government](http://www.govt.nz)

This resource is available from [www.healthed.govt.nz](http://www.healthed.govt.nz) or the Authorised Provider at your local DHB.

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