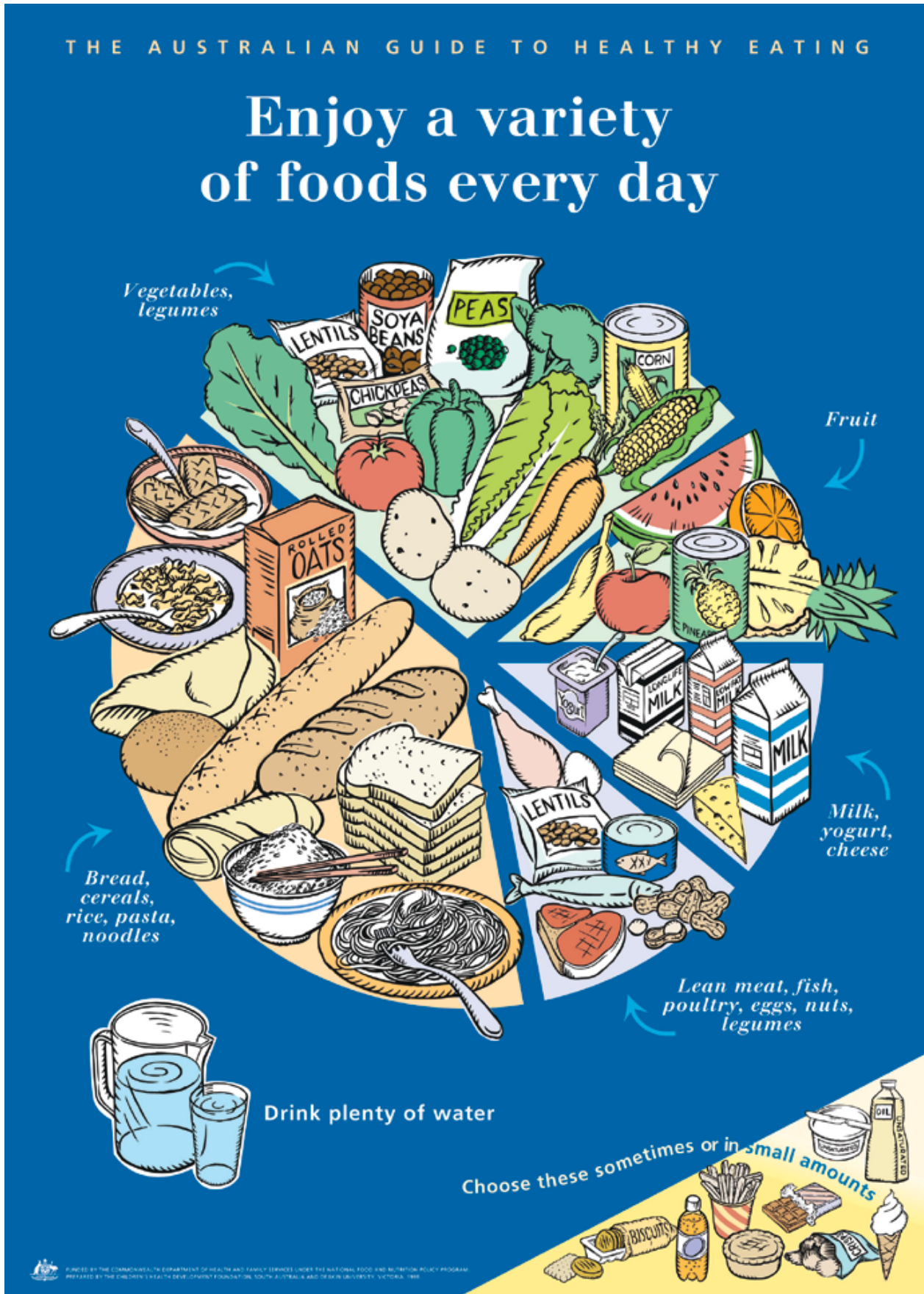


The **Food Plate** below depicts the recommended portions of each food group that Australians should eat every day.



Department of Health and Ageing, National Health and Medical Research Council (2003). Food for health - Dietary Guidelines for Australians. Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra. Copyright Commonwealth of Australia; reproduced by permission.

The 5 food groups – why are they important?

Good nutrition is essential for PLHIV. Eating well is an important co-therapy that will assist in promoting good health and optimising your immune system.

Nutritional deficiencies of protein, energy, vitamins and minerals can impair immune system functioning – this is due to decreased production of T cells, B cells, antibodies and antioxidants.

Maintaining a healthy well balanced diet can also improve your body shape and reduce the risk of developing chronic health conditions such as: cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, osteoporosis, cancer.

It is essential to consume a variety of foods from each of the five food groups to meet your daily requirements of energy, protein, fibre, vitamins and minerals.

1 BREADS AND CEREALS

Breads and cereals are an important source of carbohydrates and protein which provide your body with energy. They are also an excellent source of B-group vitamins, vitamin E, essential fatty acids and minerals.

Wholegrain breads and cereals are recommended to provide the fibre necessary to keep your bowels regular. A high fibre diet can also lower your blood cholesterol levels.

2 VEGETABLES

Vegetables provide a host of antioxidants, phytochemicals, fibre, vitamins and minerals which are essential for general health and assist to keep your immune system fighting HIV. Some vegetables also provide carbohydrates for energy (see the Glycaemic Index chart on p.21).

The availability of nutrients can be affected (increased or decreased) by cooking, therefore it is a good idea to include both cooked and salad vegetables into your daily intake.

It is also important not to boil vegetables, as nutrients can be lost in the water – try stirfrying, steaming or microwaving instead.

3 FRUIT

Similar to vegetables, fruit is another great source of fibre, carbohydrate, vitamins and minerals that will assist in optimising your health and improving your immune system.

4 DAIRY and ALTERNATIVES

Dairy products are an excellent source of calcium which is essential for bone strength and muscle contraction. They are also good sources of protein, vitamin A, B-group vitamins. Alternatives (fortified soy/rice milk, almonds, sardines, salmon with bones) are also a good source of calcium for those who cannot or do not consume dairy products.

5 MEAT and ALTERNATIVES

Meat products and alternatives (eggs, nuts, seeds, legumes – including beans, chickpeas, lentils) are all high in protein. Protein is involved in nearly every biological process in the human body, which includes building muscle tissue and helping your immune system to fight off infections. Research studies have shown that HIV weight loss tends to reduce protein stores very quickly. Therefore a major nutritional goal should be to increase or maintain your muscle mass, by eating the recommended amounts of dairy foods, meat products and legumes.

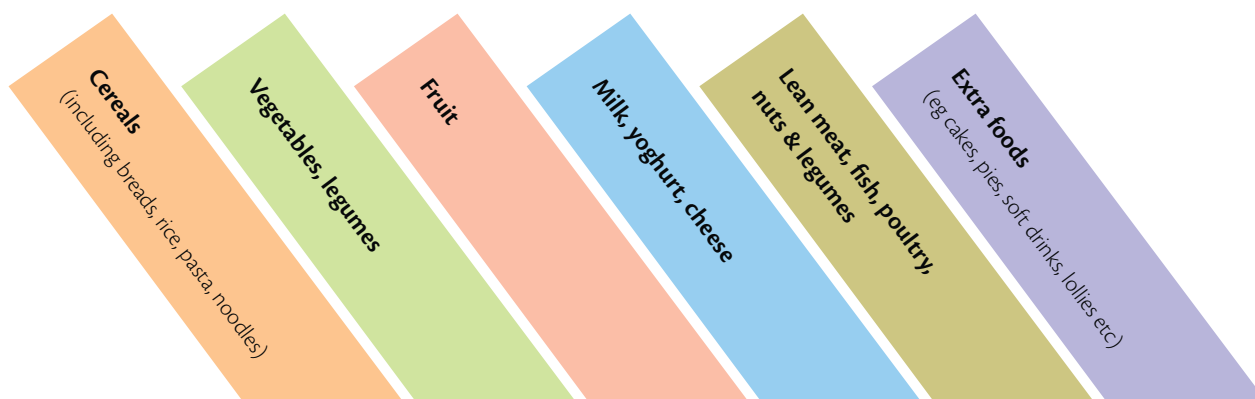
Meat products also provide the best source of 'haem' iron which more easily absorbed by the body than 'non-haem' iron from plant sources; however consuming vitamin C with non-haem iron can increase absorption into the bloodstream. Red meat (beef, lamb, liver) contains high amounts of iron & zinc, pork and chicken contain moderate amounts of iron, and fish contains a low amount of iron.

All meat products and eggs are excellent sources of vitamin B12, which can be deficient in PLHIV. The Dietary guidelines for Australians recommend consuming lean red meat 3–4 times per week. As meat products contain saturated fat (see Blood Lipids on p. 18) it is important to choose lean cuts and to remove any visible fat prior to cooking. Fish and seafood are also the best sources of omega-3 fats which are beneficial for cardiovascular health, joints/arthritis and brain functioning.

Daily servings

How many serves of these foods should we eat on average each day?

This depends a little on your body size and activity level but aim for the following:



Children & teenagers

4–7 years	5–7	2	1	2	½	1–2
8–11 years	6–9	3	1	2	1	1–2
12–18 years	5–11	4	3	3	1	1–3

Women

19–60 years	4–9	5	2	2	1	0–2½
60+ years	4–7	5	2	2	1	0–2
Pregnant	4–6	5–6	4	2	1½	0–2½
Breast feeding	5–7	7	5	2	2	0–2½

Men

19–60 years	6–12	5	2	2	1	0–3
60+ years	4–9	5	2	2	1	0–2½

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What is a serve?

Here are some examples

Cereals, breads etc		
2 slices of bread	1 medium bread roll	1 cup cooked rice, pasta, noodles
1 cup porridge	1 cup breakfast cereal flakes	or ½ cup muesli

Vegetables and legumes (choose a variety)		
Starchy vegetables		
1 medium potato or yam	½ medium sweet potato	1 medium parsnip
Dark green leafy vegetables		
½ cup cabbage, spinach, silverbeet, broccoli, cauliflower or brussels sprouts		
Legumes and other vegetables		
1 cup lettuce or salad vegetables	½ cup broad beans, lentils, peas, green beans, zucchini, mushrooms, tomatoes, capsicum, cucumber, sweetcorn, turnips, swede, sprouts, celery, eggplant etc	

Fruit		
1 piece medium sized fruit eg apple, orange, mango, mandarin, banana, pear, peach etc		
2 pieces of smaller fruit eg apricots, kiwi fruit, plums, figs		About 8 strawberries
1 cup diced pieces or canned fruit	½ cup fruit juice	¼ medium melon (rockmelon, honeydew)
Dried fruit eg 4 dried apricots	1½ tablespoons sultanas	About 20 grapes or cherries

Milks, yoghurt, cheese & alternatives		
250 ml glass or one cup of milk (can be fresh, longlife or reconstituted milk)		
½ cup evaporated milk	40g (2 slices) of cheese	250ml (1 cup custard)
200g (1 small carton) of yoghurt, plain or fruit, <i>or, as an alternative try:</i>		
a cup of calcium-fortified soy milk	1 cup almonds	½ cup pink salmon with bones

Meat, fish, poultry & alternatives		
65-100gm cooked meat or chicken (eg ½ cup mince, 2 small chops or 2 slices roast meat)		
80-120g cooked fish fillet, <i>or, as an alternative try:</i>		
2 small eggs	½ cup cooked (dried) beans, lentils, chick peas, split peas or canned beans	1/3 cup peanuts or almonds

Extras Foods which we can occasionally include for variety. They are generally higher in fat and/or sugar, kilojoules, salt etc		
1 medium piece of plain cake or 1 bun	3-4 sweet biscuits	Half a chocolate bar
60g jam, honey (1 tablespoon)	30g potato crisps	Slice pizza = 2 extras
1 can soft drink or 2 glasses cordial	2 scoops icecream	1 meat pie or pasty = 3 extras
2 standard glasses of alcohol (for adults only)		