

Fun food facts about the Five Food Groups

Teacher Information

| Food Group | Did you know? |
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| Vegetables and legumes | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Most Australians eat only about half the recommended quantity of vegetables per day.• Vegetables are nutrient dense, low in energy (kilojoules) and a good source of dietary fibre and minerals and vitamins (such as magnesium, vitamin C and folate).• Legumes are the seeds or pods from any bean, pea or lentil.• Legumes are a good source of carbohydrate, fibre, plant protein, B-complex vitamins, iron, potassium, and other minerals.• Slow release of carbohydrates and energy from legumes helps regulate blood glucose levels. |
| Fruits | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Most Australians eat only about half the recommended quantity of fruit, but drink far too much fruit juice (½ cup per day is enough).• Consuming fruit instead of juice provides more fibre and less energy (kilojoules) and leaves you feeling fuller longer.• The vitamins, minerals and fibre in fruit help to lower blood pressure and blood cholesterol.• People who eat enough fruit are less likely to suffer heart disease or stroke.• Fruit helps keep gums and skin healthy. |
| Grain foods, mostly wholegrain and/or high fibre varieties | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Most Australians eat less than half the recommended quantity of wholegrain foods, and too much refined grain (cereal) food.• The nutrients provided by whole grains include carbohydrates, protein, fibre and a wide range of vitamins and minerals.• Whole grains are very low in fat but contain beneficial polyunsaturated fatty acids and fat soluble vitamin E.• Whole grains keep the digestive system healthy and help prevent constipation and bowel cancer.• Whole grains help to lower blood cholesterol and glucose levels and reduce risk of heart disease and type 2 diabetes. |
| Lean meat and poultry, fish, eggs, tofu, nuts and seeds | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The foods from this food group are 'protein rich' and most Australians have no trouble eating enough each day.• Variety of choices from this group is important to gain nutritional benefits and reduce health risks.• Lean red meat is an excellent source of protein, iron, zinc and vitamin B12 but adults need no more than 100-120g per day.• Foods in this group are an important source of minerals including iron, zinc and iodine, B group vitamins (B12 only from animals), and essential fatty acids.• The iron and zinc in animal foods is more easily absorbed by the body than in plant foods such as nuts, seeds and legumes/beans.• Vitamin C found in fruit and vegetables helps absorption of iron from these non-animal foods. |
| Milk, yoghurt, cheese and/or their alternatives (mostly reduced fat) | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Most Australians consume only about half the recommended quantity of milk products, but too many full fat varieties.• Reduced fat dairy foods are recommended after the age of 2 years to decrease saturated fat and energy content of the diet.• Reduced fat varieties of milks are not suitable for children under the age of two due to their high energy needs for growth.• Milk foods are a good source of protein, minerals, calcium and vitamins. |



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