

Why Eat Well? fact sheet

As the saying goes, you are what you eat! Our bodies are made up of the food and drinks we consume, so it's important we eat well to enjoy good health.

Good food and nutrition is essential:

- for healthy growth and the physical, intellectual and emotional development of infants, children and young people
- to resist infection and help fight acute diseases, like colds and flu and other infections in the short term
- to protect against life-threatening illnesses like heart disease and stroke, type 2 diabetes, and some types of cancer in the long term
- to recover and heal quickly from an injury or surgery
- for general wellbeing and longevity
- to provide energy to keep bodily functions working (like breathing, maintaining body temperature and heart beating), digest food and enjoy physical activity.

Eating well means enjoying a variety of healthy food, in amounts that are suitable for your age, size, gender and the level of physical activity you do. You can find out more about how to eat well in the Dietary Guidelines for Australians.

Eating well goes hand-in-hand with being physically active to help you achieve and maintain a healthy bodyweight. If you're not striking a balance between the energy that you put in (as food and drink) and the energy your body uses up (for bodily functions and being active), the extra energy you consume is stored as fat in the body. This excess stored fat causes overweight and obesity, which can lead to the life-threatening illnesses listed above.