

Mental health and wellbeing

Nutrition Support Action Plan for case managers/key workers - Assessing a consumer's diet

You may have an idea that your consumer is not eating a balanced diet, but have trouble working out what areas to target first. Use the tables on the following pages to guide your general assessment of their diet. Once you have calculated how your consumer's diet compares with the Australian Dietary Guidelines, you can be more confident in the recommendations you make. Please note these are general guidelines and may not be appropriate for all consumers (for example, if pregnant) – a dietitian can provide individualised advice.

Step 1. Get an idea of what foods and drinks your consumer usually has. You might need to clarify the following things:

- The portions eaten (see the section 'What's a standard serve')
- The cooking methods used (in particular the amount and type of fat used if any)
- Whether dairy products are full fat or fat reduced (e.g., full cream milk or reduced fat milk)

- Whether grain products are wholegrain or not (for example is bread white or wholegrain)
- Whether beverages contain caffeine or not.

Step 2. Fill out the four tables on the following pages (column 'consumer's diet'), based on your consumer's answers.

Step 3. Compare their answers with the recommendations from each row.

Step 4. Advise on ways to increase or decrease foods for a more balanced diet. If your consumer is on a budget, refer to 'Healthy Shopping on a Budget' on the NEMO mental health page for more information. You can record the plan in columns 'action to improve diet'.

What's a standard serve?

Grain (cereal) foods: 1 slice bread, ½ cup cooked pasta/rice/noodles, 2/3 cup wheat cereal flakes; 3 crispbreads; 1 crumpet

Vegetables: 1 cup salad; 1 medium tomato; ½ cup cooked vegetables; ½ medium potato or other starchy

vegetables like sweet potato or cassava; ½ cup sweet corn; ½ cup beans, peas or lentils

Fruit: 1 piece (for example, 1 apple, banana or orange); 2 small pieces (for example, 2 kiwi fruits, plums or apricots); 1 cup diced/canned fruit with no added sugar. Only occasionally: ½ cup (125ml) fruit juice.

Milk and alternatives: 1 cup (250ml) milk; 1 tub yoghurt (200g); 2 slices cheese (40g); 1 cup (250ml) soy/rice milk, calcium fortified.

Lean meat and alternatives: 65g cooked lean red meat; 80g cooked lean poultry (about half a regular chicken breast);

100g cooked fish (or a small tin of fish); 2 eggs; 1 cup cooked legumes (lentils, chickpeas, baked beans); 30g nuts/seeds; 170g tofu.

Extras: 1 tbsp butter/hard margarine; 1 slice of plain cake/small cake-type muffin (40g); 1 tbsp honey/jam; 2-3 sweet plain biscuits; 2 scoops ice-cream; ½ chocolate bar (25g); 30g potato chips; 1 can soft drink (375ml); ¼ meat pie; 12 hot chips

Diet analysis tables

Table 1: Core food groups

| Core food group | Consumer's diet | Recommendations | Actions to improve diet |
|---|--|---|-------------------------|
| Vegetables and legumes/beans | Average number of serves per day: _____ | Goal serves per day*: Men: 6 Women: 5 | |
| Grain (cereal) foods | Average number of serves per day: _____ Proportion of wholegrain cereals consumed (compared to total amount of cereals): _____ | Goal serves per day*: Men: 6 Women: 6 At least two-thirds should be wholegrain and/or high cereal fibre varieties. | |
| Fruit | Average number of serves per day: _____ | Goal serves per day*: Men: 2 Women: 2 | |
| Milk, yoghurt, cheese and/or alternatives | Average number of serves per day: _____ Proportion of reduced fat dairy/dairy alternatives consumed (compared to total amount): _____ | Goal serves per day*: Men: 2.5 Women: 2.5 Mostly reduced fat. | |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|--|
| Lean meat and poultry, fish, eggs, tofu, nuts/seeds, and legumes. | Average number of serves per day: _____ | Goal serves per day*: Men: 3 Women: 2.5 | |
|---|---|---|--|

* Serves per day for men and women aged 19-50.
For further information go to www.eatforhealth.gov.au

Table 2. Oils and fats

| Saturated fat examples | Consumer's diet | Recommendation | Action to improve diet |
|---|--|--|------------------------|
| Fat on meat Palm oil Butter, cream Cooking margarine | Amounts used (circle): Moderate/ medium/ large. Fats used: | Limit intake of saturated fats. Replace saturated with unsaturated fats such as vegetable oils, spreads, nut butters/ pastes and avocado. | |

Table 3. Discretionary or “sometimes” foods

| Examples | Consumer's diet | Recommendation | Action to improve diet |
|---|-----------------|---|------------------------|
| Cakes, ice cream, sausages, processed meats, pies, pizza, chips | | Limit food high in saturated fat, added salt and added sugar. | |

Table 4. Drinks

| Drinks | Consumer's diet | Recommendation | Action to improve diet |
|---|---|--|------------------------|
| Water | Average water intake per day: _____L | Water is best. Needs vary (in general 2-2.5L per day is a good goal). | |
| Caffeinated drinks (e.g. tea, coffee, energy drinks) | Average number of caffeinated drinks per day: _____ | 400mg caffeine per day or less (equivalent to 3 to 4 regular cups of coffee, or 4 to 6 cups of black tea). | |
| Drinks with added sugar (e.g. soft drinks, sports drinks) | Average amount of sugary drinks per day: _____L | Limit intake of drinks with added sugar. Prefer water or low kJ drinks. | |
| Alcohol | Drinking habits: | For healthy adults: no more than 2 standard drinks on any day. A standard drink contains 10g of alcohol. For women pregnant, planning a pregnancy or breastfeeding: no alcohol. | |

Actions for case manager/key worker

Do you need more information, or would you like to refer your consumer for more individualised advice?

Find an Accredited Practising Dietitian on the Dietitians Association of Australia's website www.daa.asn.au (click on 'Find an APD').