

Welcome

Welcome to the Winter edition of Nutrition News.

Getting kids to eat vegies is often a challenge. Birds Eye recently set out to find out what kids really think of vegies. Check out the survey results and tips for fussy eaters.

Our feature article is on salt. Australians eat twice as much salt as they need. We tell you all you need to know about this mineral, and give useful tips on how to eat less of it.

The Nutrition section features the latest in nutrition including *What's On* for Winter.

Happy reading,

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Birds Eye Children's Survey 2007

In a recent survey of 500 Australian children, Birds Eye found that a staggering 30% of children will only eat vegetables if they are given a reward or forced to by parents.

Are Australian parents sending the wrong message to their children by coercing them to eat their vegetables using stern words or rewards?



Michael Grose, a leading spokesperson on parenting and family matters, says common dinner-threats include not getting dessert, not leaving the table or having a privilege taken away unless vegetables are eaten.

Grose states, "Offering a reward to your child for eating a vegetable is teaching them reward-based motivation at an age when children are most impressionable. This could start a pattern of unrealistic expectations when it comes to unpleasant tasks later in life. Plus, rewards have a tendency to escalate – today's ice-cream treat is tomorrow's Playstation."

Not only do rewards and threats contribute to behavioural issues, they also confirm to children that you agree that vegetables taste bad.

The 'Birds Eye Children's Survey 2007' found that 57% of children disliked vegetables "because of the taste". Brussels sprouts were the least liked vegetable, and potato emerged as the undeniable favourite.

"This research was undertaken to get a snapshot of what Aussie kids like and dislike on the dinner plate," says Birds Eye Marketing Manager, Glenn Myatt. "By better understanding children's attitudes towards vegetables we aim to help parents come up with solutions for fussy eaters."

The launch of the new Captain Birds Eye Chicken & Vegetable Patties range is underpinned by this sentiment. The Heart Foundation Tick approved patties "hide" veggies with chicken breast, making it much more appealing to children. "There are a

number of foods such as the Captain Birds Eye Chicken & Vegetable Patties range which can ensure children eat nutritious food with minimum fuss," adds Grose. He recommends the following easily implemented techniques to stop dinner times becoming a battlefield and provide positive messages for children's development:

Hints and Tips for Fussy Eaters

- 1. Involve your children in the cooking process.** This is a good starting point as kids are more likely to eat something they have had a say in making.
- 2. Avoid turning your home into a restaurant.** It is very common for parents to prepare two or three different meals every night to suit fussy eaters. Try substituting instead. For example, if your child doesn't like fish, give them sausages but keep the side dishes the same.
- 3. Cook in fun and interesting ways.** Be creative and let your kids be part of the planning process. Research conducted by Birds Eye found that children have vivid imaginations and should be encouraged to use them.
- 4. Don't offer rewards and bribes.** Offering a reward to your child for eating a vegetable is just reinforcing the fact that you agree that it does not taste good.
- 5. Don't make a big deal of it.** Unless children have a medical condition, don't become too perturbed if they don't eat their meal. Kids survive and will not starve if food is available.
- 6. Good eating habits = better performance.** As children reach the cusp of adolescence (11 or 12 years old), health messages become more relevant. Telling your sports-crazy child that eating healthy food will make him kick the football further is more likely to resonate.



Salt - Shake the habit

What is salt?

Salt is the common name for *sodium chloride*. Sodium is essential for good health. It is used to regulate fluid in the body and blood pressure. It is also important for maintaining acid levels (pH) of body fluids, transmitting signals between nerves and muscle, and controlling body temperature. The human body can't produce sodium, so it must be supplied by our daily diets.

Salt and health

Sodium has been linked with a number of health conditions including congestive heart failure, osteoporosis, kidney stones, asthma and fluid retention, however, its detrimental effect on blood pressure is of greatest concern.

The link with high blood pressure

Eating too much salt may increase your risk of developing high blood pressure. Excess sodium that is not excreted in urine or sweat can cause fluid retention, which in turn may increase blood volume. Increases in blood volume mean that the heart has to use more force to pump it around the body, which can cause an increase in blood pressure. High blood pressure (*hypertension*) puts you at greater risk of heart attack and stroke, two of the biggest killers in Western society.



Although evidence linking excessive salt intake with high blood pressure isn't conclusive, research findings suggest that genetics and age play a large role in determining an individual's sensitivity to salt. Studies indicate that people with a family history of high blood pressure and older people are at greater risk of developing high blood pressure.

It is estimated that almost one in three Australians over the age of 25 has high blood pressure. Studies show that populations with lower salt intakes have lower levels of hypertension and suffer fewer heart attacks and strokes. High blood pressure is responsible for 60% of all strokes and 50% of all heart disease in Australia; for this reason, it is recommended that individuals choose low-salt foods and use salt sparingly.

It is important to remember that excess salt intake is not the only culprit when it comes to high blood pressure. To maintain blood pressure at a healthy level it is also essential to achieve a healthy body weight, moderate your alcohol intake, and eat a balanced diet.

The DASH diet (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension) which is rich in fruit, vegetables, legumes, nuts, low-fat dairy foods and fish has also been found to successfully lower blood pressure in people with hypertension.

How much salt do I need?

The recommended dietary intake (RDI) for sodium is 920-2300mg per day. This equates to a maximum recommended intake of approximately 6g or just over one teaspoon of salt. Currently, Australians eat much more than this on average: men's salt intake is estimated to be around 10g per day, and women's about 7g per day. The main sources of sodium in the Australian diet are:

- processed foods (75%);
- salt added during cooking and at the table (15%); and
- naturally occurring salt in food (10%).

Cook with less salt

- There are lots of ways to add flavour to your home-cooked meals without using salt.
- Add fresh herbs to pasta dishes, vegetables and meat.
- Use garlic, ginger, chilli and lime in stir-fries.
- Add red wine to stews and casseroles and white wine to risottos and chicken sauces.
- Roast vegetables such as red capsicums, fennel, parsnips and squash to bring out their flavour.
- Squeeze lemon juice onto fish or seafood.
- Try using different types of onion - brown, red, white, spring onions and shallots.
- Make sauces using ripe tomatoes and garlic.

Salt and processed foods

Most of the salt in the average Australian diet comes from processed foods. The National Heart Foundation of Australia is working with the food industry to make significant reductions in the amount of salt in our food supply. The Tick program identifies foods and meals which meet strict nutrition standards for salt, as well as other nutrients such as saturated fat and trans fat. Consumers can rest assured that meals and products which bear the Tick symbol are a healthier choice than their regular counterparts.

Foods high in salt

- Most fast foods such as pizza, burgers, nuggets and pies
- Potato crisps, corn chips and pretzels
- Sauces, condiments, stocks and marinades
- Processed meats such as sausages, salami, ham and hot dogs
- Bread and some breakfast cereals
- Packet or canned foods e.g. canned soups
- Butter, margarine and some cheeses



How can I eat less salt?

- Most fresh foods are naturally low in salt. Fresh vegetables, fruit, meat, fish, milk and nuts contribute only small amounts of salt to the overall diet.
- Try to reduce or omit altogether salt used in cooking or added at the table. You will be surprised at how quickly your palate adjusts to the change. After only a few weeks of eating a lower salt diet you will become more sensitive to the presence of salt in foods.
- Experiment with using other ingredients in place of salt to add flavour to meals. Garlic, ginger, basil, oregano, thyme and dill are just a few of the hundreds of herbs and spices you can use to add taste to a dish. Replace saltier sauces and condiments with vinegar, lemon juice, lime juice, wine or Worcestershire sauce.
- Limit salty take-away and fast foods
- Check product labels for their sodium content and choose low salt (less than 120mg of sodium per 100g), salt-reduced or no added salt products whenever possible.



What about iodine?

Iodine is an essential mineral found in significant amounts in foods such as fish, seafood, seaweed, dairy foods and eggs. Iodine is required by the body to maintain normal thyroid function and regulate hormones involved in growth and development. A severe deficiency of iodine causes enlargement of the thyroid gland known as *goiter*. To reduce the incidence of iodine deficiency in Australia, it has been added to table salt since the 1920's.

More recently, the popularity of alternatives to iodised table salt, such as sea and rock salts, has led to a decreased iodine intake and the re-emergence of mild iodine deficiency in Australia. Recent studies have found that almost half of primary school-aged children are suffering from a mild to moderate iodine deficiency, which can lead to impaired growth and brain development.

To ensure that your iodine intake is adequate it is important to make natural food sources of iodine a regular part of your diet. One fish meal per week is enough to fulfil an average adult's iodine requirement. In addition to this, if you chose to use table salt in cooking, be sure to use iodised varieties. Keep an eye out for iodised flaky salts which will soon be on the market.

Low Salt Cooking - Country Harvest Casserole

Try this quick and easy winter warmer. Not only is it low in salt and fat, it also provides 2 ½ serves of vegetables per serving.

Preparation time: 5 minutes

Serves: 4

Ingredients:

- 2 teaspoons oil
- 2 skinless chicken fillets, finely sliced
- 1 leek, chopped
- 420g can cream of chicken soup
- ½ cup white wine
- 500g packet frozen **Birds Eye Country Harvest Peas, Carrots and Cauliflower**
- Mashed potato for serving
- Parsley sprigs for garnish

Method:

1. Heat oil in a large frying pan, add chicken and stir-fry for 3-4 minutes or until browned. Add leek and cook for 2 minutes until tender.
2. Pour in soup and wine and stir in Birds Eye Country Harvest vegetables. Simmer covered for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally.
3. Serve casserole on a bed of mashed potato and garnish with parsley sprigs.

Cooking time: 20 minutes

Tip: For a vegetarian dish, omit chicken and substitute soup with cream of asparagus or mushroom.

Nutrition Information per Serving

Energy	1480kJ
Protein	36.4g
Fat	14.0g
Saturated fat	3.9g
Carbohydrate	14.0g
Sugars	6.0g
Dietary fibre	8.8g
Sodium	533mg





Nutrition Watch

Detailed Nutritional Information from Apples to Zucchini is now available

NUTTAB 2006 Online has been launched on the Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) website. With 2,600 different foods and data available for view for up to 169 nutrients per 100g for these foods, *NUTTAB 2006* will be an "essential tool for health professionals, the food industry, academics, students and consumers."

foodstandards.gov.au/monitoringandsurveillance/nuttab2006/
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Making Healthy and Safer Food Choices for You and Your Family

Shoppers consistently ask for more information about exactly what food labels mean. FSANZ has designed an easy-to-use shopper's guide, *Choosing the Right Stuff - The official shopper's guide to food additives and labels, kilojoules and fat content* to answer those questions. The book contains information on:



- how to make informed choices about healthier eating from reading nutrition information and claims
- what is in the ingredient list, percentage labelling of the key ingredient and the country of origin of the food
- food recalls, storage requirements and allergens genetically modified foods, novel foods, irradiated foods, and food additives including a full list of food additives by name, number and use
- the kilojoules and fat in commonly eaten foods and drinks
- a list of useful contacts for more information

Now available from your local bookshop.

What's On?

National Diabetes Week Starts 8 July 2007

National Diabetes Week 2007 targets the entire Australian community. Diabetes is the fastest growing non-infectious disease in the world. For every person who has been diagnosed with diabetes, there is another who also has it and doesn't know.

Diabetes is a serious health condition. There is no cure. If left untreated it can cause heart attack, stroke, kidney failure, blindness, amputation and erectile dysfunction. If diagnosed early, diabetes can be effectively managed and the risk of serious health problems greatly reduced. Type 2 diabetes, the most common form of diabetes, can be successfully managed or even prevented by maintaining a healthy weight, engaging in regular physical activity and having healthy eating patterns.

National Diabetes Week begins on the 8th of July and finishes on the 14th of July. To find out what is happening in your area visit: www.diabetesaustralia.com.au

National Bones Week

5 - 11 August 2007

This year, National Healthy Bones Week focuses on the benefits of consuming dairy in school lunches for primary school-aged kids, the fun and diversity of the products, and the reinforcement of the link between dairy and bone health/development.

Are you looking after your bones?

Osteoporosis is a global epidemic affecting more than 150 million people worldwide and 2 million people here in Australia. It is estimated that osteoporosis affects one in two women and one in three men over the age of 60.

Diet and exercise are the most modifiable lifestyle factors which can impact upon bone health. Foods rich in calcium, including dairy and sardines, can play an integral role in bone strength.

Fish oil helps weight loss: study

Fatty acids found in fish can help with weight loss when combined with moderate exercise, an Australian study has shown.

The University of South Australia study found that obese people who consumed a daily dose of fish oil containing omega-3 fatty acids burned off more excess weight than those who used exercise or fish oil alone. These researchers believe that 'the omega-3 found in fish oil increases fat-burning ability by improving the flow of blood to muscles during exercise'.

