



Revised Dietary Guidelines Lack Clear Grains Message

The Grains & Legumes Nutrition Council has welcomed today the revised Australian Dietary Guidelines and the Australian Guide to Healthy Eating released by the National Health & Medical Research Council. However, while the Council supports the shift to a greater focus on whole grains and high fibre grain foods, it is disappointed that despite advocating for some key amendments including guidance around legumes consumption, a change in recommended serve sizes and the number of serves of grain foods per day, these have not been instilled.

“We support the emphasis on the consumption of a wide variety of grain foods, and the change in recommendations for grain foods from ‘*preferably wholegrain*’ to ‘*mostly wholegrain and/or high cereal fibre varieties*’. This change supports the evidence-based science, which indicates that eating two-three serves of whole grain and high fibre grain foods a day is associated with a 30% reduced risk of chronic diseases such as diabetes and heart disease,” commented Managing Director of the Grains & Legumes Nutrition Council, Georgie Aley.¹⁻³

A key area that the Council believes the revised Australian Dietary Guidelines falls short is in respect to serve size and the number of serves of grain foods.

“We are disappointed with the changes made to serve sizes and the number of serves of grain foods recommended. We strongly believe that the recommended serve sizes do not reflect a realistic portion, which is likely to confuse people trying to understand how much grain food to eat each day. The previous guidelines recommended 1 serve as 2 slices of bread, similar to what is commonly eaten as a sandwich. However in the new guidelines a serve is one slice of bread so a sandwich constitutes two serves. Being told to eat six serves in a day may seem difficult to achieve if people are not aware that they commonly eat at least two serves in one meal.”

“In addition, we are disappointed that the revisions to the Dietary Guidelines do not provide a recommended number of serves of legumes per week as is provided for other foods within the meat and alternatives group. A recommendation of two to three serves per week would encourage people to enjoy a healthy nutritious food such as legumes more regularly,” stated Ms Aley.

The Grains & Legumes Nutrition Council recommends eating legumes two-three times per week to reduce the risk of heart disease and help manage diabetes.⁴⁻⁶ The Council encourages Australians to eat legumes, such as beans, lentils and peas, more often as both a vegetable and a lean meat alternative- cooked and canned legumes are a nutritious, inexpensive alternative to meat. However, despite the growing evidence of the health benefits associated with legumes only one in every five Australians eats legumes regularly.⁷

The Australian Dietary Guidelines are recommendations for healthy Australians to provide guidance on healthy eating to meet nutrient needs and reduce risk of chronic disease. For individualised nutrition advice the Grains & Legumes Nutrition Council recommends people see an Advanced Practising Dietitian. Visit the Dietitians Association of Australia website to find a dietitian near you www.daa.asn.au.

The Grains & Legumes Nutrition Council has a number of resources to help people understand how to follow the new Dietary Guidelines and the Australian Guide to Healthy Eating. For information and recipes visit www.ginc.org.au.

The Grains & Legumes Nutrition Council is the leading independent voice on nutrition and health for grains and legumes.

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Notes to editor:

Grains and Legumes in the Dietary Guidelines

Guideline 2

Enjoy a wide variety of nutritious foods from these five groups every day:

- Grain (cereal) foods, mostly wholegrain and/or high cereal fibre varieties, such as breads, cereals, rice, pasta, noodles, polenta, couscous, oats, quinoa and barley
- Plenty of vegetables, including different types and colours, and legumes/beans
- Lean meat and poultry, fish, eggs, tofu, nuts and seeds, and legumes/beans

Recommending ‘mostly wholegrain and/or high cereal fibre varieties’ encourages eating healthier choices most of the time. It also helps people understand that one meal a day of white rice, pasta or bread can be included in a healthy diet.

The Dietary Guidelines note that to meet the recommendations the average Australian will need to increase their whole grain / high fibre food intake by 160%.

Whole grain foods vary in the amount of whole grain they contain. To choose foods higher in whole grain check the ingredient list and choose foods with the higher whole grain percentage. To choose foods higher in fibre check the nutrition information panel and choose foods with the more fibre per serve.

Australian Guide to Healthy Eating

The new Australian Guide to Healthy Eating recommends adults eat six serves of grain foods a day. Two serves can be eaten together in a meal, like two slices of bread in a sandwich.

For example, one day might include a bowl of high fibre cereal for breakfast, a wholemeal sandwich at lunch, a whole grain crispbread snack and cup of rice with your dinner.

The Guide recommends between four and seven serves of grain foods per day for children, depending on their age.

Changes to recommended serve sizes for grains

Previous Dietary Guidelines (AGHE 1998)	New Dietary Guidelines (AGHE 2012)
2 slices bread (60g)	1 slice bread / flat bread (about 40g)
1 medium bread roll	½ medium roll (about 40g)
1 cup cooked rice, pasta or noodles (180g)	½ cup cooked rice, pasta or noodles
1 cup porridge (230g)	½ cup cooked porridge or polenta

1½ cup breakfast cereal flakes (40g) ½ cup muesli (65g)	¾ cup wheat cereal flakes (30g) ¼ cup muesli (30g)
½ cup flour	¼ cup flour
	3 crispbreads (35g)
	1 crumpet (60g) or small English muffin or scone (35g)
	½ cup cooked barley, buckwheat, semolina, cornmeal, quinoa

Changes to recommended serve sizes for grains and legumes

Previous Australian Dietary Guidelines (AGHE 1998)*	New Australian Dietary Guidelines (AGHE 2011)
Vegetables ½ cup or 75g cooked dried beans, peas or lentils	Vegetables 75g (½ cup) cooked dried or canned beans, chickpeas or lentils, no added salt
Meat and alternatives ½ cup cooked dried beans, lentils, chickpeas, split peas or canned beans	Meat and alternatives 1 cup (150g) cooked dried beans lentils, chickpeas, split peas or canned beans
	Meat and alternatives 170g tofu

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