

Simple Portion Guide To Fuel Your Teen For A Healthy Day

Adolescence is a stage of rapid growth and development. The right balance of food throughout the day gives your teen the fuel they need to stay energised, focused, and ready for whatever comes their way.

Every teen grows and develops at their own pace, so their needs can be a little different. Here is a simple guide to the servings of each food group that can help fuel most teens of average height with everyday activity levels.

Recommended daily serves of each food group

Food Groups	Boys		Girls	
	12-13 years	14-18 years	12-13 years	14-18 years
Vegetables & legumes/beans	5.5	5.5	5	5
Fruit	2	2	2	2
Grain (cereal) foods, mostly wholegrain	6	7	5	7
Lean meat and poultry, fish, eggs, nuts and seeds, and legumes/beans	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5
Milk, yoghurt, cheese and/or alternatives (mostly reduced fat)	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5

What does a serve look like? The hand portion guide

Portion sizes can feel confusing. A simple way to estimate serving sizes is to use your hand as a guide. Each hand reference helps match portions to your teen's needs, making healthy eating easier to achieve.



Fist



- 1 cup of raw salad vegetables
- 1 piece medium fresh fruit
- 1 cup of diced or canned fruit



Palm



- 100g raw meat or poultry
- 100g cooked fish
- 1 slice of bread



Cupped Hand



- 1/2 cup cooked vegetables, legumes/beans
- 1/2 cup cooked porridge
- 1/2 cup cooked rice, pasta, noodles, buckwheat, semolina, polenta
- 1/2 medium potato

Fact Sheet

fresh SNAP

An easy guide to spreading serves across the day

Every family has their own routines, and every teen has different tastes and needs. Here is one way to spread the food group serves across a day. Use it as a guide to spark ideas and adapt it to suit your teen's appetite, activity level, and family meals.

Breakfast

2 serves grain + 1 serve meat/egg = Eggs on toast



2 slices wholegrain bread



2 large egg



Morning tea

1 serve fruit + 1 serve dairy = Banana smoothie



1 medium banana



1 cup milk



Challenge

Can you match the serves in the sample day to the Hand Portion Guide? e.g. 1 cup of cooked pasta = 2 cupped hands of pasta. Give it a go with other foods and see how the portions look in real life!

Lunch

2 serves grain + 1 serve meat/poultry + 0.5 serve dairy + 2-3 serves vegetables = Cheesy chicken pasta



1 cup cooked pasta



80g cooked chicken



60g mozzarella cheese



1-1.5 cup cooked vegetables



Afternoon tea

1 serve fruit + 1.5 serve dairy = Blueberry yoghurt



1 cup blueberries



1 cup yoghurt



Dinner

2 serves grain + 1 serve meat/fish + 2-3 serves vegetables = Baked salmon with rice



1 cup cooked rice



100g cooked salmon



1-1.5 cup cooked vegetables



Supper (optional)

1 serve grain



3 crispbreads

OR



1 plain scone

Every teen is unique!

Some teens may enter puberty earlier and need extra energy and nutrients sooner to support faster growth. Others may go through puberty later, with their nutrition needs peaking at a different time. Encourage your teen to listen to their hunger and fullness cues. Every meal is a chance to support your teen's growth and wellbeing.

Australian dietary guidelines. (n.d.) <https://www.eatforhealth.gov.au/> NEMO. (2020). How understanding portion sizes can help you meet your healthy eating goals. https://www.health.qld.gov.au/___data/assets/pdf_file/0030/148818/wtmgt-portions.pdf



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