

A photograph of a salad bar with various vegetables in metal trays, including shredded carrots, green bell peppers, and tomatoes, set against a dark green background.

Healthy choices: food and drink classification guide

A system for classifying foods and drinks

2020

FRUIT & NUT TRAIL MIX
\$2.50
Best choice

FRUIT SALAD
\$4
Best choice

SNACK PACK
\$4
Best choice

CHEESE & CRACKERS
\$3
Best choice

FRUIT TUBS
\$2.50
Best choice

SAVOURY MUFFIN
\$3

FRUIT TOAST
\$3.50
Best choice

YOGHURT & MUESLI CUP
\$3.50
Choose carefully

LEMON CASHEW BLISS BALLS
\$3.50

FIG & GOJI BLISS BALLS
\$3.50
Choose carefully

RASPBERRY MINI MUFFIN
\$1.50
Choose carefully

BANANA BREAD
\$3.50
Limit

CARAMEL SLICE
\$4
Limit

SLICE
\$3
Limit



Healthy choices: food and drink classification guide

**A system for classifying
foods and drinks**

2020

Acknowledgements

The *Healthy choices: food and drink classification guide* is adapted from the Queensland Department of Health's *A better choice: healthy food and drink supply strategy for Queensland health facilities* (2007) and the Victorian Department of Education and Training's *School canteens and other school food services policy* (2012).

The Victorian *School canteens and other school food services policy* (2012) was based on the NSW Department of Health and NSW Department of Education and Training's *Fresh Tastes @ School: NSW Healthy School Canteen Strategy* (2004).

Contact

For more information about the *Healthy choices: food and drink classification guide* contact healthychoices@dhhs.vic.gov.au.

To receive this publication in an accessible format email the Prevention and Population Health Branch <healthychoices@dhhs.vic.gov.au>.

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Available at health.vic – Healthy choices <<https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/preventive-health/nutrition/healthy-choices-for-retail-outlets-vending-machines-catering>>

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1

The Healthy Choices framework



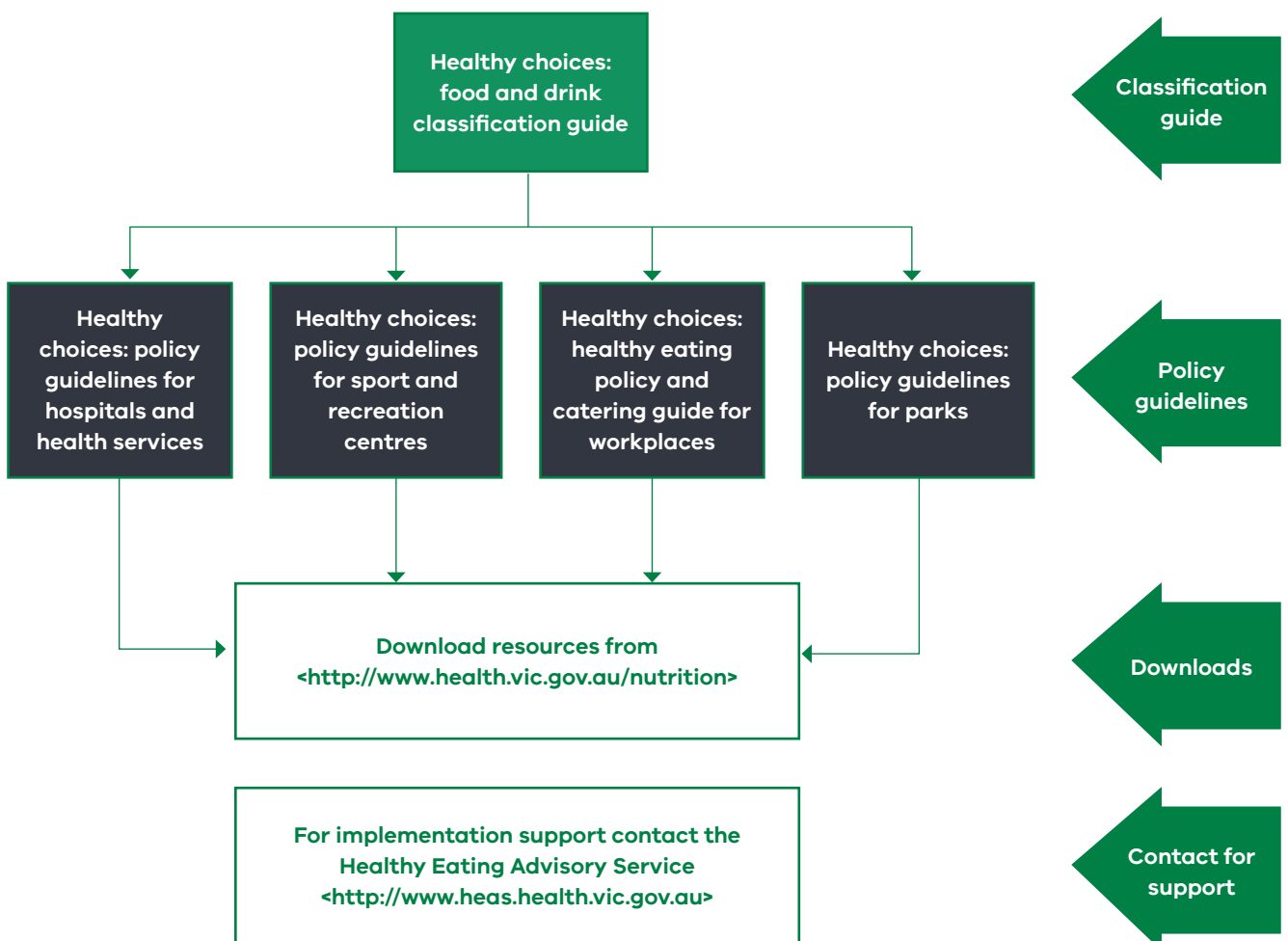
Good nutrition is important for a healthy lifestyle and contributes to the health and wellbeing of the community. Together with physical activity, healthy eating plays a key role in preventing disease, maintaining a healthy weight and supporting children’s growth and development.

A significant proportion of the Australian food dollar is spent on foods and drinks purchased outside the home. Easy access to nutritious foods and drinks and support to make healthy choices outside the home is essential.

The Victorian Government is putting health at the centre of our everyday lives through a place-based systems approach to prevention and health promotion. This involves increasing access to healthy foods and drinks in the places where people spend their time.

Healthy Choices is a framework for improving availability and promotion of healthier foods and drinks in community settings (Figure 1).

Figure 1: The Healthy Choices framework



Food and drink classification guide

The *Healthy choices: food and drink classification guide* uses a traffic light system to categorise foods and drinks as **GREEN**, **AMBER** or **RED**. This resource describes the processes used to classify items and defines the types of foods and drinks in each category.

Policy guidelines

Setting-specific policy guidelines are available to support the implementation of Healthy Choices in:

- hospitals and health services
- workplaces
- sport and recreation centres
- parks.

The policy documents address:

- **GREEN**, **AMBER** and **RED** foods and drinks through retail outlets, vending machines and catering
- how foods and drinks are advertised, promoted and displayed
- foods and drinks used for fundraising, prizes and give-aways
- sponsorship by food industry
- how the physical environment supports healthy eating
- supportive environments for breastfeeding.

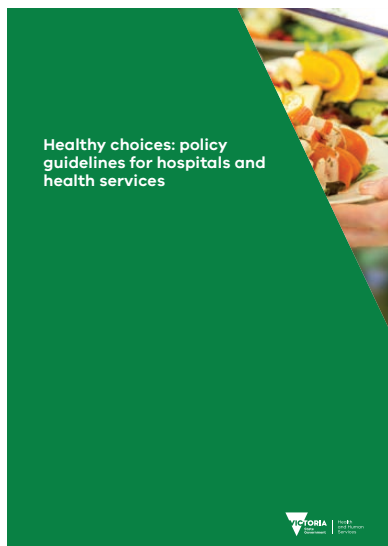
Resources and support

The Healthy Eating Advisory Service supports organisations wanting to put Healthy Choices into practice. The Service provides information and advice, training and a comprehensive website with online

learning and menu assessment tools, fact sheets, and recipes to help with providing healthier foods and drinks across the organisation. For more information visit <<http://www.heas.health.vic.gov.au>>.

The *Healthy choices: food and drink classification guide* and setting-specific policy documents are available from the Department of Health and Human Services website at <<http://www.health.vic.gov.au/nutrition>>.

This classification guide and policy documents need to be used together when applying Healthy Choices in community settings.



Classify foods and drinks online using FoodChecker

FoodChecker is a free Victorian Government website that allows you to assess foods and drinks according to the Healthy Choices guidelines.

With FoodChecker you can:

- assess retail outlet and catering menus, drinks fridges and vending machines to find out the total percentage of **GREEN**, **AMBER** and **RED** items
- classify individual recipes and packaged food and drink products
- look up thousands of branded packaged foods and drinks to find out if they are classified **GREEN**, **AMBER** or **RED**, and find healthier alternatives.

Get started at <http://foodchecker.heas.health.vic.gov.au>

FoodChecker is brought to you by the Healthy Eating Advisory Service, which is delivered by Nutrition Australia Vic Division with support from the Victorian Government.

Healthy choices: food and drink classification guide

What will this guide do?

This guide outlines a food and drink classification system that can be used to increase availability and promotion of healthier food and drink choices and reduce availability and promotion of less healthy choices in community settings.

This guide will help users:

- identify **GREEN**, **AMBER** and **RED** foods and drinks
- understand the processes used to classify foods and drinks as **GREEN**, **AMBER** or **RED**.

Where does Healthy Choices apply?

The *Healthy choices: food and drink classification guide* can be used in any setting or situation where foods and/or drinks are sold or provided to staff, volunteers, visitors and customers. This can include:

- food and drink retail outlets such as cafeterias, cafes, coffee shops, canteens, kiosks (including mobile food kiosks) and coffee carts
- other on-site retail outlets that mainly sell foods and drinks (such as convenience stores)

- food and drink vending machines
- catering provided by an organisation for meetings, functions and events (such as workshops, conferences, community events, launches, celebrations and ceremonies) and client or community education or training programs
- catering provided in a facility by external user groups
- fundraising activities
- rewards, incentives, gifts, prizes and give-aways
- advertising, promotion and sponsorship.

The guidelines apply to all foods and drinks, whether freshly made on the premises or supplied pre-packaged.

The guidelines are not designed for:

- treatment of specific diseases or medical conditions requiring dietary intervention
- foods and drinks that are not recommended for consumption by the general population and are for special purposes only, for example some formulated supplementary foods and drinks¹ (such as formulated supplementary sports drinks, protein drinks, formulated meal replacements)
- meals and snacks for inpatients or aged care residents² and Meals on Wheels
- foods and drinks that staff and visitors purchase from outside a facility or bring from home for personal use.

Do the guidelines apply to school food services?

Healthy Choices uses a similar traffic light classification system to school food services across most states and territories of Australia.

In Victoria, the Department of Education and Training has a separate policy for school food services which can be used to increase the availability and promotion of healthy food and drink choices in school settings.

¹ Food Standards Australia New Zealand. *Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code* – Standard 2.9.4 – Formulated supplementary sports food <<https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/F2017C00314>> and Standard 2.9.3 – Formulated meal replacements and formulated supplementary foods <<https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/F2017C00336>>. Canberra: FSANZ; 2017.

² Inpatient and aged care resident menu items are guided by the Department of Health and Human Services *Nutrition standards for menu items in Victorian hospitals and residential aged care facilities*.

Promotion of breastfeeding

Breastmilk is the ideal food for infant growth and development. Breastfeeding provides many immediate and future benefits for mothers as well as infants. The *Australian dietary guidelines* recommend that infants are exclusively breastfed for around the first six months of life. Breastfeeding should continue until the baby is 12 months old, or for as long as both the mother and infant want to keep going. However, any breastfeeding is beneficial to the infant and mother. Breastfeeding is best, but sometimes this is not possible. All mothers need support from family and friends in choosing what is best for them.

The World Health Organization *International code of marketing breastmilk substitutes*³ aims to protect the community from irresponsible and biased marketing of breastmilk substitutes, which has the potential to undermine the role of breastfeeding. The Code recognises that breastmilk substitutes have a legitimate role to play in circumstances where a child is not breastfed and cannot access expressed or donor breastmilk.

The WHO code recommends that there should be no advertising or other promotion to the general public of infant formula (including formula for babies over 12 months and 'toddler milk') complementary foods, bottles and teats. This includes activities such as sponsorship.

More information on strategies to promote and support breastfeeding in government settings and retail spaces can be found in the Healthy choices setting-specific policy documents (page 2) that accompany this food and drink classification guide.

Evidence base

The *Healthy choices: food and drink classification guide* provides evidence-based advice about healthy food and drink provision.

This guide is adapted from the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services *Healthy choices: food and drink guidelines for Victorian public hospitals* (2010) and aligns with the following scientific and strategic documents:

- *Australian dietary guidelines*⁴
- *Australian guide to healthy eating*⁵
- *Healthy food charter*⁶

Who is this resource for?

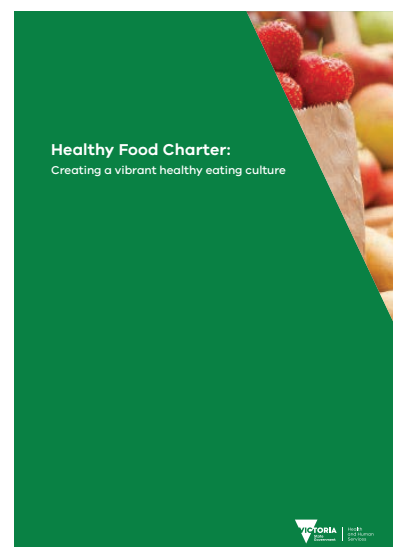
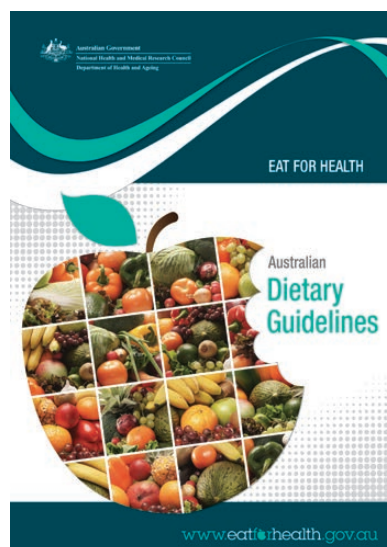
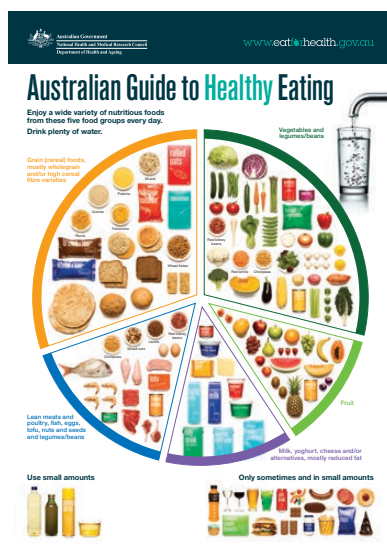
This resource is for anyone involved in applying Healthy Choices in community settings. Food-service staff, retailers, employers, volunteer coordinators, contract managers, food and drink manufacturers, caterers and health promotion officers may find the resource especially useful.

3 World Health Organization, 1981. *International code of marketing of breast-milk substitutes* <<https://www.who.int/nutrition/publications/infantfeeding/9241541601/en>>.

4 National Health and Medical Research Council 2013, *Australian dietary guidelines*, Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra.

5 National Health and Medical Research Council 2013, *Australian guide to healthy eating*, Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra.

6 Department of Health & Human Services 2013, *Healthy food charter*, State Government of Victoria, Melbourne.



Organisations registered with the Achievement Program can use the information in this resource to work towards meeting the requirements of the healthy eating benchmarks. For more information visit <<https://www.achievementprogram.health.vic.gov.au>>.

How to use this resource

The *Healthy choices: food and drink classification guide* should be used together with the setting-specific policy documents to help users implement Healthy Choices in community settings.

The resource is not intended to be read from start to finish, but should be used as required.

The Achievement Program

The Achievement Program provides a quality improvement framework for the creation of healthy environments for learning, working and living across early childhood services, schools and workplaces.

The framework for workplaces enables a whole-of organisation approach to promoting and supporting health and wellbeing across five health priority areas, including healthy eating.

Implementing the Healthy Choices policy supports the achievement of the healthy eating benchmarks as part of creating a healthy workplace environment. For more information visit <<https://www.achievementprogram.health.vic.gov.au>>

2

GREEN,
AMBER or
RED?



The traffic light classification system

The *Healthy choices: food and drink classification guide* categorises foods and drinks as **GREEN**, **AMBER** or **RED** based on their nutritional value.

The GREEN category – best choices

These foods and drinks are the healthiest choices. Ensure they are always available and displayed prominently. Actively promote and encourage **GREEN** foods and drinks.

The AMBER category – choose carefully

These foods and drinks should be selected carefully and consumed in moderation. Do not let **AMBER** items dominate the menu or choices displayed. Do not promote or advertise **AMBER** items at the expense of **GREEN** options. Offer healthier options within the **AMBER** category and avoid large serve sizes.

The RED category – limit

These foods and drinks should be consumed rarely and in small amounts. Availability and display of **RED** options should be limited and promotion and advertising of **RED** items should be avoided.



The GREEN category – best choices

Foods and drinks in the **GREEN** category are the healthiest choices. They are usually:

- good sources of important nutrients
- lower in saturated fat, added sugar and/or salt
- lower in energy (kilojoules)
- higher in fibre.

GREEN foods and drinks are based on the five food groups in the *Australian guide to healthy eating*:

- grain (cereal) foods, mostly wholegrain and/or high fibre cereal varieties
- vegetables and legumes/beans
- fruit
- milk, yoghurt, cheese and/or their alternatives, mostly reduced-fat
- lean meat and poultry, fish, eggs, tofu, nuts and seeds and legumes/beans.

Water is also an important part of the **GREEN** category and should always be readily available.

Some **GREEN** foods and drinks are even healthier than others. For example, wholegrain and white bread are both in the **GREEN** category, but wholegrain bread is higher in fibre and is a healthier choice.

Offering **GREEN** foods and drinks in appropriate serve sizes is consistent with the recommendations in the *Australian dietary guidelines*.

Guidelines for the GREEN category

Ensure **GREEN** foods and drinks are always available

- Offer a wide variety of **GREEN** choices.
- Ensure **GREEN** ingredients make up the majority of meals, snacks and drinks.
- Include **GREEN** choices across all menus and product categories.
- Make **GREEN** choices available for as much of the day as possible, including after hours and on public holidays.

Actively promote and encourage **GREEN** foods and drinks

- Promote **GREEN** choices in all situations where foods and drinks are offered.
- Ensure **GREEN** choices are attractively presented and competitively priced.
- Include **GREEN** choices in special offers such as meal deals, combos and loyalty cards.

Display **GREEN** foods and drinks in prominent areas

- Place **GREEN** choices at eye level on shelves, in fridges and in vending machines.
- Display **GREEN** choices at the front of cabinets and bain maries.
- Place **GREEN** choices in high traffic areas.



Foods and drinks in the GREEN category

Below is a summary of foods and drinks in the GREEN category. For more GREEN choices refer to the *Common foods and drinks classification guide* (Section 5).

Grain (cereal) foods

- Breads, rolls, bagels, English muffins
- Some plain corn/rice cakes and crispbreads
- Plain grains including rice, pasta, noodles, barley, buckwheat, semolina, polenta, burghul, cracked wheat, couscous, quinoa
- Breakfast cereals that meet the GREEN criteria in Table 1 (page 20)
- Filo pastry

Fruit

- Fresh and frozen fruit, including avocado
- Fruit purée or canned fruit in natural juice or water with no added sugar
- Stewed fruit with no added sugar

Vegetables

- Fresh and frozen vegetables
- Canned vegetables

Legumes/beans

- Beans (such as kidney, soy, mung), lentils, chickpeas, split peas, baked beans

Milk, yoghurt, cheese and alternatives

- Reduced-fat plain milk
- Cheese that is naturally lower in fat (including cottage and ricotta) and reduced-fat forms of other cheeses (such as reduced-fat cheddar)
- Reduced-fat plain or flavoured yoghurt and custard
- Calcium-fortified dairy alternatives (including soy/rice/almond drink, soy yoghurt)
- Reduced-fat flavoured milk and calcium-fortified alternatives that are equal to or less than 900 kJ per serve as sold

Lean meat/poultry, fish, eggs and alternatives

- Lean meat (such as beef, pork, lamb, veal, chicken, turkey) with visible fat and skin removed
- Fresh and frozen fish
- Canned fish in spring water
- Eggs
- Tofu and bean curd

Nuts and seeds

- Plain, unsalted, unroasted/dry roasted nuts and seeds in serve sizes up to 30 g
- 100 per cent nut/seed paste with no added sugar, salt or fat

Mixed meals

- Some commercial or freshly prepared ready to eat meals, mixed hot-food dishes or plated dinners that are lower in fat, salt and added sugar and use vegetables, legumes and beans, lean meats, wholegrains and reduced-fat cheeses

Sauces, soups, dips and dressings

- Pasta and simmer sauces, soups, dips, mayonnaise and salad dressings that meet the GREEN criteria in Table 1 (page 20)

Drinks

- Plain, unflavoured water (tap, spring, mineral, soda, sparkling)
- Reduced-fat plain milk
- Calcium-fortified milk alternatives (including soy/rice/almond drink)
- Reduced-fat flavoured milk and calcium-fortified flavoured milk alternatives that are equal to or less than 900 kJ per serve as sold
- Tea and coffee without added sugar



The AMBER category – choose carefully

AMBER foods and drinks should be selected carefully and consumed in moderation. Although AMBER items may provide some valuable nutrients they can:

- contribute to excess energy (kilojoule) intake
- contain moderate amounts of saturated fat, added sugar and/or salt.

AMBER options may be healthier varieties of items that are usually in the RED category. For example, sugar-sweetened soft drinks are RED. Diet soft drinks contain less energy and are AMBER.

Healthier choices in the AMBER category include less saturated fat, added sugar and/or salt or more fibre. Adding GREEN ingredients to AMBER foods and drinks is a good way to make AMBER items healthier.

Use the *Common foods and drinks classification guide* (Section 5) to help you identify healthier AMBER choices.

Guidelines for the AMBER category

To encourage people to choose AMBER foods and drinks carefully you can:

- reduce the amount and variety of AMBER foods and drinks offered
- provide AMBER items in smaller serve sizes
- provide healthier choices within the AMBER category.

Do not let AMBER foods and drinks dominate

AMBER foods and drinks should not dominate the choices available. Offering mostly AMBER items will provide excess kilojoules at the expense of nutrient-rich GREEN options that are needed for optimal health and vitality.

Do not promote AMBER foods and drinks at the expense of GREEN choices

This includes:

- product placement in cabinets, shelves, fridges, refrigerated cabinets, bain maries and vending machines
- product placement in high-traffic areas such as reception desks, counters in waiting areas, entrances and exits of food outlets, beside cash registers and in dining areas
- promotion or advertising on counters, cabinets, fridges, vending machines, menu boards, staff notice boards, in lifts and via promotional stands and product displays.

Avoid large serve sizes

Today there is a general trend towards serving or packaging foods and drinks in larger portions, making it easier to consume excess energy (kilojoules). Offer moderate portions instead.



Foods and drinks in the AMBER category

Below is a summary of foods and drinks in the AMBER category. For more AMBER choices refer to the *Common foods and drinks classification guide* (Section 5).

Grain (cereal) foods

- Some savoury breads, scrolls, foccacias and twists
- Some breakfast cereals which do not meet the criteria in Table 1 (page 20)

Fruit and vegetables

- Canned fruit or stewed fruit with added sugar (for example in syrup or jelly)
- Dried fruit in serve sizes up to 30 g
- Some fruit leathers, straps and dried fruit bars that are 100 per cent dried fruit with no added sugar
- At least 99 per cent fruit juice with no added sugar⁷ in serve sizes up to 250 ml
- Ice blocks, ice crushes, gelato and sorbet based on pure fruit juice with no added sugar⁷ in serve sizes up to 250 ml
- Vegetables roasted in oil, marinated and pickled vegetables, olives

A serve of fruit juice in the *Australian dietary guidelines* is 125 ml. For practicality, the maximum serve size for AMBER fruit juices is 250 ml.

Milk, yoghurt, cheese and alternatives

- Regular-fat plain milk
- Regular-fat forms of cheese
- Regular-fat plain or flavoured yoghurt and custard
- Reduced-fat flavoured milk and flavoured milk alternatives that are between 900–1,600 kJ per serve as sold
- Regular-fat flavoured milk and flavoured milk alternatives that are equal to or less than 1,600 kJ per serve as sold

Meat and alternatives

- Meat or poultry with visible skin or fat
- Fish canned in brine, oil or flavoured sauce
- Some meat products and lean, processed meats that meet the AMBER nutrient criteria

(Table 2, page 21), for example some uncrumbed/crumbed burgers patties, balls or strips and some lean, reduced sodium deli meats (roast beef/turkey breast slices, pastrami, chicken breast pieces)

Nuts and seeds

- Salted nuts and seeds
- Nut and seed pastes with added sugar, salt or oil

Unsaturated fats and oils

- Mono- or poly-unsaturated margarines and oils such as canola, olive, peanut, sesame, sunflower, safflower, soybean, flaxseed

Single hot-food items, ready to eat meals and snack foods

Items that meet the AMBER nutrient criteria (pages 21–22). This includes some:

- savoury-topped breads and pizzas with wholemeal flour and reduced-fat cheese
- steamed dim sims and spring rolls
- oven-baked potato products
- ready to eat meals, mixed hot-food dishes and plated dinners
- savoury snack foods, biscuits and crispbreads
- wholemeal muffins or scones with added fruit and vegetables
- uncoated, un-iced sweet biscuits
- ice-creams, milk or soy-based ice confections and dairy desserts made with reduced-fat milk

Drinks

- Regular-fat plain milk
- Reduced-fat flavoured milk and flavoured milk alternatives that are between 900–1,600 kJ per serve as sold
- Regular-fat flavoured milk and flavoured milk alternatives that are equal to or less than 1,600 kJ per serve as sold
- Fruit and vegetable juices with no added sugar⁸ in serve sizes up to 250 ml
- Ice crushes (for example Slurpees™ and slushies) based on at least 99 per cent fruit juice with no added sugar⁸ in serve sizes of up to 250 ml
- Artificially sweetened drinks with no added sugar.⁸ It is recommended to provide these drinks in the smallest serve size available (for example, less than 375 ml cans)
- Artificially sweetened energy drinks with no added sugar in serve sizes up to 250 ml
- Some formulated supplementary drinks (milk/alternative based) that are not high in protein

⁷ Added sugar includes sucrose (commonly called sugar), fructose, glucose, honey, fruit juice concentrate, fruit sugar syrup, deionised fruit juice and similar ingredients.

⁸ Added sugar includes sucrose (commonly called sugar), fructose, glucose, honey, fruit juice concentrate, fruit sugar syrup, deionised fruit juice and similar ingredients.

The RED category – limit

Foods and drinks in the RED category are based on 'discretionary choices' in the *Australian dietary guidelines*. These items are not essential in a balanced diet and can contribute to excess energy intake, overweight and obesity and chronic disease if consumed frequently or in large amounts. In general RED choices are:

- high in energy (kilojoules)
- high in saturated fat, added sugar and/or salt
- lacking in important nutrients such as fibre.

Sugar-sweetened drinks, deep-fried foods and confectionery are examples of RED choices.

Alcohol is also included in the RED category. For information about the responsible service of alcohol visit the Victorian Commission for Gambling and Liquor Regulation website at <<https://www.vcglr.vic.gov.au>>.

The RED category also contains foods and drinks that are not recommended for consumption by the general population as part of a normal diet and are for special purposes only. This includes high protein drinks and formulated supplementary sports drinks.



Guidelines for the RED category

Limit⁹ availability of RED foods and drinks

This includes limiting:

- the range of RED choices offered
- the supply of RED choices in all situations.

If RED choices are provided, offer the smallest portion available. Jumbo sizes of RED foods and drinks should be avoided.

Avoid promoting or encouraging RED foods and drinks

This includes:

- promotional materials on counters, cabinets, fridges, vending machines, menu boards, staff notice boards, in lifts and via promotional stands and product displays
- meal or point of sale promotions which include RED choices, for example meal deals, two for one deals, upsizing and supersizing.

Limit the display of RED foods and drinks

RED choices should not be displayed in excessive quantities or in prominent areas including:

- at eye level in cabinets, fridges, refrigerated cabinets, bain maries, vending machines or on shelves
- on reception desks or counters in waiting areas, at entrances and exits of food outlets, beside cash registers and in dining areas.



⁹ In some instances (for example, workplace catering) RED items must be avoided completely. Refer to the setting-specific Healthy Choices policy documents for more information.

Sweet drinks

Sugar-sweetened drinks

Sugar-sweetened¹¹ drinks are in the **RED** category and should be limited. These drinks provide extra energy (kilojoules) to the diet, but no other important nutrients. Sugar-sweetened drinks include:

- soft drinks
- flavoured waters and flavoured mineral waters
- flavoured teas
- fruit drinks (less than 99 per cent fruit) and cordials
- sports waters and sports drinks
- energy drinks
- ice crushes (Slurpees™, slushies).

Sugar-sweetened drinks are associated with weight gain and dental caries. If sugar-sweetened drinks are offered, they should be provided in the smallest serve size available (for example 200–375 ml cans).

Artificially sweetened drinks

Artificially sweetened drinks (including 'diet', 'no sugar' and 'low joule') include less sugar and energy than regular sweet drinks.

Artificially sweetened drinks with no added sugar add little energy to the diet and do not directly contribute to weight gain. However, some drinks advertised as 'diet', 'reduced-sugar' or 'low-sugar' may include both artificial sweetener¹² and added sugar.

Artificially sweetened drinks are in the **AMBER** category if they include no added sugar.

Whether sweetened with sugar or artificial sweeteners, all soft drinks are acidic. Frequent consumption can contribute to the erosion of tooth enamel, a major factor in tooth decay.

Artificially sweetened drinks should be provided in the smallest serve size available (for example, less than 375 ml cans).

Note: This information does not apply to artificially sweetened flavoured milk drinks. For information about classifying flavoured milk drinks please refer to page 36 of the *Common foods and drinks classification guide*.

¹¹ 'Sugar-sweetened' refers to products with added sweetener, for example sucrose (sugar), fructose, glucose, honey, fruit juice concentrate, fruit sugar syrup, deionised fruit juice and similar ingredients.

¹² This includes artificial or intense sweeteners (including natural sweeteners), for example aspartame, saccharin, steviol glycosides, monk fruit extract, erythritol, sorbitol, xylitol and mannitol.

Energy drinks and other caffeine-containing drinks

Energy drinks are sweet drinks that are also high in caffeine. These drinks are in the **RED** category. Under the Food Standards Code *Standard 2.6.4 Formulated caffeinated beverages*, energy drinks are not recommended for children, pregnant or lactating women and individuals sensitive to caffeine¹³.

Artificially sweetened energy drinks with no added sugar in serve sizes of less than 250 ml are **AMBER**.

Other caffeine containing drinks include:

- tea, iced tea and tea flavoured drinks
- coffee and coffee flavoured drinks
- chocolate and chocolate flavoured drinks
- cola and cola flavoured drinks
- some sports drinks.

Refer to the *Common foods and drinks classification guide* (Section 5) for information about classifying drinks containing caffeine.

High protein drinks

A range of high protein drinks are on the market and commonly promoted as dietary supplements or performance enhancers. This includes formulated supplementary sports drinks¹⁴ that are typically designed for sports people to achieve specific goals. Generally, these drinks are not recommended for consumption by the general population as part of a normal diet and are for special purposes only. Formulated supplementary sports foods and drinks are not suitable for children under 15 years of age or pregnant women and should only be used under medical or dietetic supervision.

For the purpose of the Healthy Choices guidelines, a high protein drink¹⁵ can usually be identified if it is labelled as a 'protein shake', a 'high protein drink' or as having 'added' or 'extra' protein. It is recommended that these drinks are in limited supply under Healthy Choices because they are not intended for the general population, particularly in settings where children are present.

High protein drinks and protein shakes that are 300 ml or less per bottle are **AMBER**. Those over 300 ml are **RED**.

Protein waters (plain or flavoured waters that contain added protein) over 300 ml are **RED**. Those under 300 ml are **AMBER** if they are artificially sweetened with no added sugar, otherwise they are **RED**.

13 Food Standards Australia New Zealand, *Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code – Standard 2.6.4 Formulated Caffeinated Beverages*, available at <<https://www.foodstandards.gov.au>>.

14 Food Standards Australia New Zealand. *Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code – Standard 2.9.4 – Formulated supplementary sports foods* <<https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/F2017C00336>> and *Standard 2.9.3 – Formulated meal replacements and formulated supplementary foods* <<https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/F2017C00314>>. Canberra: FSANZ; 2017.

15 These guidelines consider drinks containing 5 g or more of protein per 100 ml as being high protein drinks. These are generally protein shakes and drinks labelled as 'added', 'high' or 'extra' protein.

An example of marketing resources available for retail food outlets meeting the Healthy Choices guidelines.

Choose well. Feel great.

Making healthy choices easier.

To help you make healthier choices, food and drinks have been classified according to their nutritional value.

Best choice

Choose **green** food and drinks as often as possible. They are fresh and good for you.



Choose carefully

Choose **amber** food and drinks sometimes. They are less healthy and there are better options.



Limit

To look after your health, choose **red** food and drinks rarely and in small amounts.



BEST
CHOICE



3

Classifying foods using nutrient information



What is nutrient information?

Nutrient information describes the amount of energy (kilojoules) and nutrients (carbohydrates, protein, fat, fibre, vitamins and minerals) in a food or drink. There are a number of ways to find nutrient information, for example:

1. **From the food label¹⁶ on a product.** Food labels include an ingredient list and a nutrition information panel (NIP). The NIP outlines amounts of specific nutrients in a product.
2. **From the food or drink manufacturer.** You can search manufacturer websites or call companies directly to obtain nutrient information.

What is on a NIP?

NIPs include information about the amount of energy (kilojoules), protein, total fat, saturated fat, carbohydrate, sugars and sodium (salt) in a food or drink. If a nutrient claim is made (for example, 'high in fibre'), the NIP will also state the amount of that specific nutrient in the product.

Information is provided 'per 100g' and 'per serve' of product. 'Per serve' information on the NIP is determined by the manufacturer which means that serve sizes of similar foods and drinks are not always standardised and may vary within and across brands. When comparing NIPs of similar products, use the 'per 100g' column.

Sample food label for a muesli bar

Servings per package: 8 Serve size: 31 g		
	Quantity per serve	Quantity per 100 g
ENERGY	527 kJ (126 cal)	1,700 kJ (405 cal)
PROTEIN	1.9 g	6.0 g
FAT		
- Total	3.7 g	11.9 g
- Saturated	0.7 g	2.2 g
CARBOHYDRATE	20.3 g	65.5 g
- Sugars	7.4 g	23.7 g
SODIUM	31 mg	100 mg
FIBRE	1.7 g	5.4 g

Nutrition information panel (NIP)

Ingredients: Rolled oats, glucose syrup, sugar, vegetable oil, wheat, rice flour, fruit paste (9%) [dried dates, sultanas, pear juice, invert sugar, humectant (422), wheat fibre, vegetable fat (hydrogenated coconut oil) vegetable gum (pectin), food acid (lactic), flavour], almonds, honey, coconut, oat fibre, maize starch, skim milk powder, emulsifier (soy lecithin), salt, flavour, food acid (malic).

Ingredient list

When assessing products against the Healthy Choices criteria use the product or package size as sold or commonly consumed. This may be different from the serve size listed on the NIP. This commonly applies to snacks and drinks.

¹⁶ For information about reading food labels visit the Eat for Health website <<https://www.eatforhealth.gov.au/eating-well/how-understand-food-labels>>.

Nutrient criteria for GREEN and AMBER foods

Nutrient criteria are available to help identify GREEN and AMBER choices for some common foods.

By comparing the food's nutrient information against the criteria, you can determine whether the item is likely to be GREEN, AMBER or RED.

Nutrient criteria to identify GREEN choices

Nutrient criteria are available to help identify GREEN breakfast cereals, pasta and simmer sauces, soups, dips, mayonnaise and salad dressings.

To check if a product fits in the GREEN category, compare the amount of saturated fat, sodium, fibre and sugar in the item (per 100 g) against the criteria in Table 1.

If the item meets the criteria for each required nutrient it is a GREEN choice.

If the item does not meet any one of the criteria it will be categorised as AMBER or RED.

Table 1: Green choices (assess per 100 g)

Green choices (assess per 100 g)				
Category	Nutrient criteria			
	Saturated fat (g) per 100 g	Sodium (mg) per 100 g	Fibre (g) per 100 g	Sugars (g) per 100g
Breakfast cereals not containing dried fruit (assess as dry weight)	2 g or less	-	5 g or more	20 g or less (> 25 g = RED)
Breakfast cereals containing dried fruit (assess as dry weight)	2 g or less	-	5 g or more	25 g or less (> 30 g = RED)
Pasta sauces and simmer sauces	2 g or less (> 5 g = RED)	300 mg or less (> 700 mg = RED)	-	-
Soups as prepared (ready to eat, canned, instant)	2 g or less	300 mg or less	-	-
Dips (legume, dairy, vegetable or salsa)	2 g or less	750 mg or less	-	-
Mayonnaise and salad dressings (low or reduced fat)	3 g or less	750 mg or less	-	-
Tuna and legume ready-to-eat products	2 g or less	400 mg or less	-	-

Note: This table includes criteria for a small selection of foods. Check the *Common foods and drinks classification guide* (Section 5) for more GREEN choices.



Nutrient criteria to identify AMBER choices

The following tables are available to help identify AMBER foods:

- Table 2: Single hot-food items and processed meats
- Table 3: Ready to eat meals
- Table 4: Snack foods

Nutrient criteria for AMBER items vary but may include energy (kilojoules), saturated fat, sodium and fibre.¹⁷

A 'maximum serve size' may also be included.

Products are assessed per 100 g, per serve as sold, (i.e. per product, item or packet) or both. The 'per serve as sold' (i.e. per product item/packet) measure applies to products such as snack foods and drinks where the whole individual item or packet is commonly consumed as one individual serve.

If an item meets the criteria for each required nutrient it is an AMBER choice. If the item does not meet any one of the criteria it will be categorised as RED.

Table 2: Single hot-food items and processed meats

Single hot-food items and processed meats (assess per 100 g and maximum serve size as sold)				
Category	Nutrient criteria			
	Energy (kJ) per 100 g	Saturated fat (g) per 100 g	Sodium (mg) per 100 g	Maximum serve size
Savoury pastries (such as pies, pasties, sausage rolls, quiches, cheese and spinach triangles), filled breads (such as calzone), pizza, dumplings, dim sims, samosas, spring rolls, instant noodles	1,000 kJ or less	5 g or less	400 mg or less	200 g or less
Oven-baked potato products (such as wedges, chips, French fries, gems, hash browns, potato cakes)	1,000 kJ or less	5 g or less	400 mg or less	150 g or less
Meat products and alternatives – crumbed/coated and uncrumbed/uncoated (such as burgers, patties, strips, balls, nuggets), sausages, frankfurts, saveloys and chorizo	1,000 kJ or less	5 g or less	450 mg or less	150 g or less
Processed luncheon meats and cured meats (such as Fritz, Devon, chicken loaf, Strasburg, pastrami, ham, bacon, silverside/corned beef, sliced chicken, turkey or roast beef, diced processed chicken meat)	1,000 kJ or less	3 g or less	750 mg or less	50 g or less

¹⁷ Total fat and added sugar are not included in the criteria as limiting total kilojoule content restricts the amount of fat or sugar that can be added. A criterion for saturated fat is included due to the link between saturated fat and cardiovascular disease.

Table 3: Ready to eat meals

Ready to eat meals (assess per serve as sold and per 100 g)					
Category	Nutrient criteria				
	Energy (kJ) per serve as sold	Saturated fat (g) per 100 g	Sodium (mg) per 100 g	Sodium (mg) per serve as sold	Fibre (g) per serve as sold
Ready to eat meals, mixed hot-food dishes (commercial or pre-packaged) – GREEN	2,000 kJ or less	2 g or less	250 mg or less	750 mg or less	5 g or more
Ready to eat meals, mixed hot-food dishes (commercial, or pre-packaged) – AMBER	2,500 kJ or less	2 g or less	300 mg or less	900 mg or less	3 g or more

Table 4: Snack foods

Snack foods (assess per serve as sold [i.e. per product item/packet])					
Category	Nutrient criteria				
	Energy (kJ) per serve as sold (i.e. per product/packet)	Saturated fat (g) per serve as sold (i.e. per product/packet)	Sodium (mg) per serve as sold (i.e. per product/packet)	Sodium (mg) per serve as sold (i.e. per product/packet)	Fibre (g) per serve as sold (i.e. per product/packet)
Sweet snack foods, bars and biscuits	600 kJ or less	3 g or less	-	-	1 g or more
Savoury snack foods, biscuits, crispbreads and crisps	Energy must be 1,800 kJ or less per 100 g	600 kJ or less	2 g or less	200 mg or less	-
Ice-creams, milk or soy-based ice confections and dairy desserts ¹⁸	Milk must be listed as first ingredient (or second after water)	600 kJ or less	3 g or less	-	-
Cakes, muffins, slices and sweet pastries	900 kJ or less	3 g or less	-	-	1.5 g or more

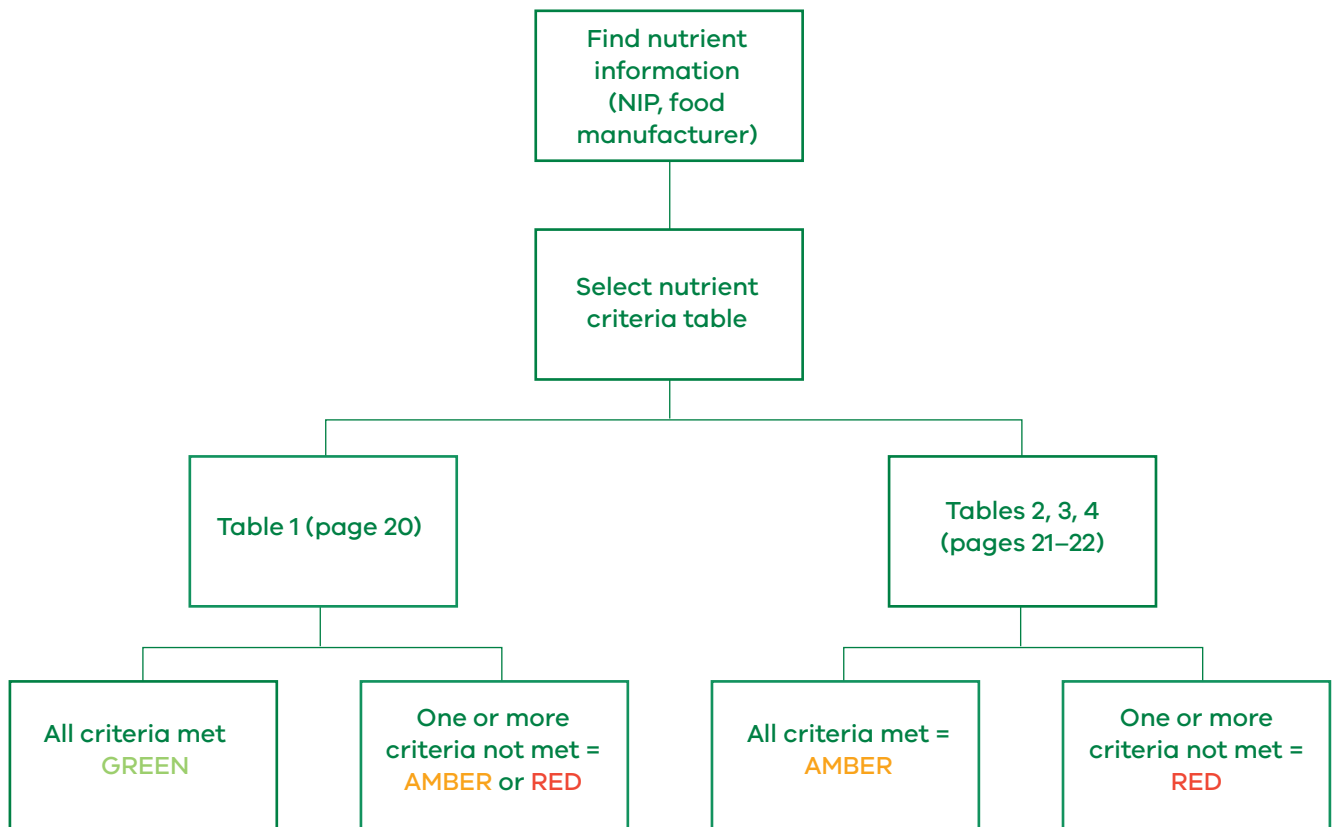
When assessing products against the Healthy Choices criteria use the product or packet size as sold or commonly consumed. This may be different from the serve size listed on the NIP. This commonly applies to snacks and drinks.

¹⁸ Dairy desserts include items such as cheesecake, panna cotta, tiramisu, crème brûlée, milk or rice-based pudding, creamed rice, fromage frais, dessert custard, mousse.

How to assess foods using nutrient criteria tables

The diagram below outlines the process for comparing nutrient information for a food against the nutrient criteria tables. Use this process to decide whether:

- breakfast cereals, pasta and simmer sauces, soups, dips, mayonnaise and salad dressings fit into the **GREEN** category (Table 1)
- single hot-food items, processed meats, ready to eat meals and snack foods fit into the **AMBER** category (Tables 2–4).



The practical examples on the following pages illustrate how to follow this process.

In these examples the foods analysed are commercial products, and nutrient information is obtained from NIPs on food labels.

Example A: Crumbed chicken fillet patty (oven-baked)

STEP 1 – Find the NIP

The NIP (nutrition information panel) is on the crumbed chicken fillet patty packet.

STEP 2 – Identify the correct nutrient criteria table

Patties are in the 'Single hot-food items and processed meats' table and should be assessed against the criteria in Table 2 (see extract below).

Single hot-food items and processed meats are assessed using the 'per 100 g' column on the NIP.

STEP 3 – Assess per 100 g and per maximum serve size as sold

Nutrition information panel for crumbed chicken fillet patty

Serves per package: 60 Serve size: 120 g		
	Quantity per serve	Quantity per 100 g
ENERGY	1,176 kJ	980 kJ
PROTEIN	17.4 g	14.5 g
FAT		
- Total	15.8 g	13.2 g
- Saturated	4.1 g	3.4 g
CARBOHYDRATE	18.4 g	15.3 g
- Sugars	0.2 g	0.2 g
SODIUM	526.8 mg	439 mg

1. Find the serve size on the NIP. Make sure this is the same as the size of the whole product as it would be commonly consumed.

2. Find the 'per 100 g' column on the NIP.

3. Look at the quantity per 100 g for:

a) energy (kilojoules)

b) saturated fat

c) sodium.

Compare the information on the NIP against the criteria in Table 2.

Ingredients: Chicken (60%), flour, water, salt, vegetable oil, yeast & yeast extract, dehydrated vegetables, sugar, salt, spices, preservatives

Saturated fat = 3.4 g per 100 g (meets **AMBER** criteria)

Serve size = 120 g (meets **AMBER** criteria)

Extract from Table 2: Single hot-food items and processed meats

Single hot-food items and processed meats (assess per 100 g and maximum serve size)				
	Energy (kJ) per 100 g	Saturated fat (g) per 100 g	Sodium (mg) per 100 g	Maximum serve size as sold
Meat products and alternatives – crumbed/coated and uncrumbed/uncoated (such as burgers, patties, strips, balls, nuggets), sausages, frankfurts, saveloys and chorizo	1,000 kJ or less	5 g or less	450 mg or less	150 g or less
	Energy = 980 kJ per 100 g (meets AMBER criteria)		Sodium = 439 mg per 100 g (meets AMBER criteria)	

This crumbed chicken-fillet patty is in the **AMBER** category and should be selected carefully.

Example B: Savoury snack mix, 80g packet

STEP 1 – Find the NIP

The NIP (nutrition information panel) is on the savoury snack mix packet food label.

STEP 2 – Identify the correct nutrient criteria table

This savoury snack food mix product should be assessed against the savoury snack foods, biscuit, crispbreads and crisps criteria in Table 4 (see extract below).

STEP 3 – Assess per serve

Use the product or packet size as sold or commonly consumed. This may be different from the serve size listed on the NIP. This commonly applies to snacks and drinks.

Nutrition information panel for savoury snack mix, 80g packet.

Product/packet size: 80g Serves per package: 2 Serve size: 40 g		
	Quantity per serve	Quantity per 100 g
ENERGY	920 kJ	2,300 kJ
PROTEIN	3.5g	8.8 g
FAT		
- Total	15.0g	37.4 g
- Saturated	2.0g	5.1 g
CARBOHYDRATE		
- Sugars	17.1 g	42.8 g
	2.5 g	6.3 g
SODIUM	268 mg	669 mg

(As suggested by manufacturer)

1. Find the per serve column on the NIP. Make sure this is the same as the size of the whole product as it would be commonly consumed.
2. Look at the quantity 'per serve' (i.e. per product item/packet as commonly consumed) for:
 - a) energy (kilojoules) $920\text{kJ} \times 2 = 1840\text{kJ}$ per serve (packet) as commonly consumed
 - b) saturated fat $2.0\text{g} \times 2 = 4\text{g}$ per serve (packet) as commonly consumed.

This is the 40g serve is suggested by the manufacturer, however the actual packet size is 80g, so multiply these nutrient values x 2 to calculate the actual serve size as commonly consumed.

Compare the information on the NIP against the criteria in Table 4.

Ingredients: Wheat starch, cashews (26%), canola oil, soya bean solids, (13%), sugar, Multigrain (ground corn, barley meal, wheat flour, oat meal, rice flour) (4%), salt, onion, malt extract, soy sauce powder, sesame seeds, garlic.

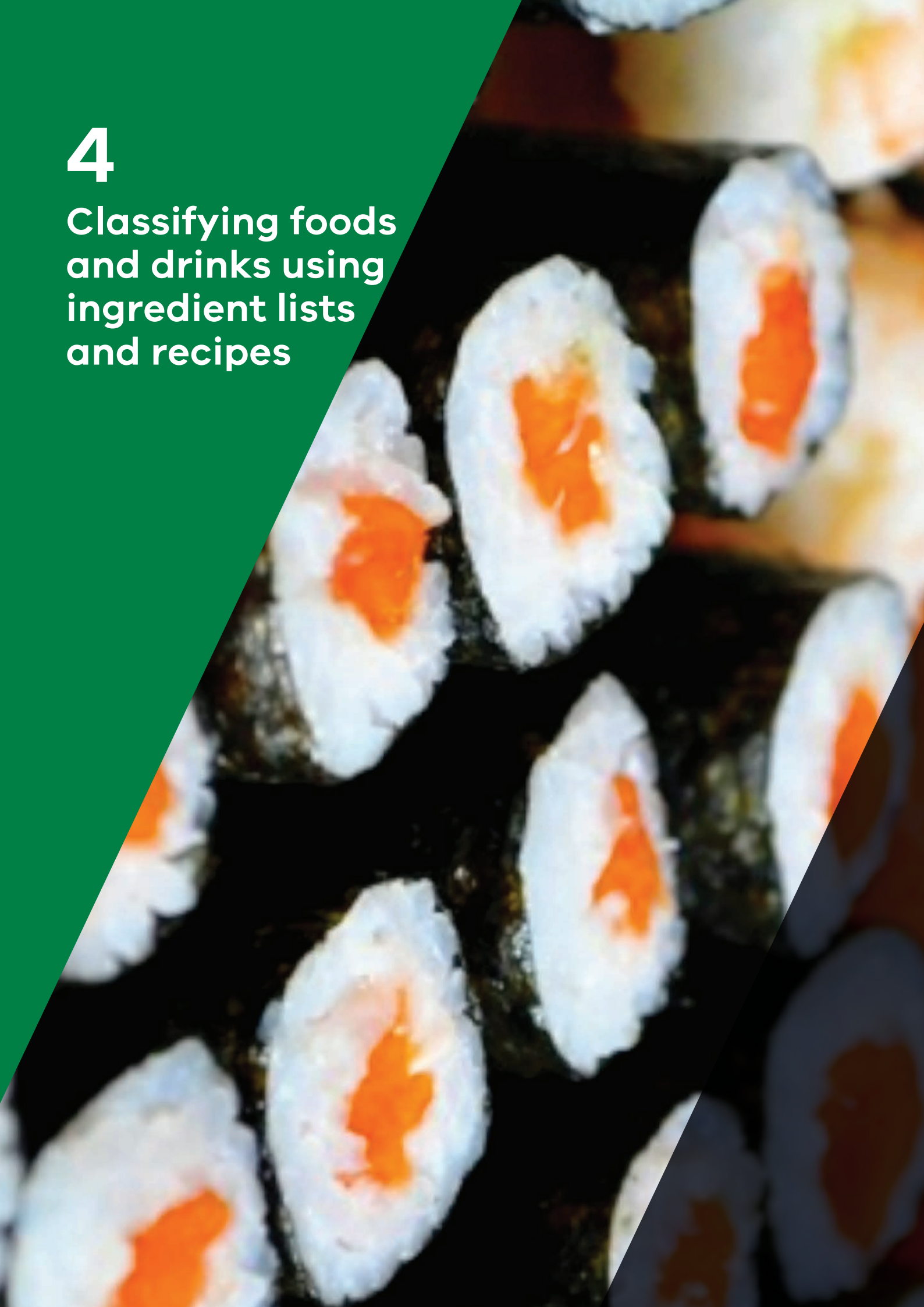
Extract from Table 4: Snack foods

Extract from Table 4: Snack foods (assess per serve as sold [i.e. per product item/packet])			
	Energy (kJ) per serve as sold (i.e. per product/packet)	Saturated fat (g) per serve as sold (i.e. per product item/packet)	Sodium (mg) per serve as sold (i.e. per product/packet)
Savoury snack foods, biscuits, crispbreads and crisps	600 kJ or less	2 g or less	200mg or less
	Energy must be 1,800 kJ or less per 100 g		

This savoury snack mix product is in the **RED** category and should be limited.

4

**Classifying foods
and drinks using
ingredient lists
and recipes**



Classifying foods and drinks using major and minor ingredients

It is not possible to classify a food or drink as **GREEN**, **AMBER** or **RED** using nutrient information and nutrient criteria tables if:

- nutrient information is not available (for example, for foods and drinks prepared on site)
- nutrient information is available but the item does not fit in a category in the nutrient criteria tables.

In these situations, foods and drinks should be classified based on the nutrition content of their ingredients.

Information about ingredients is available from ingredient lists on food labels or from recipes.

Use the following process to classify foods and drinks according to their ingredients:

1. Identify major ingredients and minor ingredients
 - Major ingredients** make up the majority of an item. All ingredients are considered 'major' except those that are provided in very small amounts.
 - Minor ingredients** make up only a small proportion of the item. Some examples of minor ingredients are:
 - dressings and mayonnaise
 - sauces, relishes and chutneys
 - spreads, including butter and dairy blends
 - garnishes
 - oils and oil spreads
 - salt
2. Classify all major and minor ingredients as **GREEN**, **AMBER** or **RED**.
3. Use the information in the table below to determine whether the overall food or drink is in the **GREEN**, **AMBER** or **RED** category.

Category	Criteria
GREEN	<p>Option 1 – all ingredients are GREEN</p> <p>Option 2 – items with a mix of GREEN, AMBER and RED ingredients must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • vegetables and/or fruit • mostly GREEN major ingredients <p>Items must meet one of the following conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 AMBER major ingredient and all other ingredients are GREEN, OR • 2 AMBER minor ingredients and all major ingredients are GREEN, OR • 1 AMBER and 1 RED minor ingredient and all major ingredients are GREEN
AMBER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • at least one GREEN or AMBER major ingredient, AND • no more than 2 RED ingredients with a maximum of 1 RED major ingredient
RED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • does not meet the criteria for GREEN or AMBER • contains deep fried major ingredients (except for sushi and rice paper rolls)
Extra criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a thin spread of margarine in sandwiches, or a dash of oil for frying off ingredients does not alter the classification of meals or snacks
Serve size information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • milk-based smoothies should be provided in serve sizes of 500 ml or less • cakes and muffins should be provided in serve sizes of 80 g or less • biscuits should be provided in serve sizes of 40 g or less

Example: Crumbed chicken-patty burger

A burger made with an oven-baked crumbed chicken patty includes:

- major ingredients: bread bun (70 g), oven-baked crumbed chicken patty, onion, lettuce
- minor ingredients: mayonnaise (regular-fat).

Using the *Common foods and drinks classification guide* (Section 5), the ingredients in the burger are classified as follows:

Food item: Crumbed chicken patty burger		Green	Amber	Red	
Major ingredients	Bread bun	■			Overall classification: AMBER
	Crumbed chicken patty (oven-baked)		■		
	See page 24 for AMBER classification				
	Lettuce	■			
	Onion	■			
Minor ingredients	Mayonnaise (regular-fat)			■	

The burger contains three **GREEN** major ingredients, one **AMBER** major ingredient and one **RED** minor ingredient.

Because the burger includes an **AMBER** major ingredient and a **RED** minor ingredient it does not meet the requirements for the **GREEN** category.

As only one **RED** ingredient is present, and the meal does not include deep-fried items or confectionery, it fits into the **AMBER** category.

The crumbed chicken-patty burger should be selected carefully and served with salad or vegetables.



Portion control

Reducing portion sizes can help consumers manage their energy intake. Even when **GREEN** choices are provided, offering foods and drinks in large portions can contribute to excess energy and weight gain.

Try the following tips to help you offer meals, snacks and drinks in appropriate portion sizes:

- Avoid oversized servings. Use small to medium sized plates (20–25 cm diameter), bowls and cups (250 ml volume) when serving foods and drinks.
- Use standard sized ladles and spoons when serving food to avoid putting too much on the plate.
- Maximise the use of fruit, vegetables, legumes and whole grains as these ingredients will fill customers up without providing excess kilojoules. For example, when serving meals, fill half the plate with vegetables.
- Avoid meal specials such as combo deals and supersizing.
- Avoid offering large and jumbo-sized takeaway cups and containers. Offer small to medium/regular sizes as standard and avoid overfilling.
- Limit liquid kilojoules. If **RED** drinks are offered, offer the smallest cup or can/bottle size available.
- Use standard slices of bread (40 g) and medium-sized bread rolls (60–80 g) for sandwiches and burgers. Offer larger items such as baguettes, focaccias and wraps in half serves.
- If muffins, cakes and slices are provided, serve smaller or 'mini' individually packaged varieties up to 80 g (the size of a tennis ball)
- Choose smaller options of pre-packaged foods and snacks (such as meat pies). Avoid king-size snack bars and chocolate bars.



5

Common foods and drinks classification guide



Food or drink category

Breads and alternatives	32
Breakfast cereals	33
Cakes, muffins, slices and sweet pastries	33
Confectionery, chewing gum and mints	34
Drinks	35
Fats and oils	37
Fruit	37
Grains (rice, pasta, noodles, barley, couscous, buckwheat, semolina, polenta, burghul, quinoa, oats)	38
Ice confections – fruit or water based	38
Ice-creams, milk or soy-based ice confections and dairy desserts	38
Legumes and beans	39
Meat products and alternatives, sausages and frankfurts	39
Meat, poultry, fish, eggs, tofu, nuts and seeds	40
Milk, yoghurt, cheese and alternatives	41
Mixed hot-food dishes, ready to eat meals and plated dinners	42
Other ingredients	43
Oven-baked potato products	43
Pastry	43
Pizza	43
Processed luncheon and cured meats	44
Salad dressings	44
Salads	45
Sandwiches	45
Sauces and condiments	45
Savoury pastries, pies and instant noodles	46
Savoury snack foods, biscuits and crisps	47
Soups	48
Spreads	49
Sushi	49
Sweet snack foods, bars and biscuits	49
Vegetables	50

Foods or drinks	Category			Comments and suggestions
Breads and alternatives				
Bread (fruit, nut, vegetable), wraps, rolls	■			Examples include multigrain, wholemeal, high-fibre white, rye, bagels, rolls, lavash, baguette, Turkish bread, Lebanese bread, tortillas, ciabatta, raisin/fruit bread. It is recommended to offer high-fibre, wholemeal, wholegrain or multigrain options. Offer spreads separately and use sparingly.
English muffins	■			
Focaccia		■		It is recommended to use wholemeal bases where possible.
Pizza bases	■			
Banana bread		■	■	See 'Cakes, muffins, slices and sweet pastries' (page 33)
Pikelets, pancakes, crumpets	■	■	■	GREEN options are made with wholemeal flour, reduced-fat milk and minimal salt and sugar and are cooked with minimal oil (non-stick pan or spray oil). Those with added fat, sugar and/or salt are AMBER or RED . Cream, jam, sprinkles, syrup, chocolate and butter are RED additions. Dutch pancakes (proffertjes) are RED .
French toast	■	■	■	GREEN options are cooked with little oil and served without sugary toppings. Those with added fat, sugar and/or salt are AMBER or RED . Cream, jam, sprinkles, syrup, chocolate and butter are RED additions.
Savoury-topped breads, cheese breads, twists, pull-aparts, scrolls, garlic/herb breads		■	■	AMBER options are with vegetable toppings. Varieties with high-fat meats (such as bacon and salami) and large amounts of butter are RED . Wholemeal bread brushed lightly with mono- or poly-unsaturated oil and garlic is a healthier alternative to commercial garlic bread.
Pappadams, taco shells		■	■	Plain air-popped pappadams are AMBER . Hard taco shells and flavoured pappadams that are higher in fat and salt are RED . Deep-fried pappadams are RED .
Rice cakes, corn cakes, crackers, crispbreads, grissini, bread sticks	■	■	■	Check nutrient information against the nutrient criteria table below Plain wholemeal or multigrain varieties which are higher in fibre and lower in fat and sodium (salt) are GREEN . Flavoured varieties may be higher in fat and salt and are AMBER or RED . Crackers and crispbreads that meet the AMBER criteria below and also have 2 g or more of fibre per serve are considered GREEN .

Extract from Table 4	Energy (kJ) per serve as sold (i.e. per product/packet)	Saturated fat (g) per serve as sold (i.e. per product/packet)	Sodium (mg) per serve as sold (i.e. per product/packet)
Savoury snack foods, biscuits, crispbreads and crisps Energy must be 1,800 kJ or less per 100 g	600 kJ or less	2 g or less	200 mg or less

Foods or drinks	Category	Comments and suggestions
Breakfast cereals		
Unflavoured and unsweetened wholegrain cereals and puffed cereals, wholewheat biscuits and flakes, porridge, untoasted muesli	■	<p>Check nutrient information against the nutrient criteria table below</p> <p>GREEN cereals are lower in added sugar, higher in fibre and without added confectionery. Serve with reduced-fat milk.</p> <p>Choose untoasted muesli as toasted varieties can be high in saturated fat.</p>
Oats and porridge	■	<p>Plain porridge and oats are GREEN.</p> <p>For commercial, flavoured instant varieties, check nutrient information against the nutrient criteria below.</p>

Extract from Table 1	Saturated fat (g) per 100 g	Fibre (g) per 100 g	Sugars (g) per 100 g
Breakfast cereals not containing dried fruit (assess as dry weight)	2 g or less	5 g or more	20 g or less (> 25 g = RED)
Breakfast cereals containing dried fruit (assess as dry weight)	2 g or less	5 g or more	25 g or less (> 30 g = RED)

Cereals higher in added sugar and lower in fibre	■	■	<p>AMBER cereals are lower in fibre and higher in saturated fat and/or added sugar (for example, some toasted muesli and flavoured puffed cereals).</p> <p>Breakfast cereals not containing dried fruit are RED if they contain more than 25 g sugar per 100 g. Breakfast cereals containing dried fruit are RED if they contain more than 30 g per 100 g.</p> <p>Avoid chocolate flavoured and coated (including honey, chocolate or sugar coated) cereals and cereals containing confectionery.</p>
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Cakes, muffins, slices and sweet pastries			
Scones	■	■	<p>Check nutrient information against the nutrient criteria table below</p> <p>Plain scones made with wholemeal flour, reduced-fat milk and fruit and/or vegetables with minimal fat, added sugar and salt are likely to be GREEN.</p> <p>Those made with added fat (such as butter), sugar and salt are AMBER or RED.</p> <p>Scones containing chocolate or confectionery or served with jam, cream or excessive amounts of butter are likely to be RED.</p> <p>Use mono- or poly-unsaturated margarine instead of butter, fruit puree instead of jam and whipped ricotta or yoghurt instead of cream.</p> <p>Offer spreads separately and in small amounts.</p>
Sweet buns (hot cross buns, apple and cinnamon scrolls)	■	■	<p>Check nutrient information against the nutrient criteria table below</p> <p>Choose AMBER options which are un-iced and unfilled.</p> <p>RED choices are higher in fat and sugar, and may be iced or filled (for example, with custard filling).</p> <p>Avoid spreads which are high in fat (for example, butter).</p>

Foods or drinks	Category		Comments and suggestions
Cakes, muffins, slices and sweet pastries (continued)			
Muffins, banana bread		■ ■	<p>Check nutrient information against the nutrient criteria table below</p> <p>AMBER options are likely to be lower in fat, based on fruit or vegetables and higher in fibre (for example, wholemeal or wholegrain).</p> <p>Be aware of portion sizes. Muffins commonly weigh up to 200 g. It is recommended to provide mini muffins or 80 g medium-sized muffins.</p>
Danishes, doughnuts, croissants, tarts		■	These items are high in sugar and saturated fat and are RED .
Cakes, slices, scrolls, sweet pastries, puddings and soufflés		■ ■	<p>Check nutrient information against the nutrient criteria table below</p> <p>Slices, scrolls and cakes that are uncoated and unfilled and made with wholemeal flour, fruit, vegetables and nuts with less added fat and sugar may be AMBER.</p> <p>Avoid slices, scrolls and cakes that are coated, iced or filled with chocolate, cream or jam. These are high in energy (kilojoules) and sugar and are likely to be RED.</p>

Extract from Table 4	Energy (kJ) per serve as sold (i.e. per product/packet)	Saturated fat (g) per serve as sold (i.e. per product/packet)	Fibre (g) per serve as sold (i.e. per product/packet)
Cakes, muffins, slices and sweet pastries	900 kJ or less	3 g or less	1.5 g or more

Confectionery, chewing gum and mints			
All types		■	<p>All types of confectionery are in the RED category.</p> <p>This includes: lollies (boiled, soft), jelly, juice jellies, jelly beans, liquorice, marshmallow, regular mints, bubble gum, carob, chocolate, chocolate spreads (such as chocolate hazelnut spread), hundreds and thousands, sprinkles, syrups, halvah, marzipan, nougat, sherbet, turkish delight, chocolate coating, carob coating, yoghurt-flavoured coating.</p> <p>These foods have minimal nutritional value and are high in energy, added sugar and/or saturated fat.</p>
Sugar free chewing gum and mints		■	<p>Sugar-free chewing gum can promote good oral health.</p> <p>If providing mints after meals choose sugar-free options.</p>

Foods or drinks	Category		Comments and suggestions
Drinks			
Plain water (tap, mineral, soda, sparkling) Water flavoured with natural essence	■		Water is the healthiest drink choice. Clean and safe tap water should be available free of charge. Flavoured waters with natural essence and no added sweeteners or sugar are GREEN .
Fruit and vegetable juices with no added sugar		■ ■	Fruit juice contributes to excess energy and sugar intake. At least 99 per cent fruit juice with no added sugar, mixed fruit and vegetable juices and frozen products based on at least 99 per cent fruit juice with no added sugar are AMBER . Fruit juice should be provided in serve sizes of up to 250 ml. Serves greater than 250 ml are RED . Diluted fruit juice (e.g. juice with added water or tea) can also be AMBER if they contain no added sugar and the juice component is 250 ml or less.
Coconut water		■ ■	Coconut water is AMBER if it is 100% coconut water, contains no added sugar and contains less than 300 kJ per serve, otherwise it is RED . Coconut water that contains 99% fruit juice is also AMBER as long as it has less than 300 kJ per serve and contains no added sugar.
Sugar-sweetened drinks and low/reduced sugar drinks			■ Sugar-sweetened soft drinks, flavoured waters, flavoured mineral waters, flavoured teas, fruit drinks (less than 99 per cent fruit juice), cordials, sports waters, sports drinks, energy drinks and ice crushes (Slurpees™, slushies) are in the RED category. Some drinks with added sugar may still be advertised as 'diet', 'artificially sweetened' or 'low/reduced sugar' because they include a mix of added sugar and artificial sweetener. These drinks are in the RED category. If sugar-sweetened drinks are offered, they should be provided in the smallest serve size available (e.g. 200–375 ml cans).
Artificially sweetened, diet, low-joule		■ ■	■ Artificially sweetened drinks with no added sugar are AMBER . It is recommended to provide these drinks in the smallest serve size available (e.g. 200–375 ml cans). Artificially sweetened energy drinks with no added sugar in serve sizes of 250 ml and less are also AMBER . Serve sizes over 250 ml are RED . Energy drinks and artificially sweetened drinks should not be available from food and drink outlets in facilities frequently used by children.
Kombucha and fermented soft drinks		■ ■	■ Kombucha and other fermented soft drinks are classified as AMBER if they have less than 1 g of sugar per 100 mL and the alcohol content is equal to or less than 0.5%. Kombucha and other fermented soft drinks are classified as RED if they contain 1 g or more of sugar per 100 mL and/or if alcohol content is greater than 0.5%.
Tea (plain, decaffeinated, herbal, chai)	■	■	GREEN choices include little or no added sugar. AMBER options include significant amounts of sugar or honey. Offer artificial sweeteners as an alternative to sugar.

Foods or drinks	Category		Comments and suggestions
Drinks (continued)			
Iced tea (homemade)	■	■	<p>GREEN varieties are made with little or no added sugar.</p> <p>AMBER options include significant amounts of added sugar or honey.</p> <p>Try lemon or mint for extra flavour instead of sugar or honey.</p> <p>Bottled iced tea is assessed under the sugar-sweetened drinks category on page 35 or the artificially sweetened drinks category on page 35.</p>
Coffee (plain, decaffeinated) ¹⁹	■	■	<p>GREEN options are black or use reduced-fat milk and little or no sugar.</p> <p>AMBER choices use regular-fat milk and/or significant amounts of sugar or flavoured syrups.</p> <p>Offer decaffeinated varieties and artificial sweeteners as an alternative to sugar.</p> <p>Bottled black coffee (without milk) is GREEN if it contains no sugar, or AMBER if it contains less than 5 g sugar per serve – otherwise it is RED.</p> <p>Bottled coffee that contains milk or milk alternatives is assessed using the flavoured milk criteria on page 36.</p>
Alcohol			<p>RED</p> <p>Alcoholic drinks (for example, beer, liqueur, mixed drinks, port, sherry, spirits and wine) are RED choices.</p> <p>For information about the responsible service of alcohol visit the Victorian Commission for Gambling and Liquor Regulation website at <https://www.vcglr.vic.gov.au>.</p>
Flavoured milk Milkshakes, smoothies Iced coffee, iced chocolate Mocha, hot chocolate, flavoured coffee ²⁰ Formulated supplementary drinks ²¹	■	■	<p>RED</p> <p>Low or reduced-fat flavoured milk (or 2 g or less total fat per 100 ml) and calcium-fortified (at least 100 mg per 100 ml) flavoured milk alternatives that are equal to or less than 900 kJ per serve as sold are GREEN.</p> <p>Low or reduced-fat flavoured milk and flavoured milk alternatives that are between 900–1,600 kJ per serve as sold are AMBER.</p> <p>Regular-fat flavoured milk (or more than 2 g total fat per 100 ml and flavoured milk alternatives that have less than 100 mg calcium per 100 ml and equal to or less than 1,600 kJ per serve as sold are AMBER.</p> <p>Any flavoured milk and flavoured milk alternatives that are more than 1,600 kJ per serve as sold are RED.</p> <p>To classify milk-based smoothies made on site, use the process for classifying foods and drinks using major and minor ingredients (page 27).</p> <p>Hot chocolate and flavoured coffee made with reduced-fat milk in small cup sizes (approximately 250 ml) is GREEN. Reduced-fat options in larger cup sizes (approximately 350 ml) are AMBER. Regular-fat options are AMBER.</p> <p>Jumbo coffees and other hot drinks are not recommended.</p> <p>Avoid additions of whipped cream, ice-cream, beverage whitener, melted chocolate, caramel, syrup sugar, honey, condensed milk and other confectionery. These are RED choices.</p>

19 Classification of coffee drinks made on site does not account for caffeine content, but is based on the energy (kilojoule) content and serve size of the drink.

20 Classification of coffee drinks made on site does not account for caffeine content, but is based on the energy (kilojoule) content and serve size of the drink.

21 Standard versions of formulated supplementary drinks that are not high in protein.

Foods or drinks	Category		Comments and suggestions
Drinks (continued)			
High protein drinks		■ ■	<p>High protein milks and protein shakes that are 300 ml or less per bottle are AMBER. Those over 300 ml are RED.</p> <p>This includes protein-energy supplements and formulated supplementary sports drinks that are designed to supplement a person's diet or enhance performance.</p> <p>Protein waters (plain or flavoured waters that contain added protein) over 300 ml are RED. Those under 300 ml are AMBER if they are artificially sweetened with no added sugar, otherwise they are RED.</p> <p>Other formulated supplementary drinks that are not high protein can be classified under the flavoured milks and milk alternatives criteria.</p>
Fats and oils			
Butter and dairy blend spreads			<p>Avoid these items as they are high in saturated fat.</p> <p>Use mono- or poly-unsaturated margarines and oils as a healthier alternative.</p>
Lard, dripping, suet, shortening, tallow, duck fat, copha, ghee, cooking margarine		■	
Palm oil, cottonseed oil		■	
Cream, sour cream		■ ■	<p>Avoid cream (including mascarpone) and cream-based sauces. These are high in saturated fat.</p> <p>Choose reduced-fat cream and sour cream as AMBER options.</p> <p>Evaporated milk and reduced-fat yoghurt are healthier choices.</p>
Coconut oil, coconut cream			<p>Coconut oil and coconut cream (including reduced-fat versions) are high in saturated fat.</p>
Coconut milk		■ ■	<p>Regular-fat coconut milk is RED.</p> <p>Reduced-fat coconut milk is AMBER.</p> <p>Coconut-flavoured evaporated milk is a healthier alternative to coconut cream or coconut milk.</p>
Monounsaturated and polyunsaturated oils and margarines		■	<p>Use small amounts of mono- or poly-unsaturated margarines and oils such as canola, sunflower, safflower, olive, soybean, sesame, peanut or flaxseed.</p> <p>Choose reduced-salt margarine.</p> <p>Oil sprays are a good option to minimise the amount of oil used.</p>
Fruit			
Fresh fruit	■		Choose mostly fresh fruit.
Frozen fruit	■		Frozen fruit (for example, berries) is a convenient alternative to fresh.
Canned fruit	■	■	<p>Fruit canned in natural juice or water with no added sugar and purees with no added sugar are GREEN.</p> <p>Canned fruit with added sugar (for example, in syrup or jelly) or purees/coulis with added sugar are AMBER.</p>

Foods or drinks	Category			Comments and suggestions
Fruit (continued)				
Stewed fruit	■	■		Stewed fruit with no added sugar is GREEN . Stewed fruit with added sugar is AMBER .
Dried fruit		■		Dried fruit (including freeze-dried fruit and desiccated coconut) can stick to teeth, increasing the risk of tooth decay. It should be provided occasionally.
Banana and coconut chips			■	Banana and coconut chips are high in fat and sugar and are a RED choice
Dried fruit-based confectionery			■	Dried fruit coated with sugar, chocolate, carob or yoghurt flavouring is RED .
Grains (rice, pasta, noodles, couscous, barley, buckwheat, semolina, polenta, burghul, quinoa, oats)				
Plain (boiled, steamed)	■			Includes all plain and unflavoured varieties with no added fat or salt. If boiling in stock, use reduced-salt stock.
Fried or with added fat and/or added salt and filled pasta (e.g. ravioli)		■	■	Filled pasta (such as ravioli and tortellini) and grains fried in small amounts of mono- or poly-unsaturated oil are AMBER (for example, polenta grilled with a drizzle of oil). Those which are heavily salted or fried are RED (for example, fried polenta squares).
Ice confections – fruit or water based				
Ice blocks, ice crushes (slushies, Slurpees™), gelato, sorbet		■	■	Items based on at least 99 per cent fruit juice with no added sugar are AMBER . These should be provided in serve sizes of up to 250 ml. Sugar sweetened varieties, or those over 250 ml, are in the RED category.
Ice-creams, milk or soy-based ice confections and dairy desserts				
Ice-creams, sundaes, milk or soy-based ice confections		■	■	Check nutrient information against the nutrient criteria table below Uncoated, reduced- or low-fat items that are lower in sugar and available in smaller serve sizes may be AMBER .
Frozen yoghurt		■	■	Diet dairy desserts may also be AMBER .
Dairy desserts (cheesecake, milk based puddings and mousses, rice pudding, creamed rice, dessert-style custards, fromage frais, panna cotta, tiramisu, trifle)		■	■	Regular-fat items and products that contain chocolate, lollies, crumble, cookies, fruit syrups or other confectionery are likely to be RED . Chocolate-coated ice creams are RED . Note: Products based on milk alternatives (e.g. soy, rice, almond milk) may also be AMBER if they fulfil all criteria, including the milk alternative being listed as the first ingredient (or second after water).

Extract from Table 4	Energy (kJ) per serve as sold (i.e. per product/packet)	Saturated fat (g) per serve as sold (i.e. per product/packet)
Ice-creams, milk or soy-based ice confections and dairy desserts Milk (or milk alternative) must be listed as first ingredient (or second after water)	600 kJ or less	3 g or less

Foods or drinks	Category			Comments and suggestions
Legumes and beans				
Beans, lentils, chickpeas	■	■		Use dried or canned varieties. Select reduced-salt canned options.
Legume ready-to-eat products	■	■		Check nutrient information against the nutrient criteria table below This includes legume products with added grains and/or vegetables (e.g ready-to-eat lentil salads, bean and rice products).

Extract from Table 1	Saturated fat (g) per 100 g	Sodium (mg) per 100 g
Tuna and legume ready-to-eat products	2 g or less	400 mg or less

Meat products and alternatives, sausages and frankfurts				
Meat, chicken, fish and vegetable products (burgers, patties, balls)		■	■	Check nutrient information against the nutrient criteria table below Uncrumbed, uncoated items that are lower in fat and salt and are oven-baked, grilled or shallow-fried with minimal oil are likely to be AMBER . Items made from fatty mince with generous amounts of oil and salt, or crumbed and coated items, are likely to be RED . Some reduced-fat/reduced-salt frankfurts, saveloys and sausages that are grilled, steamed or oven-baked may be AMBER . Avoid battered, deep-fried items. All deep-fried foods are RED .
Crumbed chicken and fish nuggets, wedges, strips		■	■	
Frankfurts, saveloys, sausages, chorizo		■	■	
Lentil patties, falafel balls	■	■	■	Grilled or oven-baked options made on site with minimal oil and salt may be GREEN . Those prepared with little salt and shallow-fried in little oil (mono- or poly-unsaturated) may be AMBER . For commercial products, check nutrient information against the nutrient criteria table below .
Deep-fried items			■	Avoid deep frying. All deep-fried foods are RED .

Extract from Table 2	Energy (kJ) per 100 g	Saturated fat (g) per 100 g	Sodium (mg) per 100 g	Maximum serve size
Meat products and alternatives – crumbed/coated and uncrumbed/uncoated	1,000 kJ or less	5 g or less	450 mg or less	150 g or less

Foods or drinks	Category			Comments and suggestions
Meat, poultry, fish, eggs, tofu, nuts and seeds				
Meat	■	■		Offer lean meat trimmed of visible fat (for example, beef, lamb, veal, pork and kangaroo) and lean skinless poultry (such as chicken and turkey) as GREEN choices. Fattier cuts of meat and chicken with visible skin are AMBER . Prepare meat, poultry and fish dishes using low-fat cooking techniques (for example, oven bake, grill, steam or use non-stick cookware).
Poultry	■	■		
Fish and seafood	■	■		
Canned or processed fish (tuna, salmon, sardines)	■	■		Canned fish in spring water is GREEN . Canned fish in brine, oil or flavoured sauce is AMBER . If using flavoured canned fish, select varieties that are lower in fat and salt for a healthier choice. Seafood extender (Surimi or 'crab' stick) is AMBER .
Tuna and cracker snacks	■	■		GREEN options include tuna canned in spring water. AMBER varieties include tuna with added oil and/or salt. It is recommended to choose products with wholemeal or multigrain crackers where possible.
Tuna ready-to-eat products	■	■		Check nutrient information against the nutrient criteria table below This includes tuna products with added grains and/or vegetables (e.g. ready-to-eat tuna and beans, tuna and rice).
Smoked salmon		■		Smoked salmon is high in salt and is an AMBER choice.
Eggs	■			Prepare eggs with minimal salt and fat.
Tofu	■	■		Plain tofu that is steamed or lightly fried in small amounts of oil with no added salt is GREEN . Tofu prepared with large amounts of added fats and sweet or salty sauce is AMBER .
Nuts	■	■	■	Plain, unsalted and unflavoured nuts and seeds are GREEN . Lightly salted nuts and seeds or those that are roasted in oil are AMBER . Coated nuts (for example, honey, chocolate or savoury coating) are RED choices.
Deep-fried items			■	Avoid deep-fried items (such as battered seafood, deep-fried tofu). All deep-fried foods are RED .

Extract from Table 1	Saturated fat (g) per 100 g	Sodium (mg) per 100 g
Tuna and legume ready-to-eat products	2 g or less	400 mg or less

Foods or drinks	Category			Comments and suggestions
Milk, yoghurt, cheese and alternatives				
Plain, unflavoured milk	■	■		Low or reduced-fat plain and evaporated milk, and buttermilk is GREEN . Regular-fat plain and evaporated milk is AMBER .
Milk alternatives	■			Unflavoured calcium-fortified milk alternatives (including soy/rice/almond drink) with at least 100 mg of added calcium per 100 ml are GREEN .
Yoghurt and yoghurt alternatives (plain and flavoured)	■	■	■	Low- or reduced-fat (or 2 g total fat or less per 100 g) varieties are GREEN . Regular-fat varieties are AMBER . Choose mostly natural, unsweetened yoghurt or alternatives. Ensure soy yoghurt is calcium-fortified. Coconut-based yoghurts are RED .
Yoghurt-based products	■	■	■	Commercial yoghurt products with added ingredients are RED if they contain confectionery such as chocolate chips, sweet biscuits, or sweet toppings and sauces such as caramel. To classify yoghurt-based products made on-site, use the process for classifying foods and drinks using major and minor ingredients (page 27).
Cheese	■	■		Cheese that is naturally lower in fat (such as cottage and ricotta) and reduced-fat forms of other cheeses (for example, reduced-fat cheddar) are GREEN . Offer these as standard options. Regular-fat forms of cheese are AMBER . Limit cheeses that are high in saturated fat and/or salt such as double or triple-cream Brie or Camembert.
Cheese and cracker snacks	■	■		GREEN options include reduced-fat cheese. AMBER varieties include regular-fat cheese. It is recommended to choose products with wholemeal or multigrain crackers where possible.
Custard	■	■		Reduced-fat varieties are GREEN . Regular-fat varieties are AMBER . Choose plain custards that are lower in fat and sugar.

Foods or drinks	Category			Comments and suggestions
Mixed hot-food dishes, ready to eat meals and plated dinners				
Commercial ready to eat meals	■	■	■	<p>Check nutrient information against the nutrient criteria table below</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Assess items using the process for classifying foods and drinks using major and minor ingredients (page 27)</p> <p>GREEN options are lower in fat and salt and higher in fibre. GREEN dishes use lean meats trimmed of fat, skinless poultry, unbattered/uncrumbed fish and seafood, reduced-fat cheeses, wholegrains, legumes, plenty of vegetables and reduced-salt stocks, sauces and gravies.</p> <p>AMBER or RED choices are higher in fat and salt and lower in fibre.</p> <p>Prepare meals using small amounts of mono- or poly-unsaturated oil (such as canola, sunflower, soybean, olive or peanut) and use low fat cooking techniques.</p> <p>Avoid large portion sizes.</p> <p>Avoid battered, crumbed and deep-fried items (for example, tempura, calamari rings, deep-fried noodles), fattier meats (such as sausages) and large amounts of regular-fat cheeses. Avoid adding salt and fat (for example, butter and oil).</p> <p>Avoid sauces based on cream, butter, ghee, coconut cream and high fat cheeses. For a healthier option use evaporated milk, natural yoghurt, ricotta cheese or reduced-fat coconut milk or use tomato or vegetable based sauces.</p>
Plated dinners (commercial, prepared on site)	■	■	■	
Nachos, tacos, burritos, enchiladas	■	■	■	
Casseroles, stews, curries	■	■	■	
Risotto, fried/savoury rice	■	■	■	
Stir fries, noodle based meals	■	■	■	
Pasta dishes (spaghetti bolognese, lasagne, pasta bakes)	■	■	■	
Seafood dishes	■	■	■	
Hot dogs, sausage sandwiches, kebabs, burgers		■	■	

Extract from Table 3	Energy (kJ) per serve as sold	Saturated fat (g) per 100 g	Sodium (mg) per 100 g	Sodium (mg) per serve as sold	Fibre (g) per serve as sold
Ready to eat meals, mixed hot-food dishes (commercial or pre-packaged) – GREEN	2,000 kJ or less	2 g or less	250 mg or less	750 mg or less	5 g or more
Ready to eat meals, mixed hot-food dishes – AMBER	2,500 kJ or less	2 g or less	300 mg or less	900 mg or less	3 g or more

Pasta sauces and simmer sauces	■	■	■	<p>Check nutrient information against the nutrient criteria table below</p> <p>Examples include creamy mushroom, butter chicken, lemon chicken, sweet and sour, Rogan josh, tikka masala, beef stroganoff, beef casserole, cacciatore, korma, vindaloo, honey soy.</p>
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Extract from Table 1	Saturated fat (g) per 100 g	Sodium (mg) per 100 g
Pasta sauces and simmer sauces – GREEN	2 g or less	300 mg or less
Pasta sauces and simmer sauces – RED	> 5 g	> 700 mg

Foods or drinks	Category			Comments and suggestions
Other ingredients				
Cocoa or cacao powder		■		Using cocoa or cacao when cooking is a better alternative than using chocolate.
Flours, all types	■			Use wholemeal flour in baking to boost fibre.
Artificial or intense sweeteners (including natural sweeteners)		■		Powder, liquid or tablet form, e.g. sucralose (NutraSweet™, Splenda™), aspartame (Equal™), saccharin (Sweet'N Low™), steviol glycosides (Stevia™, Natvia™), monk fruit extract, erythritol, sorbitol, xylitol, mannitol.
Sugars			■	Sugar refers to white, brown, caster or raw sugar, honey, and syrups (for example, maple, rice, malt, agave, coconut syrup). Use only in small amounts in cooking. Most recipes can half the quantity without affecting the taste. Try adding fruit as an alternative for sweetness

Oven-baked potato products				
Hot potato chips, wedges		■	■	Check nutrient information against the nutrient criteria table below
French fries		■	■	Serve in small amounts.
Hash browns, gems, rostis		■	■	Avoid adding salt and oil during preparation. Some oven-baked varieties may be AMBER .
Potato cakes		■	■	Avoid deep-fried items. All deep-fried foods are RED .

Extract from Table 2	Energy (kJ) per 100 g	Saturated fat (g) per 100 g	Sodium (mg) per 100 g	Maximum serve size
Oven-baked potato products	1,000 kJ or less	5 g or less	400 mg or less	150 g or less

Pastry				
Shortcrust pastry			■	Puff and shortcrust pastry are high in fat and are RED .
Puff pastry		■	■	Reduced-fat puff pastry is AMBER .
Filo pastry	■			Filo pastry is a healthier choice and is GREEN .

Pizza				
Commercial, freshly prepared pizzas and filled breads	■	■	■	Check nutrient information against the nutrient criteria table below OR Assess items using the process for classifying foods and drinks using major and minor ingredients (page 27) GREEN options are made on site and are generally topped with reduced-fat cheese, lean meats and plenty of vegetables. AMBER and RED choices are higher in fat and salt and are likely to include regular-fat cheese and fatty meats.

Extract from Table 2	Energy (kJ) per 100 g	Saturated fat (g) per 100 g	Sodium (mg) per 100 g	Maximum serve size
Savoury pastries, filled breads, pizza, dumplings, dim sims, samosas, spring rolls, instant noodles	1,000 kJ or less	5 g or less	400 mg or less	200 g or less

Foods or drinks	Category		Comments and suggestions	
Processed luncheon and cured meats				
Ham, bacon, prosciutto, pancetta		■	■	Check nutrient information against the nutrient criteria table below Processed meats are high in saturated fat and/or sodium (salt) and are AMBER or RED . Offer reduced-fat and reduced-salt varieties and serve in small portion sizes (maximum serve = 50 g). Trim visible fat from meats such as bacon, prosciutto and pancetta.
Pastrami, silverside, corned beef		■	■	
Diced processed chicken meat		■	■	
Sliced chicken, turkey, roast beef		■	■	
Devon, Strasburg, Mortadella		■	■	
Chicken roll/loaf		■	■	
Kabana		■	■	
Dried or cured meats, e.g. beef jerky		■	■	
Salami			■	Salami is high in saturated fat and is a RED choice.

Extract from Table 2	Energy (kJ) per 100 g	Saturated fat (g) per 100 g	Sodium (mg) per 100 g	Maximum serve size
Processed luncheon meats and cured meats	1,000 kJ or less	3 g or less	750 mg or less	50 g or less

Salad dressings				
Citrus, balsamic vinegar, vinegar	■			Dressings made on site based on lemon or orange juice or vinegar with no added salt may be GREEN .
Oil or mayonnaise based dressings (e.g. Caesar, coleslaw, French, thousand island, Italian, honey mustard)	■	■	■	Check nutrient information against the nutrient criteria table below Dressings prepared with mono- or poly-unsaturated oils and little salt or commercial low-fat varieties with lower sodium (salt) content are GREEN . Those higher in salt and fat are AMBER . Dressings based on regular-fat cream or mayonnaise are RED . Yoghurt dressings are a healthy alternative to cream-based dressings.

Extract from Table 1	Saturated fat (g) per 100 g	Sodium (mg) per 100 g
Mayonnaise and salad dressings	3 g or less	750 mg or less

Foods or drinks	Category			Comments and suggestions
Salads				
All types (garden, Caesar, Greek, Thai, potato, chicken, beef, tuna, coleslaw, calamari, pasta)	■	■	■	<p>Assess items using the process for classifying foods and drinks using major and minor ingredients (page 27)</p> <p>Salads containing a variety of vegetables, lean, uncoated and uncrumbed meat, skinless poultry, tinned fish in spring water or reduced-fat cheese with small amounts of dressings are GREEN.</p> <p>Salads with regular-fat cheese, dried fruit, crumbed or coated meats and seafood and large amounts of oil-based dressing are AMBER.</p> <p>RED salads include significant amounts of deep-fried ingredients (for example, deep-fried chicken schnitzel or strips, battered calamari, fried croutons) and use generous amounts of dressing based on regular-fat cream or mayonnaise.</p>
Sandwiches				
Sandwiches, wraps, rolls, baguettes, toasties, focaccias, pides	■	■		<p>Assess items using the process for classifying foods and drinks using major and minor ingredients (page 27)</p> <p>GREEN sandwiches include vegetables, lean meat, fish canned in spring water and reduced-fat cheese, and small amounts of mono- or poly-unsaturated margarine or reduced-fat mayonnaise. Wholemeal, multigrain or other high-fibre breads are encouraged.</p> <p>Sandwiches with significant amounts of butter, regular mayonnaise, chutney or relish, regular-fat cheese, fattier cuts of meat and some processed meats (such as ham) are likely to be AMBER.</p> <p>Sandwiches made with deep-fried ingredients (for example, schnitzel) or fatty and salty processed meats (such as salami) are likely to be RED.</p>
Sauces and condiments				
Tomato, barbecue, Worcestershire	■	■		<p>Use in small amounts.</p> <p>Reduced-salt varieties are GREEN and should be used where available.</p> <p>Regular-salt options are AMBER.</p>
Liquid stock, stock cubes/powder (vegetable, chicken, beef, fish)	■	■	■	<p>Regular liquid stock (or stock cube/powder made according to directions) is AMBER. Reduced-salt liquid stock is a GREEN option and should be used as the default choice. Stock cubes/powder used dry without water are RED.</p>
Asian style sauces (soy, kecap manis, sweet chilli, peanut, fish, oyster, hoi sin, tamari, plum)		■	■	<p>These sauces are usually high in salt and/or sugar and should be used in small amounts.</p> <p>For a healthier option choose sauces that are lower in sugar and salt.</p> <p>Salt-reduced versions are AMBER.</p>
Mustard, wasabi horseradish		■		<p>Use in small amounts.</p>
Chutney, cranberry sauce, relish, tapenade, pesto			■	<p>Use in small amounts. Choose options that are lower in salt and sugar if available.</p>

Foods or drinks	Category		Comments and suggestions
Sauces and condiments (continued)			
Curry paste			■ Use in small amounts or use spices instead.
Gravy, hollandaise, béchamel, béarnaise		■	■ If using meat juices for gravy, skim fat from juices first and thicken with cornflour instead of roux. If using instant gravy choose reduced-salt and reduced-fat varieties, which are AMBER . Use reduced-fat milk, reduced-fat cheese and small amounts of butter for a healthier béchamel sauce.
Tomato paste	■	■	Reduced-salt options are GREEN and should be used as the standard choice in recipes.
Sour cream		■	■ Regular-fat varieties are RED . Reduced- or low-fat varieties are AMBER . Natural yoghurt is a healthier option.
Mayonnaise, aioli, dijonnaise, tartare	■	■	■ Check nutrient information against the nutrient criteria table below Low-fat varieties may be GREEN or AMBER . Always choose low-fat mayonnaise and use in small amounts. Regular mayonnaise is RED .
Dips (legume, dairy, vegetable based) Salsa	■	■	■ Check nutrient information against the nutrient criteria table below Offer choices that are lower in salt and fat. Avoid oil, cream, and cheese-based dips. These are likely to be AMBER or RED . Use dips that are yoghurt based (for example, tzatziki) or vegetable based (for example, pumpkin) for a healthier option.
Dip and cracker snacks	■	■	GREEN options include dips based on yoghurt, vegetables, legumes or salsa. AMBER options include dips that are oil-, cream- or cheese-based. It is recommended to choose products with wholemeal or multigrain crackers where possible.





Extract from Table 1	Saturated fat (g) per 100 g	Sodium (mg) per 100 g
Dips (legume, dairy, vegetable or salsa)	2 g or less	750 mg or less
Mayonnaise and salad dressings	3 g or less	750 mg or less

Savoury pastries, pies and instant noodles			
Savoury croissants			■ These are high in saturated fat and energy and are RED .
Meat pies, filled pasties		■	■ Check nutrient information against the nutrient criteria table below These items are generally high in saturated fat, salt and energy and are usually RED . AMBER items are lower in fat and salt, are made from filo or reduced-fat puff pastry and are likely to be vegetable based.
Party pies		■	
Topped pies (potato, cheese and bacon)		■	
Chicken and vegetable pies		■	
Sausage rolls		■	
Pastry finger foods (samosas, curry puffs)		■	■ Avoid deep-fried items. All deep-fried foods are RED .






Foods or drinks	Category			Comments and suggestions
Savoury pastries, pies and instant noodles (continued)				
Dumplings, won tons, gyoza	■	■	■	Some vegetable dumplings, won tons and gyoza which are steamed and made on site with little salt and oil may be GREEN .
Vegetable pasties or parcels	■	■	■	Some vegetable parcels and cheese and spinach triangles which are oven-baked, lower in fat and salt and made on site with reduced-fat cheese and filo pastry may be GREEN .
Cheese and spinach triangles	■	■	■	
Quiche, savoury tarts	■	■	■	Check nutrient information against the nutrient criteria table below Quiches made on site from filo pastry or without pastry (for example, frittata) may be AMBER or GREEN . If preparing quiches on site, use reduced-fat cheese, no cream and plenty of vegetable fillings.
Spring rolls, Chiko™ rolls, dim sims		■	■	Check nutrient information against the nutrient criteria table below Oven-baked or steamed options that are vegetable based may be AMBER .
Instant noodles and pasta		■	■	Check nutrient information against the nutrient criteria table below Those that are lower in fat and salt may be AMBER .

Extract from Table 2	Energy (kJ) per 100 g	Saturated fat (g) per 100 g	Sodium (mg) per 100 g	Maximum serve size
Savoury pastries, filled breads, pizza, dumplings, dim sims, samosas, spring rolls, instant noodles	1,000 kJ or less	5 g or less	400 mg or less	200 g or less

Savoury snack foods, biscuits and crisps				
Nuts, seeds and legumes	■	■	■	Plain (unsalted, unflavoured, uncoated) nuts, seeds and legumes are GREEN (for example, chickpeas). Lightly salted nuts, seeds, legumes and chickpeas are AMBER . Suggested serve size for nuts is 30 g or less. Coated seeds, nuts and legumes (including honey, chocolate or savoury coating) are RED .
Plain popcorn	■			Air-popped popcorn with no added fat or salt is GREEN .
Lightly salted or flavoured popcorn		■	■	Check nutrient information against the nutrient criteria table below Flavoured popcorn is higher in fat, sugar and/or salt and may be AMBER or RED . Lightly salted popcorn (with no added fat, sugar or flavourings) has an extra allowance of up to 2,000 kJ per 100 g to be considered AMBER , provided it meets the other per-serve criteria in the nutrient criteria table below.

Foods or drinks	Category	Comments and suggestions
Savoury snack foods, biscuits and crisps (continued)		
Salted, plain or flavoured crisps and extruded snacks (including potato-, corn-, grain- or vegetable-based)	 	Crisps and chips are generally high in energy (kilojoules), saturated fat and salt. They are usually in the RED category. Some items which are lower in fat and salt may be classified as AMBER .
Biscuits, crackers, pretzels, other savoury products	 	Check nutrient information against the nutrient criteria table below Look for items that are higher in fibre and lower in saturated fat and sodium (salt).

Extract from Table 4	Energy (kJ) per serve as sold (i.e. per product/packet)	Saturated fat (g) per serve as sold (i.e. per product/packet)	Sodium (mg) per serve as sold (i.e. per product/packet)
Savoury snack foods, biscuits, crispbreads and crisps Energy must be 1,800 kJ or less per 100 g	600 kJ or less	2 g or less	200 mg or less

Soups		
Prepared on site	 	Assess items using the process for classifying foods and drinks using major and minor ingredients (page 27) If preparing soups on site use reduced-salt stock and plenty of vegetables and legumes for a GREEN choice. Soups prepared with regular stock are likely to be AMBER . Avoid cream-based soups. Natural yoghurt, milk and evaporated milk are good alternatives to cream. Avoid deep-fried croutons.
Commercial (canned, ready to eat)	 	Check nutrient information against the nutrient criteria table below GREEN options are likely to be based on vegetables and use reduced-salt stock. Commercial soups that are higher in fat and salt are likely to be AMBER .
Dried instant soups		All dried instant soups that are prepared by adding boiling water are AMBER .

Extract from Table 1	Saturated fat (g) per 100 g	Sodium (mg) per 100 g
Soups as prepared (ready to eat, canned)	2 g or less	300 mg or less

Foods or drinks	Category			Comments and suggestions
Spreads				
Peanut butter, other nut spreads	■	■	■	Nut and seed pastes with no added sugar, salt or fat are GREEN . Nut spreads with small amounts of added sugar, salt or fat are AMBER . Coconut-based spreads are RED
Fish/chicken/meat paste		■		Use sparingly and offer reduced-salt varieties where available. Use spreads in combination with nutritious fillings like vegetables rather than offering alone.
Yeast/vegetable extract spreads		■		
Sweet spreads and toppings			■	Honey, chocolate spread, chocolate nut spread, caramel, syrups, toppings and sprinkles are high in energy, sugar and/or saturated fat. Use sparingly.
Jam, fruit pastes, coulis		■	■	Use sparingly. Jams, marmalade, fruit pastes (such as quince paste) and coulis made from 100 per cent fruit with no added sugar are AMBER . Jams, fruit pastes and coulis made with added sugar are RED .
Sushi				
Sushi, nori rolls, rice paper rolls	■	■		Assess items using the process for classifying foods and drinks using major and minor ingredients (page 27) GREEN options include vegetables and lean, uncoated and uncrumbed meats and seafood. Items that include crumbed or coated meats and seafood and generous amounts of mayonnaise and soy sauce are AMBER . Avoid varieties with deep-fried fillings.
Sweet snack foods, bars and biscuits				
Fruit leathers, straps and bars		■	■	Products that are 100 per cent dried fruit with no added sugar are AMBER . Fruit leathers, straps and bars with added sugar are RED .
Dried fruit, nut and seed bars		■	■	Check nutrient information against the nutrient criteria table below These items are often high in energy (kilojoules), added sugar and saturated fat and are AMBER or RED .
Fruit-filled bars		■	■	
Muesli bars		■	■	
Cereal-based and breakfast bars		■	■	
Coated and topped bars (chocolate, yoghurt)		■	■	Bars that are coated or topped (for example, with chocolate or yoghurt flavoured topping) are likely to be RED .

Foods or drinks	Category		Comments and suggestions
Sweet snack foods, bars and biscuits (continued)			
Sweet biscuits (plain, coated, iced, filled)		■ ■	<p>Check nutrient information against the nutrient criteria table below</p> <p>Some smaller, plain biscuits may be AMBER.</p> <p>Offer high-fibre varieties that are lower in sugar and fat.</p> <p>Avoid sweet biscuits that are coated, iced or filled with chocolate, cream or jam. These are high in energy (kilojoules) and added sugar and are likely to be RED.</p>
Jumbo cookies and biscuits			■ These are high in sugar and energy and are in the RED category.

Extract from Table 4	Energy (kJ) per serve as sold (i.e. per product/packet)	Saturated fat (g) per serve as sold (i.e. per product/packet)	Fibre (g) per serve as sold (i.e. per product/packet)
Sweet snack foods, bars and biscuits	600 kJ or less	3 g or less	1 g or more

Vegetables			
Fresh	■		Choose mostly fresh vegetables. This includes avocado.
Frozen	■		Frozen vegetables (such as peas) are a convenient alternative to fresh.
Canned	■		Select reduced-salt canned vegetables where possible.
Cooked (boiled, steamed, shallow-fried, roasted, stir-fried, grilled)	■	■	<p>Boiled or steamed vegetables with no added fat or salt are GREEN. Those grilled or oven-roasted with a light spray of oil and no added salt are also GREEN.</p> <p>Vegetables grilled or oven-roasted in generous amounts of oil are likely to be AMBER.</p> <p>Use reduced-fat cheese or natural yoghurt instead of sour cream or butter to top cooked vegetables such as corn and baked potato.</p>
Deep-fried vegetables			■ All deep-fried foods are RED , including fried wedges, potato cakes, hot potato chips, other vegetable chips (for example, eggplant), onion rings and deep-fried vegetable fritters (such as pumpkin and corn).
Preserved (dried, fermented, pickled)	■	■	<p>Plain, unsalted dried vegetables are GREEN (for example, shiitake mushrooms, dried unflavoured seaweed snacks).</p> <p>Pickled and fermented vegetables are AMBER.</p>
Marinated (e.g. olives)		■	Select vegetables marinated in mono- or poly-unsaturated oil. Drain oil thoroughly before use.

An example of marketing resources available for vending machines that meet Healthy Choices guidelines.

Choose well. Feel great.

Making healthy choices easier.

To help you make healthier choices, food and drinks have been classified according to their nutritional value.

Best choice

Choose **green** food and drinks as often as possible. They are good for you.



Choose carefully

Choose **amber** food and drinks sometimes. They are less healthy and there are better options.



Limit

To look after your health, choose **red** food and drinks rarely and in small amounts.

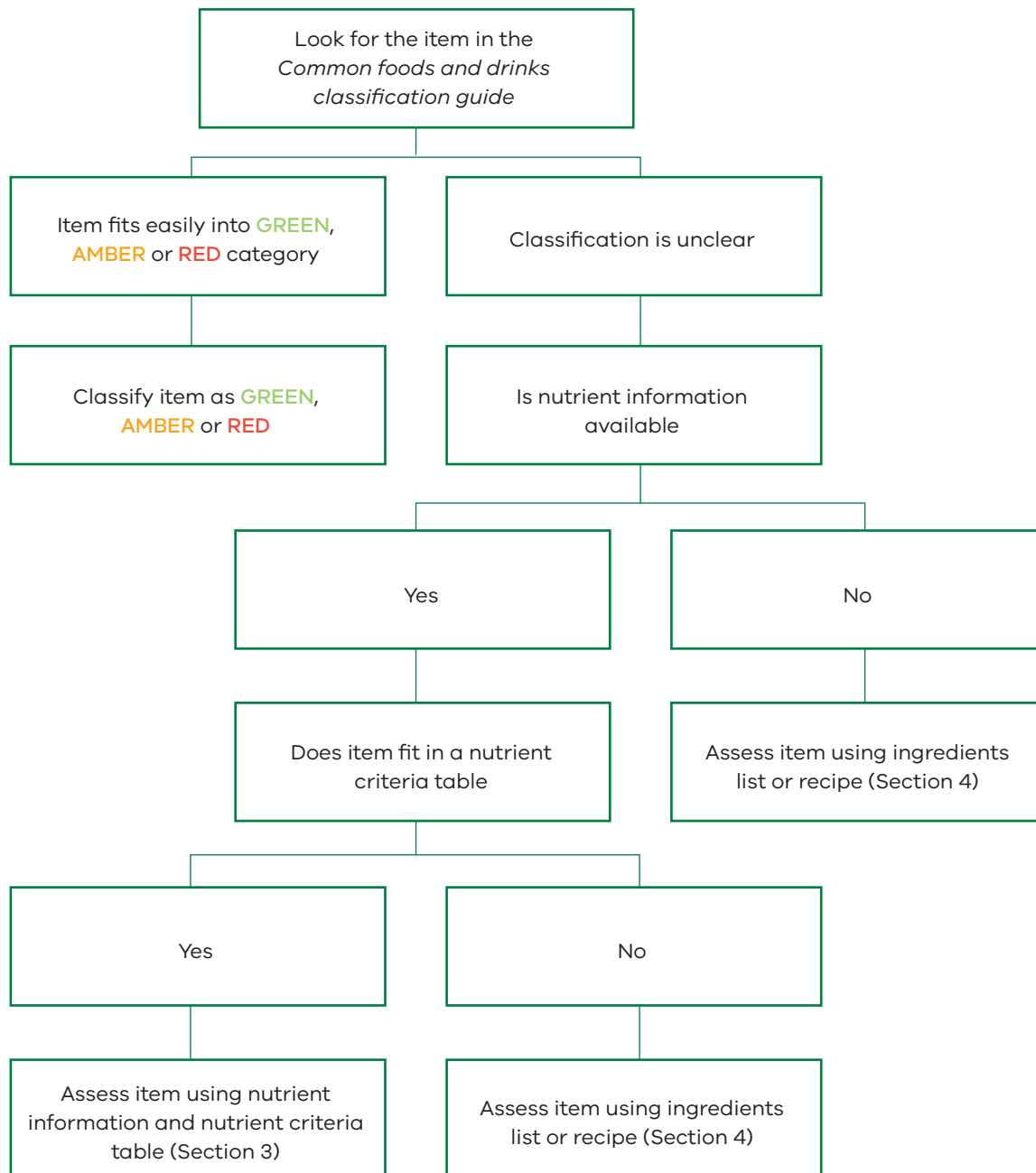


Appendices



Appendix 1: GREEN, AMBER, RED

Use the flowchart below to decide whether a food or drink fits into the GREEN, AMBER or RED category.



Appendix 2: useful resources and websites

General nutrition and healthy eating

Healthy Eating Advisory Service
<<http://www.heas.health.vic.gov.au>>

Better Health Channel
<<https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au>>

Nutrition Australia <<https://nutritionaustralia.org>>

Dietitians Australia <<https://dietitiansaustralia.org.au>>

Australian Government Department of Health
(Nutrition and Healthy Eating) <<https://www1.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/health-publth-strateg-food-index.htm>>

Victorian Department of Health and Human Services
(Healthy eating) <<http://health.vic.gov.au/nutrition>>

Guidelines and standards

Eat for Health <<https://www.eatforhealth.gov.au>>
(includes *Australian dietary guidelines*, *Australian guide to healthy eating*, *Infant feeding guidelines* and consumer resources including posters and brochures)

Food Standards Australia New Zealand
<<https://www.foodstandards.gov.au>>

Food safety

Victorian Department of Health and Human Services
(Food Safety) <<https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/food-safety>>

Training.gov.au <<https://training.gov.au/Home/Tga>>

Recipes and practical food ideas

Healthy Eating Advisory Service
<<http://www.heas.health.vic.gov.au>>

LiveLighter <<https://www.livelighter.com.au>>

Heart Foundation
<<https://www.heartfoundation.org.au>>

Melbourne Markets <<http://www.marketfresh.com.au>>

Go for 2 & 5 <<http://www.gofor2and5.com.au>>

Healthy Kids Association <<https://healthy-kids.com.au>>

Queensland Association of School Tuckshops
<<https://qast.org.au>>

Tasmanian School Canteen Association <
<http://tascanteenassn.org.au>>

Western Australian School Canteen Association
<<https://www.waschoolcanteens.org.au>>

Special diets

Australasian Society of Clinical Immunology and Allergy <<https://www.allergy.org.au>>

Heart Foundation
<<https://www.heartfoundation.org.au>>

Better Health Channel
<<https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au>>

Diabetes Australia Victoria
<<https://www.diabetesvic.org.au>>

Baker IDI <<https://www.baker.edu.au>>

Coeliac Australia <<https://www.coeliac.org.au>>

Meniere's Australia Resource and Information Centre
<<http://www.menieres.org.au>>



Rice
GREEN

