

Dietary Guidelines & Healthy Eating:

As we enter the festive season (or more aptly the season of food and beverage over indulgence), rather than the normal chemicals drugs and obscure studies, new information on dietary guidelines and healthy might be more appropriate!

This week the National Health & Medical Research Council released for public consultation their new drafts for *Australian Dietary Guidelines* and *Australian Guide to Healthy Eating*.

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Providing the scientific evidence for healthier Australian diets: Public consultation on draft Australian Dietary Guidelines

Australians can now have their say on draft dietary advice that will help inform healthy eating habits for everyone. Tomorrow, the National Health and Medical Research Council will release its draft *Australian Dietary Guidelines* and the *Australian Guide to Healthy Eating* for public consultation. The draft guidelines provide evidence-based advice to health professionals and the general public about food choices to promote health and wellbeing and reduce the risk of diet-related diseases.

CEO of the National Health and Medical Research Council, Warwick Anderson, said the guidelines are grounded in good health outcomes, a strong evidence base and extensive consultation.

"They are based on evidence that has undergone extensive and rigorous review by some of Australia's leading health experts," Professor Anderson said.

"Our expert committee analysed more than 55,000 papers in the peer-reviewed scientific literature to develop the guidelines. The complete review process was deliberately long and broad in scope, and I am confident that this has resulted in the *Australian Dietary Guidelines* being fully supported by the best available evidence."

"The modelling work that underpins the draft guidelines is more comprehensive than any we're aware of that has occurred in Australia or overseas.

"These draft guidelines are yet another example of NHMRC leading international best practice standards."

"We have worked hard to base these draft guidelines on the best and most available science."

"Our aim now is to make these guidelines clear and relevant to ensure our dietary messages are put into practice."

Based on the evidence reviewed, key recommendations of the Guidelines include:

- o People should eat a variety of nutritious food; advice that has not changed over many years, but is now reinforced with stronger scientific evidence.

- o Most Australians need to increase our intake of vegetables, fruit, whole grain cereal foods, and milk products- particularly reduced fat varieties.

o Some population groups need to eat more of some food groups and less of others. For example, some women who consume an omnivore diet may benefit from eating more red meat, while some adult males may need to reduce their consumption.

o Most Australians may benefit from reducing excessive intake of energy-dense nutrient-poor foods and drinks which are high in saturated fat, salt and added sugar, particularly sugar sweetened drinks, if we are to tackle obesity and diet-related chronic disease.

Consultation on the draft Australian *Dietary Guidelines*, incorporating the *Australian Guide to Healthy Eating*, opens on 13 December 2011 and closes on 29 February 2012.

To provide feedback or for more information, please visit: www.eatforhealth.gov.au

Media Contact: David Cooper 02 6217 9121 or 0422 008 512