

# healthy eating for teenagers



**GIVE YOUR BODY THE BEST!** Adolescence is a very exciting time in your life. By eating the best food you can expect the best from your body!

## WHAT CAN YOU DO?

## FOOD AND NUTRITION TIPS

► **Eat regularly with plenty of variety:** This is important to ensure you will get enough nutrients and keep up your energy levels. Missing meals such as breakfast can affect concentration and performance, and may lead you to overeat or have less nutritious foods later.

► **Choose carbo foods for energy:** Most of your energy should be supplied from foods rich in *carbohydrates*. These foods also contain other valuable nutrients such as vitamins, minerals and dietary fibre.

**Carbohydrate-rich foods include:** wholegrain breads and breakfast cereals, pasta, rice, noodles, fruits, legumes (such as lentils, soy beans, chick peas and baked beans) and some vegetables (like potatoes, sweet potato and corn).

► **Facts on fat:** Fats are a very concentrated source of energy. If you take in more than your body burns up, you will store the excess as body fat.

> Foods high in *saturated fat* should be limited, they include: butter, fatty meat, skin on poultry, fried foods, potato crisps, sausages, ice cream, pastries, biscuits and chocolate.

> Instead, choose low-fat dairy products (or alternatives like soy), lean meat instead of fatty meats, chicken with the skin removed, legumes, small amounts of *poly-* and *monounsaturated fats* from olives, avocados, nuts (eg macadamia nuts) and seeds (eg. sunflower oil).

► **Progress with protein** - Protein is a vital part of all body cells. Extra protein is required while you are growing quickly. It's important to choose a variety of different protein foods each day.

**Protein-rich foods include:** legumes, nuts and peanut butter, milk and dairy foods, soy products, eggs, lean meat, poultry, fish and wholegrain breads and cereals.

► **Iron** is required to make new red blood cells, which carry oxygen through your body. A lack of iron can lead to anaemia - with symptoms of tiredness, poor energy and weakness. Once girls start menstruating, they will lose iron due to blood loss. The two major types of iron in foods are:

> **Haem iron** - found in meat, poultry and fish. It is well absorbed by the body.

> **Non-haem iron** - found in legumes, egg yolks, wholemeal and wholegrain breads and cereals, green leafy vegetables, nuts and seeds. This type of iron is not as well absorbed as iron from meat. However, vitamin C increases non-haem iron absorption by two to three times. That's why it's a good idea for example, to drink a glass of orange juice with your cereal or toast, and add tomato or red capsicum to your sandwiches, pasta sauces and stir-frys.

► **Calcium** is crucial for building strong bones and teeth. You need three serves of calcium-rich foods every day.

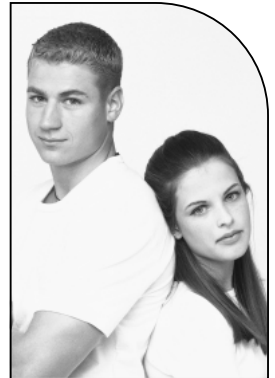
**Calcium-rich foods include:** dairy foods and calcium fortified soy products (such as *So Good*<sup>®</sup> soymilk or soy yoghurt). Calcium is also found in sesame seeds, almonds, brazil nuts, pistachio nuts, dried figs, dried apricots, legumes, pumpkin and green leafy vegetables like broccoli and bok choy.

► **Choose plain water to drink:** as high sugar drinks and foods can contribute to excess energy intakes, which increase the chance of storing excess body fat.

## LIFESTYLE TIPS

► **Regular physical activity** such as playing sport, walking, dancing, bike riding or resistance exercises with weights, is important for fitness, healthy bone growth and controlling body weight.

► **Being a healthy vegetarian teenager** means more than just cutting out the meat. You will need to eat a variety of plant foods to ensure a nutritionally adequate diet. Ask your doctor for the fact sheet on vegetarian eating and consult an Accredited Practising Dietitian (APD) for personalised advice.



## WOULD YOU LIKE MORE INFORMATION?

At the **Sanitarium Nutrition Service**, we are a team of qualified nutritionists and dietitians who work together for the sole purpose of helping people enjoy healthy foods and the benefits of a healthier lifestyle.

We invite you to contact us during business hours to:

✓ Receive a copy of our **'PROTECTIVE PLANT FOODS'** leaflet.



✓ Subscribe to our **FREE**, quarterly food & nutrition newsletter, **'GOOD FOOD NEWS'**.



✓ Talk with a qualified dietitian about any nutrition issue of interest to you.

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This nutrition sheet has been developed by the Sanitarium Health Food Company and favourably reviewed by Nutrition Australia.



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