



Prevention
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the veggie

By Cynthia Sass and Jennifer Pinkerton
Photography Plamen Petkov



factor

Of all the scientific evidence that points to staying slim and healthy, eating plenty of veggies wins hands down. **We make it easy to get enough of a good thing.**



Your grandma always said, "Eat your veggies!"

She was spot on. This simple rule is one of the most powerful and important ways to fight ageing, according to nutrition and ageing research from Tufts University in the US. "Of all the scientific evidence that points to staying healthy and keeping our body weight in check, eating plenty of vegetables wins hands down," says accredited practising dietitian Susie Burrell, author of *Losing the Last 5 kg* (\$19.95; Hardie Grant).

But although Australians' veggie intake is on the rise, we're still falling short. A whopping 90 per cent of us aren't getting the National Health and Medical Research Council's recommended five serves per day. Turning these stats around, however, is as smart a move as buying health insurance—minus the hip-pocket damage. As the Dietitians Association of Australia reports, eating enough veggies lowers your risk of heart disease, type 2 diabetes and bowel cancer. And according to dietary guidelines from the US, eating 14 cups of vegetables a week, from a wide range of veggie groups, raises blood levels of many protective antioxidants. In addition to their well-documented ability to fight and reduce the risk of disease, antioxidants may help preserve your long-term memory and learning capabilities, even as you get older. In short, to get the maximum anti-ageing protection and disease prevention, you need to eat the right number of servings per week *and* include lots of variety.

So, we've got you convinced, but you're still struggling to work all this produce into your diet, right? Our three-step plan breaks down the five essential veggie groups, provides a cheat sheet for quick reference and serves up seven days' worth of recipes. You'll be fulfilling your five-serve-a-day quota in no time.

Sneaky ways with veggies

Swap noodle soup for bean or lentil
 Serve chicken or fish over a bed of corn or wilted greens instead of over rice
 Use salsa or passata for dipping

Add mashed beans or chopped mushrooms to lean beef or turkey mince
 Trade half your pasta portion for chopped veggies

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the vegie factor

The ideal vegie schedule

Your goal: 14 cups a week

This might seem like a lot, but it's easier than it sounds. Researchers have divided the entire vegetable spectrum into five groups (yes, beans are a vegie!) and broken down your exact weekly needs.

DARK GREENS
 You need: 2 cups per week
Spinach, broccoli, rocket, silverbeet, kale
Pay-off: Get ready for better lung health, stronger bones, a tougher immune system, lower blood pressure, reduced inflammation and a healthier brain.

ORANGE VEGETABLES
 You need: 1½ cups per week
Carrots, sweet potatoes, pumpkin
Pay-off: This sunny-coloured collection works for better vision, blood-sugar control and lung health; these vegies are also high in cancer-fighting carotenoids.

BEANS
 You need: 2½ cups per week
Pinto beans, kidney beans, black beans, lentils, edamame, chickpeas, tofu
Pay-off: These infamous 'musical fruits' lower rates of high blood pressure, heart disease, breast and colon cancers, and type 2 diabetes.

STARCHY VEGETABLES
 You need: 2½ cups per week
White potatoes, corn, peas
Pay-off: The nutrients in this group include vitamins A, C, B6 and folate, as well as potassium and magnesium. Each vegetable is rich in unique antioxidants, such as the cancer-battling isoflavones in peas and blood-pressure-lowering molecules called kukoamines in potatoes.

WILDCARD VEGIES
 You need: 5½ cups per week
Artichokes, asparagus, brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, eggplant, green beans, mushrooms, onions, capsicum, tomatoes, zucchini
Pay-off: This eclectic group ensures a broad spectrum of nutrients and antioxidants that protect every system in your body, including betacarotene in capsicum and quercetin, a natural anti-inflammatory, in onions.

Weekly cheat sheet

ONE WEEK AT A GLANCE						
MON	TUES	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
Lunch 1 cup dark greens Dinner ¾ cup starchy veg	Lunch ½ cup orange veg Dinner ½ cup beans	Lunch 1 cup dark greens & ½ cup beans Dinner 1½ cup wildcard veg	Lunch 1 cup wildcard veg Dinner 1 cup beans	Lunch 1 cup wildcard veg Dinner ¾ cup starchy veg	Lunch 1 cup wildcard veg Dinner 1 cup orange veg	Lunch ½ cup beans Dinner 1 cup starchy veg & 1 cup wildcard veg

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The great *Prevention* veg-out

These 14 one-serve meals incorporate all five vegetable groups into a perfect seven-day schedule. Next to every vegetable in these recipes, we've listed its category so you can make substitutions as you wish. Once you get the hang of it, adding more roughage to your meals will be a breeze!



Salmon spinach salad

Toss 1 cup baby spinach (dark greens) with 1 tbs blue cheese and 1 tbs balsamic vinegar. Top with 90 g tinned red salmon (in brine and drained), ½ cup ruby-red grapefruit and 1 tbs walnuts. (For extra calcium, eat the salmon bones as well.)

NUTRITIONAL INFO PER SERVING 1,550 kJ (370 cal), 27 g protein, 10 g carbs, 2 g fibre, 24 g fat (8 g sat fat), 831 mg sodium



Smoky turkey sandwich

Spread 1 tbs grainy mustard on 1 wholegrain English muffin. Fill with 60 g smoked turkey and ½ cup sliced green apple (leave the skin on). Pair with ½ cup carrot sticks (orange veg) and ¼ cup of hummus.

NUTRITIONAL INFO PER SERVING 1,834 kJ (438 cal), 32 g protein, 39 g carbs, 12 g fibre, 14 g fat (3 g sat fat), 675 mg sodium



Broad-bean and goat's-cheese salad

Combine 1 cup cooked fresh or frozen broad beans (beans) with ¼ cup diced avocado and 5 finely sliced black olives. Serve on a bed of 1 cup rocket (dark greens), and top with 30 g soft goat's cheese. Mix 2 tsp extra-virgin olive oil with ½ tbs freshly squeezed lemon juice and drizzle over the top with some freshly ground black pepper.

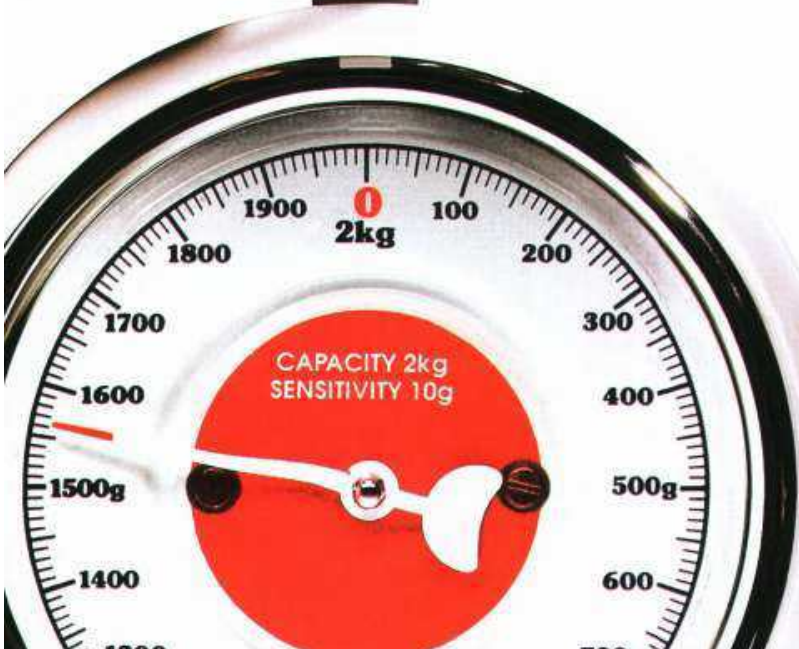
NUTRITIONAL INFO PER SERVING 1,576 kJ (376 cal), 18 g protein, 17 g carbs, 9 g fibre, 24 g fat (7 g sat fat), 295 mg sodium



Lamb with roasted capsicum and bean mash

Heat 1 tsp olive oil in a pan and add 2 crushed garlic cloves. Sauté for 2 minutes, then add ½ cup drained and rinsed cannellini beans (beans) to heat. Mash with another teaspoon of olive oil and season with black pepper. Serve with 90 g grilled lean lamb and ½ roasted red capsicum (wildcard veg).

NUTRITIONAL INFO PER SERVING 1,442 kJ (344 cal), 36 g protein, 22 g carbs, 8 g fibre, 11 g fat (3 g sat fat), 74 mg sodium





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Chicken and corn salsa

Grill 90 g of skinless chicken. Combine 1 cup corn (starchy veg) with ¼ cup diced capsicum (wildcard veg), ¼ cup Spanish onion (wildcard veg), ½ red deseeded chilli and 1 cup roughly chopped coriander. Serve chicken on top of mixture.

NUTRITIONAL INFO PER SERVING 1,656 kJ (396 cal), 33 g protein, 40 g carbs, 7 g fibre, 9 g fat (2 g sat fat), 103 mg sodium



Zesty roast-beef wrap

Spread 1 small wholemeal pita with 2 tbs fat-free natural Greek yoghurt, ½ tsp horseradish and 1 tsp chopped chives. Fill with 60 g lean roast beef and serve with ½ cup sliced red capsicum (wildcard veg) and ¼ cup hummus.

NUTRITIONAL INFO PER SERVING 1,693 kJ (404 cal), 28 g protein, 33 g carbs, 9 g fibre, 15 g fat (4 g sat fat), 536 mg sodium



Prawn and artichoke salad

Chop 5 king prawns (80 g) and combine with 1 tbs whole-egg mayonnaise, 1 tsp lemon juice and ¼ tsp freshly ground black pepper. Fold in ½ cup of tinned artichoke hearts (wildcard veg) and serve with 4 Vita-Weat crackers.

NUTRITIONAL INFO PER SERVING 1,415 kJ (338 cal), 23 g protein, 17 g carbs, 4 g fibre, 18 g fat (4 g sat fat), 930 mg sodium



Chicken pasta salad

Halve ½ cup cherry tomatoes (wildcard veg) with ½ cup cooked and chilled wholegrain spiral or penne pasta, 90 g chicken breast cut into chunks, 3 sliced fresh basil leaves and 1 tbs extra-virgin olive oil.

NUTRITIONAL INFO PER SERVING 1,683 kJ (402 cal), 28 g protein, 13 g carbs, 4 g fibre, 26 g fat (5 g sat fat), 121 mg sodium



Peas supreme

Toss ½ cup cooked wholemeal spaghetti with 2 tsp extra-virgin olive oil, 60 g chopped lean bacon and ½ cup of frozen and thawed peas (starchy veg). Sprinkle with 2 tbs grated parmesan.

NUTRITIONAL INFO PER SERVING 1,914 kJ (457 cal), 32 g protein, 25 g carbs, 8 g fibre, 23 g fat (7 g sat fat), 1,585 mg sodium



Orange-zing veggie stir-fry

Combine 2 tbs orange juice with 1 tbs white vinegar, ½ tsp grated fresh ginger and 1 tsp low-sodium soy sauce; set aside. Sauté ½ cup chopped onions (wildcard veg) in 2 tsp peanut oil until translucent. Add ½ cup each sliced mushrooms and chopped asparagus (wildcard veg) with ginger sauce. Stir-fry for 3 to 5 more minutes. Add ¼ cup mandarin segments and 1 tbs slivered almonds. Serve with ½ cup brown rice.

NUTRITIONAL INFO PER SERVING 1,527 kJ (365 cal), 10 g protein, 41 g carbs, 6 g fibre, 16 g fat (2 g sat fat), 299 mg sodium



Chickpea and mushroom minestrone

Sauté ¼ cup diced onion (wildcard veg) with 1 crushed garlic clove in 2 tsp olive oil for 3 to 4 minutes until soft. Add ¼ cup sliced mushrooms (wildcard veg) and 1 tbs chopped basil; cook for another 2 minutes. Stir in ½ cup passata with 1 cup low-sodium chicken or veg stock and ½ cup rinsed chickpeas (beans). Cook for 15 minutes. Add pepper and serve with 1 tbs grated parmesan.

NUTRITIONAL INFO PER SERVING 1,706 kJ (407 cal), 15 g protein, 48 g carbs, 10 g fibre, 14 g fat (3 g sat fat), 1,276 mg sodium



Lentil salad

Combine ½ cup drained and rinsed tinned lentils (beans) with 30 g slivered almonds, ½ medium capsicum (wildcard veg) and ½ cup chopped parsley. Mix 2 tsp olive oil with 1 tsp lemon juice and ½ tsp lemon zest, and pour over bean mixture. Season with pepper.

NUTRITIONAL INFO PER SERVING 1,465 kJ (350 cal), 13 g protein, 12 g carbs, 8 g fibre, 26 g fat (2 g sat fat), 386 mg sodium



Sweet-potato wedges with fish

Take 1 cup (150 g) sweet potatoes (orange veg) cut into wedges; leave skin on. Heat oven to 220°C and cook wedges in 1 tsp olive oil for 25 minutes. Serve with ¼ tsp of salt, 150 g grilled white-fleshed fish and 1 tbs tartare sauce.

NUTRITIONAL INFO PER SERVING 1,576 kJ (376 cal), 43 g protein, 25 g carbs, 3 g fibre, 11 g fat (2 g sat fat), 808 mg sodium



Prosciutto and dill potato salad

Combine ¼ cup fat-free plain yoghurt with 1 tbs fresh dill and 1 tsp Dijon mustard. Add 1 diced hard-boiled egg, 1 cup cooked and diced potato (starchy veg), 1 cup cauliflower (wildcard veg) and 30 g prosciutto, cut into small pieces.

NUTRITIONAL INFO PER SERVING 1,239 kJ (296 cal), 23 g protein, 28 g carbs, 6 g fibre, 8 g fat (2 g sat fat), 737 mg sodium

Notes: Strive to limit your saturated- and trans-fat intake to less than 10 per cent of your total energy per day. (Look for less than 10 g per 100 g on food labels.) Try to limit your sodium intake to less than 2,300 mg per day.