



Healthy active living



Healthy eating

About this resource

More and more studies show the link between nutrition and mental health and wellbeing.¹

As evidence grows that what people consume can affect their wellbeing, it highlights the need for taiohi to have access to easy-to-understand information to help them make healthy food choices.

Health Ed's Healthy Eating for Young People booklet sets out the why, the what and the how, when it comes to getting nutritious foods, including ideas for healthy snacks and how to choose takeaways with less processed ingredients and more nutritious fillings.

How to use it

Begin the conversation about eating well by sharing with taiohi that research shows what people eat (their nutrition), affects not only their physical health, but also their mental health. By paying attention to their food choices, people can improve their wellbeing.

Introduce the Healthy Eating for Young People resource, and together look for answers to these commonly asked questions:

- What are the four food groups?
- How many daily servings are recommended of each:
 - fruit and vegetables
 - bread and cereals
 - milk and milk products
 - lean meats, chicken, seafood, eggs, legumes, nuts and seeds
 - water or low fat milk

Share one new idea you've learned from the resource before inviting taiohi to share something they have learned, or that appeals to them. Give them a copy of the resource to take home to keep learning about healthy eating.

Be aware that some taiohi have limited influence over food choices made by whānau, so encourage them to make healthy choices when they can, and if possible provide a list of support services e.g. for food and finance support.



Suitable for

Improving mood

People with better quality diets are less likely to be depressed, while eating more processed and unhealthy foods is associated with increased anxiety.²

Concentration and focus

Getting the right nutrients helps to improve taiohi concentration and focus¹, which in turn supports learning and participation.

Making informed choices

Education about healthy food choices competes with marketing aimed at appealing to young people. By learning about nutrition, taiohi can make informed choices.


For taiohi

How food affects the brain

Taiohi may enjoy [this Ted Ed video](#) by Mia Nacamulli that explains how food choices have a long-lasting effect on the brain.

HEALTHY EATING FOR YOUNG PEOPLE





To grow and be healthy, you need to be active, eat the right foods and get enough sleep.

YOUR GUIDE TO HEALTHY EATING



Life as a young person can be fast, furious and fun. To grow and be healthy, you need to be active and eat the right foods. This brochure shows how to choose healthy foods, drinks and snacks. It also says how you can be active in everyday life, and how much sleep you need.

MAKE HEALTHY FOOD CHOICES

Look after yourself. Your health is important, and it's affected by what you eat.

- Help with preparing the family meals. You could even have one night a week when you cook for the whole family.
- As often as you can, eat meals with your family and whānau.
- Lead by example – encourage your family and whānau and friends to make healthy food choices.
- Eat three meals every day, plus two or three healthy snacks during the day if you are hungry.
- Always take time to eat a healthy breakfast – so you have energy to start the day.



EAT MANY DIFFERENT FOODS

Eat a variety of foods from these four food groups every day:

- vegetables and fruit
- breads and cereals
- milk and milk products
- lean meats, chicken, seafood, eggs, legumes*, nuts and seeds.

** Legumes include cooked dried beans, peas and lentils.*

Always take time to eat a healthy breakfast – so you have energy to start the day.



VEGETABLES AND FRUIT

- Provide carbohydrate, vitamins and minerals, fibre and are low in fat.
- Eat them with most meals.
- Great snack food.



HOW MUCH DO I NEED?

- **At least 5** servings of vegetables and **2** servings of fruit every day.
- Eat many different coloured vegetables and fruit: tomato or strawberry; broccoli or kiwifruit; carrot or mandarin; eggplant or plum; potato or pear.



WHAT IS ONE SERVING?



CUP cooked vegetables, eg, broccoli, peas, corn, spinach, pūhā (75 g)
a medium potato or similar sized piece of kumara (75 g)

1

CUP salad
apple, pear, banana or orange
CUP diced or canned fruit (150 g)

2

small apricots or plums (150 g)

Dried fruit and fruit juice are not recommended because they contain a lot of sugar.

Drain the juice from canned fruit before eating.



BREADS AND CEREALS



- They also include rice and pasta.
- They provide carbohydrate, which can be an important source of energy and fibre, and some vitamins and minerals (especially wholegrain breads and cereals).
- A great source of energy for growth, sport and fitness.

HOW MUCH DO I NEED?

At least 7 servings every day – if you're very active, you may need more.



WHAT IS ONE SERVING?

1/4

CUP muesli (30 g)

1/2

CUP porridge

CUP cooked pasta or rice

1/2

bread roll or large wrap

1

1 slice of bread, pita pocket or tortilla

2

breakfast wheat biscuits



MILK AND MILK PRODUCTS

- They include milk, cheese and yoghurt.
- They provide energy, protein, fat and most vitamins and minerals, including calcium.
- You need high-calcium foods to build strong bones.
- Choose low-fat milk (yellow or green top) for extra calcium.
- Try milk, cheese and yoghurt as snacks.



HOW MUCH DO I NEED?

At least **3** servings every day.

WHAT IS ONE SERVING?



CUP of low-fat milk (250 ml)
pottle of low-fat milk yoghurt

2

slices cheese (40 g) or
1/2 cup grated cheese



LEAN MEATS, CHICKEN, SEAFOOD, EGGS, LEGUMES*, NUTS & SEEDS



- All contain protein, which your body needs to grow.
- Also contain fat and many different vitamins and minerals – especially iron, which is important for your blood and brain.
- Your body easily uses the iron from meat, chicken and seafood. To help use the iron from legumes, eat fresh, vitamin C-rich vegetables and fruit at the same time, including kūmara, broccoli, tomatoes, oranges and kiwifruit.
- Limit processed meats, such as luncheon, salami, bacon and ham as they are usually high in saturated** fat and/or salt.

** Legumes include cooked dried beans, peas and lentils.*

*** Saturated fats are found in animal fat, palm and coconut oil.*





HOW MUCH DO I NEED?

- **At least 2** servings every day.
- Vegetarians – **at least 3** servings of legumes*, nuts or seeds.

WHAT IS ONE SERVING?



CUP nuts or seeds (30 g)



CUP of mince or casserole (195 g)



CUP tofu (170 g)



CUP baked beans

1/2

medium steak (65 g)

1

large piece of fish (100 g)
medium pāua or kina (100–120 g)

2

slices cooked meat (65 g)
eg, roast lamb, or pork
eggs





VegetARIANS

Vegetarians need food with lots of iron such as wholegrain cereals, legumes, dried fruits and dark green leafy vegetables. To help your body absorb the iron in these foods, eat fresh, vitamin C-rich vegetables and fruit with them.

If you don't eat cheese, milk or eggs, you need to get protein from foods such as tofu and legumes. If you drink soy milk, choose one that has added calcium and vitamin B12.

[See the pamphlet *Eating for Healthy Vegetarians* – Code HE1519, available at www.healthed.govt.nz]





HEALTHY SNACKS

Snacks help provide the extra energy you need for growth and physical activity. If you are going to be out and about, take snacks with you. Choose healthy snacks that are low in saturated fat, salt and sugar, such as:

- bread, bread rolls, bagels, rēwena and pita breads or French sticks. Try some wholegrain varieties and have them with your favourite low-fat fillings
- crackers, fruit buns, scones, fruit bread, pancakes, popcorn (try popping your own)
- unsalted nuts and seeds
- pasta and rice
- breakfast cereals with low-fat milk/yoghurt
- low-fat yoghurt, plain or flavoured low-fat milk
- fresh fruit – whole, with yoghurt, blended in a home made smoothie or with a slice of cheese
- vegetable sticks together with a dip or spread (hummus, cottage cheese or yoghurt-based dips)
- reheated leftovers, for example, stews, soups and vegetables (such as potato, taro, pumpkin or kūmara).





EATING WHEN YOU ARE OUT AND ABOUT

Many takeaways are high in fat, sugar and salt and should be kept for special occasions, not every day. If you are out and need a snack or a meal, look for healthier options. Choose those with less fat, especially saturated fat, and more vegies such as:

- kebabs and wraps
- filled bread rolls
- pizza with more vegetables than cheese
- sushi
- pasta with tomato-based sauces
- thick chunky chips or wedges instead of french fries
- rice- or noodle-based takeaways (not fried) with lots of vegetables
- baked, stuffed potatoes.



**Keep some fruit and
a bottle of tap water
in your bag in case you
get hungry or thirsty.**

HAVE PLENTY TO DRINK

Drink at least **6 to 8** glasses every day. Drink even more during hot weather and when you are very active (especially before, during and after exercise).



DRINK MORE OF ...

Water is best. It's free and easy to get.

Low-fat milk is also a good drink; it's rich in calcium and makes a good snack.

DRINK LESS OF ...

Fruit drinks and juice are high in sugar. If you choose juice, dilute it with water (1/2 juice and 1/2 water) and have it with a meal rather than on its own. This may help to protect your teeth from the sugar.

Soft drinks are high in sugar and energy (calories) and can contain caffeine. They should be occasional drinks (less than once a week).

If you drink coffee or tea, limit them to one or two cups per day. Don't drink tea or coffee with meals because they reduce the amount of iron and calcium you can absorb from the meal.

Energy drinks and energy shots are not recommended. They contain added vitamins and caffeine. They are usually also high in sugar. Most of the added vitamins are not needed.

Alcohol is not recommended. If you choose to drink alcohol, drink only a little, eat some food, don't binge drink and do not drive.



EATING FOR GROWING AND MOVING

Because you are still growing, you need more energy (calories), vitamins and minerals than ever before. What you eat will affect your performance – on and off the field.

Choose a range of foods from the four food groups. Have plenty of breads, cereals, vegetables and fruit, lower fat milk products (milk, yoghurt, some cheeses), lean meat or alternatives and lots of fluids (especially water). Sports drinks are unnecessary for most young people.



SIT LESS, MOVE MORE, SLEEP WELL



Sit less

- Break up sitting time
- Spend no more than 2 hours each day (excluding school) at the computer, on a device, or watching TV

Move more

- Do at least an hour of moderate to vigorous activity a day
- Include activities that strengthen muscles and bones at least 3 days a week

MODERATE

I'm breathing faster, and my heart is beating a bit more.

I can still talk!

- Walking the dog
- Biking on the flat
- Playing at the park or pool
- Dance
- Kapa haka
- Skateboarding

VIGOROUS

I'm breathing a lot harder, and my heart is beating faster.

I can only say a few words without taking a breath.

- Running games
- Mountain biking
- Uphill tramping
- Fast lap swimming
- Sports
- Waka ama

Sleep well

- Getting enough sleep at night is very important for your health:
 - 14–17 year olds need 8–10 hours a night

FOR MORE INFORMATION



SPEAK TO YOUR:

- school nurse or public health nurse
- health education or home economics teacher
- doctor or practice nurse.

VISIT THESE WEBSITES:

- Ministry of Health: www.health.govt.nz
- 5+ a day: www.5aday.co.nz
- Sport NZ: www.sportnz.org.nz
- HealthEd: www.healthed.govt.nz - see the 'healthy eating' and 'physical activity' sections
- Toi Tangata: www.toitangata.co.nz
- Pacific Heartbeat: www.heartfoundation.org.nz/your-heart/pacific-heartbeat
- Healthy Kids: www.healthykids.org.nz/eat/move/walks
- Heart Foundation: www.heartfoundation.org.nz
- www.healthyfood.com

This resource is available at www.healthed.govt.nz
or from the Authorised Provider at your local DHB

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Physical activities

About this resource

As well as learning about the benefits of being active for both physical and mental wellbeing, it is useful for taiohi to understand that there are a range of everyday activities that they can use or modify to help them get and stay physically active.

The Physical Activities resource is a starting point for discussions about how taiohi might aim to get 30 minutes of physical activity into their day.

The pictures remind them that even if they are unable to get out and about, there are fun activities they can do at home to get moving.

How to use it

With taiohi, discuss how just 30 minutes of daily physical activity is enough to benefit both our physical and mental health. Ask taiohi what kinds of physical activities they enjoy, and what their friends and whānau do.

Different ways to use this resource:

- Introduce the Physical Activities graphic and look at each option. Which activities they have done before or which ones would they like to try?
- Invite taiohi to rate activities for how they feel about them or how practical they are to do (for example 1 to 5 with 1 being they love it, or thumbs up, down, or sideways).
- Brainstorm together what taiohi might do in different scenarios for example, if it's raining or the swimming pool is closed. Support them to think of alternative activities they could do at home. Note these ideas on their chart.

Encourage taiohi to set a goal to do 30 minutes of physical activity everyday. Remind them that the time can be split, for example, three sessions of 10 minutes.

Foster optimism that physical activity can be enjoyable and they can achieve their goals.



Suitable for

Body and brain health

Even a moderate amount of activity can improve taiohi body and brain health, lift mood, and decrease anxiety and stress.

Growing confidence

By taking small steps to become more active, taiohi can make changes to their daily habits and learn to self-manage to achieve wellbeing goals.

A sense of belonging

Taking part in physical activities with a group or a team provides opportunities for socialising, making friends, and feelings of connection to community.

For taiohi

Goal-setting

Support taiohi to set a SMART goal (see the Goal setting section) to help them understand that even by making small changes, they can make a big difference to their wellbeing.



PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES

pick one or two which you would like to try



Dance

Put on some of your favourite music and dance to it. or sign up to a dance class.



skateboard

Get out your skateboard, skates, rollerblades or scooter and head out to a skate park.



walking

take the dog for a walk, walk around the block or meet up with a friend and go for a walk



trampoline

jump on a trampoline or go to a trampoline park



Workout with a friend

organise with a friend to do a workout with this could be in your home or outside at a park



Swimming

pop down to your local swimming pool and swim some laps.



workout at home

find an app or online workout that you can follow along with. Also you can write up an at home workout.

Sports

play a sport. see what your school offers or just get together with friends to play



What other ideas do you have:

-
-
-
-
-



Biking

take a bike ride, around the block/neighbourhood



Gym

sign up to the Gym, go there after school or attend classes.



kick a ball around

take a ball to the park meet up with a friend or two and have a bit of fun kicking or throwing the ball around



Sleep diary

About this resource

The Sleep Diary helps taiohi to track how much sleep they are getting and to identify any factors that may be contributing to poor quality sleep or lack of sleep.

Tracking sleep over a week will give insight into their daytime activities and mood, their routines and habits before bed, any disruptions to sleep time, and how they felt when they woke in the morning.

Once equipped with this information, taiohi will be able to identify opportunities and set goals to work towards improving their sleep hygiene.

How to use it

With taiohi, discuss how:

- Mood is affected by the quality of sleep
- Sleep is affected by a range of different factors
- The Sleep Diary helps identify the factors affecting our sleep

Look at the resource together. Discuss the areas for taiohi to complete before going to sleep and the areas to complete in the morning.

Reassure taiohi that if they don't know an exact answer, for example 'how many minutes before I fell asleep', to have a guess. It's the overall data that will be helpful.

Check they understand how to complete the diary. One way to do this is by asking them to explain it to you.

Give taiohi a copy of the Sleep Diary to take away. Suggest they keep it and a pen next to their bed, so they remember to complete it just before they go to sleep and first thing in the morning.

Once taiohi have filled in their sleep diary for a week, they will be able to set goals to work towards improving their sleep hygiene.



Suitable for

Linking sleep with mood

By tracking sleep and mood together, taiohi can see how the two are linked, and that getting good sleep means meeting one of their basic wellbeing needs.

Managing screen time

The Sleep Diary will highlight how much time taiohi are spending on screens before sleep and how late they are staying awake to do so.

Taiohi who game, or spend time on their phone late at night, will improve their sleep by reducing screen time and heightened emotions caused by using social media and gaming.

For taiohi

Sleep action plan

Taiohi can create a sleep action plan by setting SMART goals.

- Why do they want better sleep, what will it mean?
- What steps will they take, what will they change?
- What will success look like?

Sleep Diary

Complete this form each day: write in the shaded area just before going to bed, and the non-shaded area in the morning

Day / date							
Mood level during the day 0 – 10 (10 worst)							
Fatigue level during the day 0 – 10 (10 worst)							
Naps taken during day – what time? How long for?							
Activity during day? 0 – 10 (10 most active)							
Caffeine, nicotine, alcohol during day, and during evening?							
What did I do just before going to bed?							
What time I went to bed							
What did I do in bed? (Read, TV, sex)							
What time did I put the lights out?							
How many minutes before I fell asleep?							
What time did I wake up?							
Number of times I woke up?							
Number of hours I slept?							
On waking up in the morning, how rested do I feel? 0 – 10 (10 most rested)							

Sleep hygiene

About this resource

Sleep is a basic need, with good quality sleep supporting both physical and mental health.

When feeling tired or fatigued, taiohi will face challenges with daily functioning, including managing their emotions and relationships. This becomes a cycle.

The Sleep Hygiene resource helps taiohi to understand the different factors that can contribute to improving sleep quality and patterns, with tips about what to do if they are finding it difficult to fall asleep and stay asleep.

How to use it

Begin by talking with taiohi how people use hygiene habits every day to stay healthy, such as washing hands after using the toilet or brushing teeth before bed. As with these habits and routines, sleep hygiene helps people to get a good night's sleep, which is important for overall wellbeing

Discuss how sleeping well allows our brain and body to recharge, and how this supports both physical and mental health.

Go through the Sleep Hygiene resource together. Discuss each tip and check with taiohi that they understand what it means. Tick each tip taiohi know and already do and put an asterisk against those they are willing to try.

Ask taiohi if they have other ideas they would like to add to their sleep hygiene routine, for example, switching off screens 30 minutes before bedtime.

Encourage taiohi to create a sleep hygiene routine to trial for at least two weeks.

Reassure them that with practice and persistence, their new routine will become a habit and they will notice a difference not only in how they sleep, but also how they feel.



Suitable for

Improving brain function

When taiohi are well-rested they will be better able to focus, concentrate, and retain new information. Sleep hygiene also supports emotional regulation.

Eating better

A study by the University of Otago showed that just one hour less sleep a night affects how and what children eat.³ Good sleep hygiene will help taiohi eat better and be physically active.

Setting routines

When taiohi have improved sleep hygiene, they can start to create healthy routines. This will improve self-care, time management, and hauora (overall wellbeing).

For taiohi

How does sleep work?

Share the Sleep Foundation (US) video [How does sleep work?](#) with taiohi so they can learn what the brain does while we sleep.

Sleep Hygiene

Sleep hygiene is good sleeping habits to help support a good night's sleep.

Regular sleep schedule

- try to maintain same sleep pattern
- this helps your body to regulate a natural sleep rhythm
- even in the weekends stick to your regular pattern within an hour or 2



Bedtime routine

- create a consistent routine before bed
- hot shower/bath
- meditation/stretches
- read a book
- warm drink (no caffeine)

Tips if struggling

- no clock watching. This can reinforce negative thoughts and increase your stress levels
- if unable to sleep after 20mins get up and do something calming or boring. sit on the couch in the dark, read a boring book until you feel tired
- use a sleep diary/app to track your sleep

REMEMBER

- eat right
- exercise regularly
- avoid caffeine, nicotine and alcohol 4 hours before bed

What other ideas do you have?

Your bedroom

- keep the bed as your sleep space
- block out noise and light
 - blackout curtains
 - sleep mask
 - earplugs
- keep the bedroom cool and aired
 - leave a window open a little
 - ideal temperature 17-21C

Weekly planner

About this resource

Preparing activities and organising time helps to set routines, self-manage daily life, and creates a sense of achievement.

Achievement builds self-confidence, resilience, and motivation. The Weekly Planner helps taiohi to plan ahead so that their week includes a balance of daily activities.

By using the planner once as a baseline without making changes to daily activities, taiohi can see how their current activity affects their mood. Then they can compare any changes to their mood as a result of planning and implementing new activities throughout their day and week.

How to use it

With taiohi, discuss:

- The concept of comparative data i.e. getting a picture of what they do now, so that they can see the difference a change makes.
- How balancing daily activities (such as rest, work, and play) can help improve mood.

Look at the resource together and discuss the instructions for the first week. Check they understand the instructions, especially the percentage. For some taiohi using an emoji or a score out of ten may be easier.

To practice, model your own responses for a day, then invite taiohi to do the same.

Next, discuss the three types of activities: rest, work, and play. What kind of activities might taiohi plan to do in week two and subsequent weeks? Write down their ideas.

Encourage taiohi to be flexible and adapt their plan if necessary. For example, they can swap activities or which days they do them. What's important is that they do activities from each group every day and record how it made them feel and how strongly they felt.



Suitable for

Understanding balance

Seeing the relationship between what they do during the day and their mood will help taiohi to understand the benefits of finding balance in everyday activities.

Taking first steps

Making small changes will help taiohi take the first steps to making healthier choices. Reassure them they don't need to do everything at once.

Overcoming challenges

Support taiohi to identify potential barriers to success. Being prepared with strategies to overcome challenges as they arise, will build taiohi confidence to take risks.

For taiohi

Mental Wealth

Mental Wealth's Feel Good section provides [tips and guides](#) taking care of mind, body, and soul to live well and feel good. There is also a link to [Mana Restore](#) for gamers.

Weekly Planner

First week: Write down what you do and how you feel (emotion). Rate the emotion 0-100% *E.g. "Watched TV, Sad 85%"*

Subsequent weeks: Plan activities each day, mixing activities of Work, Rest and Play (or Routine, Pleasurable & Necessary). Pace yourself!

Day							
Morning							
Afternoon							
Evening							

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2. Felice N Jacka, Arnstein Mykletun, Michael Berk, Ingvar Bjelland, Grethe S Tell. The association between habitual diet quality and the common mental disorders in community-dwelling adults: the Hordaland Health study. Psychosomatic Medicine, 2011. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/21715296/>
3. <https://www.otago.ac.nz/news/newsroom/15-march-2023-small-changes-in-childrens-sleep-lead-to-significant-changes-in-eating-habits>



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