



Healthy Eating for Wellbeing

**A Nutrition Guide for Alcohol
& Other Drug Consumers**





Welcome

There is a significant overlap between Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) use and physical and mental health. Nutrition can play a major role in improving these. This guide aims to give AOD consumers some basic information about the overlap between nutrition and AOD use to assist with their health and wellbeing journey.

The information in this booklet should not be substituted for the advice of a General Practitioner or Accredited Practising Dietitian (APD).

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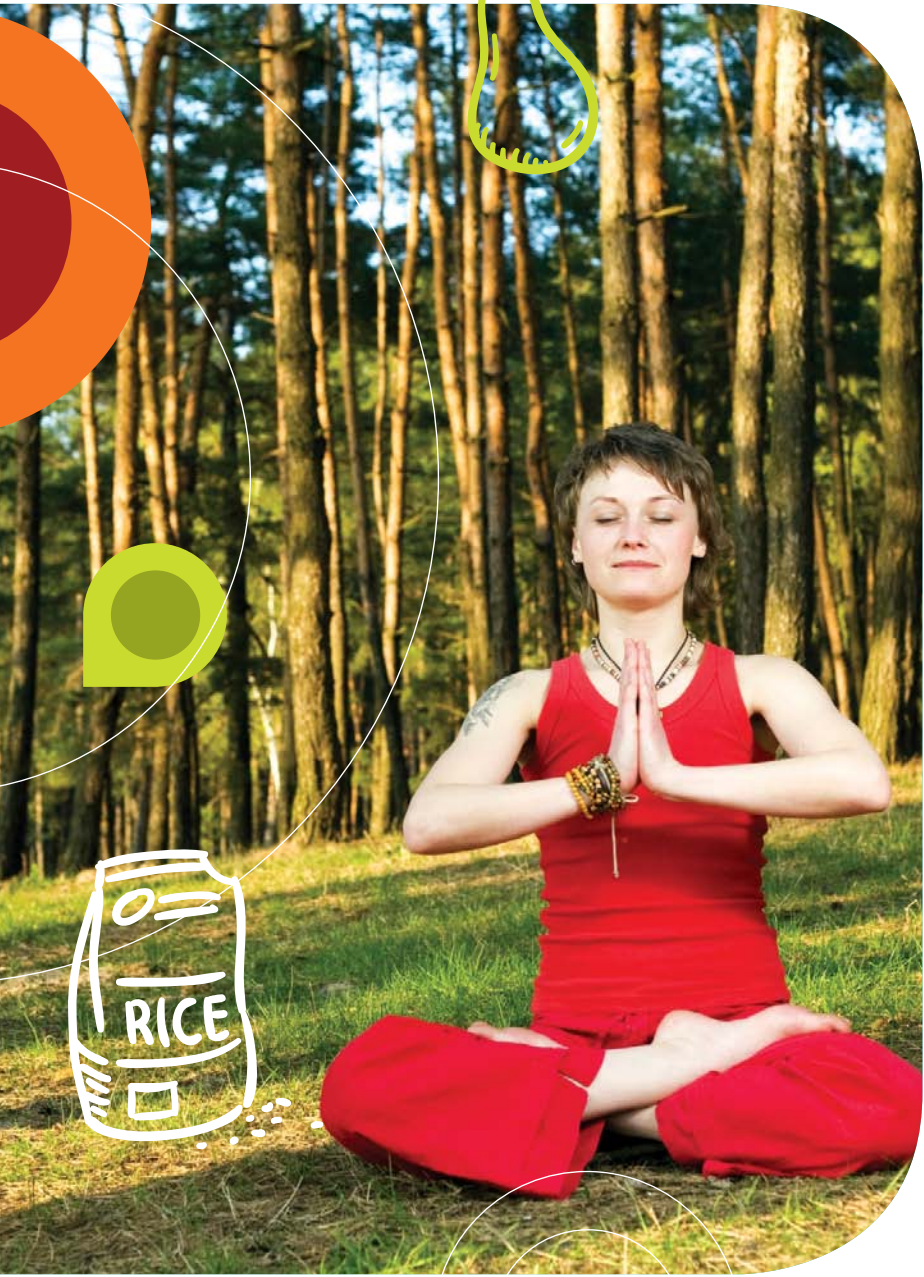
WANADA staff acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the Traditional Custodians of this country and its waters. WANADA staff wish to pay their respect to Elders past and present and extend this to all Aboriginal people reading this message.

Disclaimer:

The "Healthy Eating for Wellbeing: A nutrition guide for alcohol and other drug consumers" is intended to provide information and examples about healthy eating in relation to alcohol and other drug use and rehabilitation. This information is offered as a guide only. The guide is designed to assist alcohol and other drug consumers to improve their health and wellbeing based on consultation with consumers and workers and information available at the date of publication.

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My food and exercise goals

To get you started on your journey, list some things you would like to achieve in the near future. Try to make them realistic and achievable, for example, eat 1 piece of fruit each day or use the stairs instead of the lift.

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Nutrition can help

- ✓ To provide **energy**
- ✓ To maintain a **healthy body**
- ✓ To reduce the risk of **chronic disease**

Alcohol and other Drug use affects our whole body...

- It can cause our body to lose vitamins and minerals through bleeding, vomiting, diarrhoea and other damage so we need to eat a nutritious diet to replace these vitamins and minerals.
- Eating a varied and balanced diet rich in fresh fruits, vegetables, dairy products, wholegrain breads and cereals, lean meats and meat alternatives (eggs, legumes, soy products) will improve **ENERGY** levels and **BRAIN** and **BODY FUNCTIONS**.



Moods and foods

Did you know that **healthy eating** is important for your **mind**?

A balanced diet of a variety of foods leads to improved moods...

- Chemicals in our brain regulate our moods, behaviours and how we think and feel.
- Our brain chemicals need nutrients to work properly.
- Without the nutrients, we may find we get depressed, anxious, irritable and tired.
- We need a variety of foods to get the nutrients we need for our body to function properly and help stabilise our moods.

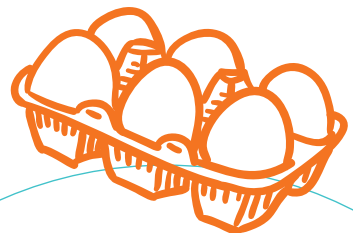
Nutrients that affect mood	Not enough of this can cause...	Foods that have this nutrient
Vitamin B1 (Thiamin)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mental confusion• Weight loss• Irritability• Breakdown of muscle• Mild confusion to coma¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Vegemite• Wholegrain breads• Pork• Sunflower seeds• Breads and cereals with thiamin added (it will say on the food label)
Folate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Large immature red blood cells• General weakness• Depression¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chinese cabbage• Wheat germ/wheat bran• Peanuts• Chickpea flour• Legumes• Asparagus• Raw strawberries• Seafood

¹ Stewart, R. (2009). Griffith handbook of clinical nutrition and dietetics (3rd ed.). Brisbane, QLD

Some things that may help with mood, depression & anxiety

- Avoid or reduce your caffeine intake as it can produce low moods and more anxiety.
- Use only one teaspoon of coffee per cup to help reduce your caffeine intake.
- Avoid too much sugar and refined carbohydrates as they create highs and lows in mood. Refined carbohydrates include white breads, pastas and cereals as well as bakery products and those products with high sugar content (more than 10g per 100g).
- Look for products without colours, flavours or additives as they may affect your mood.
- Eat wholegrain cereals, breads and pastas to help stabilise mood.
- Try oily fish 2-3 times a week, this includes canned tuna, herring, sardines and tuna (choose tuna in spring water for less fat intake).
- Drink water throughout the day to keep yourself hydrated. Even mild dehydration can affect mood and thinking.
- Avoid energy drinks as they contain caffeine or caffeine like products that can increase anxiety. These drinks often contain high sugar levels that can cause your mood to fluctuate.

Try using the 'Food Diary' on the next page to write down how you feel when you eat a meal. If you skip a meal, write down how you were feeling and why you didn't eat. Also write down any exercise or active chores you did as exercise improves your mood.



Food Diary

Date	Time of Day	Food Eaten / Physical Activity	How I'm Feeling

Date	Time of Day	Food Eaten / Physical Activity	How I'm Feeling

Alcohol and other drug use may...

- Affect **CONCENTRATION** and **MEMORY**
- Suppress the **IMMUNE SYSTEM**
- Lead to **BRAIN** damage
- Lead to **TEETH, SKIN** and **EYE** problems
- Affect our **SLEEPING**
- Increase the risk of **OBESITY** and **DIABETES**
- Lead to **LIVER** damage and **MUSCLE BREAK DOWN**
- Lead to break down of **GUT LINING**
- Increase risk of **STOMACH AND OTHER CANCERS**
- Impact on **SEXUAL FUNCTION**
- Impact on **PERSONALITY**
- Increase risk of **HEART DISEASE, STROKE** and **HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE**

...which can also affect your mood.



How does food affect my body and mind?

Listed below are some nutrients that are affected by alcohol and other drug use. When we don't have enough of one or more important nutrients, it can affect our mind and body. These show up as symptoms, which you might have already experienced. You should see your doctor or a Dietitian if you think you have any of these symptoms.

Nutrient affected	Not enough of this can cause...	Foods that have this nutrient
Vitamin B2 (Riboflavin)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Itching, burning, watering of eyes• Sore, burning lips• Skin lesions with greasy scales• Purple, swollen tongue¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Milk• Yoghurt• Eggs• Cheese• Mushroom• Organ meats (liver, kidney, heart)
Vitamin B3 (Niacin)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dermatitis• Dementia• Diarrhoea• Tremors• Sore tongue• Hair loss• Red scaly rash around eyes, nose and mouth¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rice bran & Wheat bran• Breads with niacin added• Meat (Beef, lamb, pork, poultry, veal, fish)• Peanuts

Nutrient affected	Not enough of this can cause...	Foods that have this nutrient
Vitamin B6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weakness • Sleeplessness • Cracking at corners of mouth • Inflamed tongue • Inflammation of the inside lining of the mouth¹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wheat germ/bran • Fish • Banana • Beef, veal, mutton, fish, chicken breast • Legumes – e.g. baked beans, chick peas, kidney beans • Vegemite
Vitamin B12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yellow tinted skin • Smooth beefy red tongue • Numbness • Tingling • Burning feet • Stiffness • Weakness • Fatigue¹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meat (Rabbit, veal, beef, pork, fish) • Milk and dairy products • Mussels & Oysters • Sardines
Vitamin C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impaired wound healing • Swelling • Bleeding • Bone and teeth weakness • Swollen bleeding gums • Fatigue • Lethargy¹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Red capsicum, onion, potato, brussels sprouts, watercress • Oranges, lemons, pawpaw, mandarin, guava, blackcurrant juice • Chicken & Lamb liver

¹ Stewart, R. (2009). Griffith handbook of clinical nutrition and dietetics (3rd ed.). Brisbane, QLD

Some suggestions to help changes in the body

Vomiting

- Causes dehydration and can irritate your throat and affect your teeth and gums.
- Try small, regular snacks, rather than main meals.
- Try clear soups, jelly, lemonade, dry ginger ale, ice cubes, icy poles or fruit juice.
- Try cold dishes as the smell isn't as strong.
- Try plain or bland foods or dry, salty foods like crackers and pretzels.
- Eat and drink slowly so the stomach doesn't expand too much.^{2,3}

Nausea (feeling sick)

- First try clear soups, lemonade or ice cubes.
- Then try a half and half mixture of milk and soda water; diluted fruit juices or weak tea.
- When you can tolerate these, try small amounts of food like:
 - > plain dry biscuits;
 - > thin crisp toast with a spread;
 - > boiled rice;
 - > yoghurt;
 - > soft, stewed fruit like apples, pears and peaches.^{2,3}

Dry Mouth

- Rinse your mouth with warm saltwater or mouth wash regularly, use alcohol-free mouthwash.
- Drink small amounts of water or milk frequently between meals.
- Use chewing gum to stimulate saliva.
- Add sauces, gravy or margarine to dry foods.
- Brush and floss your teeth regularly.^{2,3}

Loss of appetite

- Try small serves on a small plate.
- Snack between meals.
- Avoid very sweet foods and foods high in fat.
- Eat your main meal when you feel the best.
- Avoid drinking a lot of water before or during your meal to allow more room for food in your stomach.
- Listen to your favourite music while you eat.
- Take a walk or do some exercise before you eat.^{2,3}

Taste changes

- If drinks taste too sweet, flavour them with something unsweetened such as lime juice, pureed fresh banana, strawberries.
- Try different protein foods like cheese, egg or white meats such as chicken and turkey.
- Experiment with adding herbs, spices, sauces and seasonings to your food.
- Brush your teeth or use mouthwash before you eat.
- Eat foods cold or at room temperature.
- Use a plastic knife and fork.^{2,3}

Chewing and swallowing food

- Try foods and drinks of different thicknesses and see which one you like best. Thin liquids, dry foods and sticky foods are often hard to swallow.
- Add sauces and gravy to dry foods.
- Drink water or milk with meals.
- Try drinking through a straw.
- Try different head positions like tilting forward or backward, to see if it makes swallowing easier.
- If you have sore teeth, try steaming vegetables so that they are soft or putting fruit and vegetables in the blender.
- Reduce distractions to help you concentrate on the actions of chewing and swallowing.^{2,3}

Diarrhoea

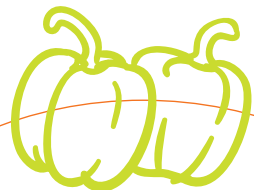
- Try small meals instead of large ones.
- Rest and try small amounts of clear juice or soup.
- Avoid caffeine as it can make diarrhoea worse.
- Lactose intolerance can be a cause so avoid milk products if you know this is a problem. Lactase enzyme replacements (what is lacking in lactose intolerance) can be used, e.g. Lacteeze from chemists or choose lactose free products. See your GP or Dietitian before removing dairy products from your diet.
- Avoid food and drinks that increase gas like beans, onion, cabbage and carbonated drinks.^{2,3}

Constipation

- Listen to your body and go to the toilet when you feel the urge.
- Try drinking a cup of warm water first thing in the morning.^{2,3}
- Eat more foods with fibre (eat more fruit, vegetables, wholegrain breads and cereals and legumes).
- Drink more water.
- Be active. This helps your bowel muscles exercise and move food through your body.
- Try eating prunes.

² Dietitians Association of Australia. (2009). Nutrition Manual (8th ed.). Deakin, ACT: Dietitians Association of Australia.

³ Rolfes, S.R., Pinna, K., & Whitney, E. (2009). Understanding normal and clinical nutrition (8th ed.). Belmont, CA : Wadsworth/Cengage Learning.



Healthy weight gain

You may have found that you lost weight while using AODs. Here are some tips to help you gain weight in a healthy way.

- Eat foods packed full of nutrients like:
 - fruits and vegetables;
 - wholegrain breads, pastas and cereals;
 - lean meat (e.g., beef, lamb, chicken, turkey, fish);
 - alternatives to meat like eggs, legumes (e.g. kidney beans, baked beans, chickpeas) and soy products;
 - some healthy fats (e.g., avocado, olives, olive oil, margarine and nuts);
 - reduced fat dairy products (e.g., milk, yoghurt, cheese).
- Limit foods like lollies, soft drinks and takeaway foods with lots of energy (Calories). Check out “What to look for on labels” to help you choose the best quality foods.
- Drink only small amounts before and during meals so you can fit more food in.
- Try planning to eat 5 to 6 times a day if you have a small appetite.
- Keep some healthy snacks with you in a cooler bag (celery and carrot sticks, crackers and cheese, chopped apples and sultanas).
- Add healthy toppings to your meals. Try adding reduced fat cheese to spaghetti, peanut butter or jam to toast or yoghurt to muesli.
- Add milk instead of water when you’re cooking. For example, add milk to oats and add margarine and milk to mashed potato.
- Add powdered milk (skim milk powder), margarine, honey, dried fruits to cooking.
- Eat a little bit more than you would normally at each meal, but don’t force yourself to eat.
- Add healthy oils to the top of your salad like olive oil, olive oil dressings, whole olives, avocado, nuts and sunflower seeds. These are sources of good fats as well as other nutrients.
- Make up a bulk amount of milk smoothie each morning using full cream milk. Keep it in the fridge and drink it throughout the day between meals.⁴

Healthy weight loss

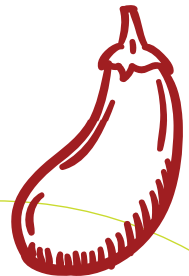
Some tips for healthy weight loss are below. Weight loss should occur over time to be sustainable. It is reasonable to aim for a loss of 0.5-1kg per week and although it may be frustrating because loss is slow, it will be beneficial in the long term. It's about a healthy lifestyle, not 'dieting' so think about making small changes to your lifestyle that add up to long term health and wellbeing.

- Use hunger as a guide for your eating, eat when you feel hungry and stop when you feel full. You may have to pay extra attention if you are not used to eating when you're hungry or not used to feeling hungry.
- Be more physically active, for example, taking the stairs instead of the lift or walking somewhere instead of driving or doing some housework.
- Reduce your food portions (see "Guide for serve sizes each day").
- Your taste may have changed so try different varieties of foods as they will have different tastes and textures.
- Take your time when you eat, pausing between each bite. Eating too quickly can lead to eating too much and feeling uncomfortably full.
- Drink some water while you eat.
- Use a smaller plate so you can still fill your plate without eating as much.
- Leave food on your plate so that you only eat until you feel full.
- Pour food that comes in packages into a bowl so you can see how much you're eating.^{5,6}

⁴ American Dietetic Association. (2011a). Healthy Weight Gain Retrieved 20th January 2011, from <http://www.eatright.org/Public/content.aspx?id=6852>

⁵ American Dietetic Association. (2011b). Ways to Shave Calories Retrieved 20th January 2011, from <http://www.eatright.org/Public/content.aspx?id=6849>

⁶ Dietitians Association of Australia. (2008). Weight Management Retrieved 20th January 2010, from <http://daa.asn.au/for-the-public/smart-eating-for-you/nutrition-a-z/weight-management/>



Useful websites

Nutrition information & recipes

American Dietetic Association - www.eatright.org

Australian Government, Measure Up

www.health.gov.au/internet/abhi/publishing.nsf/Content/home

Diabetes WA - www.diabeteswa.com.au

Dietitians Association of Australia - www.daa.asn.au

Heart Foundation - www.heartfoundation.org.au

Nutrition Australia - www.nutritionaustralia.org.au

Reading food labels

Nutrition Australia - www.nutritionaustralia.org.au

Food Standards Australia New Zealand - www.foodstandards.gov.au/consumerinformation/labellingoffood

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What to look for on labels

Take one of these shopping with you and put one on the fridge. Look at the right hand column of the food product labels “quantity per 100g” (or 100ml if liquid) and compare the numbers to each recommendation.

Energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Less than 1000kJ (239Cal) of energy per 100g• Snack foods (lollies, chocolates, chips) - less than 600kJ per serve
Fat	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Less than 5g of total fat per 100g
Saturated Fat	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Less than 3g of saturated fat per 100g
Fibre	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• More than 3g of fibre per serve
Sugar	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Less than 10g sugar per 100g
Salt (Sodium)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Less than 120mg of salt (sodium) per 100g• Less than 400mg of salt per 100g if not possible to choose below 120mg• Breakfast Cereals - Less than 350mg of salt (sodium) per 100g

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Guide for serve sizes each day

Food Type	Serves	Example Serve Sizes
Fruit (Fresh OR Canned OR Stewed)	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 medium piece (e.g. apple, pear, orange, small banana) or 5 small prunes • 2 small pieces (e.g. apricots, kiwi fruit, plums) • 4 dried apricot halves, 1½ Tb sultanas (about the size of a golf ball) • 1 cup diced pieces or canned fruit (about a fist sized amount)
Fruit Juice	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ½ cup juice (about the size of a tennis ball)
Vegetables	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 90g of potato or 1 small potato (about the size of a household light bulb) • 75g or ½ cup of cooked vegetables (about the size of a household light bulb) • 1 cup of salad (about the size of a fist) • 75g or ½ cup cooked dried beans, peas or lentils
Breads, Cereals, Rice, Pasta, Noodles	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 slices of bread • 1 medium bread roll • 1 cup cooked rice, pasta or noodles • 1 cup porridge, 1 1/3 cup breakfast cereal flakes, ½ cup muesli
Meat, Poultry, Fish, Eggs, Legumes, Nuts, Seeds	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 65-100g cooked meat, chicken (e.g. ½ cup lean mince, 2 small chops, 2 slices roast meat) • 80-120g cooked fish fillet (about the size of a man's palm) • 2 small eggs • 1/3 cup almonds or peanuts • ¼ cup sunflower seeds or sesame seeds • ½ cup cooked (dried) beans, lentils, chickpeas, split peas
Milk, Cheese & Yoghurt	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 250mL or 1 cup of fresh, long-life or reconstituted dried milk • ½ cup evaporated milk • 40g or 2 slices of cheese (about the size of your 3 middle fingers together) • 200g (1 small carton) yoghurt
Fats & Spreads	Max 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10g for 2 slices of bread (the size of a postage stamp and the thickness of your finger)

Agency for Clinical Innovation. (2010). Nutrition Standards for adult inpatients in NSW Hospitals. NSW: Greater Metropolitan Clinical Taskforce.

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