



healthyfood@sport

Why Sporting Club Canteens are Going Greener - Fact Sheet

The sporting environment provides the ideal setting to promote a healthy and active lifestyle and the opportunity to role model healthy eating behaviours.

In 2011, the Australian Government released the National Healthy School Canteen Guidelines (NHSCG) to assist school canteens to provide healthy food and drink options. The NHSCG are now also used as a guide for the **Healthy Food@Sport** project to categorise foods and drinks sold in sporting canteens into **GREEN**, **AMBER** or **RED** categories, according to their nutritional value.

GREEN foods and drinks should always be on the canteen menu, as they are a good source of essential nutrients, which are necessary for growing bodies and maintaining concentration at sport. Foods and drinks in this category are generally low in saturated fat, added sugar and salt.

AMBER foods and drinks are suitable for sale on the canteen menu, however they should be selected carefully and not dominate the menu. **AMBER** foods and drinks contain some valuable nutrients, but are higher in saturated fat, added sugar and/or salt than their **GREEN** counterparts. If eaten in large quantities, **AMBER** foods and drinks can contribute to excess energy (kilojoules) intake.

RED foods and drinks should be limited on the canteen menu as they are a poor source of essential nutrients and are often high in energy, saturated fat, added sugar and/or salt.

Examples of foods and drinks include:

GREEN - breads; wholegrain breakfast cereals (lower in added sugar and higher in fibre); reduced fat milk, yoghurt, custard and cheese; fresh, frozen or canned fruit; and vegetables.

AMBER - full cream milk, yoghurt, custard and cheese; 99 per cent fruit juice; dried fruit; lean processed meats; some ready-to-eat or pre-packaged meals such as pasta, rice dishes and soups; and some sweet and savoury snacks such as reduced fat whole grain crackers and snack bars.

RED - sugar sweetened drinks; confectionary; and energy dense snack foods. If an item does not meet the **GREEN** or **AMBER** category, it is automatically categorised as **RED**.

Nutrients in the spotlight

Energy from food is measured in kilojoules. Energy is made up of different food components, such as carbohydrate, protein and fat. In the same way that you need to put fuel in a car, the human body requires energy to function. Our energy requirements depend on our gender, age, height, weight and physical activity



levels. When we consume too much energy compared to our body's needs, it gets stored as body fat. Likewise, when we consume less energy than we use, weight loss occurs.

Saturated fat is commonly referred to as "bad fat", as its consumption has been associated with the development of heart disease. Saturated fat is often found in animal products, such as butter, full cream milk and cheese, and in the visible fat found on meats.

Excessive consumption of salt (sodium) increases the removal of calcium in the kidneys and has been linked with the development of high blood pressure. It is particularly important for children to get used to eating foods that are not salty, as most taste behaviours are primed early in life.

Added sugars are used to increase the palatability of certain foods, and are not a source of essential vitamins or minerals. However, natural sugars found in fruits and dairy are packaged with other essential nutrients and are encouraged as part of a healthy diet.

Why sporting club canteens should provide healthy menu choices?

- 28% of children aged 2-16 years in Australia are overweight or obese.
- Overweight and obesity increases the risk of developing chronic diseases later in life, such as type 2 diabetes and heart disease.
- There are many opportunities for children and adolescents to consume less nutritious foods at the discretion of their parents or carers.
- Sporting clubs are health promoting environments, and this includes the foods and drinks sold at the sporting canteen.
- Good nutrition in active children helps them perform better and for longer.

Data sourced from the 2007 Australian National Children's Nutrition and Physical Activity Survey.



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