

Article

Interpreting the Australian Dietary Guideline to “Limit” into Practical and Personalised Advice

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Abstract: Food-based dietary guidelines shift the focus from single nutrients to whole diet. Guideline 3 of the Australian Dietary Guidelines (ADG) recommends “limiting” discretionary foods and beverages (DF)—Those high in saturated fat, added sugars, salt, and/or alcohol. In Australia, DF contribute 35% of total energy intake. Using the ADG supporting documents, the aim of this study was to develop a food-based educational toolkit to help translate guideline 3 and interpret portion size. The methodology used to produce the toolkit is presented here. “Additional energy allowance” is specific to gender, age, height and physical activity level, and can be met from core foods, unsaturated fats/oils/spreads and/or DF. To develop the toolkit, additional energy allowance was converted to serves equaling 600 kJ. Common DF were selected and serves were determined based on nutrient profile. Portion sizes were used to calculate number of DF serves. A consumer brochure consisting of DF, portion sizes and equivalent number of DF serves was developed. A healthcare professional guide outlines the methodology used. The toolkit was designed to assist dietitians and consumers to translate guideline 3 of the ADF and develop a personalized approach to include DF as part of the diet.

Keywords: dietary guidelines; discretionary foods; ready reckoner; dietary advice

1. Introduction

Dietary guidelines provide health professionals, policy makers and the public with evidence-based recommendations that promote health and wellbeing and reduce chronic disease risk. They are developed