



The more stars, the healthier.

Information for Shoppers

The new Health Star Rating system provides a simple way to compare similar packaged foods. Health Stars provide an at-a-glance comparison of the nutritional profile of products on supermarket shelves.

Ratings range from 1/2 a star to 5 stars.
The more stars, the healthier the choice. Simple.



What is the Health Star Rating system?

The Health Star Rating system was developed by the Australian, state and territory governments in collaboration with industry, public health and consumer groups.

It is a voluntary front of pack labelling scheme that scores the overall nutritional profile of similar packaged foods and assigns them a rating from 1/2 a star to 5 stars. It is being gradually introduced by the food industry on a voluntary basis over 5 years.

Maintaining a healthy weight is important for everyone. Improving our health can start with the choices we make in the shopping aisles. When we are in the supermarket we don't always have time to try to 'translate' what it all means and compare the range of foods available. Nutrition information on food labels can sometimes be confusing or difficult to understand.

Here's what you should look for on the front of packaged food labels:



Under the system, the star ratings are based on nutritional information, including:

- ☆ Energy (kilojoules).
- ☆ Risk nutrients – saturated fat, sodium (salt) and sugars. These are linked to increased risk of obesity and chronic disease, such as cardiovascular disease and type 2 diabetes, if consumed in excess of recommended guidelines.
- ☆ Positive nutrients – dietary fibre, protein and the proportion of fruit, vegetable, nut and legume content.

The Health Star Rating system is not intended to be used on fresh fruit, vegetables or meat; however some pre-packaged varieties of these may use the system.

Most products will still carry a Nutrition Information Panel (NIP) which provides important information about the contents of the packaged food and can be used in combination with the Health Star Rating.

For more information on how to use the Health Star Rating system,
visit www.healthstarrating.gov.au

How will this help me?

As a nation, our waistlines are growing. Improving our health starts with the choices that we make in the shopping aisles.

The new Health Star Rating front-of-pack labelling system is a simple way to read food labels. It helps shoppers compare similar packaged food products, making it easier to make healthier food choices for you and your family.

Packaged food with a higher nutritional profile will score more stars, with 5 stars being the highest possible score and ½ a star the lowest. Specific nutrient information may also be shown alongside the Health Star Rating.

The Health Star Rating should be used alongside the *Australian Guide to Healthy Eating* which provides information to help all shoppers enjoy a variety of nutritious foods from each of the Five Food Groups.

Remember, it's important to aim for 5 serves of vegetables and 2 serves of fruit every day.

Simple tips for healthy eating

1. Drink plenty of water
2. Eat more vegetables and fruit
3. Watch how much you eat – even foods that are good for us, when eaten in large amounts, can lead to weight gain
4. Eat less packaged food
5. Eat regular meals – don't skip meals – and always start the day with a healthy breakfast
6. Limit your alcohol intake
7. Limit intake of foods high in added fat, sodium (salt) and sugar. These are best eaten only sometimes or in small amounts. Examples include lollies, chocolate, biscuits, cakes, pastries, soft drinks, chips, pies, sausage rolls and other takeaways.

Try these tips next time you go shopping

- ☆ Look for the Health Star Rating on the front of packaged food products.
- ☆ Use the Health Star Rating to compare similar food products. Remember, the more stars, the healthier the choice.
- ☆ Make one positive change to your shopping basket or ingredients for a meal.
- ☆ The nutrient information icons provide information about the amount of energy, saturated fat, sugars and sodium (salt) in the product. You can use these to choose products lower in these risk nutrients.
- ☆ Some products will show a 'positive' nutrient icon as well – you can use this information to choose products high in these nutrients, if they are important to you.

Want more information?

The *Australian Dietary Guidelines* provide information for people of different ages, life stages and gender, on the minimum recommended average daily number of serves from each of the Five Food Groups. For more information, visit the Eat for Health website (www.eatforhealth.gov.au).

