



Health Star Rating Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Health Star Rating and who is behind it?

The Health Star Rating is a system that rates the overall nutritional value of similar foods on a scale from half a star to five stars. The more stars, the healthier.

The Health Star Rating is a joint Australian, state and territory governments and New Zealand Government initiative. It was developed in collaboration with public health experts and industry and consumer groups.

Where can I find the Health Star Rating?

The Health Star Rating is on the front of many food product packs. The Health Star Rating system is voluntary. Food manufacturers can choose whether to display the Health Star Rating on their products. If they do, they must use the strict calculation to determine a rating. Some Health Star Rating labels also provide extra information on specific nutrients in a food product.

Fresh fruit and vegetables automatically score five stars, the highest Health Star Rating.

How do I use the Health Star Rating?

The Health Star Rating allows you to quickly and easily compare the nutritional value of products in similar categories, which are often displayed together. For example, you can compare the rating of two types of yoghurt, but not a yoghurt and a breakfast cereal. The more stars a product has, the healthier it is.

How is the Health Star Rating calculated?

The Health Star Rating system uses a strict calculation to determine the rating for each food product based on its ingredients.

Ratings are increased for fruit and vegetables, nuts and legumes, fibre, and protein content. Ratings are decreased for salt, saturated fat, sugar, and energy content.

Ratings are based on:

- total energy (measured in kilojoules)
- saturated fat, sodium (salt) and sugar content – eating too much of these increases our risk of heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes, obesity and some forms of cancer
- fibre, protein, fruit, vegetable, nut and legume content – eating more of these nutrients and ingredients is good for your health.



How many stars does a food product need to have to be considered healthy?

Packaged food products are rated between half a star (least healthy) and five stars (most healthy). Food with a low rating should be considered an occasional treat, but can be part of a balanced diet that includes higher rated products, fresh fruit, vegetables and lean meats.

When it comes to processed treats or snacks, you can still make healthier choices by choosing a product that has more stars.

The Health Star Rating has changed for some of the regular products I buy, why is that?

The Health Star Rating was recently strengthened so that food with higher amounts of salt and sugar receive lower ratings, and fruit and vegetables (including minimally processed canned and frozen produce) automatically score five stars, which is the highest rating.

What's the Health Star Rating for fresh fruit and vegetables?

Fresh fruit and vegetables, including minimally processed (chopped or peeled, for example), canned and frozen produce, automatically score five stars, which is the highest star rating. Some canned or frozen produce will have sugar, fats or salt added to it, which means they may score lower. Remember, the more stars the healthier.

What if the food products that I buy regularly don't have the Health Star Rating?

The Health Star Rating system is voluntary and there are no charges for using it. Food manufacturers can choose whether to display the Health Star Rating on their products. If your favourite brand of packaged food does not have a rating, you can contact the company to encourage them to use health stars.

What's the Health Star Rating for meat and fish?

The Health Star Rating was created to be used on multi-ingredient, packaged food products. Single-ingredient fresh foods like fresh meat, poultry and fish are not always packaged and are not required to have a nutrition information panel. These products aren't intended to use the Health Star Rating system, however the brand may still choose to display the system.

Who verifies that the food manufacturers have calculated the Health Star Rating correctly?

Food manufacturers who choose to display the Health Star Rating on their products must use the strict calculation to determine a rating and they are responsible for the correct and accurate use of the system. If you have concerns about an incorrect rating on a product, you can ask a manufacturer or you can submit questions using the enquiries [form](#) or by emailing: frontofpack@health.gov.au.

If a product has a high star rating, can I eat as much as I want?

The Health Star Rating is not intended to replace general dietary advice, such as that provided by the Australian Dietary Guidelines, which recommend eating a balanced diet that includes a variety of nutritious foods every day.

A high star rating can help you choose the healthier option within a food category to eat as part of a complete, balanced diet.

For more information visit healthstarrating.gov.au