

# Why we should cook at home...

A recent Dietitians Association of Australia (DAA) survey involving more than 1,000 people found about half of all adults (53%) aged 18 to 64 are unhappy with their current weight, and one in three want to adopt healthier eating habits. The DAA offers these tips for cooking and eating well at home.

**H**ealthier eating habits are actually close to home, with research showing getting busy in the kitchen is one way to pack a punch when it comes to keeping your weight in check and improving your health.

Need convincing? Check out these reasons to cook at home more often:

- Cooking at home puts you in control of serving sizes, and means you can get the balance right when plating up meals. Try this simple rule of thumb: ½ vegetables, ¼ good-quality carbohydrates (such as potato, sweet potato, pasta, quinoa and brown rice), and ¼ lean protein (like meat, chicken, fish, eggs or legumes).
- An Australian study found that by improving skills in home cooking, we can 'up' our vegetable intake by more than half a serve a day (that's great news for the 93% of Aussies that fall short of the daily quota for vegies!).

- Preparing food together as a family or with friends provides time to connect. And according to Australian research, children who help with preparing and cooking healthy meals eat significantly more vegetables and fruit.

- The average Aussie family spends nearly 15% of their food budget on fast food and/or takeaway food, making cooking at home a simple money-saving choice.
- Recent Harvard University research found regularly eating meals prepared at home to be linked with a lower risk of developing type 2 diabetes, and this is partly due to less weight gain in those who regularly cooking at home.

Download the free *Everyday Healthy Bumper Edition* cookbook, celebrating the 10th anniversary of Australia's Healthy Weight Week, which took place last month. Visit:

[www.healthyweightweek.com.au](http://www.healthyweightweek.com.au) PS

## 5 SUPER-EASY KITCHEN SNACKS FROM DAA SPOKESPERSON THEMIS CHRYSIDIS:

**1** When preparing a stir-fry, cook pork, chicken or red meat as a whole piece and then slice it before adding it to vegetables. It will remain moist and tender and avoid overcooking and becoming tough like thin pre-cut strips can.

**2** Get creative with leftovers. Extra rice? Make fried rice, by adding in some vegetables and a chopped-up omelette. Extra bolognese sauce? Add some beans, green vegetables and rice for a quick chilli con carne, or use it in a taco with avocado, spring onion, pineapple and corn.

**3** Stale loaf of bread? Spray it with a little water, wrap in foil and gently warm in the oven to give it a second life.

**4** Instant sorbets—forget time-consuming recipes, simply blend frozen fruit (such as mango, banana or kiwi fruit) in a food processor with a splash of water or juice for a quick, tasty and refreshing dessert.

**5** Leftover herbs, garlic, chilli, ginger, lemon grass or other aromatic ingredients? Blend these altogether and freeze them in ice cubes and then use them for super-quick flavour bombs in soups, pastas or grilled meats.

*The average Aussie family spends nearly 15% of their food budget on fast food.*

For more nutrition inspiration, contact an Accredited Practising Dietitian (APD). APDs translate the latest in nutrition science into practical, tailored advice, and can help motivate and support you towards better health. For more nutrition tips and recipes, and to find an APD visit: [www.daa.asn.au](http://www.daa.asn.au)