

Chapter 1 : Nutrition across the life stages - AIHW - SOURCE - Social Policy Library at BSL

The purpose of this report is to investigate the adequacy of the Australian diet across various life stages to help inform the evidence-base in relation to nutrition-related health determinants for chronic conditions.

These changes will continue throughout all life stages with the requirements for calories, protein, vitamins and minerals adjusting as we grow older. In addition to the physical needs of the body changing over time, dietary needs at different life stages will change as a result of economic, psychological and social aspects. In contrast, upon reaching our senior years our mobility is reduced and we may become less able to cook nutrient-rich, fresh meals. In this page we will briefly explore the change in nutritional requirements for each life stage – infants, children, teens, adults and the elderly.

Infants and pre-school children Nutritional needs of babies Many studies have proven that maintaining a balanced diet in the infancy life stage is paramount for long-term health and well-being. Breastfeeding might not be for everyone, so bottle feeding formula milk offers a great alternative. But if you are unsure about which formula to give your baby, a nutritionist or midwife will be able to advise you. Generally the introduction of solids begins after six months. Combine them with either formula milk or breast milk to fulfil the nutritional needs of infants.

Nutritional requirements for children The nutritional requirements for children aged one to five progresses from their first 12 months. By then, they need all of the essential nutrients to aid a growing body. In these early years they will need help managing their meals – cutting food and helping with feeding – and by the age of five, preferably earlier, they should be able to manage mealtimes independently. Ensuring the child has a balanced diet containing the essential food groups and nutrients - vitamin A, C, calcium, iron and zinc – can be difficult if your child is a fussy eater.

Nutritional tips for preschool children: Offer fruit and vegetables at every opportunity starting with breakfast. Hiding vegetables in foods such as Bolognese and other pasta sauces is a good way of providing the recommended five a day without them realising. Sometimes children can become sick of a particular food. So if they love apples then refrain from overfeeding them. Keep offering new foods; it can take them up to 20 times of tasting something to like it.

Schoolchildren and teenagers Healthy eating for kids Starting school can be very daunting – not only for children, but for parents too. This is the time where, for at least one meal, a child may be in charge of what they eat. For parents who do not opt for their child to have school dinners, choosing what they have in their packed lunch can be a tough task. Take a look at our healthy eating for kids and lunch box ideas pages to get some inspiration on how to supply balanced meals that kids will enjoy.

Nutritional tips for schoolchildren: Advise against snacking on crisps, biscuits and chocolate. Offer healthy snacks such as fruit, popcorn or home-made biscuits instead. Encourage three set meal times – breakfast, lunch and dinner - with healthy snacks between meals. Educate your child about healthy eating if they buy their own meals at school. Be supportive towards physical activities and sports. Try introducing them to sports that you can play together.

Healthy eating for teenagers When a child enters their teenage years, they tend to start making their own choices about their own social life, nutrition and education. Although this can be seen as a positive step, physiological changes and peer pressure can affect the way a teen acts. Teenagers may refuse certain types of food. In this instance, parents can only set a good example at home. Stock the fridge with healthy snacks and serve balanced meals when they decide to stay in. Due to the accelerated growth period a teenager goes through, they need a balanced diet packed full of nutrients including calcium, iron and protein. You may want to consider a vitamin and mineral supplement designed specifically for teenagers. This will ensure they are getting these essential nutrients. Unfortunately the most common avenues that they might explore to achieve this include unhealthy fasting, skipping meals and avoiding all sugary foods and snacks. If you do fear your teenager may have an eating disorder, your GP or local nurse will be able to offer advice and confidential information about the next steps. We can now shift our focus on nutrition and maintaining a physically active and healthy lifestyle. This will help reduce the risk of weight, age and lifestyle related diseases. With reduced mobility to get to the shops to buy ingredients for balanced meals, and other social aspects like a lower food budget, single elderly people may lose the motivation to cook balanced meals or even lack the cooking skills to complete such tasks. Freezing food, snacking and purchasing long life foods all

can be great ways to introduce and maintain the dietary requirements and nutritional needs of an older adult or elderly person. While cooking large meals, splitting them into individual portions and then freezing them will enable you to have a number of cooking-free days and give you the nutrients and minerals you need to stay healthy.

Chapter 2 : Nutrition Across Life Stages 1st Edition - Medicine4u

Nutrition Across Life Stages clearly and comprehensively presents the impact of nutrition on people across the life cycle, moving through each life stage by first highlighting normal nutritional needs before delving into the implications of nutrition for health and disease at that particular stage in life.

Nutrition throughout the life cycle Nutritional needs and concerns vary during different stages of life. Selected issues are discussed below. If a woman is underweight before becoming pregnant or fails to gain sufficient weight during pregnancy, her chance of having a premature or low-birth-weight infant is increased. Overweight women, on the other hand, have a high risk of complications during pregnancy, such as high blood pressure hypertension and gestational diabetes , and of having a poorly developed infant or one with birth defects. Weight loss during pregnancy is never recommended. Recommended weight gain during pregnancy is At critical periods in the development of specific organs and tissues, there is increased vulnerability to nutrient deficiencies, nutrient excesses, or toxins. For example, excess vitamin A taken early in pregnancy can cause brain malformations in the fetus. One important medical advance of the late 20th century was the recognition that a generous intake of folic acid also called folate or folacin in early pregnancy reduces the risk of birth defects, specifically neural tube defects such as spina bifida and anencephaly partial or complete absence of the brain , which involve spinal cord damage and varying degrees of paralysis, if not death. For this reason, supplementation with micrograms 0. Good food sources of folic acid include green leafy vegetables, citrus fruit and juice, beans and other legumes, whole grains, fortified breakfast cereals, and liver. Overall nutritional requirements increase with pregnancy. In the second and third trimesters, pregnant women need additional food energyâ€™about kilocalories above nonpregnant needs. Most additional nutrient needs can be met by selecting food wisely, but an iron supplement 30 milligrams per day is usually recommended during the second and third trimesters, in addition to a folic acid supplement throughout pregnancy. Other key nutrients of particular concern are protein , vitamin D , calcium , and zinc. Even lighter social drinking during pregnancy may result in milder damageâ€™growth retardation, behavioral or learning abnormalities, or motor impairmentsâ€™sometimes described as fetal alcohol effects. Until a completely safe level of intake can be determined, pregnant women are advised not to drink at all, especially during the first trimester. Caffeine consumption is usually limited as a precautionary measure, and cigarette smoking is not advised under any circumstances. Limiting intake of certain fish , such as swordfish and shark , which may be contaminated with methylmercury, is also recommended. An extra kilocalories of food per day is needed to meet the energy demands of lactation. Because pregnancy depletes maternal iron stores, iron supplementation during lactation may be advised. Breast-fed infants may be sensitive to the constituents and flavours of foods and beverages consumed by the mother. In general, lactating women are advised to consume little, if any, alcohol. Infancy , childhood , and adolescence Breast-fed infants, in general, have fewer infections and a reduced chance of developing allergies and food intolerances. For these and other reasons, breast-feeding is strongly recommended for at least the first four to six months of life. Soy formulas and hydrolyzed protein formulas can be used if a milk allergy is suspected. In developing countries with poor sanitation, over-diluted formulas or those prepared with contaminated water can cause malnutrition and infection, resulting in diarrhea , dehydration , and even death. Breast-fed infants may need supplements of iron and vitamin D during the first six months of life and fluoride after six months. A vitamin B12 supplement is advised for breast-fed infants whose mothers are strict vegetarians vegans. Solid foods, starting with iron-fortified infant cereals, can be introduced between four and six months to meet nutrient needs that breast milk or infant formulas can no longer supply alone. Other foods can be introduced gradually, one every few days. Infants should not be given honey which may contain bacteria that can cause botulism , foods that are too salty or sweet, foods that may cause choking, or large amounts of fruit juice. Low-fat or nonfat milk is inappropriate for children less than two years of age. The rapid growth rate of infancy slows down in early childhood. During childhoodâ€™but not before the age of twoâ€™a gradual transition to lower-fat foods is recommended, along with regular exercise. Establishing healthful practices in childhood will reduce the risk of childhood obesity as well as obesity in

adulthood and related chronic diseases e. Vegetarian children can be well nourished but care is needed for them to receive sufficient energy calories , good-quality protein, vitamins B12 and D, and the minerals iron, zinc, and calcium. It is difficult for children who do not drink milk to obtain enough calcium from their food, and supplements may be required. Because of possible toxicity, iron supplements should be taken only under medical supervision. Studies have found no convincing evidence that ADHD is caused by sugar or food additives in the diet or that symptoms can be alleviated by eliminating these substances. Because of unusual eating practices, skipped meals, and concerns about body image, many teenagers, especially girls, have a less than optimal diet. Teenage girls, in particular, need to take special care to obtain adequate amounts of calcium so that bones can be properly mineralized. Iron-deficiency anemia is a concern not only for teenage girls, who lose iron periodically in menstrual blood, but also for teenage boys. Adulthood No matter which nutritional and health practices are followed, the body continues to age, and there appears to be a strong genetic component to life expectancy. Nevertheless, healthful dietary practices and habits such as limited alcohol use, avoidance of tobacco products, and regular physical activity can help reduce the chance of premature death and increase the chance of vitality in the older years. For the most part, a diet that is beneficial for adults in general is also beneficial for people as they age, taking into account possible changes in energy needs. In elderly people, common problems that contribute to inadequate nutrition are tooth loss, decreased sense of taste and smell , and a sense of isolationâ€”all of which result in decreased food intake and weight loss. The elderly may have gastrointestinal ailments, such as poor absorption of vitamin B12, and digestion difficulties, such as constipation. Inadequate fluid intake may lead to dehydration. Nutritional deficiency may further compromise declining immune function. Prescription and over-the-counter drugs may interact with nutrients and exacerbate the nutritional deficits of the elderly. In addition, decreasing physical activity, loss of muscle tissue, and increasing body fat are associated with type 2 diabetes , hypertension , and risk of cardiovascular disease and other diseases. Older people, especially those with reduced sun exposure or low intakes of fatty fish or vitamin D-fortified food, may need supplemental vitamin D to help preserve bone mass. Adequate calcium intake and weight-bearing exercise are also important, but these measures cannot completely stop the decline in bone density with age that makes both men and women vulnerable to bone fractures due to osteoporosis , which could leave them bedridden and could even be life-threatening. Treatment with various bone-conserving drugs has been found to be effective in slowing bone loss. Staying physically fit as one ages can improve strength and balance, thereby preventing falls, contributing to overall health , and reducing the impact of aging. There is evidence that intake of the antioxidants vitamin C , vitamin E , and beta- carotene as well as the mineral zinc may slow the progression of age-related macular degeneration , a leading cause of blindness in people older than 65 years. Two carotenoids , lutein and zeaxanthin, also are being studied for their possible role in protecting against age-related vision loss. Research suggests that the dietary supplement glucosamine, a substance that occurs naturally in the body and contributes to cartilage formation, may be useful in lessening the pain and disability of osteoarthritis. Aerobic exercise and strength training, as well as losing excess weight , also may provide some relief from arthritis pain. Elevated blood levels of the amino acid homocysteine have been associated with an increased risk of cardiovascular disease and with Alzheimer disease , the most common form of dementia ; certain B vitamins, particularly folic acid , may be effective in lowering homocysteine levels. High concentrations of aluminum in the brains of persons with Alzheimer disease are most likely a result of the disease and not a cause, as correspondingly high levels of aluminum are not found in blood and hair. There is ongoing research into the possible value of dietary supplements for the normal memory problems that beset healthy older people. The so-called free-radical theory of aging â€”the notion that aging is accelerated by highly reactive substances that damage cellular components, and that intake of various antioxidants can repair free-radical damage and thereby slow agingâ€”has generated much interest and is a promising area of research, but it has not been scientifically established. On the contrary, the life spans of various mammalian species have not been extended significantly by antioxidant therapy. Ongoing studies are investigating whether the consumption of 30 percent fewer calories undernutrition, not malnutrition slows aging and age-related disease and extends life spans in nonhuman primates. There is no evidence that severe energy restriction would extend the human life span beyond its current maximum of to years.

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Chapter 6 : Nutrition Across Life Stages

ABSTRACT. The purpose of this report is to investigate the adequacy of the Australian diet across various life stages to help inform the evidence-base in relation to nutrition-related health determinants for chronic conditions.

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Chapter 9 : Nutrition across the life stages, Table of contents - Australian Institute of Health and Welfare

Life stages As you age, your body's dietary needs will change. These changes will continue throughout all life stages with the requirements for calories, protein, vitamins and minerals adjusting as we grow older.