

6 OUT OF 7 AUSTRALIANS NOT GETTING ENOUGH QUALITY PROTEIN

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Australians have improved their intake of quality protein rich foods but are still falling a serve short of the recommended daily amount according to figures from the Australian Health Survey released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) last week.

The data shows there has been an increase in consumption of lean meats and alternatives such as fish, eggs and tofu, but only one in seven (14%) of people met the recommended daily serves on a regular basis.

For most adults and children over 9 years of age, the recommendation is 2.5 lean protein rich food serves each day but the figures showed the national average is 1.7 serves.

Dietitian and author Susie Burrell said the figures show a positive trend towards leaner forms of protein but most Australians are still not getting enough and that can impact weight control.

“Australian adults are very good at eating protein at dinner but often our breakfast and lunch choices are meals we pick up on the go and they can be carb heavy at the expense of protein. Aiming for at least one protein rich food such as eggs at each meal is the key to reaching daily protein targets.

“Eggs are one of nature’s handiest whole food packages and they provide us with a very high quality protein that contains all the essential amino acids.

“Sometimes we think that natural whole foods are expensive or difficult to prepare but eggs are one of the most affordable grocery items and they can feature in so many simple meals.”

Research by the CSIRO has found it is ok to eat eggs every day and higher egg consumption is associated with having a better quality diet. Recent studies have also shown the good cholesterol in egg yolks is a vital component of cell membranes and helps our bodies make vitamin D and hormones.

“Eating an egg a day is an easy and healthy way to find that extra serve and reach the dietary guidelines.”

The ABS data showed adults were more likely to meet the recommend intake of good quality protein rich foods than children (17% compared with 4.5%) and males were more likely than females (18% and 10% respectively).

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