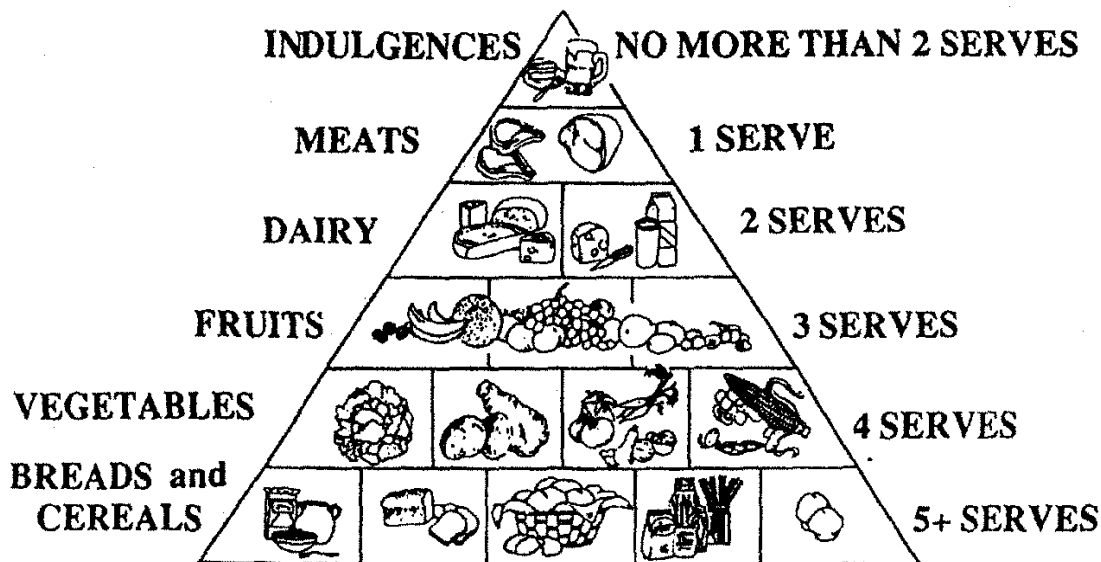


## THE 12345(+) NUTRITION PLAN

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Most national food guides currently in use have been designed to provide adequate nutrient intakes based on standards of the 1940's and 1950's. Current concerns centre around a much wider range of nutrients. Recent surveys of the Australian population have shown that diet of the 1980's is excessive in fat and salt whilst being low in complex carbohydrate, fibre, zinc, iron, folate and magnesium compared to current RDI's and the national dietary guidelines and targets of the 1980's. The development of a quantified and nutritionally-assessed food guide which considers both dietary adequacy and excesses is essential to maximise the effectiveness and relevance of future nutrition education programs. The Healthy Diet Pyramid of the Australian Nutrition Foundation developed in the 1980's sought to address this issue but it remains a largely qualitative food guide.

Beginning with the current Australian Five Food Group guide and more recent overseas food guides, computer simulation of daily food plans was used to generate a model diet meeting 100% RDI and the Dietary Targets of the Better Health Commission for energy needs of the average adult. Food choices and portion sizes were based on recent data gathered on random population data for Australia. This model diet was then adjusted to form a Foundation diet catering for the energy needs of the lowest decile of energy intake. A series of structured additions to the diet were then constructed to allow for a range of energy and nutrient needs in the community. The Foundation diet, which accounted for at least 70% RDI at an energy level of 5500 kilojoules was termed the 12345 diet and formed the basis of the 12345(+) Nutrition Plan. The 12345 numeration relates to the recommended serves per day from the various food groups (see Figure). The serve size for meats or alternatives was equivalent to 60g cooked, lean, red meat; for dairy foods, to 300 ml milk; for fruits, to one medium piece; for vegetables, to 1/3rd of a cup and for cereals and breads (mostly wholemeal), to one slice of bread or 30 g breakfast cereal. In the vegetable category, the foods were divided into four subcategories, dark green leafy and cruciferous, red-yellow, starchy and "others", one serve from each being recommended daily. To account for foods which may have limited nutritional value but are nonetheless an integral part of Australian culture, up to two "indulgences" a day are allowed for.



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