

**FOOD CONSUMPTION PATTERNS OF SOUTHERN CHINA AND
MELBOURNE CHINESE****B.H.H. HSU HAGE, X. RAO*, M.L. WAHLQVIST, Y. LI*, X. LIU* and K. ZHANG***

This study examines food consumption patterns of three southern Chinese communities of distinctive dialects and sub-culture, and compares them with Melbourne Chinese.

Total energy intakes of southern Chinese were higher than Melbourne Chinese. Rice, pork, and soups emerged as an important source of energy in the southern Chinese communities. These foods, together with leafy green and cruciferous vegetables, legumes, and tea, characterised the core or traditional southern Chinese diet. Compared to the southern Chinese populations, Melbourne Chinese showed a lower intake in all these foods. Melbourne Chinese consumed more milk and milk products, poultry, and fruits than their counterparts in southern China. The intake of calcium, beta-carotene, zinc, and iron was higher in southern Chinese than in Melbourne Chinese. The food source of calcium and beta-carotene in southern Chinese communities was derived principally from leafy greens, and of zinc and iron from rice, pork, and leafy greens.

This study suggests that food consumption patterns depend on food availability and traditional food culture of the study populations. Additionally, this study demonstrated that the conventional notion about relationships between the intake of dairy products and calcium, and the intake of carrots and beta-carotene does not hold in southern Chinese populations.

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