



Heart Foundation supporting Australians to achieve and maintain a healthy weight

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Overweight and obesity are risk factors for numerous chronic diseases including cardiovascular disease, chronic kidney disease, type 2 diabetes and many types of cancer [1]. Overweight/obesity is the second leading risk factor, only behind tobacco, contributing to disease burden in Australia, and accounts for over a quarter of the coronary heart disease burden [2].

National Obesity Strategy

The National Obesity Strategy 2022-2032, published in March 2022, is a framework to prevent and reduce overweight and obesity in Australia [3]. To achieve the Strategy's vision that encourages and enables healthy weight and healthy living for all, the federal and state and territory governments have committed to the following three ambitions:

1. Creating supportive, sustainable and healthy environments, through strategies such as improving nutrition information to help consumers make healthy choices.
2. Empowering people to stay healthy, driven by activities that improve knowledge, skills and confidence.
3. Ensuring access to early intervention and care, via approaches that strengthen workforce capacity and improve models of care and referral pathways.

Aligning closely with the Heart Foundation's vision of an Australia free of heart disease, we welcomed the Strategy's strong emphasis on equity. Addressing the modern 'obesogenic' environment requires a whole-of-system approach that considers the wider determinants of health including the availability, accessibility and affordability of food and drinks.

How is the Heart Foundation helping more people achieve a healthy weight?

The Heart Foundation is committed to implementing the principles that guide the Strategy and recognise that to halt the rise and reverse the trend of overweight and obesity, we need multi-sectoral engagement and action.

The Heart Foundation supports evidence-based policy initiatives to create healthier food environments:

- Clear and transparent food labelling
- Mandating and strengthening the Health Star Rating system
- Restricting unhealthy food marketing to children
- Creating environments that enable physical activity

The Heart Foundation also supports individuals to achieve and maintain a healthy weight through our physical activity and food and nutrition programs and resources:

- Our [food and nutrition position statements](#) on heart-healthy eating, alcohol, meat, eggs, dairy, salt and dietary fat, underpinned by high-quality evidence.
- Our [catering guidelines](#) to help organisations achieve heart-healthy eating in the workplace.
- Our delicious [heart-healthy recipes](#) and [recipe e-books](#), including titles like family recipes on a budget, five-ingredient recipes, and fish. We also have a four-week [heart-healthy dinner plan](#), which has had over 86,000 visitors to date.
- Our work on [Healthy Active by Design](#), to highlight how best practice planning and design of buildings, streets, towns and cities can improve Australians' heart health.
- [Heart Foundation Walking](#), with over 1,200 walking groups available nationwide and our six-week Personal Walking Plans which people can access anywhere, anytime.
- [Jump Rope for Heart](#), our iconic skipping program supporting primary school-aged children to form heart-healthy habits early in life.

To explore our range of food and nutrition resources, visit: heart-foundation.org.au/bundles/for-professionals/nutrition-resources-for-practice-and-patient-care

To learn more about Heart Foundation Walking, visit: walking.heart-foundation.org.au

References

- [1] Cancer Council Victoria. Obesity Evidence Hub. 2020. www.obesityevidencehub.org.au. [accessed 29.8.22].
- [2] Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. Australian Burden of Disease Study 2018: Interactive data on risk factor burden. 2021. www.aihw.gov.au/reports/burden-of-disease/abds-2018-interactive-data-risk-factors/report-editions. [accessed 29.8.22].
- [3] Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care. *National Obesity Strategy 2022-2032*. 2022. www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/national-obesity-strategy-2022-2032.