

FACT SHEET

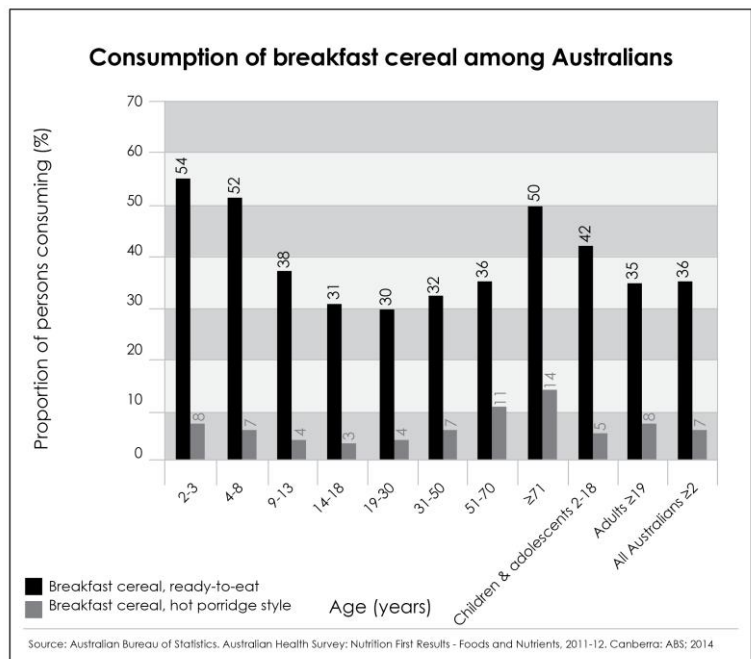
BREAKFAST CEREAL CONSUMPTION IN AUSTRALIA August 2014

In May 2014, the Australian Bureau of Statistics released the first results from the 2011-12 National Nutrition and Physical Activity Survey, one component of the three part Australian Health Survey¹. The results from this survey provide the most up-to-date data on the food and nutrient intake of Australians. This fact sheet outlines the consumption data and nutrition results of ready-to-eat and hot porridge style breakfast cereals.

How many Australians eat breakfast cereal?

Just over a third (36%) of Australians aged 2 years and over, ate ready-to-eat breakfast cereals on the day they were surveyed (39% of males and 34% of females) and seven per cent ate hot porridge style cereals (6% males and 9% females).

The groups most likely to eat breakfast cereal were two to three year olds (54%), four to eight year olds (52%) and adults aged 71 years and over (50%).



How much cereal do Australians eat?

Australian adults (19 and older) ate around 48 grams of ready-to-eat breakfast cereals and 203 grams of cooked porridge style breakfast cereals.

The *Australian Guide to Healthy Eating*² defines a standard serve of grain or cereal foods as 30 grams of wheat cereal flakes, ¼ cup (30 grams) muesli and ½ cup (120 grams) of cooked porridge. At least 4-6 serves of grain foods per day are recommended for adults aged 19 - 70 years, depending on their energy needs. An additional 2-3 serves may be required by those with higher energy needs.

Which nutrients do breakfast cereals provide?

This data confirms that breakfast cereals are important, nutrient dense foods that provide significant levels of essential nutrients. Together, ready-to-eat breakfast cereals and hot porridge styles provide 17.6% iron, 18.7% thiamin, 13.0% folate, 12.6% riboflavin and 10.6% of dietary fibre intakes for Australians aged 2 years and over. In addition, breakfast cereals contribute very little towards kilojoules (energy 4.6%), total sugars (3.4%), sodium (around 2%ⁱⁱ) and fat (2.2%) intakes.

Looking specifically at children's nutrient intakes, ready-to-eat breakfast cereals are amongst the top three foods contributing to iron (19.8%), thiamin (20.2%), riboflavin (13.5%), folate (13.3%), and zinc (9.4%) intakes in the diets of 2-18 year olds. In addition to the nutrients gained directly from breakfast cereal, the milk consumed with breakfast cereal provides almost a third of the daily milk intake for Australian children.³

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The specific macro and micro nutrient contributions for ready-to-eat and hot porridge style breakfast cereals in Australia are outlined in the table below. The data below is on a per capita basis and includes non-cereal eaters, therefore the proportion of nutrients provided is likely to be higher for people who eat breakfast cereals. The higher nutrient contributions from ready-to-eat breakfast cereals compared to hot porridge styles reflects the greater consumption of ready-to-eat breakfast cereals at the time of the survey and fortification of these breakfast cereals with vitamins and minerals.

Proportion of nutrients provided by breakfast cereal
(per capita including breakfast cereal consumers and non-consumers aged 2 years and over)

NUTRIENT	READY-TO-EAT (%)	HOT PORRIDGE STYLE (%)	COMBINED (%)
Energy (kJ)	3.7	0.9	4.6
Protein	2.6	0.9	3.5
Carbohydrate	5.7	1.1	6.8
Total sugars	2.8	0.6	3.4
Starch	8.5	1.5	10.0
Dietary fibre	9.1	1.5	10.6
Total fat	1.5	0.7	2.2
Saturated	0.7	0.7	1.4
Monounsaturated	1.3	0.7	2.0
Polyunsaturated	3.6	1.0	4.6
Linoleic	4.1	1.2	5.3
Alpha-linolenic	1.6	0.3	1.9
Trans	0.3	0.5	0.8
Vitamin B1 (thiamin)	18.1	0.6	18.7
Iron	16.5	1.1	17.6
Folate equivalents	12.7	0.3	13.0
Vitamin B2 (riboflavin)	11.5	1.1	12.6
Zinc	7.3	1.1	8.4
Niacin equivalents	5.9	0.6	6.5
Magnesium	6.3	1.5	7.8
Vitamin B6	3.8	0.4	4.2
Selenium	3.5	0.7	4.2
Phosphorus	3.7	1.5	5.2
Calcium	3.3	1.7	5.0
Vitamin E	3.1	0.2	3.3
Potassium	2.6	1.0	3.6
Sodium	2.1	0.2	2.3
Vitamin C	1.1	0.0	1.1
Iodine	0.7	1.3	2.0
Vitamin A (retinol equivalents)	0.1	0.4	0.5
Vitamin B12	0.0	1.2	1.2

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics. *Australian Health Survey: Nutrition First Results – Foods and Nutrients, 2011-12*. Canberra: ABS; 2014.

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References:

1. Australian Bureau of Statistics. *Australian Health Survey: Nutrition First Results - Foods and Nutrients, 2011-12*. Canberra: ABS; 2014.
2. National Health and Medical Research Council. *Australian Guide to Healthy Eating*. Canberra: NHMRC; 2013.
3. F Fayet, L Ridges, N Sritharan, P Petocz. Breakfast cereal consumption is associated with higher micronutrient and milk intake among Australian Children. *Australasian Medical Journal* 2011 4(12):775.

Notes on the AHS:

- i. The ABS Australian Health Survey (AHS) is the most comprehensive analysis to date of Australian's health. It was designed to collect a range of information from Australians about health related issues including data on nutrition and physical activity. This fact sheet is based on the first release of data from the 2011-2012 National Nutrition and Physical Activity Survey, a component of the AHS. It presents results from a 24-hour recall of food, beverages, supplements and some dietary behaviours for Australians aged two years and over. Approximately 9,500 private dwellings across Australia were surveyed.
- ii. Sodium: The data for sodium overestimates the proportion of sodium intake contributed by specific food groups. This is because the AHS data only includes sodium naturally present in foods as well sodium added during processing; it does not include salt added in home prepared foods or at the table and an estimated 64% of Australians report that they add salt at home either during meal preparation or at the table.
- iii. Total sugars: Total sugars data includes the sugars naturally present in foods plus added sugars (e.g. honey, table sugar). There is no separate data available for added sugars.

For more information:

Please contact ABCMF director Leigh Reeve APD lreeve@afgc.org.au or Bite Communications on (02) 9977 8195. For more of the latest breakfast news please follow the Australian Breakfast Cereal Manufacturers Forum (ABCMF) on Twitter @cereal4brekkie or visit <http://www.breakfastcereal.org.au>.

About the Australian Breakfast Cereal Manufacturers Forum (ABCMF): The ABCMF provides evidence-based, practical information so Australians can have a better understanding of the true value of breakfast cereals and breakfast as part of a healthy lifestyle. The ABCMF is a forum of the Australian Food and Grocery Council.