



Northern  
Territory  
Government

Healthy **choices**  
*made easy*



**Catering guide for  
meetings, functions, events  
and health education  
activities**



All catering (paid for with public monies) for meetings, functions, events and health education activities must comply with the *Healthy food and drink options for staff, volunteers and visitors in Northern Territory Health Facilities Policy* (available at [http://health.nt.gov.au/Nutrition\\_and\\_Physical\\_Activity/Nutrition/index.aspx](http://health.nt.gov.au/Nutrition_and_Physical_Activity/Nutrition/index.aspx)). Note that the Policy does not apply to food people bring from home or the shop to consume on premises (includes morning and after-noon teas and other social celebrations).

The Policy follows the recommendations of the Australian Dietary Guidelines (see Appendix A) and ensures consistency between the messages NT Health promotes to the community and its practice. It stipulates that **RED** foods are not allowed when catering.

This catering guide has been developed to assist staff ordering or authorising catering to make choices that comply with the Policy. Food and drinks in the 'Allowed' column are mostly from the **GREEN** category, while those in the 'Not allowed' list are from the **RED** category.

A brief description of **GREEN**, **AMBER** and **RED** is provided below. More detailed information on food categorisation is also available in the related document: *Foods and drinks Guide* available at [http://health.nt.gov.au/Nutrition\\_and\\_Physical\\_Activity/Nutrition/index.aspx](http://health.nt.gov.au/Nutrition_and_Physical_Activity/Nutrition/index.aspx).

## **GREEN** or best choice items

**GREEN** foods and drinks provide a variety of nutrients and are generally low in saturated fat and/or added sugar and/or salt. Examples include: breads, cereals, rice, pasta, noodles; vegetables; fruit; reduced-fat milk, yoghurt and cheese; lean meats, fish, poultry, eggs, nuts and legumes. Water is also an important part of the **GREEN** category and should always be available.

Ideally most foods and drinks provided when catering should be from the **GREEN** category.

## **AMBER** or items to choose carefully

**AMBER** foods and drinks are mainly processed foods that contain considerable amounts of sugar, salt and/or saturated fat. They may still contain valuable nutrients. Examples include muesli bars, some processed meat and some ready to serve meals.

While these foods and drinks are allowed in catering, they should be limited.

## **RED** items are not allowed in catering, fundraising, or as a reward, prize, give-away or as part of health education.

**RED** foods and drinks are energy-dense and lack nutritional value. They are defined by the Australian Dietary Guidelines as foods that should be consumed 'only sometimes and in small amounts'. Examples include: soft drinks; high fat, high sodium (salt) snacks, such as crisps; lollies and chocolates; deep fried foods.



## Key points when planning catering

1. Always refer to the correct delegation process and coding of expenses, as outlined in the NT Health's Accounting Property Manual. A flow chart outlining this process is found in Appendix B.
2. When catering for morning /afternoon tea, a fruit platter is the best option and will suit a wide range of dietary needs.
3. Always provide vegetarian options.
4. Do not provide foods that are deep-fried or high in fat/salt/sugar (e.g. cakes with icing or cream, chips, chocolates and lollies, regular pies and pastries). Use the menu options in this guide for your selection.
5. Do not provide snacks on meeting tables (e.g. lollies, nuts or mints).
6. Do not provide regular soft drinks, cordial or other sugar sweetened beverages.
7. Recipes and additional menu ideas can be found in Appendix B.
8. For long-term menu planning (e.g. for a camp) or for any clarification, contact the nutritionists based in the Primary Health Care teams or the Nutrition and Physical Activity Strategy Unit (ph: 8985 8025).

## Non-food 'rewards' at health education activities

Providing food based rewards can encourage individuals to consume treats when not hungry and instil a lifelong habit of using these types of food as a reward or for comfort.

Providing school children with food rewards (at school screening immunisations or dental health visits) contravenes the Department of Education and Childrens' Services *Canteen, Nutrition and Healthy Eating Policy*.<sup>1</sup>

Some suggested alternative rewards, depending on age, include:

- social rewards (e.g. attention or praise is often enough)
- recognition awards (e.g. sticker, temporary tattoo, gift certificate)
- sports equipment (e.g. Frisbee, water bottle, skipping rope)
- small toys and trinkets (e.g. yoyo, balloon - ensure age appropriateness for safety of young children)
- sport equipment
- fashion wear (e.g. hair accessories, jewelry, hat, t-shirt)
- personal hygiene items (e.g. soap, shampoo, combs, hand lotion)
- miscellaneous (e.g. key chains, cups, crazy straws, books, stationery items)

In some cases it may be more appropriate to provide rewards to the community or school, rather than the individual. This could include activities such as a disco, visiting role models, sporting events, excursion, film nights, and poster collation of photographs of health activity undertaken.

---

<sup>1</sup> (see [http://www.education.nt.gov.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0006/7539/CanteenNutritionHealthyEatingPolicy.pdf](http://www.education.nt.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0006/7539/CanteenNutritionHealthyEatingPolicy.pdf))



## Menu options guide

### Breakfast

	<b>GREEN or AMBER Allowed</b>	<b>RED Not allowed</b>
<b>Fruit/ fruit smoothies</b>	Fresh fruit, canned fruit (preferably in water or natural juice), dried fruit, fruit smoothies made with (preferably) reduced fat milk and/or yoghurt.	
<b>Cereals</b>	Lightly processed, high fibre cereals, e.g. wheat breakfast biscuits, porridge, natural muesli Offer skim/reduced fat milk and yoghurt.	
<b>Hot food</b>	Pancakes and waffles topped with fruit and reduced fat yoghurt Eggs prepared scrambled, poached, boiled or as omelette Lean bacon or ham, grilled Savoury tomatoes, baked beans, fish cakes (grilled or baked), creamed corn, onion and mushroom, bubble and squeak (potato and vegetables)	
<b>Breads</b>	Range of sliced breads and rolls such as wholemeal, wholegrain, rye, white high fibre, bagels, focaccias, pita, wraps, English muffins, raisin toast, crumpets. Poly- and mono- unsaturated margarine (thinly spread) Toast toppers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• tomato and finely chopped onion</li> <li>• mushrooms</li> <li>• creamed corn</li> <li>• Vegemite</li> <li>• peanut butter</li> <li>• banana</li> <li>• spaghetti</li> <li>• baked beans</li> <li>• reduced fat cheese</li> <li>• tuna</li> <li>• 100% fruit jam (thinly spread)</li> </ul>	Spreads high in saturated fat such as butter, dairy-blend spreads mayonnaise, oil or cream/sour cream



**Morning/Afternoon tea**

	<b>GREEN or AMBER Allowed</b>	<b>RED Not allowed</b>
<b>Fruit</b>	Fruit platter or whole fruit pieces All fresh, dried and frozen fruit	
<b>Baked products</b>	Mini fruit or savoury muffins Fruit scones with 100 per cent fruit jam Un-iced fruit buns or fruit loaf with poly- and mono-unsaturated margarine (thinly spread) Savoury scones with poly- and mono- unsaturated margarine (thinly spread) Plain sweet biscuits (e.g. milk coffee biscuits) Banana bread If spreads/toppings are required, use sparingly	Spreads high in saturated fat such as butter, dairy-blend spreads or cream Cream. Use whipped ricotta cheese with vanilla instead High fat and high sugar pastries and cakes, such as cream filled cakes, doughnuts, Danishes, etc Cream filled biscuits, chocolate coated biscuits
<b>Finger foods, antipastos and dips</b>	Vegetable sticks Vegetable-based salsas or relishes (e.g. tomato, bean, capsicum) Roasted or grilled vegetables Olives (in brine) Reduced fat yoghurt-based dips such as tzatziki; hommus; beetroot, capsicum and avocado dips Cheese platter (preferably reduced fat cheese) Water crackers or crispbread Pullapart savoury breads	Deep fried items including savoury items such as spring rolls, dim sims, samosas; potato chips, wedges, chips Coated or crumbed meats/vegetable products Oil, cream, sour cream, cheese-based dips. Crisps and corn chips



**Lunch**

	<b>GREEN or AMBER Allowed</b>	<b>RED Not allowed</b>
<b>Sandwiches</b>	<p>Breads: choose multigrain, rye, wholemeal, white high-fibre, lavash/flat breads, plain focaccias</p> <p>Filling: salad, egg and lettuce, lean meat, chicken (no skin), fish, cheese (preferably reduced fat); lean ham</p> <p>Canned tuna/salmon/sardines in water/tomato sauce</p> <p>Poly- and mono- unsaturated margarine (thinly spread)</p>	<p>Processed meats [e.g. sausages (unless reduced fat), frankfurts, devon/fritz, salami, strasbourg, tinned corned beef]</p> <p>Spreads high in saturated fat, such as butter, dairy-blend spreads mayonnaise, oil or cream/sour cream.</p>
<b>Salads and vegetables</b>	<p>Suggestions: garden, bean, pasta, couscous, coleslaw, roasted vegetables</p> <p>Tinned fish in spring water/ brine/tomato sauce</p> <p>If using cheese, preferably choose reduced fat varieties</p> <p>All fresh, dried and frozen plain vegetables, canned vegetables (preferably salt reduced)</p> <p>Dressings: (leave salads undressed or serve dressings separately)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- low-oil or no oil dressings with lemon or lime juice, natural yoghurt, balsamic or wine vinegar with pepper or herbs</li> <li>- reduced fat, no oil, low-joule commercial dressings</li> <li>- if preparing dressings use poly- and mono-unsaturated oils such as canola, sunflower, sesame, olive and peanut oils</li> </ul>	<p>Processed meats [e.g. sausages (unless reduced fat)], frankfurts, polony/devon/fritz, salami, Strasbourg, tinned corned beef)</p> <p>High fat tinned meat (e.g. corned beef)</p> <p>Cream, sour cream or mayonnaise-based dressings</p>
<b>BBQ/Sausage Sizzle</b>	<p>Include options suitable for vegetarians</p> <p>Lean beef patties, kangaroo sausages, low or reduced fat sausages, marinated skinless chicken pieces, sliced or on skewers</p> <p>Provide salads (see above)</p> <p>Wholemeal, wholegrain or high fibre white bread or rolls</p>	<p>Full fat sausages</p>



	<b>GREEN or AMBER Allowed</b>	<b>RED Not allowed</b>
<b>Sushi and/or rice paper rolls</b>	<p>Filling suggestions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- vegetables</li> <li>- lean, uncoated meats (not crumbed)</li> <li>- eggs or seafood</li> </ul> <p>Dipping sauce:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- sweet chilli sauce</li> <li>- reduced-salt soy/fish sauce with fresh herbs, garlic, onion and shallots</li> </ul>	Deep-fried coated or crumbed ingredients
<b>Hot meals</b>	<p>Lean beef, lamb, pork, skinless chicken, turkey, fish - preferably grilled or baked. If prepared in curries, use reduced fat coconut milk. Include plenty of vegetables</p> <p>Chickpeas, kidney beans, lentils, baked beans (dried or canned), lentil patties and falafels (grilled or baked)</p> <p>Plain rice, noodles, pasta, burghul, cracked wheat, polenta, couscous</p> <p>Frittata, small quiches or savoury slices (e.g. zucchini slice)</p>	<p>Processed meats [e.g. sausages (unless reduced fat), frankfurts, polony/devon/fritz, salami, strasbourg, tinned corned beef]</p> <p>High fat tinned meat, such as steak and kidney pie and corned beef</p> <p>Deep-fried foods, such as chicken drumsticks, wings and nuggets</p> <p>Hot or cold savoury pastries such as pies (unless reduced fat), sausage rolls, party pies, and croissants.</p> <p>Recipes containing butter, copha, ghee, lard</p>
<b>Desserts</b>	<p>Fruit platter or whole fruit</p> <p>Plain or flavoured yoghurt and/or custard (preferably low or reduced fat). Includes soy products.</p>	<p>Cream</p> <p>Pastries, slices, cakes, pies</p> <p>Lollies and confectionery, including 'natural' chocolate and carob</p>
<b>Drinks</b>	<p>Water should be freely available. For environmental reasons, avoid providing bottled water.</p> <p>Plain or flavoured milk (low or reduced fat varieties preferred)</p> <p>Fruit juice (at least 99%)</p>	<p>Soft drinks, iced tea, cordial, sports drinks, flavoured mineral water, sweetened waters, energy drinks</p>

A number of recipes are also provided in Appendix C.



## Appendix A: Australian Dietary Guidelines

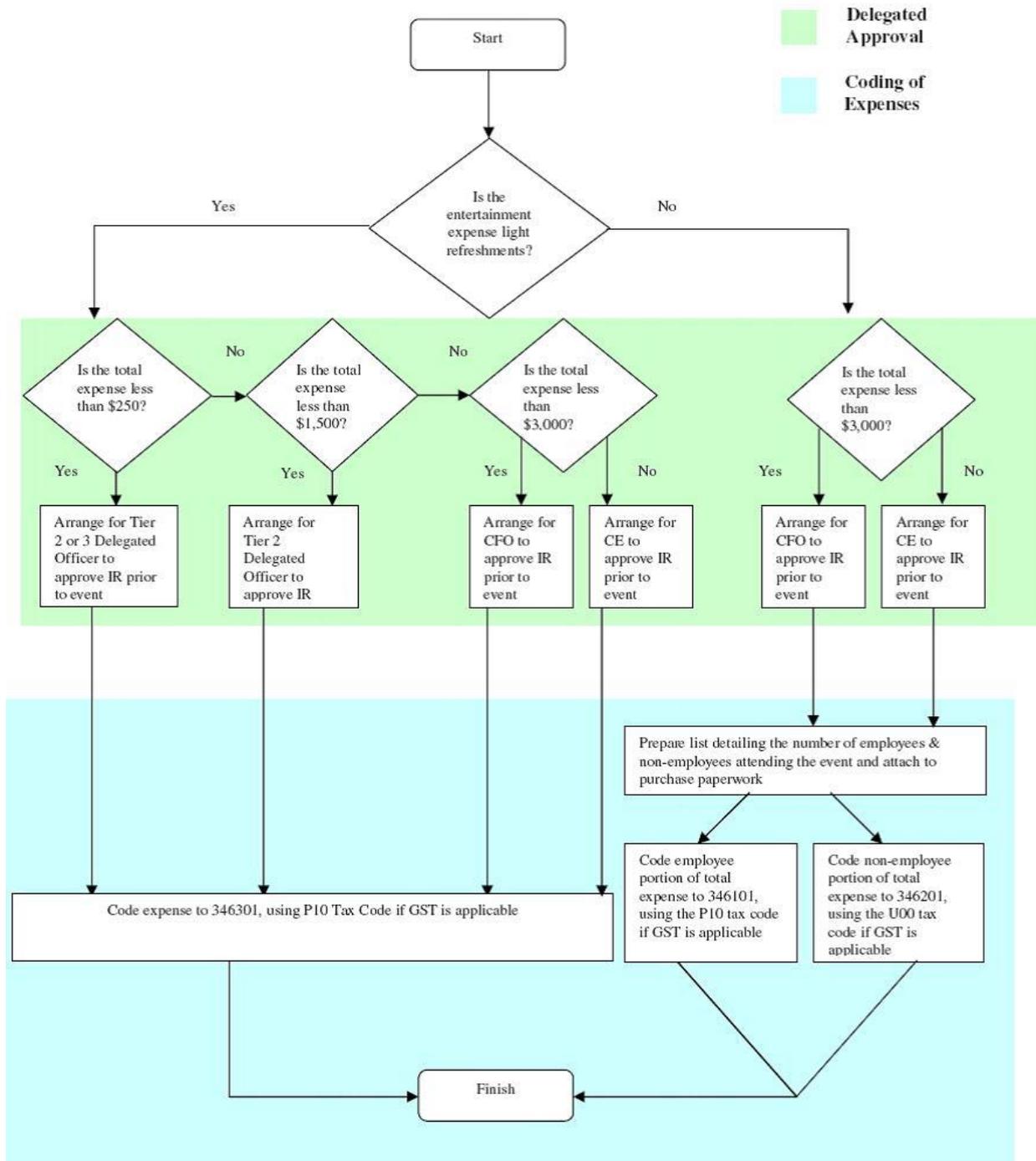
<p><b>Guideline 1</b></p>	<p>To achieve and maintain a healthy weight, be physically active and choose amounts of nutritious food and drinks to meet your energy needs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Children and adolescents should eat sufficient nutritious foods to grow and develop normally. They should be physically active every day and their growth should be checked regularly.</li> <li>▪ Older people should eat nutritious foods and keep physically active to help maintain muscle strength and a healthy weight.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Guideline 2</b></p>	<p>Enjoy a wide variety of nutritious foods from these five groups every day:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ plenty of vegetables, including different types and colours, and legumes/beans</li> <li>▪ fruit</li> <li>▪ grain (cereal) foods, mostly wholegrain and/or high cereal fibre varieties, such as breads, cereals, rice, pasta, noodles, polenta, couscous, oats, quinoa and barley</li> <li>▪ lean meats and poultry, fish, eggs, tofu, nuts and seeds, and legumes/beans</li> <li>▪ milk, yoghurt, cheese and/or their alternatives, mostly reduced fat (reduced fat milks are not suitable for children under the age of 2 years).</li> </ul> <p>And drink plenty of water.</p>
<p><b>Guideline 3</b></p>	<p>Limit intake of foods containing saturated fat, added salt, added sugars and alcohol.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limit intake of foods high in saturated fat such as many biscuits, cakes, pastries, pies, processed meats, commercial burgers, pizza, fried foods, potato chips, crisps and other savoury snacks.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Replace high fat foods which contain predominantly saturated fats such as butter, cream, cooking margarine, coconut and palm oil with foods which contain predominantly polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fats such as oils, spreads, nut butters/pastes and avocado.</li> <li>▪ Low fat diets are not suitable for children under the age of 2 years.</li> </ul> </li> <li>b. Limit intake of foods and drinks containing added salt.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Read labels to choose lower sodium options among similar foods.</li> <li>▪ Do not add salt to foods in cooking or at the table.</li> </ul> </li> <li>c. Limit intake of foods and drinks containing added sugars such as confectionary, sugar-sweetened soft drinks and cordials, fruit drinks, vitamin waters, energy and sports drinks.</li> <li>d. If you choose to drink alcohol, limit intake. For women who are pregnant, planning a pregnancy or breastfeeding, not drinking alcohol is the safest option.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Guideline 4</b></p>	<p>Encourage, support and promote breastfeeding.</p>
<p><b>Guideline 5</b></p>	<p>Care for your food; prepare and store it safely.</p>



## Appendix B: Hospitality request flowchart

<http://internal.health.nt.gov.au/PGC/DM/Documents/Finance/APM/Section%2035%20Accounting%20and%20Property%20Manual%20-%20Hospitality%20and%20Entertainment%20Expenditure.docx>

### 35.4 HOSPITALITY/ENTERTAINMENT DELEGATED APPROVAL AND CODING OF EXPENSES FLOW CHART





## Appendix C: Recipes

### Fruit scones (makes 20)

#### Ingredients

2 cups (300g) self-raising flour  
1 ½ tablespoons (30g) polyunsaturated margarine  
185mL low-fat milk  
1 cup sultanas

#### Method

1. Preheat oven to 220°C.
2. Sift flour into a bowl and rub in margarine with fingertips.
3. Add sultanas.
4. Add milk and mix to soft dough with a knife.
5. Turn onto lightly floured board and roll out to 2cm thickness.
6. Cut into rounds, using scone cutter or small glass.
7. Place nearly touching on a lightly greased baking tray.
8. Bake for 10-12 minutes until just golden.

### Vegetable Frittata

#### Ingredients

2 teaspoons olive oil  
1 small onion, sliced thinly  
250 g zucchini, sliced thinly  
250 g mushrooms, sliced thinly  
310 g can corn kernels, salt reduced, drained  
4 eggs  
1/2 red capsicum, seeded and sliced thinly  
2 tablespoons fresh basil, chopped  
1 parsley, chopped

#### Method

1. Heat oil in large non-stick pan.
2. Gently cook onion for three to four minutes until soft but not coloured.
3. Add zucchini, mushrooms, capsicum and corn, cover and cook over gentle heat for about seven to eight minutes, stirring occasionally.
4. Sprinkle parsley and basil over vegetables.
5. Beat eggs and pour over vegetables.
6. Cover and cook over moderate heat until set, about seven to eight minutes.



## Date and ginger loaf (serves 12)

### Ingredients

- 1 ¼ cups chopped dates
- 1 cup water
- 3 tablespoons margarine
- ¼ cup sugar
- ¼ cup finely chopped crystallised ginger
- 1 egg, lightly beaten
- 1 cup SR flour
- 5 Weetbix, crushed

### Method

1. Place dates, water, margarine and sugar in a medium saucepan. Bring to boil over medium heat and boil gently for two minutes (or microwave on high for four minutes).
2. Add ginger and cool.
3. Stir through beaten egg, sifted flour and weetbix.
4. Spoon mixture into a lightly greased and lined loaf tin.
5. Bake moderate oven, 180°C for 50 – 55 minutes.
6. Cool and slice.

## Apricot and sultana loaf (serves 12)

### Ingredients

- 1 cup chopped dried apricots
- ½ chopped nuts
- ½ cup sultanas
- ½ cup caster sugar
- 1 teas bicarb soda
- 1 tablespoon margarine
- 1 cup boiling water
- 1 egg, lightly beaten
- 2 cups SR flour

### Method

1. Place apricots, nuts, sultanas, sugar, bicarb soda and margarine in bowl.
2. Add boiling water, mix well and cool.
3. Add beaten egg and flour and mix well.
4. Bake 190°C, for one hour.



## **Pear and banana muffins** (makes 24 muffins)

### **Ingredients**

Olive or canola oil spray  
2 cups wholemeal self-raising flour  
2 cups white self-raising flour  
1 cup brown sugar  
2 eggs  
150ml low-fat natural yoghurt  
½ cup orange juice  
1 large banana, peeled and chopped  
1 pear, cored and diced  
½ cup low fat milk

### **Method**

1. Preheat oven to 170°C
2. Lightly spray muffin trays with oil
3. Sift flours, returning husk from wholemeal flour to the bowl, add brown sugar
4. In a separate bowl mix eggs, yoghurt and juice
5. Combine with the flour mix and fold through fruit and milk
6. Spoon mixture into trays.
7. Bake for 18-20 minutes

### **Variation**

Any unsweetened fruit juice maybe used. Use apples, blueberries or other firm fruit to vary the flavour

Additional catering and menu ideas, as well as recipes can be found at:

- <http://www.nutritionaustralia.org/>
- <http://www.healthyfoodguide.com.au/recipes>
- [http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/bhcv2/bhcsite.nsf/pages/bhc\\_recipes](http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/bhcv2/bhcsite.nsf/pages/bhc_recipes)

