



# Healthy ageing with dairy

A guidebook to help older adults  
increase their daily dairy serves

By Louise Murray (Accredited Practicing Dietitian)



## About the author

Louise Murray is an accredited practising dietitian, specialising in aged care nutrition and food services. She's on a mission to remove party pies and sausage rolls from aged care menus and has worked to improve food quality for older adults for the past 20 years.

Louise has a special interest in teaching chefs how to cook high nutritional quality food for older people while still making it taste delicious. She also teaches dietitians the skills and knowledge required to become an effective and supportive dietitian in aged care through an online mentoring program, to do more than just individual referrals.

Her consultancy Nosh Dietitians Co specialises in consulting directly to older adults in the community and the aged care sector. Connect with Louise on Instagram [@louisemurray.dietitian](#) or on her website [noshdietitians.co](#).

## Introduction

Welcome to the Dairy Australia Healthy Ageing with Dairy resource. This guidebook is designed to help older adults (>65 years) to improve the nutritional quality of their dietary intake by increasing dairy serves to 3.5 per day. The aim for older adults is to maintain their muscle, their physical function, independence and quality of life through meeting nutrition needs.

As we age, our requirements for some nutrients increase. The most significant nutrient that older people have higher requirements for is protein, with a recommended 1.2g/kg body weight/day<sup>1</sup>. This higher protein requirement is recommended to reduce the progression of sarcopenia, the age-related loss of lean muscle mass and function. Dairy contains a high-quality protein, meaning it contains all the essential protein building blocks called amino acids, so that it is an important protein source to help prevent loss of muscle mass.

Research has shown that improving nutrient intakes in older adults can be as simple as two extra serves of dairy per day<sup>2</sup>, to meet the recommended 3.5–4 serves of dairy foods per day.

## Healthy ageing with dairy

Dairy foods, such as milk, cheese and yoghurt, are naturally rich in calcium and protein – two essential nutrients that build and maintain healthy bones and muscles. The combination of calcium and protein in dairy foods make them much more effective at improving muscle mass and bone strength than supplements alone.

A world-first study completed by the University of Melbourne has linked milk, cheese and yoghurt with the prevention of falls and fractures in older people.

Dairy consumption was increased from two to 2–3.5 serves per day by older adults in residential aged care, resulting in:

- **33% reduction in all fractures;**
- **46% reduction in hip fractures; and**
- **11% reduction in falls<sup>2</sup>.**

Providing adequate milk, cheese and yoghurt is an easy and low-cost<sup>3</sup> way to increase protein and calcium in your diet.

## What if I'm only 65 years old? Does this apply to me?

Yes! The goal is to maintain as much lean muscle mass as possible as we age, and research shows that we need more protein in our diet and spread across the day to maintain and build muscle, compared to younger people. What this means is we need to plan our meals and snacks more carefully to make sure that protein needs are met and are enough to build or regain muscle in combination with resistance exercise.

As we age, it's time to focus on muscle health. We have the evidence that increasing dairy to 3.5 serves per day can contribute to muscle growth and maintenance, which supports the physical function of older adults.

## What is a serve of dairy?

### One serve of dairy is equivalent to:



**Milk**  
1 cup  
(250ml)



**Cheese**  
2 slices  
(40g)



**Yoghurt**  
¾ cup  
(200g)

Portion sizes for other dairy foods as per the Australian Guide to Healthy Eating include:

- 125ml evaporated milk
- 120g ricotta cheese
- 250ml custard
- 35g full cream milk powder (4 tbsp)
- 25g skim milk powder (3 tbsp)

1 Bauer J, et al. Evidence-based recommendations for optimal dietary protein Intake in older people: A position paper from the PROT-AGE study group. *JAMDA*. 2013; 14:542–559.

2 Iuliano S, et al. Effect of dietary sources of calcium and protein on hip fractures and falls in older adults in residential care: cluster randomised controlled trial. *BMJ*. 2021 Oct 20;375:n2364. doi: 10.1136/bmj.n2364.

3 Baek Y, et al. Reducing hip and non-vertebral fractures in institutionalised older adults by restoring inadequate intakes of protein and calcium is cost saving. *Age Ageing*. 2023 Jun 1;52(6):afad114. doi: 10.1093/ageing/afad114.

## What about lactose?

Lactose intolerance is mostly a deficiency rather than an absence of the lactase enzyme, which helps break down lactose. With a diagnosis of lactose intolerance, the amount of lactose that can be tolerated will vary from person to person.

There can be some confusion when it comes to dairy foods and lactose intolerance. Many people misunderstand 'low lactose' or 'lactose free' to mean 'dairy free'. Yet evidence shows many people can still enjoy dairy foods even with lactose intolerance.

For people with lactose intolerance, the Australian Dietary Guidelines<sup>4</sup> recommend:

- Up to 250ml of milk may be well tolerated if consumed with other foods or if intake is spread throughout the day.
- Most hard cheeses are virtually lactose free.
- Yoghurt contains 'good' bacteria that help to digest lactose.
- Lactose free milks are available and contain similar nutrients to regular milk.

## What does this mean with this increase in dairy serves?

Choosing a variety of recipes that provide different amounts of milk, cheese and yoghurt will help people tolerate the increase in dairy if they have lactose intolerance. There are now many options available for lactose free dairy options, particularly with milk, yoghurt and custard.

These can be purchased from supermarkets and used where needed, such as on cereal at breakfast or for a full milk hot chocolate.

The recipes that sit alongside this resource can have lactose free dairy products substituted in place of regular milk or yoghurt. Hard cheeses such as cheddar and mozzarella have very little lactose so buying lactose free options isn't necessary.

## How to increase dairy serves in your daily meal plan

- 1 Find ways to add in more dairy serves into existing recipes or menu items. Add a cauliflower and broccoli gratin to Sunday's roast beef or add ricotta cheese to a pasta dish. It can be as simple as adding milk and milk powder into porridge at breakfast. See the 'swap it' suggestions below for more ideas.
- 2 Aim for one serve of dairy at each mealtime. This will spread dairy serves across the day, reducing the lactose load at any one meal. It is also an easy checklist to see where you can add in dairy to your existing eating pattern.
- 3 Try something new! So often we stick with a limited number of meal options because it's easy. Increasing your intake of dairy may need you to look at your usual eating patterns and finding ways to incorporate a new food or recipe. If you live with or cook for other people, it's a great way to have a conversation about the dairy foods they enjoy most and choosing one new recipe a week to start with. Most of all, enjoy the process!

### 'Swap it' suggestions

Here is an example of a meal pattern and how we can increase dairy serves at each meal or mid-meal snack (based on estimated portions and recipes):

	Before		After	
<b>Breakfast</b>	Porridge (made with water), fresh fruit with vanilla yoghurt, toast. <b>1 serve</b>		Porridge (made with milk and milk powder), fresh fruit with vanilla yoghurt, toast. <b>2 serves</b>	
<b>Morning tea</b>	Cup cake, tea/coffee. <b>0 serves</b>		Buttermilk scones, tea/coffee. <b>0.25 serves</b>	
<b>Lunch</b>	Cup of soup with toast. <b>0 serves</b>		Pumpkin soup (fortified with milk) Toast with melted cheese. <b>1.5 serves</b>	
<b>Afternoon tea</b>	Plain biscuits, tea/coffee. <b>0 serves</b>		Cheese and tomatoes on crackers, tea/coffee. <b>1 serve</b>	
<b>Dinner</b>	Chicken cacciatore with buttered pasta, steamed broccoli and carrots. Chocolate mud cake with chocolate sauce. <b>0 serve</b>		Chicken cacciatore with ricotta, buttered pasta, steamed broccoli and carrots. Chocolate pudding with custard. <b>1.5 serves</b>	
<b>Supper</b>	Plain biscuits, tea/coffee. <b>0 serves</b>		Full milk hot chocolate or malt drink, plain biscuits. <b>1 serve</b>	

## Three-day meal plan

Use this resource as a guide of how to get your 3.5 serves of dairy each day. Swap in options depending on your taste preferences, dietary requirements, food budget and your usual eating patterns.

Recipes listed in bold are included alongside this resource for you to try:

Meal	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
Breakfast	<b>Fig and banana smoothie</b> 1.25 serves	Porridge made with full cream milk, <b>fruit compote</b> and flaked almonds 1 serve	<b>Protein pancakes with fruit compote</b> 1.5 serves
Morning Tea	40g cheddar cheese and wholegrain crackers, sliced tomato, relish 1 serve	<b>Berry and Greek yoghurt parfait</b> 0.75 serves	Flat white coffee/full milk hot chocolate 1 serve
Lunch	Wholegrain wrap with shredded roast chicken, salad and grated cheddar cheese 0.75 serves	<b>Mini ham and cheese quiches with side salad</b> 1.25 serves	<b>Lamb koftas with feta flatbread and tzatziki</b> 2.25 serves
Afternoon Tea	Tea/coffee	Flat white coffee 1 serve	Tea/coffee
Dinner	<b>Beef rissoles with cheesy mashed potato</b> , roast pumpkin and steamed broccoli 1.25 serves	<b>Ricotta gnocchi with napoli sauce</b> + side salad 0.5 serves	<b>Haloumi, sweet potato and corn fritters</b> with eggs and Greek yoghurt 1.25 serves

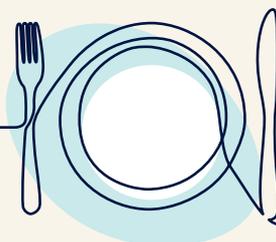
### Preparation tips

These tips will save you time by having the essential food items on hand in the pantry, fridge or freezer, to ensure that your food is nutritionally balanced as well as flavoursome.

- Smoothies are a highly nutritious and easy breakfast or snack. Have bananas in a sealed bag in the freezer – these will make your smoothies colder and smooth in consistency. Using frozen fruit for smoothies will allow you to have a variety of fruit available, especially being able to freeze fruit that is in season, while also creating a smoother, colder smoothie that is more enjoyable to drink.
- Keep staple items such as whole milk, skim milk powder, cream cheese and shelf-stable milk on hand.
- Purchase dairy foods with a long use by date when they are on special to make it more economical.

### Tips for creating a meal plan to work for you:

- Choose a variety of dairy foods that you enjoy eating, plus try one or two new ones!
- Aim to have 1 serve of dairy at each main meal and ½ a serve for a snack eaten during the day.
- Remember: protein will help to keep you fuller for longer between meals. Protein foods include dairy sources, meat, chicken, fish, eggs, legumes and lentils.
- If you tend to have 3 main meals but don't snack between meals, you'll need to have a meal with more than 1 serve of dairy to meet a total of 3.5 serves of dairy per day.
- Start by writing down what you typically eat in a day or track your food intake for 2-3 days. Write down the number of serves of each dairy food in your food intake record to see how many additional serves you can include to reach the target of 3.5 per day.



## Extra suggestions for each mealtime:

### Breakfast:

- Use milk instead of water to make porridge.
- Use fortified milk on breakfast cereal to add an extra 0.5 serves of dairy at breakfast.
  - Fortified milk: for every cup (250ml) of milk, add 1 tablespoon of milk powder/ skim milk powder. Whisk until dissolved, store in the fridge ready to use. Add a sticker to the jug of milk with the date of the day it was made, use within 3 days.
- Add grated cheddar cheese or feta cheese to scrambled eggs.
- Add a dollop of yoghurt to your cereal or muesli.

### Lunch:

- Add grated cheese to a chicken and salad wrap.
- Add fortified milk to a blended soup, add a piece of wholegrain toast with melted cheese to dip into the soup.
- Make feta flatbreads as a based for wraps or pizza<sup>^</sup>.

### Dinner:

- Add bechamel/ white sauce to baked dishes. eg cauliflower cheese with roasts, lasagne.
- Add grated parmesan cheese to rissoles<sup>^</sup>, meatballs or in the breadcrumbs for chicken schnitzel.
- Add ricotta to pasta sauces or in pikelets.
- Add custard to desserts or include a dessert with cottage/ other soft cheeses or make chocolate mousse<sup>^</sup>.

### Snacks:

- Try a smoothie for a snack on the go.
- Add milk powder into baking such as in biscuits, to create a soft centre and crunchy outer layer.
- Add 2 tablespoons of Greek yoghurt to muffins for a light, fluffy texture.
- Add custard or yoghurt to fresh or stewed fruit, add nuts such as flaked almonds for some crunch.

<sup>^</sup> Please refer to accompanying recipe



# Haloumi, sweet potato & corn fritters

A cooked breakfast done differently! These fritters are also suitable for a light dinner option, served with fried or poached eggs and a side salad.

Serves: 6      Serve size: 200g

## Ingredients

1	medium	onion, diced
2	tbsp	olive oil
2	cloves	garlic, chopped (or 1 tsp minced garlic)
350	g	sweet potato, peeled, finely grated (use a food processor if available)
2	sprigs	parsley, finely chopped
250	g	haloumi cheese, chopped into 2-3cm pieces
1	cup	plain flour
1	tsp	baking powder
½	tsp	salt
40	g	parmesan cheese, grated
1	large	egg
100	g	corn kernels (fresh or canned and drained or frozen)

## Easy yoghurt dressing

½	cup	Greek yoghurt
½	medium	lemon (juice only)
½	tsp	garlic, minced

## Method

- 1 Heat olive oil in a frying pan, add onion and fry until clear. Add garlic and fry until fragrant. Pour into a large mixing bowl.
- 2 Add grated sweet potato and chopped parsley to the mixing bowl.
- 3 Add remaining ingredients and mix until combined.
- 4 Heat a frying pan (use the same one the onion and garlic was fried in, no need to clean first) and add a good splash of olive oil. Drop heaped tablespoons of mixture into frying pan. Fry on medium heat until golden brown (approximately five minutes on each side).
- 5 Set aside on paper towel once cooked and repeat with remaining mixture.
- 6 To make the easy yoghurt dressing, combine all ingredients in a bowl.
- 7 To serve, place 2-3 fritters on a plate. Top with yoghurt dressing.



## Nutrition information

	Per serve	Per 100g
Energy (kJ)	1563	779
Protein (g)	17.8	8.9
Total fat (g)	17.2	8.6
Saturated fat (g)	7.6	3.8
Carbohydrate (g)	34.5	17.2
Sugars (g)	8.0	4.0
Dietary Fibre (g)	3.5	1.7
Sodium (mg)	1600	798
Calcium (mg)	388	194
Phosphorous (mg)	374	187

## Variations

- For extra protein, fry an egg for each serve and layer on top of the fritters.
- Add tomato relish with Greek yoghurt on top for a flavour change.
- Swap parsley for dill.

## Tips

Fritters are best made fresh but will also make a great snack option for later in the day or packed for a portable snack.

# Protein pancakes with fruit compote

Serves: 4

Serve size: 3 small pancakes

## Ingredients

70	g	rolled oats
3	large	eggs
20	g	flaxseed
60	g	skim milk powder
200	g	cottage cheese
60	g	chia seeds
¼	tsp	baking powder
¼	tsp	bicarbonate of soda
2	tsp	honey

## Method

- 1 Blend the oats until a fine powder is achieved. Add the skim milk powder, cottage cheese, chia seeds, flaxseeds, eggs, honey & blend to get a smooth batter.
- 2 Add the bicarbonate of soda and the baking powder and leave to sit for five minutes (this helps to aerate the pancakes).
- 3 Heat the oil in a frying pan over a medium heat.
- 4 Ladle the batter onto the pan and cook each pancake until brown on each side.



## Nutrition information

	Per serve (125g/3 small pancakes)	Per 100g
Energy (kJ)	1190	954
Protein (g)	19.8	15.8
Total fat (g)	12.0	9.7
Saturated fat (g)	3.2	2.5
Carbohydrate (g)	20.7	16.6
Sugars (g)	10.8	8.6
Dietary Fibre (g)	6.8	5.4
Sodium (mg)	343	275
Calcium (mg)	506	406
Phosphorous (mg)	291	233

## Tips

- Pancakes can also be made in batches and frozen.
- Top with fruit compote and Greek yoghurt.

# Fruit compote

To be added to the protein pancakes. Can also be added onto porridge with flaked almonds as an alternative breakfast option.

Serves: 5      Serve size: 70g

## Ingredients

300	g	frozen berries
2	tbsp	orange juice
½	tsp	sugar
½	tsp	cinnamon
¼	tsp	ground ginger
1½	tsp	chia seeds

## Method

- 1 Place fruit and juice in a pan and bring to a medium heat.
- 2 Once bubbling, reduce heat slightly and use a wooden spoon to break up and mash the fruit.
- 3 Continue to cook over a medium heat for 10-12 mins.
- 4 Turn off the heat and add the sugar, spices and chia seeds and stir through.



## Nutrition information

	Per serve (70g)	Per 100g
Energy (kJ)	129	187
Protein (g)	0.7	1.0
Total fat (g)	0.6	0.8
Saturated fat (g)	0.06	0.1
Carbohydrate (g)	4.3	6.3
Sugars (g)	3.9	5.6
Dietary Fibre (g)	2.5	3.7
Sodium (mg)	0.8	1.2
Calcium (mg)	25	37
Phosphorous (mg)	28	40

## Tips

Fruit compote can be stored in the fridge for up to one week or frozen in ice cube moulds for up to one month. Reheat to serve.

Compote can be used with Greek yoghurt as a snack, on top of rice pudding, semolina, on toast, scones and many more options.

# Lamb koftas with feta flatbread & tzatziki

Serves: 5

## Kofta ingredients

500	g	lamb mince
20	ml	olive oil (to brush)
150	g	feta
1	cup	breadcrumbs
2	tsp	cumin
2	tsp	paprika
2	tsp	coriander (ground)
2	tsp	garlic powder
1	tsp	cinnamon
½	tsp	cayenne (optional)
1	tsp	salt and pepper
1	tsp	mint, fresh, chopped

## Method

- 1 Place all the ingredients into a bowl and mix until everything is combined.
- 2 With wet hands, shape the koftas and place on a tray lined with baking paper.
- 3 Brush with oil and bake for 12 mins at 180°C.



## Feta flatbread ingredients

1½	cups	self-raising flour
1½	cups	Greek yoghurt (regular-fat)
150	g	feta
2	tbsp	olive oil
1	tsp	salt

## Method

- 1 Place yoghurt, flour and salt in a bowl and mix until just combined.
- 2 Crumble in the feta and, using your hands, fold into the dough mixture until combined. Turn out onto a lightly floured surface and divide into five pieces.
- 3 Roll out each piece until about 5mm thick, flouring the surface to prevent sticking.
- 4 Heat one tsp oil in a large frypan over medium-high heat. Working with one flatbread at a time, cook for two minutes each side until golden.
- 5 Remove from the pan and repeat with remaining dough. Cover cooked flatbread with foil to keep warm until ready to serve.

## Tzatziki ingredients

1½	cups	Greek yoghurt (regular-fat)
200	g	cucumber
1	tsp	garlic, minced
1	pinch	salt (to taste)
1	tsp	fresh mint, chopped (to taste)
1	tsp	fresh dill, chopped (to taste)

## Method

- 1 On the coarse side of a grater, grate the cucumber and squeeze out all the moisture.
- 2 Add the cucumber to the yoghurt with all the other ingredients and combine.
- 3 Store in an airtight container in the fridge.



## Nutrition information (lamb koftas + feta flatbreads + tzatziki)

	Per serve	Per 100g
Energy (kJ)	1190	954
Protein (g)	19.8	15.8
Total fat (g)	12.0	9.7
Saturated fat (g)	3.2	2.5
Carbohydrate (g)	20.7	16.6
Sugars (g)	10.8	8.6
Dietary Fibre (g)	6.8	5.4
Sodium (mg)	343	275
Calcium (mg)	506	406
Phosphorous (mg)	291	233

## Tips

- Add shredded lettuce and diced tomatoes for added crunch and vegetables.
- All ingredients can be stored in airtight containers in the fridge for easy leftovers.
- Tzatziki can be served with corn chips and vegetable sticks as a mid-meal snack.

# Mini ham & zucchini quiches

Serves: 4 (6 mini quiches per serve)

## Ingredients

3	sheets	puff pastry
200	g	tasty cheddar cheese, grated
160	g	zucchini (1/2 – 1 medium), grated
100	g	ham, diced
2	large	eggs
1/2	cup	cream
1	tsp	garlic, minced
		salt and pepper (to taste)

## Method

- 1 Take the three sheets of puff pastry out of the freezer and place on a clean surface to defrost before starting.
- 2 Using spray oil, grease a 12-quiche tray. Alternatively, use a mini-muffin tray (will make 48 mini muffin size quiches) or a 1/2 cup muffin tray (will make approximately 12 larger quiches).
- 3 Preheat oven to 200°C (fan-forced).
- 4 Place grated cheese, grated zucchini and diced ham into a medium sized bowl.
- 5 In a jug, whisk eggs, cream, garlic, Dijon mustard, salt and pepper.
- 6 Pour the egg mix into the bowl with the cheese mixture, stir to combine.
- 7 Using a 5-6cm biscuit cutter (or a glass), cut nine rounds from every pastry sheet, depending on the size of the quiche/ muffin tray and press gently to cover the base of each hole.
- 8 Fill up each case with the mixture. Bake in the oven for 20 minutes or until browned.
- 9 Serve with Greek salad/salad with feta cheese for an extra dairy serve.



## Nutrition information

	Per serve (6 mini quiches/230g)	Per 100g
Energy (kJ)	3079	1330
Protein (g)	23.2	10.0
Total fat (g)	51.1	22.1
Saturated fat (g)	31.0	13.4
Carbohydrate (g)	43.9	19.0
Sugars (g)	2.3	1.0
Dietary Fibre (g)	4.5	1.9
Sodium (mg)	724	313
Calcium (mg)	425	184
Phosphorous (mg)	365	158

## Tips

- Mini quiches can be frozen in single layers in the fridge.
- Quiches can be stored in an airtight container in the fridge for up to three days. Reheat before serving.
- Try swapping ham with leftover roast meat.

# Beef rissoles with cheesy mashed potato

Serves: 4 (2-3 Rissoles per serve)

## Rissole ingredients

1	small	brown onion
½	cup	breadcrumbs
500	g	beef mince, lean
1	small	zucchini
1	medium	carrot
1	large	egg
1	tsp	garlic, minced
½	tsp	dried thyme
½	tsp	dried oregano
2	tsp	Worcestershire sauce
½	cup	Parmesan cheese, grated
½	tsp each	salt and pepper

## Method

- 1 Grate the onion into a large bowl using a box grater or food processor. Add breadcrumbs and mix to combine.
- 2 Grate zucchini and carrot into the bowl. Add all remaining ingredients and mix well. Mixing with wet hands creates a better rissole that won't fall apart.
- 3 Scoop ¼ cup amounts of the mixture and form a thick patty that is slightly flattened. Set aside on a plate and repeat with the remaining mixture – it makes about 10-12 rissoles depending on the size.
- 4 Heat olive oil in a frying pan over medium heat. Add half the patties and cook for 4-5 minutes or until browned. Flip and cook the other side for 3-4 minutes or until golden and cooked through.
- 5 Transfer to a plate lined with paper towel, keep warm. Repeat with the remaining rissoles.
- 6 Serve with cheesy mashed potato (see accompanying recipe), gravy, steamed pumpkin and peas.



## Nutrition information

	Per serve (2-3 rissoles)	Per 100g
Energy (kJ)	1522	649
Protein (g)	36.4	15.5
Total fat (g)	16.0	6.8
Saturated fat (g)	7.1	3.0
Carbohydrate (g)	18.7	8.0
Sugars (g)	3.4	1.5
Dietary Fibre (g)	2.7	1.2
Sodium (mg)	344	147
Calcium (mg)	173	74
Phosphorous (mg)	400	171

## Tips

- Rissoles can be frozen uncooked in single layers if only half the rissoles are required.
- Other types of mince can be substituted. Try lamb mince with crumbled feta cheese, replace thyme with ½ tsp dried rosemary.

## Cheesy mashed potato ingredients

800	g	potatoes
200	g	cheddar cheese, grated
¼	cup	milk
½	tsp	salt (to taste)

## Method

- 1 Peel potatoes and cut into large chunks. Cook in a large saucepan of boiling salted water for 20 minutes or until very tender but not falling apart.
- 2 Drain potatoes well. Return to saucepan over low heat.
- 3 Add grated cheese to potatoes. Using a potato masher, roughly mash potatoes until cheese has melted.
- 4 Add milk, continue to mash until potatoes are smooth. If potatoes are still too firm or sticky, add a dash of milk until desired consistency is reached.
- 5 Season with salt and pepper.

## Nutrition information

	Per serve	Per 100g
Energy (kJ)	1413	529
Protein (g)	18.2	6.8
Total fat (g)	16.3	6.1
Saturated fat (g)	10.6	4.0
Carbohydrate (g)	26.8	10.0
Sugars (g)	1.9	0.7
Dietary Fibre (g)	4.6	1.7
Sodium (mg)	628	236
Calcium (mg)	413	155
Phosphorous (mg)	349	131

## Tips

Potatoes vary in water content, which will affect how much milk is needed to reach the desired mash consistency.

# Ricotta gnocchi with napoli sauce

Serves: 6

## Napoli sauce ingredients

1	small	brown onion
4	cloves	garlic, minced
1	medium	carrot, diced
1/2	medium	red capsicum, diced
400	g	passata
400	g	canned diced tomatoes
2	tsp	chicken stock powder
1/2	tsp	dried basil
1/2	tsp	dried oregano
1	cup	water
1	tbsp	brown sugar
1	tbsp	balsamic vinegar
1/2	tsp each	salt and pepper (or to taste)
50	g	butter

## Method

- 1 Heat oil in a small pot over medium heat. Add onion, garlic, carrot and capsicum. Cook for 3-4 minutes or until onion is translucent.
- 2 Add tomatoes, passata, basil, oregano, stock powder, sugar, balsamic vinegar, water, salt and pepper. Stir then simmer on low for 20 minutes.
- 3 Blend until smooth in blender or using stick blender. Return to pot on a low heat, add butter and simmer for 2-3 minutes or when butter has melted and combined.

## Ricotta gnocchi ingredients

80	g	Parmesan cheese, grated
1.5	cups	plain flour (or 00 pasta flour)
450	g	fresh ricotta cheese (from the deli section at the supermarket – it has less liquid to make a better gnocchi)
1	pinch	salt
1	pinch	nutmeg
		butter, extra for frying

## Tips

- Serve with a side salad for a full meal.
- Extra serves can be stored in airtight containers in the freezer for an easy meal.



## Method

- 1 In a large mixing bowl, add parmesan cheese, flour, ricotta cheese, salt and nutmeg. Mix until combined.
- 2 Roll out dough onto floured surface, knead until combined.
- 3 Divide into five portions. Roll each portion into a long snake and cut into equal pieces.
- 4 Cook in a pot of salted boiling water (ensure water is boiling before adding gnocchi).
- 5 When gnocchi rise to the surface, scoop out into a strainer sitting over a bowl to catch excess water.
- 6 Heat a frying pan on medium heat, add 30-40g butter and melt. Add gnocchi to the pan and fry until they start to become golden.
- 7 Serve with Napoli sauce, sprinkle with grated parmesan.

## Nutrition information

	Per serve	Per 100g
Energy (kJ)	2001	548
Protein (g)	23.0	6.3
Total fat (g)	24.9	6.8
Saturated fat (g)	15.0	4.1
Carbohydrate (g)	37.9	10.4
Sugars (g)	11.1	3.0
Dietary Fibre (g)	5.0	1.4
Sodium (mg)	959	262
Calcium (mg)	422	116
Phosphorous (mg)	354	97

# Pumpkin & sweet potato soup

Soup is a nourishing option for a light dinner, but it can be low in protein without meat or legumes. This recipe shows you how to add a serve of dairy to a blended soup in a way that keeps it stable without splitting.

Serves: 6      Serve size: 180g

## Ingredients

1	medium	onion, diced
2	tbsp	olive oil
2	tsp	garlic, minced
1	medium	carrot, diced
300	g	sweet potato, peeled and diced
300	g	pumpkin, peeled
500	ml	chicken stock
1	tbsp	parsley, fresh, chopped
1	cup	regular fat (or full cream) milk
½	cup	skim milk powder
½	cup	cream

## Method

- 1 Melt the olive oil in a large pot, add onion and fry until clear. Add garlic and fry until fragrant.
- 2 Add carrots, fry for 3-5 minutes.
- 3 Add sweet potato and pumpkin, fry for 3-5 minutes.
- 4 Add chicken stock and bring to the boil, simmer for 20 minutes.
- 5 Whisk milk, cream and skim milk powder together in a jug, then pour into the soup. Add chopped parsley. Simmer for 3-5 minutes.
- 6 Blend with a stick blender until smooth.



## Nutrition information

	Per serve (280g)	Per 100g
Energy (kJ)	1151	404
Protein (g)	8.3	2.9
Total fat (g)	17.0	6.0
Saturated fat (g)	7.3	2.6
Carbohydrate (g)	21.7	7.6
Sugars (g)	16.3	5.7
Dietary Fibre (g)	2.9	1.0
Sodium (mg)	390	137
Calcium (mg)	211	74
Phosphorous (mg)	216	76

## Variations

- For extra creaminess, add one tablespoon of sour cream when serving, sprinkle with chopped chives.
- For extra crunch, add baked croutons.

# Fig and banana smoothie

Not a big breakfast fan? A smoothie is an easy way to still have a nutritious breakfast without feeling too full. It contains protein and essential nutrients from dairy, as well as fibre from fruit and flaxseeds.

Serves: 2      Serve size: 420g

## Ingredients

20	g	dried figs
1	cup	Greek or natural yoghurt
1	tsp	vanilla extract
1	tbsp	maple syrup or honey
1½	cups	regular-fat (full cream) milk
1	medium	banana
2	tsp	flaxseed
3-4	cubes	ice (if not using frozen banana)

## Method

- 1 Place all ingredients into a blender, blend until smooth (approx. one minute).
- 2 Serve chilled.

## Tips

Freeze the banana to make it extra refreshing or add 3-4 ice cubes before blending.



## Nutrition information

	Per serve (420g)	Per 100g
Energy (kJ)	1863	444
Protein (g)	20.2	4.8
Total fat (g)	14.4	3.4
Saturated fat (g)	8.6	2.0
Carbohydrate (g)	56.3	13.4
Sugars (g)	51.9	12.4
Dietary Fibre (g)	3.6	0.9
Sodium (mg)	223	53
Calcium (mg)	649	155
Phosphorous (mg)	537	128

## Variations

- Swap dried figs for frozen blueberries for a flavour change – it will be a vibrant purple!
- Use other seasonal fruit for cost effective options, plus they will be the most nutrient dense and flavoursome, e.g. mangoes and pineapple in summer, fresh strawberries or blueberries.
- To reduce the sugar content, swap out the fruit and add one heaped tablespoon of cocoa powder and one heaped tablespoon of peanut or almond butter.
- If Greek or natural yoghurt is too tart for your taste, substitute with vanilla yoghurt and reduce the honey/maple syrup.

# Berry & Greek yoghurt parfait

Sounds fancy but parfait is an easy, delicious snack that can be made ahead of time or makes an alternative breakfast idea. They can be layered in mason jars for a portable snack – be sure to keep it chilled for food safety with dairy.

Serves: 4      Serve size: 250g

## Ingredients

2	cups	Greek or natural yoghurt
2	cups	fresh berries (blueberries, strawberries), rinsed, strawberries cut into pieces
1	tsp	vanilla extract
1	tbsp	maple syrup or honey
2	cups	granola (fruit free)

## Method

- 1 Mix yoghurt, vanilla extract and maple syrup together in a small bowl.
- 2 In a glass cup or mason jar, layer yoghurt mixture, berries, and granola. You can choose how many layers you would like to use. Try 2–3 layers of each, finishing with granola on top.



## Nutrition information

	Per serve (250g)	Per 100g
Energy (kJ)	1325	534
Protein (g)	10.4	4.2
Total fat (g)	10.5	4.2
Saturated fat (g)	4.4	1.8
Carbohydrate (g)	42.2	17.0
Sugars (g)	29.7	12.0
Dietary Fibre (g)	5.0	2.0
Sodium (mg)	112	45
Calcium (mg)	278	112
Phosphorous (mg)	302	122

*Note: nutrition information will vary slightly depending on the granola used*

## Variations

- Swap one of the berries for 100g chopped Medjool dates.
- Use frozen or fruit in season to reduce the cost.
- Kiwi fruit and banana.
- Mango and pineapple.
- Orange and passionfruit.
- Use the fruit compote recipe from protein pancakes in place of fresh fruit.

# Chocolate mousse

A decadent dessert that contributes one serve of dairy!

Serves: 3      Serve size: 140g

## Ingredients

1½	cups	cottage cheese
3	tbsp	icing sugar
⅓	cup	cocoa powder
60	g	chocolate (optional) – milk or dark

## Method

- 1 Put the cottage cheese, cocoa and icing sugar into a blender. Blend on high until all ingredients are combined.
- 2 Place the mousse into ramekins and chill.
- 3 Melt chocolate and cover the mousse. Leave to set.



## Nutrition information

	Per serve (140g)	Per 100g
Energy (kJ)	1260	893
Protein (g)	19.8	14.0
Total fat (g)	13.9	9.9
Saturated fat (g)	8.5	6.0
Carbohydrate (g)	21.4	15.2
Sugars (g)	19.9	14.1
Dietary Fibre (g)	4.3	3.1
Sodium (mg)	302	214
Calcium (mg)	163	116
Phosphorous (mg)	300	213

## Variations

- Layer fresh raspberries and toasted coconut flakes on top of the chocolate for a dessert option.
- Add orange oil or essence to the mousse mixture for a 'jaffa' flavour.
- Add mint essence to the chocolate layer for a mint slice version.





**Dairy Australia Limited** ABN 60 105 227 987  
Level 3, HWT Tower  
40 City Road, Southbank Vic 3006 Australia  
T +61 3 9694 3777 F +61 3 9694 3701  
E [enquiries@dairyaustralia.com.au](mailto:enquiries@dairyaustralia.com.au)  
[dairyaustralia.com.au](http://dairyaustralia.com.au)