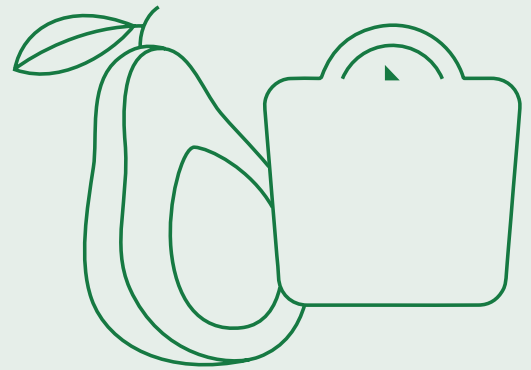


# Avocados – the perfect partner for managing weight

Avocados can be enjoyed on a daily basis to improve your health, even if you are above your ideal weight.



## From dieting to healthy eating

The words ‘dieting’ and ‘diets’ often have negative connotations. They are usually associated with fad diets (such as keto, paleo, clean eating) where specific foods, or entire food groups, are restricted and special rules guide what and when you can eat to lose body weight or change your shape.

They often focus on weight loss alone, with little regard for your overall physical and mental health. They can leave you feeling tired, anxious, sad, stressed, frustrated and feeling like a failure because you can’t achieve the results being promised. You may lack energy, focus and motivation and your body may find it hard to know how much to eat, so you overeat later on. Breaking the dieting cycle is key to managing your weight and overall health.

### Instead of dieting, try:

#### Listening to your body

Notice when you feel hungry and comfortably full - what signals does your body give you? Eat regular meals and snacks. Try not to graze on high energy snacks.<sup>1</sup>

#### Being more active

Each day look for opportunities to move more. Find activities you enjoy and find people to share them with.

#### Eating a variety of foods mindfully

Base your healthy eating plan on the five food groups: proteins, fruit, vegetables, whole grain foods and cereals, and dairy. Also include some healthy fat foods and save ‘treat’ foods and drinks for special occasions. Eat meals and snacks slowly and mindfully, enjoying every bite.

#### Getting enough sleep

Develop a regular sleep routine for both sleep quality and duration.<sup>4</sup>

#### Choosing good mood foods

Eat fruits and vegetables such as avocados regularly to improve your mood, self-esteem and optimism, and reduce stress.<sup>2</sup>

#### Being aware of social media

Many photos on socials and websites have been edited and show unrealistic body images and expectations. Care for your body rather than compare it to others.

#### Eating with others

Cooking and eating together as a family is a good time to connect, communicate and role model healthy eating.<sup>3</sup> If you live alone, look for opportunities to eat with friends, neighbours and colleagues.

#### Being body positive

Healthy bodies come in different shapes and sizes – accept and respect yourself and others.

## Nutrients can help satisfy hunger

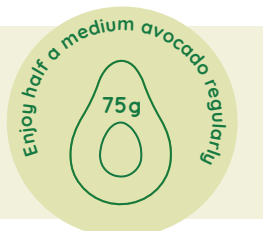
Many nutrients can play a role in satisfying your appetite – that feeling of contentment after enjoying a good meal. A healthy balanced meal should include each of these nutrients:

- Protein foods (such as legumes, nuts, lean meats and dairy) help switch off gut hormones that stimulate appetite.<sup>5</sup>
- Dietary fibre in plant foods add bulk and help physically fill the stomach to satisfy hunger.<sup>5,6</sup> The fibre in avocados also promotes a healthy gut microbiome which can assist weight management.<sup>7</sup>
- Healthy fats in avocados, nuts, nut/seed spreads, salad dressings and cooking oils can help increase gut hormones that reduce appetite after a meal.<sup>5</sup>
- Low Glycemic Index (GI) carbohydrates provide longer lasting energy and satiety.<sup>5</sup> Adding healthy fats like nuts and avocado to foods containing carbohydrates can lower the GI further.<sup>8</sup>

## Avocado helps manage body weight

Foods containing healthy fats, such as avocados, are valuable in a healthy eating plan for weight management. People who regularly eat avocado tend to have a lower Body Mass Index (BMI), a smaller waist and gain less weight over time.<sup>7,9</sup>

The scientific evidence suggests avocados do not cause weight gain.



## How much avocado can I eat?

The Australian Dietary Guidelines recommend 75g is a serve of veggies. While avocados are technically a fruit, they are more commonly eaten as a vegetable. **Half a medium avocado is a convenient 75g serve.**

Visit the Australian avocado website for a healthy [7-day weight friendly meal plan](#) that shows you how include avocado every day.

## How to help a child who is above a healthy weight?

There are several positive ways to help kids who are above their healthy weight. Firstly, it's important to consider the family as a whole unit. Ask the family to agree to the goal of all eating well and being more active. Speak positively about food – there are no good or bad foods. Try cooking and eating together. Find fun ways to be more physically active together each day. Agree to minimise screen time and make bedrooms a screen-free zone to support healthy sleep patterns.

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## Why not try Avocado salad with macadamia and avocado pesto

Make salads taste even better by adding healthy fats such as avocado, nuts and olive oil based dressings. Healthy fats help your body absorb fat soluble nutrients from salad veggies<sup>7</sup> and make salads more satisfying.

Avocado salad with macadamia and avocado pesto

Find the full recipe on the website.

For educational purposes only. Please consult your Accredited Practising Dietitian (APD) or doctor for advice on your personal dietary requirements. © Australian Avocados 2024

