

2.22 Dietary behaviour

The dietary behaviour of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people including fruit and vegetable consumption, type of milk consumed and salt intake

Data sources

Data for this measure come from the 2004–05 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey (NATSIHS).

The 2004–05 NATSIHS collected information from 10,439 Indigenous Australians of all ages. This sample was considerably larger than the supplementary Indigenous samples in the 1995 and 2001 National Health Surveys. The survey was conducted in remote and non-remote areas of Australia and collected a range of information from Indigenous Australians about health-related issues including health-related actions, health risk factors, health status, socioeconomic circumstances and women's health. It is planned to repeat the NATSIHS at six-yearly intervals, with the next NATSIHS to be conducted in 2010–11. Selected non-Indigenous comparisons are available through the 2004–05 National Health Survey (NHS).

The questions on dietary behaviour in the NATSIHS are complex as respondents needed to understand and apply the inclusions/exclusions, understand the concept of a serve and assess their consumption levels accordingly, and think about their total consumption in what would constitute an average day. Data for all those aged 12–14 years, and 68% of those were aged 15–17 years, were provided by a proxy, usually a parent. As a result the data reflect the parent's knowledge of the child's consumption; this is likely to be less accurate for usual consumption of fruit items than for the type of milk and usual consumption of vegetables items collected in non-remote areas.

In remote areas the questions on vegetable and fruit intake were amended to whether usually ate fruit and/or vegetables each day. Therefore it is not possible to produce indicators based on usual serves for remote areas from the 2004–05 NATSIHS, or for certain states and territories that have output restrictions for non-remote data items from the NATSIHS (South Australia, Tasmania, the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory).

Data analyses

Dietary habits

- In 2004–05, the majority of Indigenous people aged 12 years and over reported eating vegetables (95%) and/or fruit (86%) daily.
- The National Health and Medical Research Council guidelines recommend a minimum of five serves of vegetables per day and two serves of fruit per day. In 2004–05, in non-remote areas, 42% of Indigenous Australians were eating the recommended daily intake of fruit and 10% the recommended daily intake of vegetables. Information on the daily intake of fruit and vegetables is not available for remote areas.

- Around 25% of Indigenous people aged 12 years and over reported they sometimes added salt after cooking and a further 46% reported they usually added salt after cooking.
- Approximately 79% of Indigenous people aged 12 years and over reported they usually drank whole (full-cream) milk and 16% reported drinking reduced fat or skim milk.
- After adjusting for differences in age structure, Indigenous Australians aged 15 years and over were twice as likely to report no usual daily fruit intake, no usual daily vegetable intake and whole milk as the usual type of milk consumed as non-Indigenous Australians (Table 2.22.1b).

Dietary habits by age group

- In non-remote areas, Indigenous Australians aged 35–44 years were most likely to report a daily intake of five or more serves of vegetables (13%) and Indigenous Australians aged 55 years and over were most likely to report a daily fruit intake of two serves or more (Table 2.22.1a).
- In non-remote areas, the intake of vegetables was similar for Indigenous and non-Indigenous people across most age groups. The intake of fruit was less for Indigenous Australians than non-Indigenous Australians across most age groups (Tables 2.22.1a, 2.22.1b).
- Indigenous and non-Indigenous people aged 12–14 years were most likely to report drinking whole milk (88% and 69% respectively) than those in the older age groups (Table 2.22.1a).
- The proportion of Indigenous people who reported usually adding salt after cooking increased with age (Table 2.22.1b).
- In non-remote areas, Indigenous people were much more likely to drink full-cream milk than non-Indigenous people across all age groups (Tables 2.22.1a; 2.22.1b).

Table 2.22.1a: Selected dietary habits, by Indigenous status and age, persons aged 12 years and over in non-remote areas, 2004–05

	12–14		15–24		25–34		35–44		45–54		55 and over	
	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Indig.	Non-Indig.
	(per cent)											
Usual daily intake of vegetables												
Does not eat vegetables	2 ^(a)	1 ^(a)	2 ^(a)	1	1 ^(a)	1	1 ^(a)	1	2 ^(a)	— ^(a)	2 ^(a)	—
1 serve or less	20	23	24	27	27	24	21	20	21	18	16	13
2–4 serves	66	67	65	63	63	65	65	66	66	65	71	67
5 serves or more	12	9	8	9	9	11	13	13	11	16	11	19
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Usual daily intake of fruit												
Does not eat fruit	5 ^(a)	5	14	10	13	8	12	8	12	6	7 ^(a)	3
1 serve or less	41	39	46	44	48	45	53	42	43	38	37	32
2–4 serves	51	51	37	43	37	43	32	46	41	52	53	58
5 serves or more	2 ^(a)	5	3*	4	2 ^(a)	3	2 ^(a)	4	4 ^(a)	4	4 ^(a)	6
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

(continued)

Table 2.22.1a: Selected dietary habits, by Indigenous status and age, persons aged 12 years and over in non-remote areas, 2004–05

	12–14		15–24		25–34		35–44		45–54		55 and over	
	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Indig.	Non-Indig.
Usual type of milk												
Whole	88	69	81	55	76	49	73	48	68	37	58	35
Low/reduced fat	8	22	11	25	12	28	17	29	16	38	24	35
Skim	1 ^(b)	4	4	11	6	13	7	13	6	13	11	17
Soy	np	np	— ^(b)	3	2 ^(a)	4	n.p.	4	2 ^(b)	5	2 ^(a)	5
None of the above ^(c)	np	np	— ^(b)	1 ^(a)	— ^(a)	1	n.p.	1	3 ^(b)	1	1 ^(b)	1
<i>Total drinks milk</i>	<i>98</i>	<i>98</i>	<i>97</i>	<i>95</i>	<i>96</i>	<i>96</i>	<i>98</i>	<i>95</i>	<i>96</i>	<i>94</i>	<i>95</i>	<i>94</i>
Does not drink milk	2*	2*	3	5	3	4	2 ^(a)	5	4	6	5 ^(a)	6
Total^(d)	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

(a) Estimate has a relative standard error of 25% to 50% and should be used with caution.

(b) Estimate has a relative standard error greater than 50% and is considered too unreliable for general use.

(c) Includes 'evaporated or sweetened condensed milk'.

(d) Includes 'usual type of milk' not known.

Source: ABS and AIHW analysis 2004–05 NATSIHS and 2004–05 National Health Survey.

Table 2.22.1b: Selected dietary habits, by Indigenous status and age, persons aged 15 years and over in non-remote areas, 2004-05

	15-24		25-34		35-44		45-54		55 and over		Total non age standardised		Total Age standardised		Ratio
	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Indig.	Non-Indig.	
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	
Usual daily intake of vegetables															
Does not eat vegetables	2	1	1	1	1	1	2	0	2	0	2	1	2	1	2.1
1 serve or less	24	27	27	24	21	20	21	18	16	13	23	20	22	20	1.1
2-4 serves	65	63	63	65	65	66	66	65	71	67	65	66	66	65	1.0
5 serves or more	8	9	9	11	13	13	11	16	11	19	10	14	11	14	0.8
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	1.0
Usual daily intake of fruit															
Does not eat fruit	14	10	13	8	12	8	12	6	7	3	12	7	11	7	1.6
1 serve or less	46	44	48	45	53	42	43	38	37	32	47	39	46	40	1.1
2-4 serves	37	43	37	43	32	46	41	52	53	58	38	50	40	49	0.8
5 serves or more	3	4	2	3	2	4	4	4	4	6	3	4	3	4	0.7
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	1.0

(continued)

Table 2.22.1b (continued): Selected dietary habits, by Indigenous status and age, persons aged 15 years and over in non-remote areas, 2004–05

	15–24		25–34		35–44		45–54		55 and over		Total non age standardised		Total age standardised		Ratio
	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Indig.	Non-Indig.	
(per cent)															
Usual type of milk															
Whole	81	55	76	49	73	48	68	37	58	35	74	44	71	45	1.6
Low/reduced fat	11	25	12	28	17	29	16	38	24	35	15	32	16	31	0.5
Skim	4	11	6	13	7	13	6	13	11	17	6	14	7	13	0.5
Soy	0	3	2	4	1	4	2	5	2	5	1	5	2	4	0.3
None of the above ^(a)	0	1	0	1	0	1	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0.7
<i>Total drinks milk</i>	<i>97</i>	<i>95</i>	<i>96</i>	<i>96</i>	<i>98</i>	<i>95</i>	<i>96</i>	<i>94</i>	<i>95</i>	<i>94</i>	<i>97</i>	<i>95</i>	<i>96</i>	<i>95</i>	<i>1.0</i>
Does not drink milk	3	5	3	4	2	5	4	6	5	6	3	5	4	5	0.7
Total^(b)	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	1.0
Salt added after cooking															
Never/rarely	38	n.a.	35	n.a.	32	n.a.	25	n.a.	27	n.a.	33	n.a.	..	n.a.	n.a.
Sometimes	24	n.a.	23	n.a.	18	n.a.	24	n.a.	21	n.a.	22	n.a.	..	n.a.	n.a.
Usually	38	n.a.	42	n.a.	50	n.a.	51	n.a.	52	n.a.	44	n.a.	..	n.a.	n.a.
Total^(c)	100	n.a.	100	n.a.	100	n.a.	100	n.a.	100	n.a.	100	n.a.	100	n.a.	n.a.

(a) Includes 'evaporated or sweetened condensed milk'.

(b) Includes 'usual type of milk' not known.

(c) Includes frequency salt is added after cooking not known.

Source: AIHW analysis 2004–05 NATSIHS and 2004–05 National Health Survey.

Dietary habits by sex

- A higher proportion of Indigenous males aged 12 years and over reported not eating vegetables daily than Indigenous females (16% compared to 12%) (Table 2.22.2).
- Indigenous females were twice as likely as Indigenous males to report drinking skim milk as the usual type of milk consumed (6% compared to 3%).
- There was little difference in the proportion of Indigenous males and females reporting eating vegetables daily or adding salt after cooking.

Table 2.22.2: Selected dietary habits, by sex, Indigenous persons aged 12 years and over, 2004–05

Dietary behaviours	Males	Females	Persons
	%	%	%
Vegetable intake			
Eats vegetables daily	93	95	95
Does not eat vegetables daily	6	5	5
Total^(a)	100	100	100
Fruit intake			
Eats fruit daily	84	88	86
Does not eat fruit daily	16	12	14
Total^(a)	100	100	100
Usual type of milk consumed			
Whole	81	76	79
Low/reduced fat	10	12	11
Skim	3	6	5
Soy	1	1	1
None of the above ^(b)	1	1	1
<i>Total drinks milk</i>	96	96	96
Does not drink milk	4	4	4
Total^(c)	100	100	100
Salt added after cooking			
Never/rarely	27	32	30
Sometimes	25	24	25
Usually	47	44	46
Total^(d)	100	100	100

(a) Includes 'whether eats fruit/vegetables' not known.

(b) Includes 'evaporated or sweetened condensed milk'.

(c) Includes 'usual type of milk' not known.

(d) Includes 'frequency salt is added after cooking' not known.

Source: AIHW analysis of 2004–05 NATSIHS.

Table 2.22.3: Selected dietary habits, by Indigenous status and sex, persons aged 15 years and over in non-remote areas, 2004-05

	Males					Females					Persons				
	Non age standardised		Age standardised		Ratio	Non age standardised		Age standardised		Ratio	Non age standardised		Age standardised		Ratio
	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Indig.	Non-Indig.		Indig.	Non-Indig.	Indig.	Non-Indig.		Indig.	Non-Indig.	Indig.	Non-Indig.	
	%	%	%	%		%	%	%	%		%	%	%	%	
Usual daily intake of vegetables															
Does not eat vegetables	2	1	2	1	2.2	1	1	1	1	1.9	2	1	2	1	2.1
1 serve or less	25	23	25	24	1.0	21	16	19	17	1.1	23	20	22	20	1.1
2-4 serves	64	64	65	64	1.0	67	67	67	67	1.0	65	66	66	65	1.0
5 serves or more	9	12	9	12	0.7	11	16	12	15	0.8	10	14	11	14	0.8
Total	100	100	100	100	1.0	100	100	100	100	1.0	100	100	100	100	1.0
Usual daily intake or fruit															
Does not eat fruit	14	9	14	9	1.5	11	5	9	5	1.9	12	7	11	7	1.6
1 serve or less	47	44	47	44	1.1	46	35	44	36	1.2	47	39	46	40	1.1
2-4 serves	36	44	36	43	0.9	41	55	43	54	0.8	38	50	40	49	0.8
5 serves or more	3	4	3	4	0.8	3	5	3	5	0.7	3	4	3	4	0.7
Total	100	100	100	100	1.0	100	100	100	100	1.0	100	100	100	100	1.0

(continued)

Table 2.22.3 (continued): Selected dietary habits, by Indigenous status and sex, persons aged 15 years and over in non-remote areas, 2004–05

	Males					Females					Persons					
	Non age standardised		Age standardised		Ratio	Non age standardised		Age standardised		Ratio	Non age standardised		Age standardised		Ratio	
	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Indig.	Non-Indig.		Indig.	Non-Indig.	Indig.	Non-Indig.		Indig.	Non-Indig.	Indig.	Non-Indig.		
	%	%	%	%		%	%	%	%		%	%	%	%		
Usual type of milk																
Whole	77	51	74	52	1.4	71	37	68	37	1.8	74	44	71	45	1.6	
Low/reduced fat	13	29	15	28	0.5	16	34	18	34	0.5	15	32	16	31	0.5	
Skim	4	10	6	10	0.6	7	17	8	17	0.5	6	14	7	13	0.5	
Soy	1	4	1	4	0.4	1	5	2	5	0.3	1	5	2	4	0.3	
None of the above ^(a)	1	1	1	1	1.4	0	1	0	1	0.3	1	1	1	1	0.7	
<i>Total drinks milk</i>	<i>97</i>	<i>94</i>	<i>97</i>	<i>95</i>	<i>1.0</i>	<i>96</i>	<i>95</i>	<i>96</i>	<i>95</i>	<i>1.0</i>	<i>97</i>	<i>95</i>	<i>96</i>	<i>95</i>	<i>1.0</i>	
Does not drink milk	3	6	3	5	0.6	4	5	4	5	0.8	3	5	4	5	0.7	
Total^(b)	100	100	100	100	1.0	100	100	100	100	1.0	100	100	100	100	1.0	
Salt added after cooking																
Never/rarely	31	n.a.	..	n.a.	n.a.	36	n.a.	..	n.a.	n.a.	33	n.a.	..	n.a.	n.a.	
Sometimes	22	n.a.	..	n.a.	n.a.	22	n.a.	..	n.a.	n.a.	22	n.a.	..	n.a.	n.a.	
Usually	47	n.a.	..	n.a.	n.a.	42	n.a.	..	n.a.	n.a.	44	n.a.	..	n.a.	n.a.	
Total^(c)	100	n.a.	..	n.a.	n.a.	100	n.a.	..	n.a.	n.a.	100	n.a.	100	n.a.	n.a.	

(a) Includes 'evaporated or sweetened condensed milk'.

(b) Includes 'usual type of milk' not known.

(c) Includes frequency salt added after cooking 'not known'.

Source: AIHW analysis of 2004–05 NATSIHS and 2004–05 National Health Survey.

Dietary habits by state/territory

Dietary habits of Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians are presented in Tables 2.22.4a and 2.22.4b below. Note that data on the number of daily serves of vegetables and fruit are presented for New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland and Western Australia only due to output restrictions for these data items.

- In 2004–05, the proportion of Indigenous Australians aged 15 years and over who reported eating five serves or more of vegetables daily was 8% in New South Wales, 9% in Queensland, 12% in Victoria and 14% in Western Australia (Table 2.22.4a).
- The proportion of Indigenous Australians aged 15 years and over reporting eating two or more serves of fruit a day was 41% in New South Wales and Queensland, 43% in Victoria and 45% in Western Australia.
- The proportion of Indigenous persons reporting drinking whole milk as the usual type of milk consumed was highest in Queensland (80%) and lowest in Victoria (62%).
- The proportion of Indigenous persons reporting usually adding salt after cooking was highest in Western Australia (57%) and lowest in Victoria (35%) and Tasmania/ Australian Capital Territory (37%).
- Non-Indigenous Australians were more likely to report eating five serves of vegetables or more than Indigenous Australians in New South Wales, Queensland and Western Australia. Rates were similar for Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians in Victoria (Table 2.22.4b).
- Non-Indigenous Australians were more likely to report eating five serves of fruit or more than Indigenous Australians in four jurisdictions for which data are presented (New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland and Western Australia) (Table 2.22.4b).
- Indigenous Australians were more likely to report whole milk as the usual type of milk consumed in the four jurisdictions for which data are presented.

Table 2.22.4a: Selected dietary habits, by state/territory, Indigenous persons aged 15 years and over, non-remote areas, 2004–05

Dietary behaviours	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas/ACT	NT	Aust.
(per cent)								
Vegetable intake								
Does not eat vegetables	1	3	2	2	n.p.	n.p.	n.p.	2
1 serve or less	24	22	19	29	n.p.	n.p.	n.p.	23
2–4 serves	67	62	70	55	n.p.	n.p.	n.p.	66
5 serves or more	8	12	9	14	n.p.	n.p.	n.p.	10
Total^(a)	100	100	100	100	n.p.	n.p.	n.p.	100
Fruit intake								
Does not eat fruit	13	11	13	9	n.p.	n.p.	n.p.	12
1 serve or less	46	45	46	46	n.p.	n.p.	n.p.	47
2–4 serves	39	40	38	39	n.p.	n.p.	n.p.	38
5 serves or more	2	3	3	6	n.p.	n.p.	n.p.	3
Total^(a)	100	100	100	100	n.p.	n.p.	n.p.	100
Usual type of milk consumed								
Whole	75	62	80	68	69	64	75	74
Low/reduced fat	13	22	10	22	15	21	14	15
Skim	6	6	6	3	9	9	6	6
Other ^(b)	1	6	2	1	2	2	2	2
<i>Total drinks milk</i>	<i>95</i>	<i>89</i>	<i>96</i>	<i>94</i>	<i>92</i>	<i>94</i>	<i>95</i>	<i>94</i>
Does not drink milk	4	4	2	5	5	4	4	4
Total^(c)	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Salt added after cooking								
Never/rarely	34	33	31	23	36	45	29	33
Sometimes	20	31	22	19	23	18	27	22
Usually	45	35	47	57	41	37	44	45
Total^(d)	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

n.p. Not published due to output restrictions for non-remote data items for these states and territories.

(a) Includes 'whether eats fruit/vegetables' not known.

(b) Includes soy milk and 'evaporated or sweetened condensed milk'.

(c) Includes 'usual type of milk' not known.

(d) Includes 'frequency salt is added after cooking' not known.

Source: AIHW analysis of 2004–05 NATSIHS.

Table 2.22.4b: Selected dietary habits, by Indigenous status, persons aged 15 years and over, non-remote areas, NSW, Vic, Qld and WA, 2004–05

Dietary behaviours	NSW			Vic			Qld			WA		
	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Ratio	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Ratio	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Ratio	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Ratio
	%	%		%	%		%	%		%	%	
Vegetable intake												
Does not eat vegs	1	1	1.2	2	1	4.5	2	1	3.2	1	1	2.2
1 serve or less	22	22	1.0	22	21	1.0	18	19	1.0	28	16	1.8
2–4 serves	68	65	1.0	62	63	1.0	71	66	1.1	56	66	0.8
5 serves or more	9	11	0.8	14	15	0.9	9	14	0.7	15	18	0.8
Total^(a)	100	100	..	100	100	..	100	100	..	100	100	..
Fruit intake												
Does not eat fruit	12	7	1.6	10	7	1.5	13	8	1.6	9	6	1.5
1 serve or less	44	40	1.1	45	39	1.2	45	41	1.1	46	39	1.2
2–4 serves	42	49	0.9	42	50	0.8	39	47	0.8	38	50	0.8
5 serves or more	2	4	0.6	3	5	0.7	3	4	0.7	6	5	1.3
Total^(a)	100	100	..	100	100	..	100	100	..	100	100	..
Whole	74	47	1.6	59	41	1.4	76	48	1.6	64	41	1.6
Low/reduced fat	14	27	0.5	23	35	0.7	12	30	0.4	26	39	0.7
Skim	7	14	0.5	6	13	0.5	7	12	0.6	3	10	0.3
Other ^(b)	2	6	0.2	8	6	1.3	2	5	0.4	1	4	0.3
<i>Total drinks milk</i>	<i>95</i>	<i>88</i>	<i>3.0</i>	<i>88</i>	<i>89</i>	<i>3.0</i>	<i>95</i>	<i>90</i>	<i>3.0</i>	<i>94</i>	<i>90</i>	<i>3.0</i>
Does not drink milk	4	5	0.7	4	5	0.8	3	5	0.5	5	5	0.9
Total^(c)	100	100	..	100	100	..	100	100	..	100	100	..

(a) Includes 'whether eats fruit/vegetables' not known.

(b) Includes soy milk and 'evaporated or sweetened condensed milk'.

(c) Includes 'usual type of milk' not known.

Note: Data for SA, Tas, ACT and NT are not presented due to output restrictions for non-remote data items for these states and territories.

Source: AIHW analysis of 2004–05 NATSIHS and 2004–05 National Health Survey.

Dietary habits by remoteness

- Fruit and vegetables may be less accessible to Indigenous people in remote areas. In remote areas 20% of Indigenous Australians aged 12 years and over reported no usual daily fruit intake compared with 12% in non-remote areas. The disparity was even greater for vegetables, where 15% of Indigenous people in remote areas reported no usual daily intake compared with 2% in non-remote areas (Table 2.22.5).
- Indigenous people in remote areas were more likely to report drinking whole milk (87%) than those in non-remote areas (76%).
- Indigenous people in remote areas were more likely than those in non-remote areas to report sometimes or usually adding salt after cooking (83% compared with 66%) (Table 2.22.5).

Table 2.22.5: Selected dietary habits, by remoteness, Indigenous persons aged 12 years and over, 2004–05

Dietary behaviours	Remote	Non-remote	Total
	%	%	%
Vegetable intake			
Eats vegetables daily	84	98	95
Does not eat vegetables daily	15	2	5
Total^(a)	100	100	100
Fruit intake			
Eats fruit daily	80	88	86
Does not eat fruit daily	20	12	14
Total^(a)	100	100	100
Usual type of milk consumed			
Whole	87	76	79
Low/reduced fat	4	14	11
Skim	2	5	5
Soy	— ^(e)	1	1
None of the above ^(b)	1 ^(e)	1 ^(e)	1 ^(e)
<i>Total drinks milk</i>	95	97	96
Does not drink milk	5	3	4
Total^(c)	100	100	100
Salt added after cooking			
Never/rarely	16	35	30
Sometimes	30	23	25
Usually	53	43	46
Total^(d)	100	100	100

(a) Includes 'whether eats fruit/vegetables' not known.

(b) Includes 'evaporated or sweetened condensed milk'.

(c) Includes 'usual type of milk' not known.

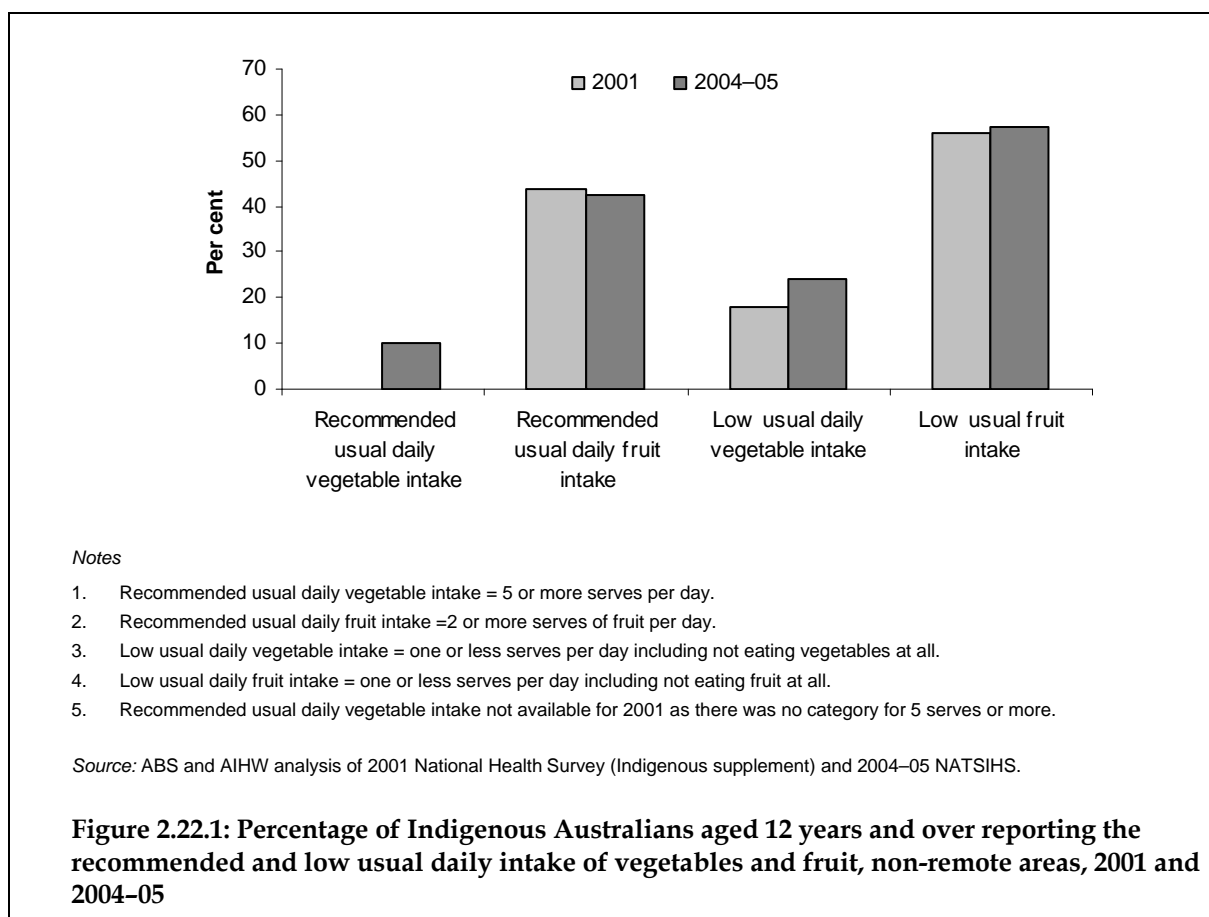
(d) Includes 'frequency salt is added after cooking' not known.

(e) Estimate is subject to sampling variability too high for most practical purposes.

Source: ABS 2006a.

Time series analysis

- In 2004–05, approximately 24% of Indigenous Australians aged 12 years and over reported a low usual daily vegetable intake (one or less serves per day) compared to 18% in 2001 (ABS 2002). The proportion reporting a low usual daily fruit intake (one or less serves per day) was similar in 2001 and 2004–05 (56% and 58% respectively) (Figure 2.22.1).



Fruit and vegetable intake by selected health and population characteristics

- In 2004–05, a higher proportion of Indigenous Australians with reported fair/poor health reported no usual daily vegetable intake and/or no usual daily fruit intake than Indigenous persons with excellent/very good health status (Table 2.22.6).
- Indigenous Australians aged 15 years and over in the lowest quintile of income were much more likely than Indigenous Australians in the highest quintile of household income to report no usual daily fruit and/or vegetable intake.
- Indigenous Australians who completed Year 9 or below as their highest year of school and did not have a non-school qualification were also much more likely to report no usual daily fruit and/or vegetable intake than Indigenous Australians whose highest year of school completed was Year 12 and who had a non-school qualification.
- A higher proportion of Indigenous people who were renting reported no usual daily vegetable intake (7%) and no usual daily fruit intake (16%) than Indigenous people who were home owners (1% and 11% respectively).

Table 2.22.6: Dietary risk behaviours, by selected health and population characteristics, Indigenous persons aged 15 years and over, 2004–05

	No usual vegetable intake	No usual daily fruit intake
	%	%
Self-assessed health status		
Excellent/very good	4.7	12.9
Good	6.3	16.6
Fair/poor	6.5	16.2
Total	5.7	14.9
Household income		
1st quintile	7.8	16.8
5th quintile	0.2	5.8
Total	5.7	14.9
Financial stress— unable to raise \$2,000 within a week for something important	2.6	10.4
Highest year of school completed		
Year 12	3.8	9.4
Year 9 or below	7.7	16.9
Total	5.7	14.9
Whether has non-school qualification		
Has a non-school qualification	3.3	13.3
Does not have a non-school qualification	7.2	16.1
Total	5.7	14.9
Employment		
Employed	5.0	14.3
Unemployed	4.0	14.4
Not in the labour force	6.8	15.6
Total	5.7	14.9
Housing		
Owner	0.5	11.1
Renter	7.4	16.4
Total	5.7	14.9
Stressors in last 12 months^(a)		
Serious illness or disability	6.2	14.6
Other stressors	5.7	14.7
Total experienced stressors	5.8	14.7
No stressors	4.6	15.3
Total	5.6	14.8
Total number persons aged 15 years and over	16,681	43,610

(a) Persons aged 18 years and over.

Source: AIHW analysis of 2004–05 NATSIHS.

Whether ran out of food in the last 12 months

- In 2004–05, approximately 24% of Indigenous Australians aged 15 years and over reported they ran out of food in the last 12 months compared to 5% of non-Indigenous Australians (Table 2.22.7).
- Approximately 8% of Indigenous people reported they went without food when they couldn't afford to buy more compared to 2% of non-Indigenous people.
- Indigenous Australians in the younger age groups were most likely to report they went without food when they couldn't afford to buy more.
- The proportion of Indigenous Australians who reported they ran out of food in the last 12 months was much higher in the Northern Territory (45%) than the other states and territories (between 19% and 29%).
- Indigenous Australians aged 15 years and over living in remote areas were more likely to report having run out of food in the last 12 months (36%) than Indigenous Australians in non-remote areas (20%).

Table 2.22.7: Proportion of Indigenous persons aged 15 years and over that ran out of food and couldn't afford to buy more at some time over the last 12 months,^(a) 2004–05

	Ran out of food											
	Went without food when couldn't afford to buy any more			Did not go without food			Total ran out of food			Did not run out of food		
	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Rate ratio	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Rate ratio	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Rate ratio	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Rate ratio
	%	%		%	%		%	%		%	%	
Sex												
Males	7	2	3.7	14	3	5.7	21	4	4.9	79	96	0.8
Females	8	2	4.1	18	3	5.7	27	5	5.1	73	95	0.8
Persons	8	2	4.0	17	3	5.7	24	5	5.0	76	95	0.8
Age												
15–24	8	4	2.1	17	5	3.2	24	9	2.7	76	91	0.8
25–34	8	3	3.0	19	4	4.5	27	7	4.0	73	93	0.8
35–44	9	2	4.4	17	4	4.6	26	6	4.5	74	94	0.8
45–54	7	2	3.3	14	2	6.3	21	4	4.9	79	96	0.8
55+	5	1	8.7	12	1	13.2	17	2	11.4	83	98	0.8
State/territory												
NSW	7	2	3.9	11	2	4.8	18	4	4.4	82	96	0.9
Victoria	10	2	5.1	12	3	3.9	21	5	4.4	79	95	0.8
Qld	7	2	3.3	13	4	3.8	21	6	3.6	79	94	0.8
WA	8	2	4.3	18	3	5.7	26	5	5.2	74	95	0.8
SA	9	2	4.4	20	3	6.7	29	5	5.7	71	95	0.8
Tas/ACT	9	2	4.1	10	4	2.7	19	6	3.2	81	94	0.9
NT	7	—	—	38	3	14.7	45	3	17.4	55	97	0.6
Australia	8	2	4.0	17	3	5.7	24	5	5.0	76	95	0.8
Remoteness area												
Remote	7	1	5.1	28	4	8.1	36	5	7.2	64	95	0.7
Non remote	8	2	4.0	12	3	4.1	20	5	4.1	80	95	0.8
Total	8	2	4.0	17	3	5.7	24	5	5.0	76	95	0.8
Total no.	19,676	283,628	..	42,674	425,252	..	62,350	708,880	..	19,5913	1.4 mill	..

(a) Information for some persons aged 15–17 years was provided by a parent or guardian.

Source: AIHW analysis of 2004–05 NATSIHS.

Data quality issues

National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey (NATSIHS)

The NATSIHS uses the standard Indigenous status question. The NATSIHS sample was specifically designed to select a representative sample of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians and thus overcomes the problem inherent in most national surveys with small and unrepresentative Indigenous samples. As with other surveys, the NATSIHS is subject to sampling and non-sampling errors. Calculations of standard errors and significance testing help to identify the accuracy of the estimates and differences.

Information recorded in this survey is essentially 'as reported' by respondents. The ABS makes every effort to collect accurate information from respondents, particularly through careful questionnaire design, pre-testing of questionnaires, use of trained interviewers and assistance from Indigenous facilitators. Nevertheless, some responses may be affected by imperfect recall or individual interpretation of survey questions.

Non-Indigenous comparisons are available through the National Health Survey (NHS). The NHS was conducted in major cities, regional and remote areas, but very remote areas were excluded from the sample. Time series comparisons are available through the 1995 and 2001 National Health Survey.

In remote communities there were some modifications to the NATSIHS content in order to address language and cultural appropriateness in traditional communities, as well as to assist respondents in understanding the concepts. Some questions were excluded and some reworded. Also, paper forms were used in communities in remote areas and computer-assisted interview (CAI) instruments were used in non-remote areas. The CAI process included built in edit checks and sequencing.

Further information on NATSIHS data quality issues can be found in the national publication (ABS 2006a).

Dietary behaviour data

The questions on dietary behaviour are complex as respondents needed to understand and apply the inclusions/exclusions, understand the concept of a serve and assess their consumption levels accordingly, and think about their total consumption in what would constitute an average day. Overall, it is considered that the indicators of vegetable and fruit intake in the non-remote component of the 2004–05 NATSIHS are of a lower quality than most other items from the survey, but are considered sufficiently reliable for the purposes of assessing broad intake levels for population groups, and comparisons between population groups. Use of the data for other purposes should be undertaken with care. Data for all those aged 12–14 years, and 68% of those aged 15–17 years, were provided by a proxy, usually a parent. As a result, the data reflect the parent's knowledge of the child's consumption; this is likely to be less accurate for usual consumption of fruit items than for the type of milk and usual consumption of vegetables items collected in non-remote areas (ABS 2006b).

Picture prompt cards were used to assist non-remote respondents in understanding the concept of a serve; one prompt card showed six examples of single serves of different vegetables and another card showed six single serves of fruit. If respondents had difficulty in reporting, interviewers were encouraged to prompt in terms of asking respondents about their usual consumption of vegetables and fruit at breakfast, lunch and dinner and for snacks. Remote respondents were asked whether they usually ate fruit and/or vegetables each day. In addition to products excluded in non-remote areas (see definitions above), fruit or vegetables considered to be bush tucker were also excluded.

In remote areas the questions on vegetable and fruit intake were amended to whether usually ate fruit and/or vegetables each day. Therefore it is not possible to produce indicators based on usual serves for remote areas from the 2004–05 NATSIHS.

References

ABS (Australian Bureau of Statistics) 2002. National Health Survey: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander results, Australia 2001. ABS cat. no. 4715.0. Canberra: ABS.

ABS 2006a. National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey 2004–05. ABS cat. no. 4715.0. Canberra: ABS.

ABS 2006b. National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey: user's guide 2004–05. ABS cat. no. 4715.0. Canberra: ABS.