



## Savoury junk foods, including fast food, hot fried potato products and salty snacks.

Savoury junk foods are discretionary foods that are high in saturated fat, added salt, low in fibre, and tend to be high in energy (kilojoules). These foods are associated with increased risk of obesity and chronic diseases<sup>1</sup>. The Australian Dietary Guidelines recommend discretionary foods be limited in the diet and only eaten occasionally in small amounts<sup>1</sup>.



The **WA Nutrition Monitoring Survey 2022** indicates that Western Australian adults overconsume savoury junk foods.

- One-third (32 per cent) of adults eat savoury junk foods four or more times a week.
- Adults aged 18 to 34 years are the most frequent consumers of savoury junk foods, with 42 per cent eating these foods four or more times a week.
- Males (39 per cent) are more likely than females (26 per cent) to consume savoury junk foods four or more times a week.

### How often do Western Australian adults usually eat fast food, including burgers, kebabs, pizza, fried chicken, meat pies, sausage rolls, or fried fish?

- Overall, almost half (45 per cent) of all adults usually eat fast food once or twice a week.
- Males (52 per cent) are more likely than females (38 per cent) to eat fast food once or twice a week.
- Adults aged 18 to 34 years (14 per cent) are twice as likely as those aged 35 to 49 years (7 per cent) to eat fast food more than twice a week.

### How often do Western Australian adults usually eat hot fried potato products, including hot chips, French-fries, wedges, hash browns or fried potatoes?

- Overall, almost half (44 per cent) of all adults usually eat hot fried potato products once or twice a week.
- More than half (53 per cent) of males eat hot fried potato products once or twice a week, compared with more than one-third (37 per cent) of females.
- Adults aged 18 to 34 years (15 per cent) are twice as likely to eat hot fried potato products more than twice a week compared with adults aged 35 to 49 years (7 per cent).

### How often do Western Australian adults usually eat potato crisps, corn chips, pretzels, salted crackers or other salty snacks?

- Overall, more than one-third (36 per cent) of adults usually eat salty snacks once or twice a week.
- Females (16 per cent) are more likely than males (9 per cent) to eat salty snacks more than twice a week.
- Adults aged 18 to 34 years (14 per cent) and 35 to 49 years (16 per cent) are more likely to eat salty snacks more than twice a week, compared with adults aged 50 years and older (10 per cent).

### Intentions of Western Australian adults who eat fast food

Respondents were asked if they were 'trying', 'thinking about trying', or 'not thinking about trying' to eat less fast food. Those who reported never or rarely eating fast food were excluded from this analysis (Table 1).

- Overall, more than half (54 per cent) of all respondents are 'not thinking about eating less fast food'.
- Younger adults (aged 18 to 34 years) are more likely to be 'trying to eat less fast food' (33 per cent) or 'thinking about trying to eat less fast food' (26 per cent) than older age groups.
- More males (20 per cent) than females (14 per cent) are 'thinking about trying to eat less fast food'.
- Adults with overweight (34 per cent), or obesity (30 per cent) are more likely to be 'trying to eat less fast food' compared with those with a healthy weight (20 per cent).

<sup>1</sup>National Health and Medical Research Council: Australian Dietary Guidelines (2023). Discretionary food and drink choices. <https://www.eatforhealth.gov.au/food-essentials/discretionary-food-and-drink-choices>.

**Table 1. Intentions of Western Australian adults who eat fast food by age, gender, and BMI**



**29%**

of adults are trying to eat less fast food

% (95% CI)

**17%**

of adults are thinking about trying to eat less fast food

% (95% CI)

**54%**

of adults are not thinking about eating less fast food

% (95% CI)

Age (years)	29%	17%	54%
18 to 34	32.5 (32.4 – 32.6)	26.3 (26.2 – 26.4)	41.2 (41.1 – 41.4)
35 to 49	31.3 (31.1 – 31.4)	13.3 (13.2 – 13.4)	55.5 (55.3 – 55.6)
50+	23.2 (23.1 – 23.3)	10.5 (10.4 – 10.6)	66.3 (66.2 – 66.4)
Sex			
Females	30.2 (30.1 – 30.3)	13.5 (13.4 – 13.6)	56.3 (56.2 – 56.5)
Males	28.0 (27.9 – 28.1)	19.5 (19.4 – 19.6)	52.5 (52.4 – 52.6)
BMI classification			
Healthy weight	20.2 (20.1 – 20.4)	14.8 (14.7 – 14.9)	65.0 (64.8 – 65.1)
Overweight	34.1 (34.0 – 34.2)	13.7 (13.6 – 13.8)	52.2 (52.0 – 52.3)
Obese	30.2 (30.0 – 30.3)	20.1 (20.0 – 20.3)	49.7 (49.6 – 49.8)

**What influences Western Australian adults to eat less fast food?**

Of those who are trying to eat less fast food, the top four influences to eat less fast food were:



**86%**

**Improve my health**



**71%**

**Look or feel better**



**60%**

**Lose weight**



**13%**

**Medical advice**

- Almost one-quarter (22 per cent) of males are influenced by 'advice from a doctor or other health professional', compared with 5 per cent of females.
- Adults with obesity (13 per cent) are more likely to be influenced by 'a health education campaign (TV or radio ad)' compared with adults with overweight (9 per cent) or a healthy weight (1 per cent).
- Non-metropolitan residents (22 per cent) are twice as likely to be influenced by 'advice from a doctor or other health professional', compared with metropolitan residents (11 per cent).

**What would make it easier for Western Australian adults or their families to eat a healthier diet?**

The top enablers reported by adults that would make it easier to eat a healthier diet are:

<b>1</b>	More healthy choices available when buying a meal or a snack	89%
<b>2</b>	If healthy food was cheaper	85%
<b>3</b>	More options for smaller portion sizes when eating out	78%
<b>4</b>	If food and drink labels were easier to understand	72%
<b>5</b>	Having a better understanding of the Australian Dietary Guidelines	71%
<b>6</b>	Less advertising for junk food	70%
<b>7</b>	Less specials and promotions for junk food and drink in supermarkets	70%
<b>8</b>	Knowing more ways of preparing healthy food	70%
<b>9</b>	Getting information from a health professional	70%