



'BETTER VENDING' FOR HEALTH

GUIDELINES



WHY DO WE NEED 'BETTER VENDING'?

Consumers want a range of food and drinks available to them that are convenient, taste good, and include some healthier choices.

Vending machines have traditionally sold snack foods and drinks that are high in energy, fat (especially saturated fat), sugar, and salt – and low in important nutrients. These items are often sold in 'supersized' (e.g. mega, jumbo & king-size) portions and it can be difficult to know what a healthier choice is within the available range.

The three District Health Boards in the Auckland region and some key stakeholders have developed the 'Better Vending' guideline to provide direction for stocking vending machines with food and drinks that have lower levels of energy, fat, sugar and salt. This means that when you or your clients grab a quick and easy snack, you'll consume less energy (or kilojoules) than previously. Small changes like this make a big difference – and help you avoid the weight gain which typically happens over time.

More than half of New Zealand adults (54%) and about one third of our children (31%) are overweight or obese. These rates have more than doubled in the past 30 years.

Weight gain happens when energy in (from food and drinks) is greater than energy out (from maintaining body processes and physical activity). Overweight and obesity are linked with increased risks of developing chronic diseases - like diabetes, heart disease and some cancers.



WHAT IS 'BETTER VENDING'?

The 'Better Vending for Health' guidelines will improve the nutritional quality and range of snack food choices available in vending machines. They classify snack items as 'Better Choice' or 'Other Choice' according to saturated fat, sodium and energy limits.

The guidelines will allow individual worksites to adapt the proportions of 'Better Choices' required to suit their own environments, for example:

Worksite A: 50% Better Choices / 50% Other Choices

Worksite B: 60% Better Choices / 40% Other Choices

A minimum of 30% 'Better Choices' is recommended, with this ratio able to be progressively altered over time to increase availability.

The agreement of a single guideline (starting in the Auckland region) will enable vending machine suppliers and food manufacturers to have a consistent goal in developing a suitable range of vended snack foods.

'BETTER VENDING' FOR HEALTH GUIDELINES

	ENERGY	SATURATED FAT	SODIUM
BETTER CHOICES	≤ 800kJ per packet*	≤ 1.5g/100g	≤ 450mg/100g
	Excludes confectionery items: i.e. soft / hard lollies, marshmallows, licorice, chocolate, carob or chewing gum. Sugar-free varieties are also excluded.		
OTHER CHOICES	≤ 800kJ per packet	—	—

* For packets containing more than one serve of an item, it is the packet size (not the serving size) that must meet these guidelines.



Reasons for this approach...

- ▶ To maximise consumer choice, increasing the range of 'Better Choices' available, while still retaining some old favourites in smaller packages.
- ▶ Limiting energy (or kJ) automatically limits the total fat and sugar content of items.
- ▶ Saturated fat is restricted in the 'Better Choice' range due to its association with increased risk of heart disease.
- ▶ Sodium is limited in the 'Better Choice' range due to its association with increased blood pressure (and therefore heart disease).
- ▶ These cut-offs have been developed based on best available evidence and to maintain consistency with existing NZ food profiling systems such as the Ministry of Health 'Food & Beverage Classification System'.
- ▶ Confectionery is excluded from the 'Better Choice' range as it has high sugar content and / or no useful nutrients.

UNDERSTANDING LABELS

Here is some information to help you make sense of the Nutrition Information Panels (NIPs) on food labels.

SERVES PER PACKAGE: 1.5		
SERVING SIZE: 30g		
	Average per serve	Average per 100g
ENERGY	770kJ	2563kJ
FAT, TOTAL	16.7g	55.7g
Saturated	0g	0g
Carbohydrate		
Sugars	1.2g	4.0g
Fibre	2.2g	7.3g

Check the manufacturer's stated number of serves per package – and adjust for this when checking if the item is less than 800kJ **per package**.

To check the saturated fat and sodium content, look in the 'average per 100g' column.

X This package does NOT meet the guidelines as it contains more than 800kJ (i.e. $1.5 \times 770 = 1155\text{kJ}$).

SERVES PER PACKAGE: 1		
SERVING SIZE: 30g		
	Average per serve	Average per 100g
ENERGY	770kJ	2563kJ
FAT, TOTAL	16.7g	55.7g
Saturated	0g	0g
Carbohydrate		
Sugars	1.2g	4.0g
Fibre	2.2g	7.3g
Sodium	2.0mg	6.7mg

EXAMPLE 1

RAW ALMONDS - 30g

- ✓ In this example, there is only 1 serve, so energy per package is 770kJ.
- ✓ This item has 0g saturated fat per 100g.
- ✓ This item has 6.7mg of sodium per 100g.

✓ This item is a 'Better Choice'; it meets the guidelines for energy, saturated fat, and sodium, and it is not a confectionery item.



SERVES PER PACKAGE: 1		
SERVING SIZE: 40g		
	Average per serve	Average per 100g
ENERGY	720kJ	1800kJ
FAT, TOTAL	6.4g	16.0g
Saturated	1.2g	3.0g
Carbohydrate		
Sugars	10.6g	26.5g
Fibre	2.2g	7.3g
Sodium	2.0mg	200mg

EXAMPLE 2

CHOCOLATE CHIP BISCUIT - 40g

- ✓ Energy per package is 720kJ.
- X Saturated fat is higher than 1.5g per 100g.
- ✓ This item has 200mg of sodium per 100g.

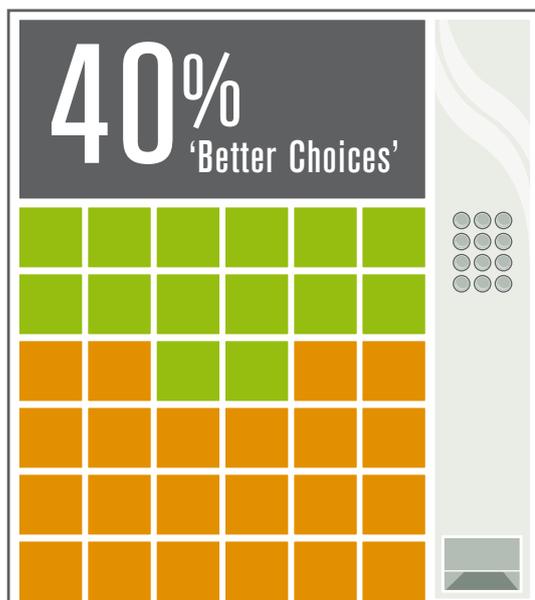
X This item is an 'Other Choice' because even though it meets the energy and sodium guidelines, it has high saturated fat content.



MAKING 'BETTER VENDING' WORK FOR YOU

Ideas for promoting the 'Better Choice' items in your vending machine:

- ▶ Place them at eye-level in the machine.
- ▶ Identify 'Better Choice' items with signage/labels.
- ▶ Subsidise 'Better Choice' items, if practical, with profits from 'Other' items.



WHAT ABOUT BEVERAGES?

We recommend that you adhere to the Waitemata Beverage Guidelines:

Waitemata DHB BEVERAGE GUIDELINES

DRINK MOST

GREEN BEVERAGES

Encourage and promote these beverages.

- > Water
- > Plain, reduced-fat milk and calcium enriched soy beverages.

DRINK IN MODERATION

AMBER BEVERAGES

Limit the sale of these beverages. These beverages offer some nutritional value or provide lower levels of energy (kilojoules (kJ))* than beverages in the RED category.

- > Fruit juices - 250ml package size or smaller
- > Reduced-fat, flavoured milk, calcium enriched soy beverages and drinking yoghurts - 350ml package size or smaller
- > Artificially sweetened carbonated beverages - 400ml package size or smaller
- > Sports beverages, sports waters and flavoured waters with less than 50kJ per 100mls - 450ml package size or smaller
- > Fruit drinks with less than 90kJ per 100mls - 350ml package size or smaller.

DRINK LESS

RED BEVERAGES

Do not sell these beverages. These beverages offer limited nutritional value or contribute excess energy (kilojoules (kJ)).

- > Carbonated sweetened beverages
- > Full-fat, plain and flavoured milks
- > Fruit drinks and cordials with more than 90kJ per 100mls
- > Sports beverages, sports waters and flavoured waters with more than 50kJ per 100mls
- > Any beverage listed in the AMBER category that is larger than the recommended package size.

* The energy content of a food or beverage is measured using kilojoules (kJ).
Excess energy intake leads to weight gain.



COMMON QUESTIONS

(and answers)

1 Who is responsible for determining the proportion of 'better choices' compared with 'other choices' in the vending machines?

The host site will determine what percentage of better choice items they would like placed in the machine.

2 Who will implement the changes to the vending machines?

The vending company is responsible for ensuring the machine is filled with the percentage of 'better' and 'other' choices that the host site has requested.

3 It sounds like a lot of extra work for the vending company?

No, it shouldn't be. There has been a lot of work done to identify a range of foods that meet the criteria. The only other commitment will be the initial time spent on changing the vending items over. This small time input will have a big pay-off for your own and your clients' health.

4 Can we make changes to include 'better choices' in our vending machines and still maintain our profits from the commission?

As long as you have a range of snack items available, people are likely to still purchase something when they are hungry. You may even find that consumer satisfaction and consequent usage increases as a wider range of choices are now available.

5 Why shouldn't I be able to buy high fat, high salt foods from my workplace vending machine? You can't take away my freedom of choice...

- ▶ This guideline still permits a range of high fat / salt snacks to be sold from your vending machine but they may be in a more appropriate package size than previously.
- ▶ The move to better vending will increase the choices available to you - and it gives people wanting 'better choices' items to select from as well.

6 Who set these limits and what evidence are they based on?

The limits in this guideline were established by a group of health professionals with nutrition expertise from the following organisations in Auckland: Waitemata DHB, Auckland DHB, Counties Manukau DHB, Auckland Regional Public Health Service, National Heart Foundation of New Zealand, and the University of Auckland's Clinical Trials Research Unit.

Justification for the use of energy, saturated fat and sodium as nutrients to be limited can be found in the following documents / reports:

- ▶ Food and Nutrition Guidelines for Healthy Adults: A background paper. Ministry of Health. 2003.
- ▶ The Burden of Disease and Injury in New Zealand. Ministry of Health. 2001.

In addition, participants in this project looked closely at what was available in the current food market, to be able to develop a guideline that is both simple to use, and able to be achieved.





FOR MORE

INFORMATION

For further information, you can contact:

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The 'Heartbeat Challenge' team
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www.arphs.govt.nz/promoting_health/heartbeat.asp

The following organisations have participated in the development of the 'Better Vending for Health' Guidelines:

Waitemata District Health Board
Counties Manukau District Health Board
Auckland District Health Board
Auckland Regional Public Health Service
The National Heart Foundation of New Zealand
Clinical Trials Research Unit, University of Auckland



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