Healthy eating and living in the Pacific during COVID-19

No food can prevent COVID-19 infection. However, it is important to maintain a healthy diet for your health, immunity and nutritional well-being, especially before, during and after an infection. Aim to eat a variety of local foods, consume less highly processed foods, and choose a balance across different food groups.

### Eating a variety of foods daily is key to ensure adequate intake of nutrients

Choose, prepare and eat those foods with less added salt, fat and sugar.

#### Protein-rich foods (35%)
- Fish, chicken, meat, eggs, dried beans, nuts, seeds and milk

#### Energy foods (50%)
- Fresh locally grown vegetables and fruits like leafy greens, tomatoes, cucumber, papayas and ripe bananas provide vitamins, minerals and fiber to strengthen immunity for preventing illness and infection.

#### Body-building foods (15%)
- Limit foods that contribute to obesity and non-communicable diseases
- Consume less foods and drinks with lots of fat, salt, and added sugars such as cakes, ice cream, soft drinks, noodles, deep-fried foods, sausages, fatty meat, condiments and canned food.

#### Protective foods
- Eat five or more portions of vegetables and fruits every day to keep you healthy
- Drinking 6-8 glasses of clean water a day helps your immune system and assists in maintaining a healthy weight.

### Limit foods that contribute to obesity and non-communicable diseases

Consume less foods and drinks with lots of fat, salt, and added sugars such as cakes, ice cream, soft drinks, noodles, deep-fried foods, sausages, fatty meat, condiments and canned food.

- Read labels to help choose products lower in fat, salt, and added sugars
- Avoid alcohol, kava, betel nuts and all forms of tobacco as a way of coping with the stress of lockdowns.

### Eat five or more portions of vegetables and fruits every day to keep you healthy

Limit trips to markets or supermarkets. Eat fresh fruits and vegetables but dried or canned fruits and vegetables are also good.

### Drink plenty of clean water every day

Drinking 6-8 glasses of clean water a day helps your immune system and assists in maintaining a healthy weight.

### Avoid alcohol, kava, betel nuts and all forms of tobacco as a way of coping with the stress of lockdowns.

- Don’t share bottles, cigarettes, and kava bowls to reduce risks of transmission
- Manage stress through a healthy lifestyle, i.e., a healthy diet, adequate sleep, maintaining social connections while following physical distancing rules
- Seek advice from a health worker or counselor if you are feeling overwhelmed

### Be physically active on a daily basis

Be physically active every day for at least 30 minutes (e.g. brisk walking) 5-7 days a week. Being physically active has a variety of benefits including helping to reduce blood pressure, control body weight and reduce risks of heart diseases, stroke, diabetes, and some cancers.

### For infants and young children

According to WHO guidelines, exclusive breastfeeding is recommended for the first six months. Continue breastfeeding up to two years and beyond, along with complementary feeding. Follow UNICEF’s advice on breastfeeding your infants while applying all the necessary precautions.

- Protein-rich foods like fish, chicken, meat, eggs, dried beans, nuts, seeds and milk
- Body-building foods
- Protective foods
- Energy foods

### For further information please email SAP-SRC@fao.org