



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.

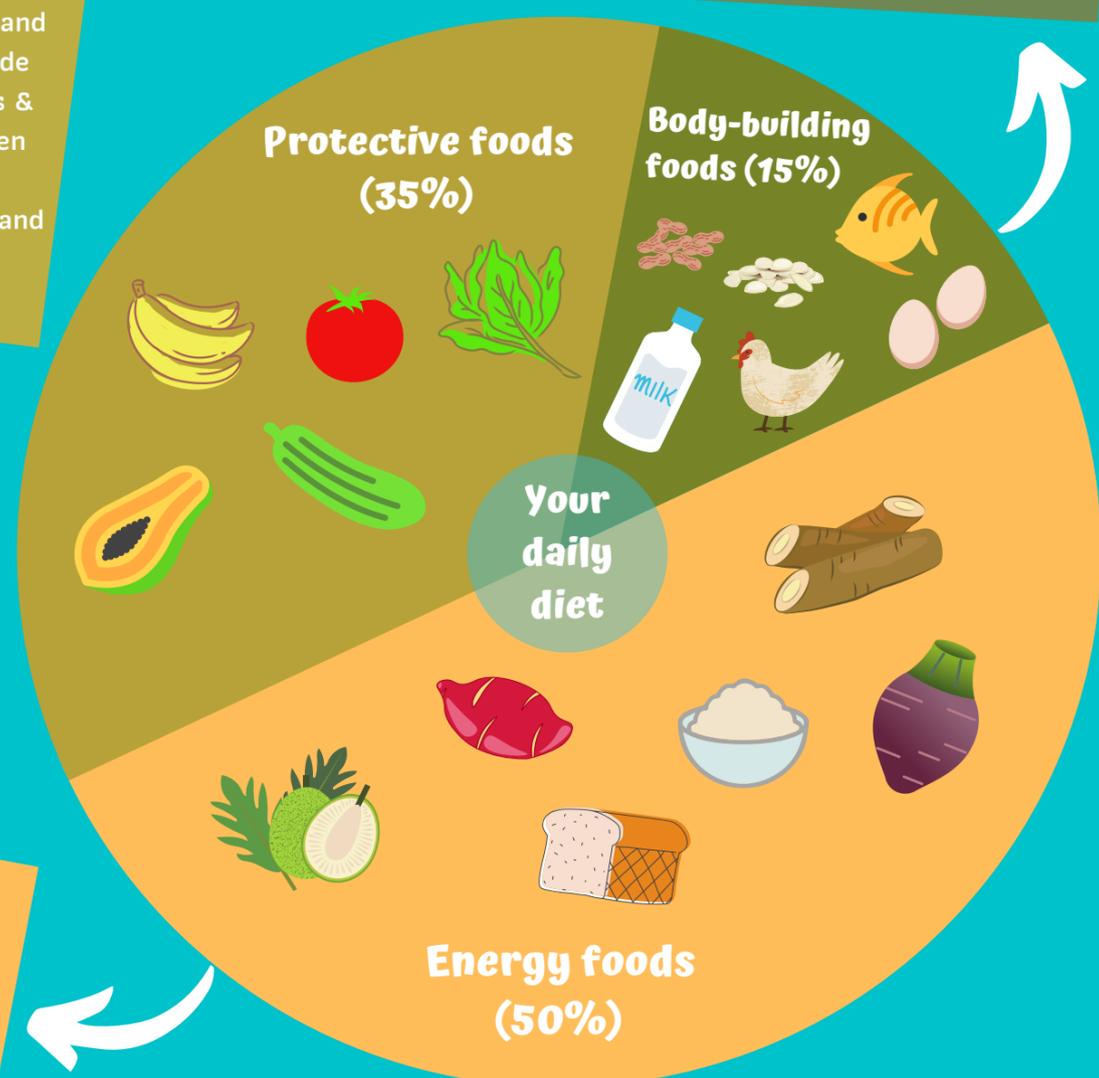
FAO recommends*

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

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

Fresh locally grown vegetables and fruits like leafy greens, tomato, cucumber, capsicum, papaya, and ripe banana provide vitamins, minerals & fiber to strengthen immunity for preventing illness and infection.

Protein-rich foods like fish, chicken, meat, eggs, dried beans, nuts, seeds and milk renew your body and immune system.



Taro, yams, cassava, sweet potato, breadfruit, brown rice and whole wheat bread give you energy.

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.



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.

- 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



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.



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.



MORE INFO

[FAO COVID-19 update website](#)
[WHO COVID-19 public advice](#)
[Pacific guidelines for healthy living](#)
[WHO physical distancing advice](#)

[UNICEF advice on Easy, affordable and healthy eating tips](#)
[WHO advice on physical activity during COVID-19](#)
[UNICEF on breastfeeding](#)

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

*Adapted from [FAO guidance on maintaining a healthy diet during the COVID-19 pandemic](#)