

# Health benefits of pork consumption in the diets of Australian children

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## Main findings

- In a recent survey of the eating habits of Australian children aged 2 - 16 years old, approximately half of the children surveyed reported eating some type of pork.
- Of the children who ate pork, most reported eating processed pork such as ham and bacon, with only 7% of children reporting that they ate fresh pork.
- The type of pork eaten in the greatest amount was ham, followed by bacon.
- Children's cultural background may influence pork intake. Fewer children who reported eating pork had a primary carer born in Africa or the Middle East, compared to Australia, Europe and the United Kingdom.
- When considering the type of pork eaten, more children who reported eating fresh pork had a primary carer born in Asia (compared to Australia, Europe and the United Kingdom). In contrast, more children that reported eating processed pork had a primary carer born in Australia, Europe or the United Kingdom, compared to Asia.
- Pork was most commonly consumed at home at lunchtime.
- Vegetable products and dishes were the items eaten most frequently with pork.
- Children who reported eating pork had greater intakes of protein, phosphorous and zinc than children who did not eat pork.
- Pork contributed substantially to the intakes of a number of important nutrients, including protein, thiamin, zinc and niacin.
- Children who ate pork were more likely to meet their nutritional requirements for protein, calcium, iron, thiamin, riboflavin, phosphorous, zinc and iodine than children who did not eat pork.
- Despite finding that children who ate pork had a greater energy, total fat and saturated fat intake than children who did not eat pork, there was no difference in weight, waist circumference, or prevalence of overweight/obesity (categorised using body mass index) between children who ate pork and those that did not.