

- Adequate and **nutritious food** is essential for **good health**
- **Biological factors** of sex and life-stage affect women's nutritional needs
- Women's food choices and dietary practices are **strongly influenced** by **structural, social and economic factors**.

Summary

- Less than 30 per cent of women **eat the recommended** intake of fruit, vegetables, legumes and fish
- Women are at **greater risk of iron deficiency** than men, due to their higher need for iron during menstruation, pregnancy and menopause
- Women are still expected to do **more food work than men**, leading to an unequal burden of stress and time
- **Gendered social norms** dictate that women adopt the role of family food gatekeeper, as well as conscientious and healthy consumer
- Being female is the strongest risk factor for the **development of an eating disorder**, and eating disorders are the third most common chronic illness among young women
- Women are more likely than men to experience **food insecurity** in Australia and worldwide
- Better quality diet and food security is associated with **lower likelihood of depressive and anxiety** disorders in women
- Women's food access, behaviours and health outcomes are strongly influenced by the **socio-economic determinants** of income, education and location

We recommend:

- Development of a comprehensive and gender-sensitive **national food and nutrition policy**
- Strategies to **increase access** to, and affordability of, healthy food
- A **holistic and gendered approach to food insecurity** that addresses both its causes and impacts
- A **gendered approach to health promotion** that:
 - Not only focuses on individual behaviour change, but also addresses the multiple **social and economic factors** that influence women's food and eating behaviours
 - Focuses on **health**, not weight
 - **Challenges gender norms** and practices that position food work as women's work
 - Applies an **intersectional gender lens** to food-related health promotion campaigns and programs

