

Do meal kits tick the right boxes?

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During the pandemic, handy meal kit delivery services are helping to develop home cooking habits incorporating healthy ingredients such as vegetables, and a balance of less harmful fats and salt.

Meal kits services seem to be growing in popularity but there is very little research on those who use meal kits and what the potential nutritional benefits and risks may be," Australian nutrition and dietetics researchers say in a new paper in *Health Promotion International*.

"For example, we really don't know if they are better or worse than home cooking or takeaway food," says lead author Dr. Carly Moores, Registered Nutritionist, a Flinders University graduate and now postdoctoral research fellow at the University of Adelaide

The researchers reviewed a year's worth of recipes from a popular meal kit service, focusing on the qualities of the recipes—including ingredients and time to prepare meals.

Co-author Flinders University academic and Accredited Practising Dietitian Dr. Kacie Dickinson says a typical [recipe](#) contained about nine different ingredients, averaging three vegetables and three ingredients from the home pantry.

The meals took about 35 minutes to prepare and were found to be relatively high in energy from fat and protein. Meals were also relatively high in sodium with some exceeding the Australian Suggested Dietary Target for sodium (

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