

Meal Preparation (Assistive Technology)

- **Preparing meals can be difficult for some people**
- **Assistive technology (AT) can make meal preparation easier**

What impacts meal preparation?




“Meal preparation” means washing, peeling, cutting, stirring and all the other parts of cooking. Most people will stand for a long time to prepare their meals.

Doing your own cooking means you can have nutritious meals that you enjoy. However, some people who had polio might find some parts of meal preparation difficult. This might be because of fatigue, muscle weakness or difficulty using your hands.

What is available?

There is a very wide range of assistive technology (AT—also known as **aids and equipment**) available, and it is important that it meets your specific needs. Your health professional can recommend the best items for you.

Here are some examples of AT that you might use:

Common problems	Example AT	Photos of AT
Muscle weakness	Jar openers Kettle tippers Lightweight pots and pans	
Fatigue with cooking	Electric appliances Pre-cut foods Pre-packaged meals	
Fatigue with gathering and moving food items	Kitchen trolley Kitchen stool Kitchen walker	

Purchasing equipment

Most AT can be found on the Independent Living Centre Australia's [website](#). This site will direct you to companies selling the equipment.

Things to consider when choosing AT

There is a wide range of AT available. There are some key points to consider when choosing the right AT for you. To find a full list of considerations when choosing AT please see the [aids and equipment fact sheet](#).

Safety considerations

If you are using AT for meal preparation, you do need to think about safety. Here are some tips:

- Check for tripping hazards, such as bulky items on the floor
- Check that the AT is not damaged
- If you are not confident using the AT, make sure you ask for help
- If you are feeling unwell or dizzy, take a break
- Sharper knives will make preparing food easier, but be careful— the sharper they are, the more dangerous they become

Funding

There is a range of government and non-government funding to help you pay for your AT.

Each funding scheme is different. Some will only fund certain types of equipment. Check with your state funding organisation for more details about what is available for you.

To learn more, visit www.polioaustralia.org.au/lifestyle-aids-and-equipment and click the “Funding” tab.

Individual Help

- Ask your doctor for a referral to see an [Occupational Therapist \(OT\)](#)
- If you are having any swallowing difficulties, ask your doctor for a referral to see a Speech Pathologist
- Contact the [Independent Living Centre](#)

Thank you to Occupational Therapy students at Monash University for developing this fact sheet.

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