

# Health & Well-being

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Easy health, well-being and nutritional tips to help you lead a healthier life.





In this article, we offer some nutrition and lifestyle tips that can help you to achieve a healthier you. Reverse bad habits, protect your heart and boost your long-term health.

The information will help you to tweak your daily diet, stay active, manage your weight, get a better night's sleep, and generally lead a healthier lifestyle in a busy world. And you don't have to read it from cover to cover... skip ahead at any time to the sections that interest you.

Each section is presented in an easy-to-understand format:

- LEARN
- APPLY
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- COOK - MAKE



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# Vegetables

## LEARN

If there's one piece of nutrition advice that tops all others, it's this: Eat vegetables daily... and lots of them. With a long list of benefits resulting from their regular consumption, vegetables truly are the cornerstone of a healthy diet.

Lots of evidence suggests that eating vegetables can protect against stroke, heart disease and cancer, with some studies suggesting they may also protect against cataract formation, some lung diseases, diverticulosis, and high blood pressure.

A summary of recent studies shows that with each additional serving of vegetables you include in your daily diet, you reduce your risk of death by cancer and cardiovascular disease by 5%. This means that increasing from one serving of vegetables to five servings of vegetables each day, reduces your risk by 20%... that's huge!

Vegetables are 'nutrient dense'. This means they contain a high amount of nutrition (vitamins, minerals, fibre, etc.) for a very small amount of energy (calories). In a world where we're surrounded by foods that are high in energy and low in nutrition, increasing our vegetable intake is, without doubt, the best way of improving our long-term health.

## APPLY

It is recommended that eating five to eight servings of vegetables each day promotes good health. So, what does one serving of vegetables look like?

One serving of vegetables = 6070g = 1 cup of salad style vegetables = 1/2 a cup of cooked vegetables.

## DO

### 5 tips to help you meet your daily target:

1. Cut up carrot, celery, cucumber, and capsicum into sticks or grab green beans, snow peas and sugar snap peas to munch on throughout the day.
2. At dinner time, make it your goal to fill half of your plate with non-starchy vegetables (broccoli, beans, peas, carrots, pumpkin, etc.). Put them on your plate first and you'll naturally eat less of the other foods at that meal, but your plate will look just as full.
3. At the beginning of each week, create a big salad: leafy greens, carrot, capsicum, cucumber, red onion, etc. Divide it into 3-4 containers and you've got the vegetable portion of your lunches sorted for the first few days of the week.
4. Learn new ways of cooking vegetables that taste great -stir-frying, sautéing, BBQ-ing, roasting, steaming and blanching are all great ways to include more vegetables in your day. Flavour them with garlic, ginger, chillies, herbs, spices, lemon juice, vinegar, and extra-virgin olive oil.
5. Make up big batches of vegetable soups, stews and curries that are rich in a variety of vegetables. Keep your freezer stocked with these meals so you always have a vegetable-rich meal at your fingertips when you're busy.



# Cook

## Stir-fried chicken and vegetables

### Nutrition Information (per serving)

- Energy: 1780kJ (420 cal)
- Carbohydrate: 8g
- Protein: 42g
- Fat: 20g (4g saturated)
- Fibre: 3g

### Ingredients

- 2 tbsp sesame or peanut oil 720g chicken breast cut into 2cm chunks
- 1 Spanish onion, quartered, separate all the layers
- 1 clove of garlic, finely chopped or crushed
- 2cm x 2cm piece of fresh ginger cut into matchstick-size strips or 2 tsp minced ginger
- 1 small red chilli, de-seeded and finely chopped
- 1 red pepper cut into long strips
- 1 carrot cut into long strips
- 200g of sugar snap peas
- 1 bunch of baby Bok choy
- 2 tbsp salt-reduced soy sauce
- ½ cup dry sherry or Chinese rice wine
- 1 lime cut into wedges to serve
- 4 tsp sesame seeds to serve

### Method

- Heat 1 tbsp of oil in a large wok, add the chicken and toss until just golden. Remove from the wok and set aside.
- Heat the remaining oil in the wok and add the onion, garlic, ginger and chilli and toss for 2-3 minutes.
- Add the capsicum and carrot and continue to toss for another 2-3 minutes.
- Add the sugar snap peas and keep tossing, then add the chicken back into the wok and continue to toss.
- Combine the soy sauce and Chinese rice wine and add to the wok, continuing to toss.
- Add the Bok choy and toss until it's just wilted. Remove the wok from the heat and immediately serve into 4 bowls.
- Sprinkle each bowl with sesame seeds and serve with a wedge of lime. Enjoy

### Notes:

Stir-Fries need to be quick, so you don't overcook the vegetables. Cut and prepare all the ingredients before you start cooking. You can also add baby corn, Bok choy, eggplant, zucchini, or any other vegetable you like to the dish.

### HEART TIP

Dark green leafy and orange-yellow vegetables have been shown to offer the best protection against heart disease. These include broccoli, spinach, kale, chard, carrots, bok choy, brussels sprouts, cabbage, carrots, pumpkin, and capsicum. Include them in your daily diet.





# Fruit

## LEARN

Mother Nature knows that most of us have a sweet tooth... and so she gave us fruit!

Alongside vegetables, fruit is a vital part of a healthy, balanced diet. Fruit offers a range of health benefits when eaten daily and is a fantastic source of dietary fibre, vitamins, minerals, and other antioxidants.

Fruit also contains energy, in the form of natural sugar. This has recently confused some people about the positives or negatives of eating fruit.

The problem is not sugar which is a naturally occurring nutrient that the body breaks down to unlock energy. The problem with sugar is with the package that it arrives in.

Sugar can be delivered to the body for example, in an apple. One apple can deliver approximately 420kJ (100cals) of energy, 4g of fibre, 75% of your daily vitamin C needs, minerals, and other antioxidants. Fruit delivers sugar in a perfectly portioned package.

The same amount of sugar can also be delivered in 250ml of soft drink. It too contains 420kJ (100cals) of energy, but it offers nothing else. No fibre, no vitamins, no minerals, or other nutrients... just sugar. This lack of fibre makes it easy to overeat and consume too much.

Overconsumption is when your sugar intake becomes a problem.

Regular consumption of fruit, and vegetables, is associated with a reduced risk of cancer, cardiovascular disease, stroke and more. This is because fruits are rich in antioxidants -and not just one or two. There are hundreds of phytochemicals known as phenolics and flavonoids and their positive effect on our health likely has more to do with all the chemicals working together when we eat whole fruit than when we consume a nutrient on its own (e.g., when we pop a Vitamin C tablet).

## APPLY

It is recommended that eating two servings of fruit each day promotes good health. What does one serving of fruit look like?

One serving of fruit = 100g = 1 large piece = 2 small pieces = 1 cup of berries or melon pieces People often ask if you can eat more than two servings of fruit per day. If you're active and engage in a high amount of physical activity, eating more than two pieces of fruit is fine. It's much better to reach for an extra banana when you get hungry than a chocolate bar.

Just make sure that most of the fruit you eat is whole, rather than juice. Most juicing removes the fibre (pulp) which is the most important part.

It's the fibre in your food that fills you up and helps regulate your appetite. Don't fall for the hype around juices and juice cleanses.

Your body will thank you for just picking up an apple and taking a bite -the old-fashioned way!

## DO

### 6 tips to help you meet your daily target:

1. Cut it up -you're more likely to eat it if you cut your fruit into bite-sized pieces for snack time.
2. Keep a fruit bowl at your office or on your desk. Keep it stocked each week, so you always have a fresh, healthy snack on hand.
3. Learn to eat locally and seasonally. Fruit tastes so much better when you buy it fresh from local growers and markets. It's even cheaper and more nutritious when consumed this way.
4. Set yourself a goal of only snacking on fruit in between meals or for dessert.
5. Don't leave the house without throwing some fruit in your bag that you can eat on the run (an apple, banana, or mandarin).



6. Make a fruit and vegetable tasting plate with cut-up fruit and raw vegetables and place it on the coffee table for morning or afternoon tea. Let the family graze to their heart's content.

## A DAY'S WORTH OF FOOD ACHIEVING 2 + SERVES OF FRUIT PER DAY:

### Breakfast

Muesli with Greek yoghurt and a handful of fresh berries.

### Morning Tea

Banana 1 cup carrot and celery sticks with hummus.

### Lunch

Chicken and feta with 2 cups salad (green beans, green leafy mix, cucumber, capsicum) and chickpeas.

### Afternoon Tea

Cappuccino and a small handful of raw nuts.

### Dinner

Salmon with ½ a cup of sweet potato mash and 1 cup of steamed Asian greens (bok choy, Chinese broccoli or Pak Choy.)



420kj (100cals) 4g fibre

75% of daily vitamin C Plus, contains minerals and anti-oxidants.... = perfect portion of sugar



420kj (100cals)

No fibre, vitamins, minerals or anti-oxidants.

Only sugar



## HEART TIP

Include a wide variety of fruits, especially citrus and deep yellow-orange ones, which are especially important in reducing your risk of heart disease. Think oranges, mangoes, mandarins, and lemons.



# Fibre

## LEARN

You have millions of helpful little 'friends' ( your microbiome) inside your gut and it's important to your health to feed those friends with fibre.

Fibre is the term given to the edible components of plant-based foods that are not digested by or absorbed into the body. As a result, they travel through the digestive tract relatively untouched where they are then partially or completely fermented by bacteria (those 'friends' of yours) in the large intestine.

There are two main types of fibre -soluble and insoluble which function in different ways.

Together these fibres maintain gut health, feed our healthy gut bacteria, and moderate the frequency and consistency of our bowel movements.

Fibre works in several ways to reduce your risk of cardiovascular disease. Soluble fibre can directly lower blood cholesterol by binding to excreted cholesterol and eliminating it as waste.

Fibre can also act indirectly to reduce your risk of heart disease as fibre-rich foods tend to be more filling and contain lower amounts of energy, which can help in weight management.

Diets high in vegetables and legumes, which are good sources of fibre, are likely to be lower in saturated fat and salt... which also protect against cardiovascular disease.

## APPLY

The recommended intake of dietary fibre is 30g per day.

Major food sources of fibre are minimally processed plant foods:

Fruits, vegetables, legumes (including peas, beans and lentils), whole grains, nuts and seeds.

The information on the next page shows a day's worth of food that meets the recommended intake for fibre, as well as the recommendation for five servings of vegetables and two servings of fruit per day.

## DO

### 6 tips to help you meet your daily target:

1. Swap to wholemeal bread or even better, wholemeal bread with grains. Bread made with wholemeal flour has double the amount of fibre as white bread. Bread made with wholemeal flour as well as grains and seeds has three times the fibre content of white bread.
2. Keep the skins on your vegetables like potatoes, sweet potatoes, carrots, and zucchini.
3. Add a large tin of '4 Bean Mix' into any casseroles or mince dishes you make. Not only does this increase fibre but also reduces the cost of the meal per serve.
4. When baking, swap half of the required flour for wholemeal flour.
5. Aim for your 5 serves of vegetables each day. 1 serving is 1 cup of raw vegetables or 1/2 a cup of cooked vegetables.
6. Pack two pieces of fruit in your lunch every day. This means buying 14 pieces of fruit in your weekly grocery shop.





## Cook

### A DAY'S WORTH OF FOOD ACHIEVING 30G FIBRE PER DAY

Breakfast -Muesli with Greek yoghurt and a handful of fresh berries -5g

Morning Tea -1 cup of carrot and celery sticks with hummus + banana 8g

Lunch -Chicken and feta with 2 cups of salad (green beans, green leafy mix, cucumber, capsicum) and chickpeas -10g

Afternoon Tea -Cappuccino and a small handful of raw nuts -3g

Dinner -Salmon with 1/2 cup of sweet potato mash and 1 cup of steamed Asian greens (bok choy, Chinese broccoli or Pak Choy) -6g

= Total 32 grams of fibre

### Pancakes with Yogurt, Honey and Fruit

#### Ingredients

- 1 cup SR flour 1/2 cup oat bran
- 1.5 cups milk 1 egg
- 1 pinch salt
- 200g natural or greek yoghurt
- 1 punnet strawberries or other fresh fruit
- honey or pure maple syrup to drizzle

#### Method

- To make the pancake mixture. Combine the flour, oat bran, milk, egg and salt in a bowl and mix with an electric beater on high for 1-2 minutes until smooth.
- Heat a non-stick pan over medium heat and pour in 1/4 cup of pancake mixture. Cook for 2 minutes or until lightly golden and flip over to cook the other side.
- Remove from the pan and set aside. Repeat with the remaining mixture until all pancakes are cooked.
- Top each pancake with a dollop or two of yoghurt, strawberries and drizzle of honey. Serve and enjoy!

#### Notes:

Stir-Fries need to be quick, so you don't overcook the vegetables. Cut and prepare all the ingredients before you start cooking. You can also add baby corn, Bok choy, eggplant, zucchini, or any other vegetable you like to the dish.

#### HEART TIP

Include a wide variety of fruits, especially citrus and deep yellow-orange ones, which are especially important in reducing your risk of heart disease. Think oranges, mangoes, mandarins, and lemons.



# Salt

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## LEARN

Salt also referred to specifically as sodium, is a natural mineral, which has been used for flavouring and preserving our food for several thousands of years. Sodium is an essential mineral for many of the body's processes, from nerve activation to muscle contraction and much more.

However, too much salt can have detrimental effects on our cardiovascular health. Sodium draws water towards it and therefore high levels of sodium in our bloodstream draw more fluid into our bloodstream, increasing our blood volume.

This increased blood volume increases blood pressure, putting greater strain on the heart. Over time, elevated blood pressure can weaken the heart muscles and lead to congestive heart failure.

High blood pressure also strains our blood vessels, which in turn contributes to atherosclerosis the precursor to heart attacks and stroke.

The tricky thing with salt is that we develop a preference for it in our food. Our taste buds become accustomed to the saltiness of our regular diet and if we were to dramatically reduce the salt from our diet, food can taste bland. Interestingly, we can train our taste buds to become accustomed to lower levels of salt by slowly reducing our salt intake over time.

## APPLY

The recommended intakes for sodium are set as an Adequate Intake (AI) and an Upper Level (UL).

AI = 420-960mg UL = 2800mg

The ideal intake is around the AI and your risk of health problems increases when your salt intake is greater than the UL. The average UK diet contains 3,000mg or more of sodium each day... so we've got some work to do.

Many foods – vegetables, whole grains, meat and dairy products – naturally contain traces of sodium, while processed/packaged foods tend to contain a lot of salt/sodium.

However just because something doesn't taste salty, doesn't mean it's low in sodium. Most packaged food contains what nutritionists describe as 'hidden' salt.

The best way to improve your salt intake is to keep your intake of highly processed foods to a minimum. These include:

- Most 'fast' foods such as pizza, Asian takeaway, chips, burgers, fried chicken, etc.
- Most snack foods such as potato chips, crackers, processed cheese, etc.
- Processed meats such as sausages, silverside, corned beef, bacon, ham, salami, hot dogs and other luncheon meats.
- Canned vegetables (tomatoes, asparagus, mushrooms, etc.)
- Packet foods, such as instant pasta, soups, flavoured noodles and rice, Mexican and Asian foods and seasoning's.
- Pre-packaged sauces and condiments, such as tomato sauce, soy sauce, fish sauce, pasta sauce, pesto, etc.
- Cheeses such as feta, gorgonzola and other flavoursome varieties.



- White bread, bread rolls, wraps, etc.

Rather than concentrating on what foods you can't eat, here's a list of foods around which you can base your diet - all are naturally low in sodium:

- Fresh or frozen vegetables. Fresh or frozen fruit.
- Raw nuts and seeds.
- Legumes: these come canned but if you drain and thoroughly rinse them, you'll eliminate up to 75% of the salt that was added during canning.
- Fresh meat, poultry or fish.
- Dairy: milk, yoghurt, ricotta and cottage cheese.
- Whole grains: oats, pearled barley, quinoa, rye, brown rice, wholemeal pasta.

## DO

Here are 7 tips for reducing your salt intake:

1. Start reducing your preference for salt by avoiding adding salt to meals when cooking.
2. Enhance the flavour of your meals with natural flavour enhancers including onion, garlic, ginger, chilli, celery, fresh or dried herbs and spices.
3. Make your baked goods such as biscuits and slices, rather than buying pre-made ones.
4. Reduce the amount of processed food on your shopping list.
5. Make your pasta sauces from scratch.
6. Swap to reduced salt sauces and use balsamic vinegar and olive oil to dress salads.
7. Drain and rinse canned products such as chickpeas, beans, corn kernels, etc.



### HEART TIP

If you have a family history of high blood pressure or heart disease you may be what's known as 'salt sensitive'. This means that you're more prone to health problems with an excessive salt intake. Look at making some long-term changes with the tips above or get individual help from a dietitian.





# Managing Weight

## LEARN

Our ability to maintain a healthy weight has an impact on our long-term health, especially our hearts. Excessive weight and obesity (especially central obesity, where we store fat on our tummy around our organs) significantly increase our risk of developing chronic disease.

But losing weight is hard and keeping weight off long term is even harder. There are so many lifestyle factors that come into play and as such, successful enduring weight loss is much more about changing the underlying habits of your eating, rather than choosing the 'right' diet.

It's important to take a long-term perspective and make permanent yet sustainable changes to your diet. Two important elements are assisting good weight loss when it comes to your daily food choices:

### Managing your energy intake

Food contains energy. Your body breaks down macronutrients (fats, carbohydrates and proteins) and the energy from these nutrients is used to fuel movement, repair damaged cells and tissue and support everyday function and growth.

When we consume more food (energy) than our body needs over an extended period, we begin to store the excess energy as fat.

Decreasing our energy intake consistently over an extended period leads to our body burning our fat stores and we lose weight.

Beware: decrease your food intake too much and you'll find it hard to maintain your exercise levels, have difficulty concentrating and become quite lethargic or irritable. A balanced approach to weight loss does not mean following a strict or restrictive diet. You've got to find a healthy balance.

### Choosing nutrient-dense foods

It's one thing to manage your energy intake, but if the food you're eating contains little nutrition, you'll be fuelling your body but not nourishing it.

Good weight management means choosing foods rich in nutrition but low in energy. That way you'll be offering your body plenty of vitamins, minerals, antioxidants and fibre to promote health and manage your energy intake as well.

Nutrient-dense foods include vegetables, fruit, nuts, seeds, legumes, meat, dairy

## APPLY

Here are a few tips to help you manage your weight:

Eat only when you're hungry. Before you put something in your mouth, ask yourself these questions: Do I need it? Am I hungry? If 'yes', then go ahead and eat, but make a nutritious choice so you fill up on good quality food. If the answer's 'no', then find an alternative way to deal with what you're feeling rather than eating.

Move your body. Exercise and general physical activity are great ways to increase your body's energy expenditure and help you lose weight. It's also a great way to de-stress, wind down and re-energise yourself.

Watch what you drink. Alcohol, fruit juice, soft drink, cordial, iced tea, flavoured milk, hot chocolates, mochas and lattes all contribute energy but offer very little nutrition. Ditch the excess drinks and grab some water instead.

Consume adequate food at breakfast time. We often overeat at the end of the day because we haven't eaten enough at the beginning.



Don't deviate from a healthy eating pattern over the weekend. During the week many of us follow a sensible, well-balanced eating pattern. We're learning about good food choices, adequate portion sizes and establishing good, long-term habits. But often on weekends, everything we've learned goes out the window and our diet is characterised by dining in restaurants, drinking soft drinks and alcohol, eating takeaway and cafe food, splurging on chocolate, crisps and other foods served on social occasions. Weight loss will only happen if you're consistent.

## DO

Start reducing your preference for salt by avoiding adding salt. Swap any cordial, fruit juice or soft drink for still, plain mineral or soda water. You don't need the excess energy in these high-sugar drinks.

Snack on whole fruit. These are high in fibre and contain just the right amount of energy to get you through the hours between main meals.

Put a sign on the fridge/ pantry that says: Are you hungry? Think about the reasons you're eating.

Cut up vegetables and snack on them during the day.

Stick to a maximum of 4 x standard alcoholic drinks per week.

## HEART TIP

Research shows that your risk of developing cardiovascular disease significantly increases as you become overweight, especially if your body is storing fat around your tummy (visceral fat). The good news is that your risk decreases as you lose tummy fat and achieve a healthier weight.



# Protein

## LEARN

“You are what you eat”? Well, it’s somewhat true and is referring to dietary protein. All our major body tissues: skin, hair, muscles, enzymes, etc., are made up of protein. For daily growth and repair of these tissues, adequate protein-rich food needs to be consumed daily. The protein you eat gets incorporated into your body’s tissues every day.

When it comes to our food, protein is a macronutrient made up of smaller nutrients called amino acids.

Some amino acids can be synthesised by the body, but nine amino acids can’t. These are known as essential amino acids, and we have to get them from our diet.

### Protein helps build muscle

When you engage in regular weight-bearing or resistant exercises combined with a moderate protein intake, your body begins to build muscle.

Muscle is a vital contributor to your metabolism because it’s the most metabolically active cell in the body, burning up to 15-20 times more calories than other cells, particularly when you’re moving or exercising. Therefore, the more muscle you have, the more energy you burn every day and the easier it is for you to maintain a healthy weight and still enjoy all the foods you love.

### Protein helps you feel full

One of the principles of healthy eating is learning which foods fill you up without overeating. Protein-rich foods help you feel fuller from a meal because they take longer to digest.

This is an important technique for combatting your mid-afternoon binge session or sugar craving. A lot of people feel hungry and tired at this point of the day because they haven’t eaten enough protein at breakfast and lunch. Aiming for an adequate serving of quality protein-rich food at every meal, especially breakfast and lunch, will keep you in much better control of your appetite and you’ll feel less inclined to tuck into the crackers and dip or chocolate, late in the afternoon.

### Protein helps control your appetite

Appetite is the outcome of several factors: circumstantial, physiological and psychological. The two physiological factors that will affect your appetite are your blood sugar level and the types of foods you eat.

If you constantly consume high amounts of sugar and highly processed foods, you’ll quickly feel you’re losing control of your appetite and are more inclined to eat unhealthy foods. Your body’s blood sugar level will be all over the place, making it much harder to maintain a healthy weight.

The addition of protein to our meals, especially at breakfast, helps control our appetite and we end up less likely to overeat during the day.

## APPLY

Foods are not all macronutrients. They are a mixture of fat, carbohydrate and protein, just in differing amounts but some foods are better sources of protein than others.

The best choices are:

- Meat: lamb, beef, pork, kangaroo, game meats, etc.
- Fish: bass, ling, salmon, snapper, barramundi, tuna, etc.
- Seafood: prawns, crab meat, squid, muscles, oysters, etc.
- Poultry: chicken, turkey, duck, etc. Eggs
- Dairy: milk, yoghurt, cheese Soy: milk, beans, tofu, tempeh
- Legumes: beans, lentils, chickpeas.

Try not to fall into the trap of using protein powders, bars or shakes. These are okay to use on occasion, but they are still highly processed foods and will never be as good as the range of options above.

It’s also important to note that your protein sources should be minimally processed. This means that salami, bacon, sausages, rissoles, flavoured milk, confectionery-style yoghurts, custards, nuggets, schnitzels, fish fingers, seafood extenders and other highly processed foods should only be eaten sparingly and in moderation. Fresh and whole is always best.





## DO

### Breakfast

To add protein at breakfast, try adding 150g- 200g of yoghurt to your muesli, 1 x cup of milk to your cereal or 1-3 eggs to your wholegrain toast. You might also like to add 100-150g of low-fat ricotta to rye bread with strawberries and a drizzle of honey.

### Lunch

To add protein at lunchtime, try adding 120- 150g of leftover roast beef to a sandwich, vegetable soup or wrap or 150g of tinned tuna to a wrap or in a salad. Try 100g of poached chicken breast and 20g of feta in a mixed garden salad with pine nuts, sun- dried tomato and sweet potato.

### Dinner

It's usually easier to add protein to your meal at dinner time. Try lean beef steak with mixed vegetables, 1/2 a chicken breast with a garden salad, roast lamb with mushrooms and caramelised onions or a salmon fillet with steamed Asian greens and a ginger soy dressing. How about adding 150g of tofu to your next Thai green curry or a vegetable and herb omelette with 23 eggs?



Choose lean sources of protein to minimise your risk of heart disease. Regularly choose foods such as legumes, white fish, chicken or turkey breast, red meat (with all visible fat removed before cooking) and milk and yoghurt.



# Fats

## LEARN

Dietary fat is an important nutrient and should be included in our daily diet. It's the body's second most favourite nutrient to burn for energy, behind carbohydrates. It's a very energy-dense nutrient, containing twice the energy of carbohydrate per gram.

This is one of the reasons why low-fat diets became so popular. Removing fat was a simple way to reduce a person's energy intake. Nutrition research back then also pointed to saturated fat as being the primary culprit causing heart disease, another reason we were encouraged to cut it out.

We now know that dietary fat is not as bad as we once thought, but due to years of low-fat diets and anti-fat health messages, most people are still confused as to the best sources and types of dietary fat to regularly include in their diets.

Like all nutrition information, it's best not to make it too complicated. We don't eat individual nutrients, we eat foods, which are a combination of lots of different nutrients. And the best kinds of foods are ones that are fresh, whole or minimally processed.

Make most of your fat intake come from whole foods, rather than highly processed ones and you'll be doing just fine.

Fat also helps with the absorption of fat-soluble vitamins (A & E). It forms the basis of cell membranes, is involved in many aspects of your nervous system and certain types of fat (e.g.

Omega 3 fatty acids) can help manage inflammation and decrease your risk of cardiovascular disease.

## APPLY

Fat is found in a wide range of foods in large or small amounts, including:

- Meat, fish and poultry and their products.
- Eggs.
- Dairy -milk, yoghurt, cheese, cream, butter. Nuts and seeds.
- Avocados. Olives.
- Coconut.
- Whole grains (contain fat in small amounts).
- Oils, margarine, spreads

Processed foods such as chips (and other deep- fried food), crackers, cakes, biscuits, pastries, ice cream, chocolate, etc.

The best sources of fat to eat regularly are whole foods. The great thing about these foods is that not only are they good sources of healthy fats, but they also contain lots of other important nutrients as well like fibre, vitamins, minerals and antioxidants. These foods include:

- Avocados. Olives.
- Nuts: peanuts, walnuts, cashews, almonds, Brazil nuts, pistachios, pine nuts, etc.
- Seeds: chia, linseed (flaxseed), sunflower seeds,
- Fresh coconut flesh or milk.
- Minimally processed fats like those listed here can also be used occasionally and in moderation:
- Extra-virgin olive oil. Coconut oil.
- Plain butter or pure cream.
- Other oils: avocado, sesame, peanut, rice bran, and canola.
- Nut butter and spreads (peanut butter).
- Nuts and seed meals (almond meal, LSA).

The main thing to be mindful of, even when eating healthy sources of fat, is that you're not consuming too much energy. Even if it's healthy food, if you consume too much energy, your body will gradually put on weight.



# Cook

## DO

Here are 5 tips for including healthy fats in your everyday diet:

1. Spread toast or wholegrain crackers with avocado. Season with salt and pepper.
2. Make up small Trail Mix packs with raw nuts and seeds. Keep them in your handbag or office desk drawer for a quick, filling and healthy snack.
3. Add crushed nuts and seeds to your breakfast cereal or muesli -a great way to add additional fibre and crunch to your morning meal.
4. Throw toasted pine nuts, cashews, almonds, peanuts or macadamias into a salad. They add texture, and nutrition and help fill you up.
5. Make your salad or vegetable dressings using extra-virgin olive oil and vinegar or lemon juice. Use flavours such as mustard, honey, garlic, ginger or soy to change it up.

## Guacamole with Sesame Crisps

### Ingredients

- 4 wholegrain wraps 1/2 tbsp olive oil rock or sea salt cumin spice
- 1/2 tbsp sesame seeds
  - 1 large avocado, peeled and de-seeded
  - 2tbsp fresh coriander leaves, finely chopped
  - 1/4 clove garlic
  - 1/2 tbsp fresh lemon juice

### Method

- Pre-heat oven to 180 degrees celsius. Line two baking trays with baking paper and set aside.
- Brush each wrap with olive oil and sprinkle with salt, cumin and sesame seeds. Cut into eights and place on the baking trays. Bake for 10-15 minutes until sesame seeds are slightly golden and the wrap is crispy.
- While the chips are baking, place the avocado, coriander, garlic and lemon juice in a small food processor and process until smooth.
- Serve the guacamole with the chips. Dip and enjoy!

## HEART TIP

Research is now showing us that overall diet quality is important for reducing one's risk of heart disease.

Consuming the right balance of dietary fats from unprocessed foods is the best way to look after your heart, in the long term.





# Omega 3's

## LEARN

Omega 3 hit the world of nutrition with a bang, and it seemed we were in the grip of yet another 'health fad'. But it's proved way more than just a trend... Omega 3s are worth paying attention to.

Omega 3 is the name given to a group of fatty acids in our diets. This fat is essential for a range of important functions in the body and the only way to achieve adequate intake is through regularly consuming foods that are rich in Omega 3.

Omega 3 fatty acids play a very important role in preventing heart disease. The body converts Omega 3 into other chemicals, which have anti-inflammatory properties in the body.

These anti-inflammatory chemicals may help reduce blood pressure, reduce blood clotting, protect against irregular heartbeats and reduce chronic inflammation -all important factors for long-term heart health.

## APPLY

To reduce your risk of developing chronic disease, including heart disease, it's recommended that your Omega 3 intake should be: around 610mg per day for men and 430mg for women.

Omega 3 fatty acids are found in marine, plant and animal foods. The types of Omega 3s vary across the different food sources, so it's important to eat a range of foods to ensure good variety.

Main food sources of Omega 3 Marine - primarily 'oily' fish

- Tuna. Salmon. Sardines. Mackerel.
- Scallops Plant.
- Nuts and seeds. Walnuts.
- Linseeds (flaxseed).
- Chia seeds
- Canola oil.
- Leafy greens (kale, spinach, etc.)
- Animals -depends on the animal's diet Eggs.
- Chicken.
- Beef.

To ensure an adequate intake of these essential fats, aim to include 2-3 serves of seafood into your diet each week and a serving of nuts and/or seeds each day.

## DO

Here are 5 tips to ensure you include Omega 3 fats in your diet every day:

1. Add 1-2 tsp of chia seeds to your breakfast cereal, oats, muesli or smoothie each day.
2. Include 1-2 handfuls of green leafy vegetables such as salad greens, kale or spinach each day.
3. Pack a little packet of mixed nuts that include walnuts as your morning or afternoon snack.
4. Keep your pantry or workplace stocked with tins of tuna, salmon and sardines for a quick, tasty meal.
5. Buy Omega 3 enriched eggs and regularly include them in your diet: scrambled, poached, boiled or made into omelettes or quiches.



# Cook

## Salmon and 4 Bean Salad

### Ingredients

- 400g fresh salmon fillets, skin on
- 2x 400g cans of 4 bean mix, drained and rinsed
- 2-3 tbsp fresh chives, finely chopped
- The juice of 1 lemon
- 8 cups of green leafy salad mix, washed and dried
- 1 yellow pepper, thinly sliced
- 1/2 red onion, thinly sliced
- 1 punnet of cherry tomatoes, sliced in half
- 200g natural or greek yoghurt
- 2 tsp wholegrain mustard

### Method

- Heat a non-stick frying pan over low heat. Add the salmon, skin side down, and cook for 4-5 minutes or until skin becomes golden. Flip over and cook for another 3-4 minutes. Remove from heat and allow to rest.
- Mix the beans, chives, red onion and half the lemon juice in a bowl. Set aside. Next, thoroughly mix the yoghurt, wholegrain mustard and the remainder of the lemon juice. Set aside.
- Divide the green leafy salad, pepper and cherry tomatoes evenly over 4 plates. Next, evenly divide the bean mixture over the 4 plates.
- Gently break the salmon apart and divide amongst the plates. Finally top each plate with a generous drizzle of yoghurt dressing and serve. Enjoy!



Wild, unprocessed, fresh seafood is one of the best sources of Omega 3 leading to protective benefits for your heart.

Just ensure you choose sustainably fished seafood so we can enjoy eating it for many years to come.



# Whole foods

## LEARN

There are so many different 'diets' you can follow: Mediterranean, vegan, gluten-free, grain-free, raw, paleo, low fat, vegetarian, shake or supplement-based, low carb, no-carb, high protein, high fat and everything else in between. Confused?

The truth is, there are no black and white rules for good nutrition. There are just guidelines.

Individual interpretation of these guidelines is necessary to find what's right for you as we all have different lifestyles, activity levels and foods we like and dislike.

The most helpful approach to healthy eating for people from all walks of life is to follow a Whole Foods Diet. The Whole Foods Diet guidelines are:

- Eat lots of and a wide variety of plant-based foods vegetables, fruit, nuts, seeds, legumes and grains
- Eat real food that's been minimally processed.
- Enjoy your food, take time to eat it and share it with friends and family.
- Balance is the key, so enjoy all foods in moderation know your limits.

A Whole Foods Diet is rich in fibre, helping you feel fuller for longer. It delivers vitamins and minerals to the body in just the right concentration and it's naturally lower in harmful fats, salt and sugar.

## APPLY

Whole Foods can be classified into five main groups:

Vegetables and fruits. Legumes and whole grains. Nuts and seeds. Dairy.

Meat, poultry, fish and eggs.

When choosing food from each of these groups, answer the following question: "How much has this food changed on its journey between the farm and me?"

The less that's done to your food between its source on the farm and you, the better.

It doesn't mean you can never eat anything processed or out of a packet. It just means that you'll experience the best health benefits when whole foods form most of your diet, rather than highly processed ones.

Keep a food diary for 3 days. At the end of those 3 days, take a highlighter and underline the processed food in your diet. How much of your daily food intake came from whole foods?

Write down some food swaps for each of the common processed foods in your diet and spend the next 3 days working on these swaps. Some swap ideas include:

- Swap bacon and eggs at breakfast for eggs on their own.
- Swap sausages for homemade rissoles.
- Swap white bread for a grainy style of bread. Swap crackers for vegetable sticks.
- Swap hot chocolate for a tub of natural yoghurt.
- Swap dried or tinned fruit for fresh fruit.
- Swap your breakfast cereal for one with less sugar and more fibre.
- Swap soft drinks for water or herbal tea.
- Swap chips for the whole potato.





# Cook

## Beef and Vegetable stir fry with quinoa

### Ingredients

- 1 tbsp peanut oil
- 1kg lean beef steak, cut into strips
- 200g quinoa
- 1 red onion, quartered
- 3 cloves garlic, crushed
- 1 small red chilli, finely chopped
- 1 red pepper, sliced into sticks
- 1 yellow pepper, sliced into sticks
- 1 carrot, chopped into sticks
- 1 head of broccoli, chopped into florets
- 2 cups of sugar snap peas
- 1 tbsp soy sauces
- 1 tbsp Chinese rice wine
- 1 tsp fish sauce
- 1 fresh lime, quartered

### Method

- Cook the quinoa according to the packet directions and set aside.
- Meanwhile, heat 1/2 tbsp peanut oil in a hot wok. Stir fry the beef strips in 3-4 batches until just cooked and set aside.
- Heat the remaining oil in the hot wok. Add the onion, garlic and chilli and stir fry for 1 minute or until aromatic.
- Add the carrot and broccoli and stir fry for a further 2 minutes. Add the pepper and continue to toss over high heat for a further 2 minutes.
- Add the beef back into the wok and then toss through the soy sauce, fish sauce and rice wine vinegar. Add the sugar snap peas and cook for a further 2 minutes.
- Remove from the heat and drizzle with fresh lime juice. Serve with quinoa.



### HEART TIP

A diet rich in Whole Foods gives your body the tools it needs to manage your appetite and achieve a healthy waist measurement. Aiming for a waist measurement of around 80cm for women and 90cm for men is one of the best ways to reduce your risk of heart disease in the future.



# Processed Foods - 1

## LEARN

Are all processed foods bad for us? Should we cut out everything that comes in a packet? If you've just read through the topic on whole foods, you may be asking these questions. Here's the low down on processed foods.

Over the past 40 years or so, food processing has done wonders for our food supply. More people than ever before across the globe have access to safe and convenient food.

The problem is that most processed food is energy-dense and nutrient-poor. And this food we now have such easy access to is relatively cheap and extremely convenient.

A diet characterised by these kinds of food delivers more energy than our bodies need, leading to weight gain over time. Yet it offers very little in the way of nutrition -(fibre, vitamins and minerals). As a society, we've become overweight but undernourished.

The goal with any dietary pattern is balanced and being smart about our daily food choices. This first section on processed foods talks about those best to avoid or only eat in moderation.

## APPLY

The term 'moderation' means "to be within reasonable limits and avoid excesses or extremes". When it comes to our daily food choices, moderation can be illustrated by the following statement:

"What you do every day is more important than what you do now and then."

We should aim for a diet characterised by the whole, minimally processed foods. This means that foods not classified as whole or minimally processed, shouldn't feature in your diet every single day or excessive amounts. That's what leads to health problems.

These foods include:

- Soft drink, cordial, fruit juice
- Flavoured milk, drinking chocolate and other flavoured drink bases and powders
- Ice cream, custard and chocolate and other dairy-based desserts
- Cakes, biscuits, slices, pastries, muffins and other baked goods
- Deep-fried foods such as chips
- Lollies
- Crisps, crackers
- Condiments: sauces, chocolate spread, etc



These foods are what nutritionists call 'discretionary'. They have very poor nutritional value.

This means that although they do give the body energy, they don't contribute fibre, vitamins, minerals or the other essential nutrients vital for good health.

Consuming too much of these foods regularly does lead to poor long-term health.

Also, due to their high processing and large amounts of added sugar and fat, these foods tend to lead us to overeat and consume far more food than our body needs.

Combine that with a sedentary lifestyle (sitting down for most of the day) and we have a recipe for long-term weight gain and poor health.

## DO

Making some small changes to your diet in this area will have a profound impact on your long-term health. Here are 6 tips to help keep your intake of discretionary foods to a minimum and improve your overall diet quality:

1. Love and embrace vegetables every day. When you fill-up on these high- fibre, highly nutritious foods, you're less likely to want the discretionary foods.
2. Swap all your sugary or flavoured drinks for water. Use lemon or lime wedges to give it a little zing.
3. Brush your teeth straight after a meal. Good for dental health but will also help reduce cravings to eat something sweet after a meal.
4. When you do have discretionary food, eat it slowly and enjoy it.
5. Plan your meals so you're prepared to eat something healthy each day and not have to rely on convenience food.
6. Make a whole food your first choice like a piece of fruit, a boiled egg or a tub of natural yoghurt. If you're still hungry after that then choose something else, but 9 times out of 10 you'll find you don't want anything else.

## HEART TIP

Reducing your intake of processed, discretionary foods helps your heart in several ways: weight loss, a reduction in excess sugar and fat and an increased intake of more whole foods, rich in fibre and antioxidants.





# Processed Foods - 2

## LEARN

While the previous chapter listed processed foods to avoid, that doesn't mean you can't eat anything that comes in a packet. Several processed products still deserve a spot on your plate. So how do you tell the difference? The answer is learning how to read food labels.

Of course, all the health claims and nutrition information on labels can be confusing.

Understanding food products, how they're made and the ingredients they're made of are all great tools for helping you wade through the 'noise' and help you become more confident in the food you choose.

## APPLY

All food products originate from two sources: animals and plants. Here are our recommendations for processed foods from each group that are fine to include as part of your diet every day:

### Plant-Based Products

#### Whole grains

The main whole grains we consume are wheat, rice, oats and corn. We technically never eat a whole grain 'whole'. They're always processed to some point and made into a product, whether bread, pasta, rice, couscous, breakfast cereals, crackers, baked goods, flours, etc. Choose wholemeal, whole grain or high fibre products instead of white or highly refined ones. When comparing products, you're looking for more fibre and less sugar.

#### Legumes

These include a range of different beans, lentils, chickpeas and split peas. We usually buy lentils canned. Although processed food, they have only been cooked and then canned with salt. Nothing else has been added and nothing's been taken away. Just drain and rinse well to remove most of the salt before consuming. They are naturally high in fibre and low in sugar.

**Nuts and seeds:** Raw nuts and seeds are your best choice, but you might also like to try dry-roasted or toasted nuts and seeds for something a little different. Nut-based butter or spreads are a good option. Look for products that are 100% nuts and have less than 3 ingredients.

### Animal-Based Products

#### Tinned or Frozen Fish

Tuna, salmon, sardines and other oily fish are commonly eaten out of a tin. Like legumes, they are just cooked and then tinned with salt or water. Drain and enjoy. Fish canned in spring water is the best choice.

Frozen fish products are also a great way to keep fish on hand to eat regularly. Just check the ingredients list, as you want to be eating 100% fish rather than processed, crumbed and battered products that have lots of added extras.

### Natural Yogurt

The addition of live bacterial cultures to whole milk is what makes yoghurt so special. These bacteria species promote good 'gut health'. The bacteria are often not still alive in confectionery-style yoghurts that are very sweet and more processed. When choosing yoghurt, aim for no added sugar and sweeten it yourself with a little honey or fruit.



# Cook

## DO

Tips for reading product ingredient lists:

1. Choose foods with ingredients lists that are short (less than 5 ingredients), rather than long.
2. If you don't know what half the ingredients are on the list of a particular product, it's best to pop it back on the shelf and find another less-processed item.
3. If sugar is the second ingredient, it's best to pop that one back on the shelf too.
4. Sugar goes by several different names. Common names are glucose, sucrose, honey, palm sugar, maltose, agave, golden syrup, molasses, barley malt, brown rice syrup and cane sugar.

Tips for reading nutrition information panels:

1. For plant-based foods, look for 5g of fibre or more per 100g.
2. For products that contain added sugar (it's in the ingredients list), aim for less than 15g per 100g.
3. For products that contain added salt (it's in the ingredients list), aim for less than 400mg per 100g.

## Lamb and Lentil Stew

### Ingredients

- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 2 large brown onions, coarsely chopped
- 2 celery sticks, coarsely chopped
- 1 large carrot, peeled, coarsely chopped
- 1 baby fennel bulb, trimmed, thinly sliced
- 900g butterfly lamb leg cut into 3cm pieces (visible fat trimmed)
- 400g can of diced tomatoes
- 4 cups of chicken or vegetable stock
- 400g can of brown lentils, drained 450g chat potatoes

### Method

- Heat the oil in a large saucepan over medium-high heat. Cook the onion, stirring for 2 minutes. Add the celery, carrot and fennel. Cook, stirring for 3-4 minutes or until the vegetables are light golden in colour.
- Add the lamb and cook, stirring for 2-3 minutes or until just browned. Add the tomato and stock. Bring to the boil. Reduce heat to low, cover and simmer for 1 hour.
- Add the lentils and potato. Cover and simmer for 1 hour or until the lamb and potato are tender. Serve.

## HEART TIP

Oily fish such as tuna and salmon are the best source of Omega 3 fatty acids. Buying them tinned is a very convenient and economical option for regularly including them in your diet. Aim for 2-3 serves of fish each week.



# Snacks

## LEARN

Your snacking habits have the power to either make or break a healthy diet. The term 'snacking' can mean both your food habits in-between mealtimes, or an entire eating pattern – i.e., grazing and eating small amounts of food regularly throughout the day.

It's important to know that it doesn't matter how often you eat. Whether it's 6 small meals a day or 3 large meals. What's more important is the total energy consumed, the quality of your food choices and finding what works for you.

If your snacking habits are causing you to eat high amounts of processed, 'discretionary' foods that are high in energy but low in nutrition, you'll find yourself prone to putting on weight and feeling out of control with your appetite.

Choosing healthy snacks is a great way to positively add to your daily nutrient intake as well as prevent yourself from becoming too hungry and making poor food choices.

## APPLY

Choosing snacks is about using the other principles in this resource that you've learned so far and then being organised, so you have quick, healthy food available. Here are some guidelines for choosing healthy snacks:

1. Choose unprocessed foods as your first option. Naturally higher in fibre and lower in energy they will fill you up more on less energy plus add nutrition to your daily intake. Include vegetable sticks, fruit, nuts and seeds, yoghurt, milk, eggs, etc.
2. Choose high-fibre foods. When choosing processed snacks such as crackers and muesli bars, aim for at least 3g of fibre per serve. Fruit, vegetables, nuts and seeds are naturally high in fibre.

3. Choose foods rich in protein. Protein helps you feel fuller for longer and is an important part of managing your appetite. Boiled eggs, tinned fish, cold meats, yoghurt, milk and cheese.
4. Choose foods that have little or no added sugar. Check ingredients lists for extra sugar and aim to find a product that contains less than 10g of sugar per serve. The natural sugars present in fruit, vegetables and dairy are perfectly fine.

## DO

Here are some snack ideas:

1. 150g natural yoghurt -natural yoghurt is a great source of healthy bacteria, calcium, protein, phosphorous, vitamin B12 and magnesium. Serve with fruit and/or a small drizzle of honey.
2. Small handfuls of raw almonds -almonds are highly nutritious. They're a great source of healthy fats and contain a variety of vitamins and minerals. They are great to nibble on throughout the day because they take some time to chew.
3. Carrot sticks with hummus fresh carrot sticks dipped in hummus are an excellent snack, especially if you love a good nibble. One carrot contains more than enough of your body's daily vitamin A needs and hummus is a very healthy dip that's low in saturated fat.
4. Banana -bananas are great. They're portable, have biodegradable packaging and are packed full of nutrition. Keep a bowl of them in your office at work or if you're wandering over to the shops for an afternoon tea break, go buy yourself a banana instead of a chocolate bar.
5. A small can of sundried tomato and onion tuna is a great source of protein and Omega 3, a tasty little tin of tuna is a handy, healthy snack. Keep a few in your desk draw for those times when you've got the munchies.
6. Peanut Butter on apple slices -spread 100% natural peanut butter (this means that peanuts are the only ingredient) on sliced apple... delicious.





## Cook

7. Small cappuccino is a great way to boost your daily intake. Milk is a good source of protein, vitamin B12, calcium and magnesium... plus caffeine does have an appetite-suppressing effect and can curb hunger for the afternoon to get you through until dinner. Please note that two espresso coffees a day contain approximately 300mg of caffeine and you don't want to be consuming any more than that for good health.

### Feta, Tomato & Basil Stacks

#### Ingredients

- 60g Greek feta or goats' cheese, sliced
- 1-2 tomatoes, sliced
- A handful of fresh basil leaves

#### Method

- Slice up the feta and tomatoes into 1/2 centimetre thick pieces
- Place 1 slice of feta onto 1 slice of tomato and top with a fresh basil leaf
- Do this with the remaining slices. Enjoy



#### HEART TIP

Make your snacks count. Maximise your intake of heart- healthy nutrients like antioxidants and fibre by choosing fruit and vegetables as your first option. If you're still hungry afterwards, you can always grab something else.

# Physical Activity

## LEARN

Your body needs regular physical activity for long-term good health. The human body is designed to move, and it needs to move as much as it can every single day.

There's an old saying: "If you don't use it, you'll lose it." It 100% applies to your body and its need for physical activity.

Muscles, bones and joints are put together in such a way that our bodies can perform a large range of different movements. However, modern-day lifestyles don't involve much moving at all.

Many of us spend a lot of our time sitting. We sit at our desks, in our cars, on public transport and our couches. When we don't regularly use our muscles and joints and sit for long periods, we lose strength, endurance, mobility and flexibility. We also see a reduction in our body's metabolism and as a result, burn less energy throughout the day.

The great thing is that once you start moving your body regularly in a range of different ways, you can regain strength, endurance and flexibility AND simultaneously boost your metabolism.

Regular physical activity is an important part of maintaining a healthy weight and improving cardiovascular health. It also has many psychological benefits, from boosting mood to improving overall mental well-being.

## APPLY

It's recommended that, as a minimum, adults engage in 30 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity every day of the week.

You don't need to 'bust your gut' at the gym to gain long term health benefits. Moderate- intensity exercise means that your activity should increase your heart rate and make you 'huff and puff' a little, but not so much that you can't talk. You should still be able to hold a conversation.

Moderate-intensity activities include brisk walking, dancing, tennis, gardening, a light weights circuit, slow cycling, slow

swimming or easy aqua aerobics, heavy cleaning work, etc.

Including vigorous bursts of activity three times, a week can add additional health benefits. This is where you may be working a little too hard to hold an easy conversation.

Vigorous-intensity activities include walking up a hill, running, fast cycling, rowing, fast swimming, heavyweights circuit, aerobics class, boot camps, a team sport match, carrying heavy loads, etc. The other important point to remember is that it doesn't have to be 30 minutes all at once. Three lots of 10-minute bouts of activity across the day are just as effective.

## DO

With our busy modern lifestyles, many people find it challenging to regularly fit activities into their day. Here are some tips to get your body moving:

1. Use the stairs instead of the escalators and/or elevators.
2. For an extra challenge, strap on ankle and wrist weights when you go for a walk.
3. Take regular 5-minute walks... It's a great chance to have a break from work or study, clear your head and move your body. Do it every hour.
4. Park further away from work and walk 15- 20 minutes to and from the car.
5. Organise a regular walking time with your friends, workmates or parent group.
6. Join an indoor and/or outdoor sports team.
7. Attend a weekly group fitness class with a friend for a catch-up.
8. Raise money for The Heart Research Institute by training for and participating in a fun run.
9. Ride a pushbike to work.
10. Do 10 push-ups, 10 crunches, 10 squats and 10 lunges first thing every morning.
11. Sit on a fit ball at your desk instead of a chair.
12. Start a lunch-time boot camp with your work colleagues.
13. Ride a stationary exercise bike while watching TV.



The link between exercise and your risk of developing a chronic disease (like heart disease) is dose dependent. This means that you gain further health benefits and improved physical fitness by exceeding the above recommendations.

# Exercise

## LEARN

There are many different forms of exercise which you can do to stay active. The key areas are **CARDIOVASCULAR**, **STRENGTH**, **FLEXIBILITY**, **MIND/BODY**.

### Cardiovascular Exercise

Cardiovascular / Aerobic exercise is a physical exercise that can range from low intensity to high intensity and depends primarily on the aerobic energy-generating process. "Aerobic" is defined as "relating to, involving, or requiring oxygen", and refers to the use of oxygen to meet energy demands during exercise via aerobic metabolism adequately.

### Strength Training / Exercise

Strength training or resistance training involves the performance of physical exercises that are designed to improve strength and endurance. It is often associated with the lifting of weights. It can also incorporate a variety of training techniques such as callisthenics, isometrics, and plyometrics.

### Flexibility Training / Exercise

Flexibility training refers to developing a wide range of movement in a joint or series of joints that is attainable in a momentary effort with the help of a partner or a piece of equipment. Human flexibility is not the same in all joints.

### Mind/Body Training/Exercise

Mind-body interventions (MBI) or mind-body training (MBT) are health and fitness interventions that are intended to work on a physical and mental level. It is designed to combine mental focus, controlled breathing, and body movements to help relax the body and mind. It may be used to help control pain, stress, anxiety, and depression, and for overall health.

## APPLY

There are different forms of training for each category and the key is to find which form works for you. Often the best routine is one that mixes up many different forms.... as the saying goes –"variety is the spice of life". Here are 4 of each:

### Cardiovascular

#### Low impact

Any activity that's easy on your joints is low impact. But don't assume this equates to low-calorie burn.

#### High Impact

High-impact cardio is an exercise that increases the heart rate as the body strikes a surface— usually the ground— to generate force.

#### Steady-State Cardio

The goal is simply to work at a consistent, moderate level of intensity for the entire session.

#### HIIT

High-Intensity Interval Training. This type of workout involves alternating between short bursts of vigorous movement and recovery periods at an easier level. Great if you are short on time and to increase your metabolism.

### Strength

Weight training: Uses the force of gravity in the form of weighted bars, dumbbells or weight stacks to oppose the force generated by muscle through a concentric or eccentric contraction.

#### Bodyweight Training

These are strength- training exercises that use an individual's weight to provide resistance against gravity. TRX Training: A form of bodyweight training that uses the TRX System, also known as Total Resistance Exercises, refers to a specialized form of suspension training.

Kettlebell Training: It is used to perform many types of exercises, including ballistic exercises that combine cardiovascular, strength and flexibility training.



## Flexibility

### Tai Chi

Sometimes also known as Shadowboxing, is an internal Chinese martial art used for defence training, health benefits, and meditation.

### Pilates

A mind-body exercise that requires core stability, strength, flexibility, and attention to muscle control, posture, and breathing.

### Meditation

This is a practice in which an individual uses techniques such as mindfulness, or focusing the mind on a particular object, thought, or activity to train attention and awareness, and achieve a mentally clear and emotionally calm and stable state.

## DO

Why not try to incorporate some simple breathing techniques into your daily routine : 5 breath technique -Follow these steps. Inhale very slowly through your nose for 5 seconds.

Exhale very slowly through your nose or mouth for 5 seconds. Wait for 5 seconds. Repeat the process three more times (1 minute total).

Also, why not try to incorporate some of these stretches for naturally tight



## HEART TIP

If you are short on time, HIIT sessions can be a great way of combining a cardiovascular and strength workout while optimising your time and efforts. These workouts also offer an afterburn effect in which your body can continue to burn calories up to 48 hours after completing the session.

# Stress

## LEARN

Stress is a broad term that we use to describe our psychological state in response to certain situations or environments in which we find ourselves. Stress affects our health in several ways both directly and indirectly.

Research has shown that certain psychological risk factors directly increase a person's chances of developing stress that leads to cardiovascular disease. These factors include depression, social isolation and/or lack of social support.

Indirectly, stress affects our health-related behaviours and in turn, these behaviours increase our risk of poor health. Busy lives, lack of time, increased work pressures and our ability to cope may cause negative changes in our lifestyle such as poor dietary patterns, smoking, lack of physical activity and increased alcohol consumption. All these factors influence our overall short and long-term health.

## APPLY

There are a variety of ways to manage stress levels or coping abilities to improve long-term health. But we first need to articulate the type of stress and manage it accordingly.

If your psychological state is characterised by depression, isolation or lack of social support, taking the appropriate steps to treat the cause of these emotions is a good place to start. Chat to your GP about managing your depression and look at reaching out to family and/or friends for help and support.

If your psychological state is caused by a busy schedule or demanding job/home life, then you need to put some lifestyle habits into place that support healthy behaviour amid the craziness of life. This may be as simple as writing a weekly meal plan; doing your grocery shopping online and getting it delivered; stocking your workspace with convenient healthy food; or organising your day with better time management strategies.

Stress management techniques are wide and varied and people need to discover whatever works for them... but here

are six tips for relaxation that everyone can apply straight away.

1. Keep a gratitude diary -daily reminders of the things that you're thankful for in life. This is a great way to boost your mood and overall outlook on the world.
2. Schedule in 'me time'. Recreation and relaxation are important for living a balanced, fulfilling life.
3. Walk and move your body daily. Movement is such an important part of our daily lives. Sitting for too long is quite detrimental to our long-term health. Make movement fun, make it regular and do it with a friend for even more psychological benefits.
4. Practice deep breathing. Stopping and concentrating on your breathing for even 5 minutes can counter the effects of stress. It lowers your blood pressure and slows your heart rate.
5. Focus on the important things. Our lives can feel 'cluttered' with stuff to do that's neither important nor urgent. Write a list, prioritise what is important and then focus your efforts on those things first. Don't sweat the small stuff.
6. Seek professional help. If you think it's necessary, remember there is no shame in talking to a trained professional about how you're feeling and what you're going through.



## HEART TIP

Heart health goes beyond the physical factors of a good quality diet and regular exercise. Take a holistic approach to your well-being by keeping psychologically healthy as well.

# Sleep

## LEARN

Sleep is a basic human function that we all do every single day. If you regularly don't get enough of it, you may be putting yourself at risk of poor health.

An adequate sleep each night is vital for both good health and productivity in our day to day lives. Insufficient sleep results in the obvious symptoms of becoming excessively sleepy throughout the day and experiencing a decrease in neurocognitive function – i.e., the ability to concentrate and make decisions.

Sleep deprivation may lead to even more serious health problems such as premature death, cardiovascular disease and the development of diabetes. Several studies link sleep duration to blood pressure, blood glucose levels, stress hormone levels, immune function, metabolic function and much more. It's a vital part of our daily routine.

## APPLY

Various research indicates that Western populations are sleeping less... and when they do sleep, it's of poorer quality. When you think about our current lifestyles, this isn't at all surprising. We have more demanding jobs with a higher rate of shift-work style positions. We're managing multiple, competing priorities between work and home and modern technology means that we can be contacted or connected to the internet '24-7'.

### So how do we get more sleep?

Firstly, sleep needs to be prioritised as an important part of your self-care. See it as a means to an end. Better quality, longer sleep means a sharper mind, better work outcomes and higher energy levels throughout the day.

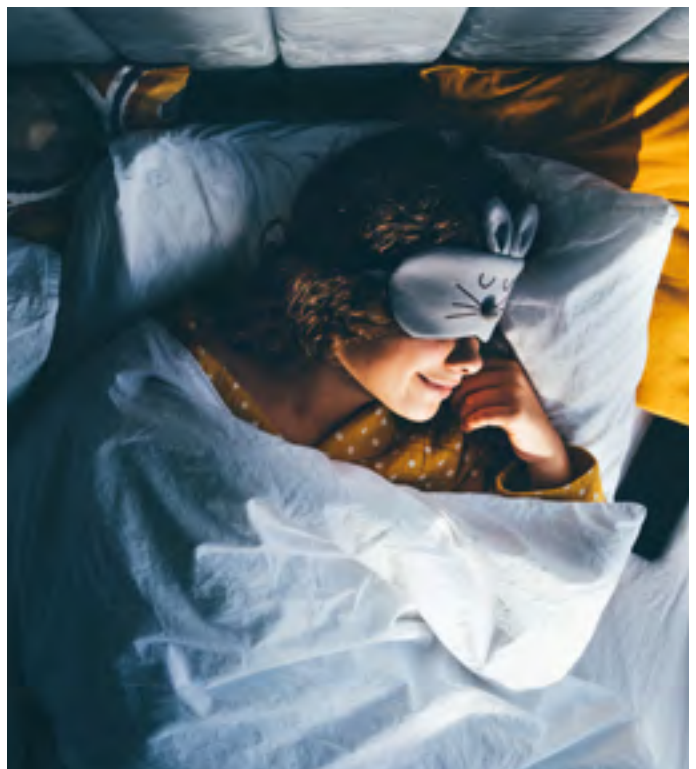
Secondly, we need to reduce our daily screen time. Research shows that we're spending more and more time on our computers or other devices, surfing the Internet or watching TV. More time spent doing these activities means less time for sleeping.

Thirdly, we need to establish consistent daily routines. Unless you have an underlying condition that makes sleeping difficult, many sleep problems can be solved by simply establishing appropriate daily habits and rituals.

## DO

Here are some quick tips to help you develop better daily sleeping patterns:

1. Watch your caffeine intake Too much caffeine results in decreased sleep duration and sleep quality -aim for no more than the equivalent of two single- shot espresso coffees per day.
2. Limit screen time in the hour before going to sleep -The lights from these devices (phones, tablets, computers, TV) can be overstimulating and make it more difficult to fall asleep.
3. Re-evaluate your workload Research shows that people working two or more jobs are more likely to report poor sleep quality and increased sleepiness throughout the day.
4. Incorporate stress-reduction activities into your day -Psychological distress is another major factor associated with poor sleep quantity and quality.
5. Get active -Moderate exercise each day has also been associated with better sleep quality. Get out for a walk each day or find a regular sport that you enjoy in which to participate.



### HEART TIP

Adequate sleep is an important part of long-term Heart Health and should be prioritised as highly as a good quality diet and regular exercise.



# Hydration

## LEARN

H<sub>2</sub>O is the most abundant chemical compound in the human body. It's such a vital part of our body's day to day function that even mild dehydration can lead to loss of physical and cognitive performance, impaired overall health and an increase in the risk of urinary disease.

Symptoms of being dehydrated become apparent after only a 2% drop in the body's normal water volume. For an average-sized male, (who carries about 40L of water), a 2% loss is only about 0.8L (800mL).

Symptoms of mild dehydration include things like thirst, hunger, dry skin, constipation, tiredness, irritability, mood swings and headaches. When dehydration is severe or prolonged, these symptoms become more concentrated and include others like migraines, dizziness, severe fatigue and nausea.

Most people won't experience extreme symptoms of dehydration but almost all of us at some time or another have felt the mild symptoms: headaches, grumpiness, lethargy, dizziness and hunger.

## APPLY

### How much water should you drink?

Water is not the only way the body stays hydrated. Much of the fluid it needs comes from our food, especially when we're eating lots of fresh fruits and vegetables. We also consume fluid through a range of drinks in addition to the plain water that we may drink.

It's not always helpful to get your fluid intake from non-water drinks -coffee, milk, tea, juice, soft drink, alcoholic beverages, etc.

They will still have a net hydrating effect on our bodies but other components like sugar, caffeine, fat, alcohol etc. are not necessarily the best things for our body all the time.

Achieving adequate hydration comes best from skipping the fancy drinks and just sticking with water.

It's recommended that you aim to drink 2-3 litres of fluid per day, depending on your size, activity levels and the weather. If it's a hot day if you're bigger if you're male and if you exercise daily, you'll need to drink more water.

Starting your day with a big glass of water is a great habit to get into as we wake up dehydrated.

The reason we weigh less in the morning is that most people will lose about a litre of fluid through the night. This fluid loss comes from breathing, sweating (especially if you like a lot of blankets or have an electric blanket) and drooling.

### How do you know you're drinking enough?

Have a quick look at the colour of your urine now and again. If you're well-hydrated, it will be a pale-yellow colour. If it is totally clear, you may be too hydrated... and if it's a dark yellow to orange colour, you are dehydrated.

## DO

Here are seven tips to help you stay hydrated:

1. Keep a 1L drink bottle with you at your desk at work and try to get through it twice in the day. Buy a drink bottle that you like, that matches your desk décor.
2. Start the day with a big glass of water, with or before your breakfast. Fill up a glass of water before you go to bed and pop it on your bedside table. That way, it's waiting for you when you wake up.
3. Aim to drink 1L of water per hour of exercise. You may need even more if it's a hot day.
4. If you struggle with plain water, try adding a squeeze of lemon or lime, adding slices of cucumber or a few peppermint leaves. Herbal tea also counts as water. Try this week's recipe for infused water jugs.
5. Make it a goal to swap juice, cordial and soft drinks for plain water – you don't need the extra sugar contained in these drinks! The weight loss results you may achieve from this will surprise you.
6. Make sure you eat adequate amounts of fruit and vegetables. Because fresh produce is high in water, this will also contribute to your fluid levels.
7. Aim to drink 250-500ml of water with each meal and snack

# Make

## Infused Water Jugs

Do you struggle to drink water because it's not tasty enough? Want to make your water taste amazing? Here's how:

### Lime, Berry and Mint

- 2L jug of water
- ¼ cucumber, thinly sliced
- 1 small handful of fresh mint leaves, roughly ripped
- ¼ cup frozen berries
- 1 lime, cut into wedges

### Rosemary and Lemon

- 2L jug of water
- 1 small handful of rosemary sprigs
- 1 lemon thinly sliced

### Method

- Pop all the ingredients of your choice into the jug of water.
- Gently stir and leave in the fridge for 2 hours before serving.



### HEART TIP

Good hydration means that your heart doesn't have to work as hard to do its job. It makes it much easier for your heart to pump blood through the blood vessels to the muscles.

# Caffeine

## LEARN

Caffeine is a naturally occurring stimulant found in foods such as coffee, tea, cocoa and guarana. It's also added to energy drinks, and sports supplements and can be taken in the form of medication.

Caffeine's effects on the body include: An increased heart rate

- Dilated blood vessels
- The relaxation of smooth muscles (muscles in the digestive system etc.)
- The release of fatty acids into the bloodstream can suppress your appetite.
- It acts on the body just like some illegal drugs... but due to its relatively harmless effect, it's still legal (thank goodness). Caffeine makes us feel less fatigued, more alert and better able to concentrate. Although the effects of caffeine are generally harmless, it is possible to have too much of a good thing.
- Excessive caffeine intake may cause: Insomnia
- Stomach upset Heartburn
- Tachycardia (a rapid heart rate)
- People may also experience anxiety, irritability or jitters.

The volume of caffeine that causes these symptoms varies for different people. If you drink large amounts of coffee all day, every day, it's possible to build up a tolerance and not experience any symptoms at all, despite your large caffeine intake. If you choose to drink caffeinated beverages, drink them in moderation. There are case studies of young adults who have died from caffeine-induced cardiac arrhythmia after consuming energy drinks... however 1 or 2 cups of coffee a day is not likely to put you at any such risk.

## APPLY

It's recommended to keep your caffeine intake to around 300mg per day. Even this may be too much for some people, so just go with what your body feels is right.

**Caffeine and Pregnancy** If you are pregnant or planning to be sometime in the future, it may be worth taking stock of your caffeine intake and reducing it if need be.

A high intake of caffeine (more than 500mg) may make it difficult to fall pregnant and can also affect the foetal heart rate, the baby's breathing and decrease blood flow to the placenta. The foetus can't detoxify caffeine like adults can and new-born of heavy caffeine users may go through withdrawals at birth. There may also be a link between caffeine intake and the rate of miscarriage.

There is very little evidence that consuming caffeine during pregnancy has a lasting, detrimental effect on your baby; so as with all things, exercise caution and strike a healthy balance.

Aim for a caffeine intake during pregnancy of 100-200mg and no more than 300mg per day. Caffeine and Bone Health A high caffeine intake can also be detrimental to your bone health if it's sustained over a long period. Continually overloading your body with caffeine will 'leach' calcium from your bones and into your urine, putting you at an increased risk of developing osteoporosis later in life.

Women are already at an increased risk of osteoporosis purely due to their hormones, so it's worth taking steps now to ensure good bone health.

Adequate calcium intake, regular exercise and a healthy caffeine intake are all important lifestyle factors that help us maintain healthy bones.

## DO

### How to monitor your caffeine intake?

A healthy level of caffeine, associated with no significant health problems, is about 300mg per day. This is equivalent to 3 cups of instant coffee or 2 espresso coffees (cappuccino, flat white, latte, long black, etc.). If you're not a coffee drinker, then it's equivalent to 3 x 250ml energy drinks (Red Bull, Monster, V) or six cans of Coke or Pepsi. You'll also find caffeine in dark and milk chocolate, hot chocolate, traditional tea and some herbal teas. The information across outlines the caffeine content in different foods and drinks.

### Food or Drink Serving Size Caffeine (mg)

- Coffee: percolated, drip, espresso, cappuccino 1 cup 100-150mg. Coffee: Instant 1 cup 80- 100mg. Coffee: decaffeinated 1 cup 2-5mg.
- Tea: 1 minute brew 1 cup 10-35mg. Tea: 3 minute brew 1 cup 20-50mg. Tea: green (Chinese) 1 cup 30-50mg.
- Tea: herbal infusions 1 cup zero. Hot Chocolate 1 cup 2-20mg.
- Coca Cola or Pepsi Drink 375ml can 30-45mg. Energy drinks (Red Bull, V, Lift, Monster, etc.) 250ml can 30-80mg.
- Milk chocolate 30g bar 10-20mg. Dark chocolate 30g bar 5-35mg.
- Over-the-counter stimulants
- Sports supplements Packet directions varying amounts, consult your practitioner.

From what we know so far, a moderate caffeine intake as discussed above doesn't seem to be harmful.



The research is inconclusive about whether excessive caffeine intake is a factor contributing to heart disease.



# Sugar

## LEARN

The detrimental effects of sugar in our diet is a hotly debated topic in the field of nutrition.

What advice should you believe? Is it an addictive poison that must be eliminated or can we eat it to our hearts' content without worrying about health issues? The answer to these questions is most likely somewhere in between these two extremes.

Sugar at its core is a naturally occurring nutrient that the body breaks down for energy. It's the only nutrient that the brain can use to function properly. This is the reason why you feel so lousy when you haven't eaten enough food.

The problem with sugar isn't that it's poisonous in itself... it naturally occurs in dairy products like milk and yoghurt and plants: grasses (sugarcane), grains (wheat, corn, rice), fruit and vegetables. The problem is that processing foods can often result in concentrated levels of sugar, along with the removal of fibre and other natural components.

It's an excessive intake of sugar, delivered into your body quickly, that puts pressure on your metabolic system and leads to health problems.

Combine a high sugar intake with a diet low in vegetables and high in energy, plus an inactive lifestyle and you've got a recipe for long-term chronic health problems. Eating high amounts of processed, high-sugar foods for a long enough period, increases your risk of weight gain, insulin resistance, Type 2 Diabetes, cardiovascular disease and more.

## APPLY

So, do you need to eliminate sugar from your diet to promote good health?

No, you don't need to eliminate it, but you do need to be mindful about where the sugar in your diet is coming from. Remember it's not the sugar itself that's bad, it's the package in which it arrives in your body that makes all the difference.

Sugar on its own contains no other nutritional value other than energy. This means that a high-sugar diet may lead to weight gain through excess energy but be lacking in essential vitamins and minerals. Sugar in its naturally occurring package – e.g., a whole piece of fruit - comes along with dietary fibre, vitamins, minerals and other health-promoting compounds. This is the best way to eat sugar.

The information below illustrates the difference between naturally occurring sugars in whole foods and their processed equivalent.

Sugar Containing Foods You Can Eat Daily Milk -plain.

- Yoghurt -Natural or Greek
- Fruit -Whole
- Vegetables -Whole.
- Sugar Containing Equivalent to Limit Intake
- Milk - plain
- Milk - flavoured (chocolate, strawberry, coffee)
- Yoghurt - flavoured, confectionery style.
- Fruit - juiced or dried
- Vegetables - juiced.

There are lots of other processed foods and drinks that also contain added sugars -like crackers, biscuits, cakes, muffins, pastries, jams, spreads, breakfast cereals, muesli bars, chocolate, and ice cream, frozen yoghurt, custard, lollies, soft drink, cordial and more.

Moderate your intake of these foods and choose low-sugar options for foods that you might eat daily (like crackers, muesli bars and breakfast cereals). Aim for less than 10g of sugar per 100g of food as a good benchmark.

## DO

Here are 5 tips for reducing your sugar intake and improving the overall quality of your diet:

1. Swap your breakfast cereal for one with less sugar. Aim for less than 10g of sugar per 100g of cereal.
2. Swap your sweetened yoghurt for a natural or plain Greek yoghurt. Sweeten it yourself with fruit or honey if necessary. This way you can control how much sugar is added and keep it minimal.
3. When baking, you can usually reduce the added sugar called for by the recipe by up to a third. This means much less sugar than store-bought varieties.
4. Choose whole fruit and natural yoghurt as a snack over chocolate bars, cakes, muffins and biscuits.
5. Brush your teeth or chew peppermint gum to decrease your desire to eat something sweet after a meal.



A healthy heart is the result of a good quality diet that's rich in whole foods and low in added sugar and processed foods.

# Meal Prep

## LEARN

Are you a busy person? Do you feel like some days you're running from one activity to another with very little time to put a healthy, nutritious meal on the table? You're not alone. It's important, however, to know that despite a busy schedule, it's still possible to serve up delicious and nutritious food every day. You must PLAN.

Good organisation is the key to successfully and consistently eating healthy food for most of your meals. If you haven't planned to eat well, then you're less likely to eat well. Disorganisation means we become more reliant on less nutritious and highly processed convenience food.

The best way to become more organised with your food is to create a weekly meal planner. From that planner write a shopping list and from that list, purchase all the groceries you need at the beginning of each week. Effective meal planning offers several benefits: Minimising stress with a meal plan, displayed in your kitchen with each of the meals outlined for each day of the week, means that you no longer need to wonder: "What am I going to make for dinner?" You just know... and because you've written your shopping list from your meal plan, you have the right ingredients available.

Better manage your budget -a meal plan means that you're only buying food that you need for any given week. Plan your meals and you'll have much less wastage than if you just buy food based on what you feel like at the time. Also, consumer research shows that we spend more money on impulse buys the more often we go to the supermarket. A good meal plan means you should only go to the supermarket once a week -not 3-4 times.

More time during the week organising your food does take some time in planning and preparation; but during the week when you're busy going from one activity to the next, your meal plan will repay you in dividends of time when it counts the most.

## APPLY

Here are some steps to planning your food each week:

Step 1: Find yourself a helpful template that suits your planning style. It might be a whiteboard in the kitchen, a printable template to stick to your fridge or a notepad that sits on your bench.

Step 2: Mark any events, activities or appointments you have that week on your meal planner so you can consider them when planning your meals. (There's no point planning dinner for Tuesday night if you're not going to be home.)

Step 3: Write down what you and the family will eat for each meal that week. Think about doubling up on some of your cooking to keep things simple. Maybe it's having the same breakfast each morning or using dinner leftovers for lunch the next day. Maybe you cook up a bulk meal for your work lunches or you cook enough one evening for dinner the next evening.

Step 4: Once your meal plan is complete, write your shopping list. Cross-reference that list with the food you already have in the fridge and pantry, so you don't double up and buy what you don't need.

Step 5: When you go shopping, whether in-store or online, only buy what's on your list. Reducing the impulse buying of snacks and excess food will be good for both your health and your back pocket.

Step 6: Refer to your meal plan throughout the week and let it support healthy eating amid a busy schedule.

## DO

Meal planning is only effective if you consider your lifestyle and food preferences. If you make it too complicated, you won't follow it. Here are 5 tips to help keep your meal plan effective:

1. Choose meals and foods that you enjoy eating. Make them healthy by using the principles discussed above, but don't plan to eat food that you don't enjoy eating.
2. Keep your meals simple to cook. Planning to cook a new unfamiliar recipe each night will overwhelm and wear most people out.
3. Double up on ingredients. If one recipe calls for fresh coriander and you have to buy a whole bunch, plan to use coriander in some of your other meals so it doesn't go to waste, and you save money at the checkout.
4. If one or more nights of the week are busy with work or family commitments and making dinner for everyone is difficult, plan to cook something in advance on the weekend or the day before, so all you must do is re-heat and serve.



## HEART TIP

Fast food isn't the best for your heart and isn't as fast as you think. It takes longer to get in the car, drive to a fast-food outlet, order and pay for your food and bring it home to eat compared to staying home, steaming some vegetables, grilling some fish fillets and mashing some potatoes! This is only possible if you've planned to have this and bought the ingredients in advance.

# Flavouring food

## LEARN

If you're serious about learning how to eat well long-term, then you must master the art of adding flavour to your food without the use of high-energy dressings, marinades and sauces... (or learn how to make them yourself).

Long-lasting habits are the result of a combination of factors and one of those factors is getting enjoyment and pleasure out of food. If your 'healthy diet' is boring and tasteless, it won't become a regular part of your life. Food needs to taste great and there are lots of nutritious and delicious foods just waiting to be included in your cooking! Gaining just a small amount of skill in the kitchen will go a long way to helping you be a regular healthy eater.

## APPLY

Here are some great foods that add flavour to your cooking without adding excess kilojoules: Onion: Is always a winner... there's a reason why it's in almost every recipe.

Fresh Herbs: Basil, coriander, parsley, chives, dill, thyme, rosemary and sage. All of these will pack an absolute flavour punch to your food - just beautiful. Use them in dressings, marinades, and garnish with salad leaves.

Garlic: Good for you and rich in flavour -garlic is a fantastic addition to most meals. Plus, it smells awesome gently sautéing in the pan. Fresh is the best option and offers the best flavour. Use it with your vegetables, roasts, pasta, rice dishes, curries, stir-fries pretty much anything!

Ginger: A great sauce of nutrition and bursting with vibrant flavour. Use it in fruit blends/juices, stir-fries, soups, broths, marinades, homemade dressings and more.

Chilli: Used to add heat and flavour to your food. Plus, chilli's contain a range of phytochemicals that promote health. Large chillies are milder than small chillies. You can also reduce the heat of chilli by removing the seeds before cooking.

Lemon: A touch of citrus can transform a dish. Use the juice and the rind. Drizzle over a pasta dish or stir fry just before serving. Add to fish dishes, homemade dressings or meat marinades.

Lime: Just a slightly different taste to lemon, but just as good in the flavour stakes. Use the juice and rind. Drizzle over a pasta dish or stir fry just before serving. Add to fish dishes, homemade dressing or meat marinades.

Dried Herbs: These are quick, convenient and economical. Make sure you keep your pantry stocked full of the whole range. Use them in soups, pasta and other dishes as well as homemade marinades, dressings and sauces.

Spices: These are also quick, convenient and economical. Make sure you keep your pantry stocked full of the whole range. Use them in curries, soups, pasta and other dishes as well as homemade marinades, dressings and sauces.

Mustard: High on flavour, mustard only needs to be sparingly used. It's great for adding to homemade dressings, marinades and sauces. Use Wholegrain, Dijon, English, and French - they're all great and uniquely add flavour.

Vinegar: The addition of the strong acidic taste of vinegar enhances the natural flavours of food. Use apple cider, red wine, white wine, balsamic, white balsamic, and white and rice wine.

## DO

Here are 5 flavour techniques to try:

1. Lemon, mustard and rosemary Combine the juice from 1 lemon with 2-3 tsp of wholegrain mustard and ½ tbsp of chopped fresh rosemary. Mix well. Allow chicken or lamb to marinate for about 30 minutes or longer. Cook on a char-grill or BBQ. Serve with a fresh garden salad.
2. Lemon, basil and garlic Combine the juice of 1 lemon with ½ tbsp of balsamic vinegar, 1 tsp minced garlic (or 1 crushed garlic clove) and 1 tbsp each of chopped fresh basil and Italian parsley. Pour over char-grilled vegetables such as zucchini, capsicum, Spanish onion and eggplant before serving.
3. Dijon salad dressing Combine 2 tsp Dijon mustard, 1 tsp honey and 1tbsp of white vinegar. Shake to combine well. Taste and adjust by adding a bit more of any of the 3 ingredients to your liking. Drizzle on a fresh salad or cooked meat.
4. Tomato salsa Combine 2 chopped tomatoes, 2 tbsp of finely shredded fresh basil, ¼ Spanish onion finely chopped and 1 tsp balsamic vinegar. Toss together and serve with grilled fish, chicken or steak. You can also serve it on top of wholemeal or sourdough toast. Heart tip... Many of these flavour-rich foods are also rich in phytochemicals. These are plant-based compounds that promote heart health through antioxidant activity and reducing inflammation.
5. Spiced Vegetables Toss vegetables (pumpkin slices, red onion quartered, zucchini sliced lengthways) in 1 tsp of minced garlic and 1 ½ tbsp Middle Eastern spice -Harissa. Place on a baking tray and spray with a small amount of olive oil. Bake in the oven for 20 minutes. Serve with couscous or toasted



