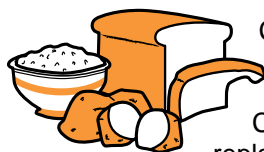


Nutrition

While watching the amount of calories you eat is important for your weight, there are also many simple changes you can make to your diet to help maintain your overall health. A healthy diet works in a number of ways. For example, it may help reduce cholesterol levels and lower blood pressure. Here are a few tips on carbohydrates and fibre.

Focus on carbohydrate and fibre – fuel the body and exercise the gut!

Carbohydrates

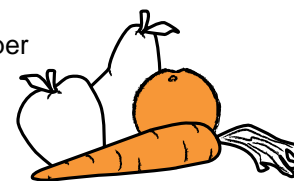


Carbohydrates, including sugar and starches, provide an easily available source of energy. Starches, particularly those from whole grains, fruit and vegetables provide slower release of energy than those from sugar and white bread.

Complex carbohydrates from whole grains and starchy vegetables are best to replace muscle and liver glycogen depleted by exercise. Starchy vegetables such as potato, taro and kumara and fruit such as bananas are also good sources of carbohydrate and can be substituted for rice, pasta and bread. Wash down carbohydrate with water to avoid bloating of the gut.

Fibre

Aim to eat 25-30 grams of fibre each day. For bread and cereals aim for 6 grams per 100 grams or more. Fruit, vegetables and whole grains also contain fibre which helps keep your gut fit and regularly exercised. Fruits and vegetables are full of fibre, vitamins, minerals and other substances that help protect your heart. They also pack in fibre and most are virtually fat-free.



Aim to fit in at least seven portions of these foods each day – five fruits and vegetables plus two whole grains.

Great tips for healthy eating

Now that you have read about carbohydrates and fibre it is important that maintain good habits. This following list gives some great hints about a balanced diet.

- Shop carefully, Eat more often – take a snack to eat at halftime of your game
- Increase the number and variety of fruits and vegetables eaten
- Choose low fat or no fat versions e.g. green top milk instead of standard
- Cut visible fat off meat
- Take the skin off your chicken
- Use cooking methods that don't use much fat (boiling, microwaving, baking, stir frying)
- Make sure protein foods are good quality – eat lean, beef, chicken, lamb. Eggs, soy protein, beans, lentils and whole grains are good sources too
- Eat fish more often (aim for twice a week or more – one at least oily fish – mackerel, sardine, salmon, tuna)
- Eat less takeaways
- Decrease your use of margarine and butter – use canola and olive oil
- Wait for toast to cool before you add the margarine/butter
- Use oil free salad dressings
- Don't add salt to your food – use more herbs and spices for flavour

- If you have high blood pressure watch out for hidden salt (sodium) in pre-prepared foods, Asian meals and spreads (like peanut butter and vegemite)
- Eat more whole grain cereals and legumes (dried peas and beans, baked beans, lentils)
- Eat everything in moderation – there are no good foods or bad foods. It is more important to learn to control your serving sizes than to eliminate a food and then binge when you succumb
- Don't go shopping when you are hungry
- Divide your food into three meals and three snacks a day.
- Limit alcohol to one or two drinks a day and do not binge drink
- Be careful of reduced fat foods – they may be lower in fat than their full fat counterparts but are not necessarily low in sugar/calories!
- If you eat out up to once a week, choose one item from the menu and enjoy it!
- If you eat out more frequently, choose one item from the menu but be careful with your choice ie low in fat, not too saucy, preferably more vegetables, legumes, lentils and less meat, chicken, cheese
- If you tend to be overweight, watch out for hidden fats i.e. in cooking, salad dressings
- Don't weigh yourself more than once a week
- Don't skip meals

Tips while eating out

When eating out it is easy to let go of all your hard work, but there are some helpful ways to stay on top of your game.

- Choose smaller servings
- If main servings are large either order an appetiser or share with a friend
- Resign from the 'clean your plate' club – eat a sensible serving and ask for a 'doggie bag' or throw it out!
- Ask for salad dressing to be served on the side so you can choose how much to add
- Order from a menu rather than from an 'all you can eat' buffet
- Measure your 'usual' size servings at home once or twice to get an idea of how they fit into the pyramid serving sizes
- Try using a smaller plate
- Choose more fruit and vegetables
- Eat as many different colours in a day as possible eg orange (carrots); purple (beetroot); red (tomato); green (spinach); yellow (capsicum) etc
- To get enough fibre in your diet you must have plenty of vegetables, fruit, whole grains, peas and beans

Kilojoules and calories

Kilojoule (kJ)

The kilojoule is a measurement of energy. It can be used to work out how much energy we get from the food we consume or how much energy we expend when we exercise.

Calorie (kcal)

Calories are another measurement of energy. One calorie is equal to 4.18 kilojoules. Many people think that energy is good while calories are bad. But really, one is just a measure of the other.

Just how many calories do I burn?

If you're of average size, when at rest, you use energy at about 1500 kcal a day. This is equivalent to 1 kcal a minute.

An average person is thought to eat about 2000 kcal a day.

If you stand up, your body's energy requirement increases by about 20% to say, 1.2 kcal a minute.

If you walk slowly at 2 km/hour this will double your energy output – 2 kcal a minute.

Walking at 4 km/hour uses four times as much as resting, ie, 4 kcal a minute. Now you're reaching moderate physical activity – which means that you'll start to have health benefits even if you don't lose weight!

The World Health Organisation recently recommended one hour (60 minutes) of moderate activity every day to improve health and prevent obesity. You don't have to be active all at one time – a few minutes here and there all add up over the day.

Try going down the stairs instead of using the lift, parking the car further away from your destination and walking, singing and talking while walking (take a friend), have meetings walking in the corridor, and standing up and walking around while talking on the phone.

Fuelling the body

Although we need energy to function, an energy-dense diet will promote weight gain. You need a healthy balanced diet combined with exercise. See below for some examples of how much energy is in different foods and which foods you should eat in moderation only.

Energy density relates to the amount of fat, sugar and water in a food.

Food sources and energy density

- One avocado (150g) - contains 22g of fat - 30% of the average daily fat requirement (but is a good source of fibre)
- One meat pie (170g) - contains 32g of fat, 40% of the average daily fat requirement.
- Soft drinks contain 11g of sugar in 100 ml – a can is 340 ml which is 8 tsp of sugar.
- Milk shake (100ml) contains 25 g of sugar. 300 ml (usual serve) contains 15 tsp of sugar.

- Fruit juice/drink/cordial - 100 ml contains 10 g of sugar. 250 ml (usual serve) contains 5 tsp of sugar.

What are you really drinking?

You've just finished your exercise session. You worked hard and you're gasping for a drink. But before you knock back that bottle, have you thought about what you're really drinking?

While energy drinks can give you a quick boost, in the long run they tend to sap your energy.



One can of soft drink contains nine teaspoons - the daily recommended amount of sugar for a relatively inactive person!

For your health it's important that you reduce your sugar intake. So if you're thirsty, drink water.

If you're still craving sweet stuff eat whole fruit instead. One apple contains only two teaspoons of sugar. And along with sugar you get fibre, vitamins, minerals and lots of phytochemicals, antioxidants and other nutrients. Plus your jaw and gums get more exercise - so it burns calories!