



8 Dietary Changes for a Healthier Life – October 2008

Inside this months issue

1. Never Skip Breakfast
2. Avoid heavy meals late at night
3. Take your lunch hour
4. Top up those important fluids
5. Reduce the glycaemic load
6. Eat more greens and colourful vegetables
7. Eat healthy fats
8. Lower your salt intake

Do you want to look healthier, feel healthier and be healthier?

Making small changes to your eating habits can mean big benefits to your well-being. This month's newsletter is about making those changes by following 8 easy steps and why you should take them!!

1. Never Skip Breakfast

How will this improve my life? It will increase your energy

Breakfast means 'breaking' the 'fast' after a good night's sleep where your body has been without food for up to 8 hours. A good breakfast such as wholegrain cereals will 'kick start' your metabolism, so that you can sustain that important energy we need to take us through to lunch-time. If you can't face a solid breakfast first thing go for is fruit yoghurt smoothies, then have a proper

breakfast a little later on.

If you skip breakfast your more likely to get very hungry at around 10am and snack on inappropriate food such as biscuits or cakes.

2. Avoid heavy meals late at night

How will it improve my life? You'll enjoy a better night's sleep and feel more invigorated in the morning.

At night, your biological clock tries to reduce your body temperature in order to get it ready for sleep, a large meal just before bed starts off digestive processes, which then raises body temperature. This works against what your body is aiming for, which will affect your sleep and you'll probably wake up unrefreshed.

You're also less likely to suffer from heartburn or acid indigestion if you avoid eating late.

3. Take your lunch hour

How will it improve my life? It will relieve irritating tummy troubles.

Many people suffer from digestive problems such as indigestion, or irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) and not taking the time to eat, relax and chew your food properly is a major factor. Too many people end up eating their lunch at their computer or rushing around having a sandwich on the hoof!

You should put yourself into a relaxed frame of mind when you settle down to eat lunch or dinner - if you don't take this time, you're not allowing your digestive system to do it's job, which will eventually manifest in unpleasant symptoms.

Eating under stress is no way to enjoy one of life's great pleasures!!!

4. Top up those important fluids

How will it improve my life? It will boost your concentration

A dehydration level of just 2% below the optimal quantity required by your body is felt severely in your mind and brain - your focus and concentration can dip by as much as 30%. The initial 2% is not enough to stimulate your brain's thirst signals, so you won't know you're heading for dehydration and, by the time you do feel thirsty, it's too late. All fluids count - water, fruit juices, herbal teas but cut down on the caffeine and alcohol, as these tend to dehydrate you.

Water is also great for flushing out those unwanted toxins!

5. Reduce the glycaemic load

How will it improve my life? It will help to stabilise your blood sugar and maintain your optimal weight.

The glycaemic-indexes (GI) and glycaemic-load (GL) takes into account not only the index value of a food, which will distinguish between 'good' and 'bad' carbohydrates, but also the quantity of that food you would typically consume. Foods high on the (GI) are digested quickly prompting rises and dips in blood sugar causing premature hunger. Equally carrots & watermelon, which are high GI foods, are classified with low GI values because the portion sizes we would normally consume are too small to cause a problem. Pasta on the other hand has a low GI value but a high GL as we tend to eat it in large servings. Decreasing portion sizes, replace high GL foods like white bread, sugary cereals, white rice, potatoes, cakes and biscuits, with lower GL options such as rye or granary bread, oats, barley, brown rice, wholemeal pasta and sweet potatoes - will help to balance your blood sugar and maintain ideal weight.

Those afternoon dips of lethargy will be a thing of the past. Good source of fibre!

6. Eat more greens and colourful vegetables

How will it improve my life? It will protect you from chronic disease and keep you looking younger

Green vegetables, leaves, sprouts and herbs are rich in the pigment chlorophyll, which is iron and magnesium rich. This nutrient rich compound helps to remove toxins from the cells and tissues, cleansing the blood and eliminating them from the body via the kidneys and liver, detoxifying and rejuvenating at the same time. Yellow, orange and red vegetables contain a group of antioxidants called carotenoids, these are known to help lower the risk of cardiovascular disease and cancer. Lots of raw fruits such as apricots, peaches, oranges and vegetables, such as carrots, peppers and tomatoes are all good sources.

Carotenoid-rich foods also contain high levels of Vitamin C essential for tissue repair, wound healing and growth. Good source of Fibre

7. Eat healthy fats

How will this improve my life? It will increase and maintain your brainpower

Healthy fats Omega 3-fatty acids (DHA) are found abundantly in fish (salmon, tuna, trout, mackerel) and cold pressed oils from seeds such as Flax, hemp and pumpkin. It is a vital nutrient for the development of the young brain; as well as maintaining mental agility and brainpower. Omega 3 is as important to the brain as calcium is to our bones!! Omega 6-fatty acids are found in evening primrose oil, borage oil, many nuts & seeds unhealthy fats Saturated fats (animal) and (trans fats) which are hydrogenated polyunsaturated fats used in chemical food processing, tend to stop the body making good use of the small quantity of essential fats that the average person eats in a day. As a result many people are deficient in healthy fats. Your ideal fat intake, based on no more than 20% of our total calorie intake, should be higher in the essential fatty acids

- 4% Omega 6 - cold pressed oils, nuts/seeds
- 3% Omega 3 - fish, cold pressed oil, nuts/seeds
- 7% monounsaturated - Olive oil cold pressed & unrefined.
- 6% saturated (animal)

8. Lower your salt intake

How will this improve my life? It will help to reduce your blood pressure

High salt intake is linked to high blood pressure and with it an increased risk of heart disease and stroke. Making a few changes will help to cut down on your risk such as: reducing your salt intake during cooking and on your meals. Checking all labels when buying packet foods, avoiding processed foods and takeaways.

It takes a while for your taste buds to change, but once you do, food will taste very different.