



# Nutrition and Lifestyle



Booklet 1

# Session 1

*Session 1 focuses on nutrition and lifestyle for daily exercise and activity*

## **Hydration:**

*Remaining hydrated is important whatever you are doing. Just a 2% loss of body weight due to dehydration results in large decreases in physical and mental performance, leaving you feeling sluggish, lethargic and unable to concentrate properly. This is even more important when exercising. Keep hydrated by ensuring you start exercising already fully hydrated and sipping water whenever possible during the activity. After exercise, rehydration should be your main priority. How can you tell if you're hydrated? Well, the easiest way is to keep an eye on the colour of your urine!!! You should aim for clear or very light straw coloured urine at all times.*

*You can find out just how much fluid you sweat out by weighing yourself before and after exercising. The difference between them is fluid losses. If you drink during exercise, remember to take off one gram per ml drank. For example; 500ml consumed = 500g off your post exercise weight.*

## **Isotonic sports drinks:**

*These contain a perfect balance of fluid, carbohydrate for energy and electrolytes which are lost when you sweat during exercise. Sipping an isotonic sports drink during exercise or drinking one immediately after finishing the activity is the best way to remain hydrated by replacing the water, energy and minerals that are being lost in your sweat.*

## **Energy (carbohydrates) and protein:**

*It is very important to start exercise with enough stored energy already in you to avoid feeling faint/dizzy. You may need to eat a carb based snack about an hour prior to exercising such as a banana or cereal bar. Energy replacement is also very important immediately after exercise to stop you feeling tired, to start replenishing energy stores used up during exercise and to fuel muscle repair. An isotonic sports drink or carb based snack is ideal. Also, try to eat a full balanced meal within 2 hours after activity too.*

*Real food is always better than supplements, but muscle recovery is important post exercise, so a milk-based drink or protein supplement can be taken within 30mins post exercise to help repair the muscles and also aid in energy replenishment in the muscle!!! This is one of the many reasons for ensuring you eat a balanced meal after exercise, as it will provide the building blocks to repair the body, as well as the energy to fuel it and other nutrients to keep you healthy.*

## **This session's challenge**

- ✓ *Remain hydrated at all times by sipping water throughout the day and avoiding too much caffeinated or alcoholic drinks*

# Session 2

*This session we focus on healthy eating and staying active*

## **Introduction to Carbohydrates and Proteins:**

*Carbohydrate foods provide energy for the body and brain to function. Examples include potatoes, pasta, rice and bread. Carbs are often split into simple and complex, or high and low GI foods. Simple sugars can cause highs and lows as they cause your body to release high levels of the hormone insulin to regulate blood sugar levels. Therefore it is best to limit simple sugars and opt for complex or low GI foods instead to keep energy levels more constant throughout the day. Examples include sweet potato, unsweetened cereals, wholemeal and granary breads and beans, even milk! Diets low in carbs will leave you feeling groggy, sluggish and moody, so avoid them and adopt a balanced healthy eating approach instead. Limit portion sizes and avoid too many sugary foods and drinks.*

*Protein doesn't just repair and build the body and brain; it has many functions in the body. It can be used as a source of fuel and keeps the immune system up and running just to give you a couple of examples. Protein is usually associated with meat, eggs and dairy products, although healthy doses can be found in fish, nuts, beans and seeds too! Vary the foods you eat to ensure you don't miss out on other essential nutrients in these different foods.*

## **Practical nutrition advice:**

*It's hard to count calories, and frankly it's utterly boring! Try to rustle up a healthy sized meal by using a smaller plate and focusing on eating portion sizes of healthy foods, rather than calorie counting. A balanced meal will comprise of 1 portion carbohydrate based, 1 protein based and 1 vegetable based. A portion would be roughly the size of your fist or slightly smaller. Stock up on veggies and salads if you're still hungry as these contain loads of vitamins and minerals vital to a healthy body and brain, while limiting calorie intake.*

## **Tips to burn extra calories and stay active at work and home:**

*If your job is sedentary, you need to make time to find ways to get your body moving. Take breaks outdoors and make the most of it by taking a short brisk walk. This will also help improve mood and concentration. Take stairs instead of lifts, get off the bus a stop early and walk the extra mile or so. Take time to do a few basic stretches at work; it helps improve posture and decrease aches and pains. Household chores can be a great workout and way to burn lots of calories, and have to be done sometime!!! Vigorous sweeping, vacuuming or gardening all burn more calories than sitting about and help you to stay feeling energetic and healthy. Tackle higher energy tasks when you need physical activity or have been sitting for a while. Wash the car, dig the garden, mow the lawn or re-organize the furniture!*

## **This session's challenge**

- ✓ *Eat at least 5 portions of fruit and vegetables every day, more if possible (80g = 1 portion unless it is dried fruit which will be less)*

# Session 3

*In session 3 we tackle diets, how to eat healthily and goal setting*

## **Long-term health**

*I know it's been said before, but you really are what you eat. Think about it; your whole body is made from nutrients in things you eat and drink. Eat just unhealthy foods and you'll have an unhealthy mind and body. Eat what your body needs and it will do what you want it to do. What you eat, and the exercise you do now, doesn't just affect the here-and-now, it affects what will happen tomorrow, next week and for years to come. The better you treat your body now, the longer it should continue to run smoothly and keep you feeling well. Reducing risk of ill health including cancer, heart disease, diabetes and many others starts NOW! This doesn't mean living a boring, restrictive life. It means feeling alert, full of energy and positive every day, knowing you are looking after your one and only body the best you can. Here are some helpful pointers to stay feeling great and healthy every day...*

## **Fad diets**

*Diets excluding food groups such as carbohydrates not only leave you feeling dreadful, they set you up for failure, as you cannot continue to avoid food groups forever without serious detrimental effects to your health. Stick to the healthy eating approach outlined in this session's challenge at the bottom of the page.*

## **Other helpful tips**

*Don't skip meals*

*Use a smaller plate if you over-eat*

*Don't use excuses to avoid exercise or meals*

*Protein based foods help you feel fuller*

*Soups fill you up due to liquid content*

*Find ways to keep active and moving*

*Exercise doesn't just burn calories while you do it. Muscle repair and replacement of energy to the muscles and the liver stores that are lost during exercise, all increase metabolism and burn calories even while you rest or sleep. Therefore, regular exercise helps maintain an increased metabolism.*

## **Goal setting...Think SMART (Specific – Measurable – Achievable – Realistic – Time Specific)**

*Set yourself a health and fitness based goal for each month and a larger one for the year. For example: lose 2 pounds this month and run a 10k fun-run this year. This motivates you to exercise and eat well on days you are busy or lack enthusiasm. When you achieve your goals reward yourself with praise and something you enjoy such as a well-earned rest or favourite food. Your goals must be SMART: eg) Run 10k in 2012 without stopping, in under 1 hour.*

## **This session's challenge**

- ✓ *Eat 3 or more, smaller main meals with a healthy snack in between each meal if needed such as a piece of fruit or cereal bar. This will ensure a constant supply of energy and nutrients to the body, increasing metabolism and preventing unhealthy snacking*

# Session 4

*This session we look at fats in our diet and ways to exercise more*

## **Fats: not all bad!!!**

*We hear the word fat and almost feel ourselves inflate. But it's not all bad; we need fat in our diet to be healthy. Fat can be categorised into unhealthier saturated (from animal sources) and manufactured (such as hydrogenated) fats and healthier mono- and polyunsaturated fats (from plant sources). It's all about limiting some fats and making sure we consume adequate amounts of healthier fats. For example, vitamins A, D, E and K are all fat soluble vitamins and require fat in the diet to be absorbed and used by the body. If we don't eat enough fat then we can become deficient in these vitamins too, causing all sorts of nasty problems.*

*Too much saturated animal fat in the diet can raise cholesterol levels and blood pressure, increasing the risk of heart disease and stroke. But, by eating more plant derived mono- and polyunsaturated fats such as nuts, seeds, olive oil and avocado to name but a few, you can decrease these risks of heart problems later in life. Also, omega-3 fats in oily fish are essential fatty acids needed by your body to stay healthy and in shape, as it cannot make them itself. So don't cut out fat. Instead, limit your intake of high fat animal products, eat leaner cuts of meat, semi or skimmed milk and ensure you eat plenty of fish, nuts, seeds, fruit and vegetables.*

## **Daily exercising**

*Have you ever written down why you want to exercise or eat well? TRY IT! Writing down your goals and reasons helps you focus and motivate yourself. It also helps you see how much healthier and fitter you have become by writing down your improvements and achievements and comparing them to how fit you used to be. Scheduling workouts helps to ensure you do them, just as you would any other important task for the week. It's your health; what could be more important than that in your weekly routine?*

## **Some ideas for increasing physical activity in your life**

- 1. Take up dancing with a friend or partner*
- 2. Stationary bike or treadmill run indoors while watching your favourite TV programme*
- 3. Invite friends or relatives to exercise with you. Go for a run, walk or bike together, or join a local sport/fitness club such as a runner's club, Boot Camp, Zumba or circuits class*
- 4. Do exercise you enjoy; savour the great feeling of being alive, well, happy and having fun*
- 5. Remember to have days off if you feel unwell or over trained. Rest is as important as exercise*

## **This session's challenge**

- ✓ Healthy fats: eat at least 2 portions of fish (140g = 1 portion), of which one must be oily fish such as salmon, mackerel or sardines and include olive oil in cooking and salad dressings. If you fancy an extra challenge, try to include small portions of nuts and seeds over the week in salads or as a healthy snack.*



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