

## Welcome

Welcome to the Spring edition of Nutrition News.

This issue we take a look at a Simplot employee's food and fitness diary.

We also give you some interesting facts about coffee and tea, including the caffeine content of some of your favourite beverages.

Get some great information on nuts and learn why we should all be snacking on these protein powerhouses!

Stay up to date on upcoming health events in the *Nutrition Watch* section and find out how you can support men's health during November!

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## Ask the Diet Doctor



Joanne is a Food Technologist (Culinary) with the Quality and Innovation team. She is 40 years of age with a busy lifestyle, with time spent working and studying. Joanne is a chef by trade and enjoys cooking. She is health conscious and prefers to eat meals she has prepared from scratch. Joanne enjoys spending her free time outdoors riding her horses, walking and cycling. She feels as though she should be doing more physical activity, however, time is often a barrier.

### Joanne's Typical Daily Diet & Exercise

<b>BREAKFAST</b> Muesli (untoasted) with fruit & nuts, rhubarb, no-fat yoghurt.	<b>SNACKS</b> 4 pieces fruit, 1 x rumball, 1 x chocolate bar (60g), 1 x handful of hazelnuts
<b>LUNCH</b> Homemade vegetable soup	<b>DRINKS</b> 4 x white teas, 1 x white coffee, 250 ml water, 1 glass wine
<b>DINNER</b> Scotch fillet with vegetables	<b>EXERCISE</b> Light activity, mainly on the weekends.

### What's the verdict?

Joanne has a fairly healthy food and exercise ethic. She starts each day with a bowl of muesli, which combines foods from a variety of food groups and contributes fruit, fibre and calcium. Eating oats may also help heart health by lowering blood cholesterol levels.

Joanne's overall intake of cereal foods (bread, pasta, rice, oats) is quite low. It is recommended that adults consume at least 4 serves of cereals per day (1 serve = 2 slices bread, 1 cup porridge or 1 cup cooked rice or pasta). Cereal foods are important as they provide vitamins, minerals and fibre.

As a whole, Joanne's diet is low in total fat and contains adequate amounts of vegetables—at least 5 serves per day are recommended (1 serve = 75g). Along with fruit, vegetables are an important source of fibre and antioxidants. She also eats no more than 3-4 serves of red meat each week, which is ideal (1 serve = 65-100g). Red meat is high in protein and iron. Women often have low iron levels which can result in fatigue and lowered resistance to infection.

Joanne's diet does not provide enough calcium rich foods such as low and reduced-fat dairy products. Calcium is important for

bone health and the prevention of osteoporosis. Joanne should aim to eat at least 2 serves each day (e.g. 1 small tub yoghurt, 1 cup milk, 2 slices (40g) cheese).

Regular snacks throughout the day are a great way to maintain energy levels. Adults should eat at least 2 pieces of fruit each day; which Joanne's does. A handful of unsalted nuts is another great snack—providing protein and a variety of vitamins and minerals. Sweet snacks like chocolate, cakes, and soft drinks should be limited due to their high kilojoule, fat and sugar content.

Ideally, adults should drink about 8 glasses of fluid each day. Joanne's intake is slightly less than this. She can optimise her fluid intake by replacing some of her cups of tea with plain water, which will help keep her hydrated without contributing kilojoules.

Exercise helps maintain a healthy weight, prevents the onset of many diseases and helps keep energy levels up. Joanne recognises that she could benefit from more regular physical activity. Ideally, she should aim to do about 30 minutes of moderate-intensity activity each day. Going for a walk at lunch-time is a great way to incorporate exercise into her work day.

# Coffee versus Tea– Need to know facts

## Coffee

Coffee is one of the world's most popular beverages; well known for the pleasant buzz it provides and it's 'addictive' properties. The pros and cons of coffee consumption have long been a topic of conversation. The majority of the population enjoy partaking in the odd cup of coffee, however, is it good for you?

Coffee is cultivated from the coffee plant species *Coffea arabica* and *Coffea robusta*, which contain caffeine. The amount of caffeine present in coffee depends on the type of bean, how it is brewed and it's strength.

Caffeine is a naturally occurring stimulant found in tea, coffee and cocoa that has been shown to increase alertness and enhance physical and mental performance. On the downside, caffeine has also been shown to increase the amount of acid produced by the stomach which can irritate the stomach lining and worsen stomach ulcers. Some coffee drinkers also claim to experience withdrawal symptoms such as headaches and difficulty concentrating when reducing their coffee intake.

## Tea

Tea is one of the most widely consumed beverages in the world, second only to water. It is enjoyed by millions of people around the world and for many it holds cultural significance in addition to it's medicinal properties.

The two main types of tea (green and black) both originate from the *Camellia sinensis* plant. Green tea is unfermented and is made by quickly steaming the leaves so that their original green colour is preserved. The more developed flavours in black tea varieties are due to their full exposure to air during the drying process.

Both green and black tea have antioxidant properties. Antioxidants are molecules which slow or prevent the breakdown of other molecules from oxidation.

Oxidation is a natural process that occurs within the body, however, excess oxidation can lead to the production of unstable molecules called 'free radicals' which have the potential to attack healthy body cells.



## Which one is better for me?

There are no definitive answers when choosing between coffee and tea, both have their benefits. Most studies agree that the consumption of tea has health benefits and may assist in the prevention of heart disease and cancers. Coffee, on the other hand, provides an energy boosting high and some studies have found that it may assist in reducing the risk of Alzheimer's disease Parkinson's disease, and type 2 diabetes<sup>(2)</sup>.

Both tea and coffee contain antioxidants and caffeine. Tea usually contains around half as much caffeine as coffee. Surprisingly, studies suggest that coffee is the biggest dietary contributor of antioxidants in America based on the combination of antioxidants per serving and the frequency of consumption. Black tea is thought to be one of the highest antioxidant contributors in America.

## The bottom line

Unfortunately excessive caffeine consumption can have a negative effect on health. Too much may cause nervousness, headaches and heart palpitations. The Victorian Government suggests that 500mg of caffeine a day is an acceptable dose for most people<sup>(3)</sup>, however, pregnant women are recommended to reduce their intake to 200mg or less per day as a precautionary measure. There is evidence that high caffeine consumption may increase the risk of miscarriage, birth complications and low birth weight babies<sup>(3)</sup>.

It is also important to remember that many coffee and tea drinkers add extra components to their drink of choice such as sugar, milk or flavours. These extras not only add flavour but they can also add to the kilojoule content. In addition to this, many coffee chains offer 'jumbo' or 'large' size drinks which may not always provide extra coffee, but will contain extra energy, fat and possibly sugar.

The most practical advice is to drink coffee and tea in moderation. Overall, these drinks pose little threat to health. Although there is some evidence which suggests that coffee and tea may help protect against cancer and other chronic diseases, the evidence is stronger for the consumption of fruits, vegetables and wholegrains.

## References:

1. FSANZ. NUTTAB Australian Food Composition Tables. 2006.
2. Klatsky A, Morton C, Udaltsova N, Friedman D. (2006) Coffee, Cirrhosis, and Transaminase Enzymes. Archives of Internal Medicine **166** (11): 1190–1195.
3. The Better Health Channel, <http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/BHCv2/bhcarticles.nsf/pages/Caffeine?OpenDocument> Accessed July 2008.

**How much caffeine do you consume? <sup>(1)</sup>**

Beverage/Food	Caffeine
Tea, black, decaf (240mL)	2mg
Coffee, instant, decaf (240mL)	2mg
Chocolate, milk (20g piece)	4mg
Chocolate, dark (20g piece)	11mg
Cola soft drink (375mL)	34mg
Tea, black (200mL)	38mg
Coffee, instant (200mL)	62mg
Coffee, espresso (40mL)	78mg
Energy drink (250mL)	80mg

# Nuts about Tree Nuts

The term *tree nut* is commonly used to mean nuts. The amount of tree nuts and peanuts consumed by Australians has decreased over the last 20 years. Although nuts have been a part of the human diet for thousands of years, recent concerns about their fat content has led to some confusion about their role in a healthy diet.

## What's so good about nuts?

Nuts are nature's own vitamin pills. Like other plant foods, they are a powerhouse of nutrients—vitamin E, zinc, selenium, calcium, iron, healthy fats (mono- and polyunsaturated), fibre and antioxidants. These are just some of the approximately 30 nutrients that are commonly found in nut varieties. They are also a great alternative source of protein to meat, making them an important part of a vegetarian diet.



Some tree nuts can also cause allergic reactions in susceptible individuals, Peanuts (which are actually a type of legume), and to a lesser degree brazil nuts, almonds and hazelnuts are the most common culprits. Young children are particularly prone to allergies of this kind, and in some instances reactions can be life-threatening. Many schools are now tree nut and peanut-free, so nuts and nut butters should only be served as an after school snack or as part of a meal.

## How much is enough?

The best advice is to eat a handful (30-50g) of a variety of nuts on most days, especially walnuts and almonds. This is roughly equivalent to 20 almonds, 10 whole walnuts, 15 cashews, 10 Brazil nuts, 4 chestnuts, 20 hazelnuts, 15 macadamias, 15 pecans, 60 pistachios, or 2 tablespoons of pine nuts.

## Health benefits of nuts

### Heart Disease

Eating foods that contain saturated fat raises blood cholesterol levels. Excessive consumption can lead to a build-up of fatty deposits in arteries, causing them to narrow and eventually leading to heart disease. Eating nuts regularly has been shown to reduce blood cholesterol levels by around 10%<sup>(1)</sup>. Eating a small handful of nuts (30g) five times a week can also reduce the risk of heart disease by 30-50%<sup>(1)</sup>. This may be due to their unique combination of heart healthy fats, vitamins, minerals and antioxidants.

### Diabetes

Regular consumption of nuts has been shown to reduce the risk of developing type-2 diabetes. Studies have shown that nuts can also help manage blood glucose and insulin levels in people with existing diabetes<sup>(1)</sup>.

### Weight management

Although nuts are a high fat food, they can still form part of a kilojoule-controlled diet when eaten in moderation. The protein and fibre they contain can help to control appetite by keeping you feeling full for longer. A handful of nuts is a great way to tide over appetite and stave off the munchies in between meals.

## Is there any such thing as a bad nut?

Most nuts have a similar energy and fat content, regardless of whether they are eaten raw, dry-roasted or oil-roasted. However consumption of nuts with added salt should be limited. Raw nuts in their natural state are low in sodium.

### References:

1. Tapsell, L. *Diabetes Care*, December 2004; vol 27: pp 2777-2783.

## Nut Nutrition Information (per 30g serve)

	Energy	Fat	SFA	MUFA	PUFA	Sodium
Almonds with skin, raw, unsalted	758kJ	16.6g	1.1g	10.8g	3.9g	2mg
Almonds roasted, salted	751kJ	16.3g	1.6g	7.5g	4.5g	234mg
Cashews raw, unsalted	731kJ	14.8g	4.2g	9.3g	2.3g	3mg
Cashews roasted, salted	796kJ	15.4g	2.6g	9.7g	2.3g	87mg
Chestnuts dry roasted, unsalted	274kJ	<1g	<1g	<1g	<1g	<1mg
Hazelnuts raw, unsalted	808kJ	18.4g	<1g	2.1g	14.6g	<1mg
Macadamias raw, unsalted	920kJ	22.9g	3.1g	18.4g	<1g	<1mg
Pecans raw, unsalted	893kJ	21.6g	1.4g	11.7g	7.4g	<1mg
Pine nuts raw, unsalted	876kJ	21g	1.3g	6.9g	11.9g	<1mg
Pistachios raw, unsalted	759kJ	15.2g	1.7g	8.0g	4.7g	2mg
Walnuts raw, unsalted	870kJ	20.8g	1.7g	3.6g	14.8g	<1mg
Mixed nuts (no peanuts) raw, unsalted	832kJ	17.2g	2.0g	10.0g	6.2g	1mg
Mixed nuts (incl. peanuts) oil roasted, salted	776kJ	16.5g	2.1g	8.5g	5.2g	179mg

SFA - Saturated fat, MUFA - Monounsaturated fat, PUFA-Polyunsaturated

## What's on?

### Prostate Cancer Awareness Week (September)

A time when Australians are encouraged to recognise the prevalence of prostate cancer and take simple steps that could save the lives of many Australian men.

For information about prostate cancer, talk to your GP or contact the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia on:

**1800 22 00 99** or **www.prostate.org.au**

### National Stroke Week (September 15–21)

Stroke is Australia's second single greatest killer. National Stroke Week aims to raise public awareness of stroke and the early warning signs.

The **FAST test** is an easy way to recognise and remember the signs of stroke and involves asking three simple questions:

- **Face** - Can the person smile, has their mouth eyes drooped?
- **Arms** - Can the person raise both arms?
- **Speech** - Can the person speak clearly and understand what you say?
- **Time** - Act FAST and call 000 immediately.

**www.strokefoundation.com.au**

### National Nutrition Week (October 14–20)

Learn to fall in love with food and value your health. Celebrate National Nutrition Week by making healthy and nutritious lunches - enhance your wellbeing and encourage those around you!

**www.nutritionaustralia.org**

### Movember (November)

Grow some facial fuzz for a good cause! Movember is a chance for the male population to raise awareness of men's health issues while also raising money which is donated to organisations with a focus on men's health. To register, visit:

**www.movember.com.au**

**Get ready to grow your Mo!!**



## What's in Season?

### Fruit

Apple, Avocado, Banana, Kiwi Fruit, Lemon, Mandarin, Orange, Passionfruit, Pear, Strawberries, Watermelon

### Vegetables

Artichokes, Asparagus, Beetroot, Broccoli, Brussels Sprouts, Cauliflower, Eggplant, Fennel, Potato, Pumpkin, Snow peas, Spinach, Zucchini

## Energy Drink Dangers

Energy drinks are formulated caffeinated beverages. Recently, researchers at Detroit's Henry Ford Hospital have found that high levels of caffeine and taurine can adversely affect heart function and blood pressure in healthy people.

They advise people who have high blood pressure or heart disease to avoid energy drinks because they could increase both their blood pressure and heart rate or change the effectiveness of their medications<sup>(1)</sup>.

### What's in Energy Drinks?

Energy drinks contain similar amounts of caffeine as an espresso or strong coffee. The caffeine comes from brewed coffee, guarana (a caffeine-containing plant product) or the chemical caffeine. Most energy drinks contain sugar or artificial sweeteners and may also contain taurine, an amino acid and B group vitamins.

In Australia, energy drinks are required to display a warning on the label indicating that they're not recommended for children, pregnant or lactating women, or people sensitive to caffeine. The maximum caffeine level for energy drinks is set at 320mg/L by the Food Standards Code<sup>(2)</sup>.

### References:

1. News-Medical.Net. <http://www.news-medical.net/?id=40754>. Accessed 17/08/08
2. FSANZ. Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code. 2008

## Did you know?

- ◆ **2,900 Aussie men die of prostate cancer every year**
- ◆ **1 in 6 men suffer from depression at any given time, but most don't seek help**
- ◆ **Testicular cancer is the most common cancer in young men aged 18 to 35 years**
- ◆ **Men access health services 30-40% less than women**