

Welcome

Welcome to the Winter edition of *Nutrition News*.

Our feature article looks at 'The Glycaemic Index'. What is it? How can you use it?

We also provide 'Tips to Avoid Winter Weight Gain' and how to 'Eat out... without blowing out'.

Check out our healthy recipe on the back Pumpkin, and Pesto Pizza. Yum!

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Tips to Avoid Winter Weight Gain

It's winter. It's 6 a.m. The alarm goes off. Usually you start the day with a jog in the park, but today there's frost on the windows, fog on the ground and a chill in the air...and it's so warm under the doona! You roll over, hit the snooze button and forget all about jogging as you doze off to sleep again.

With winter often comes weight gain. A number of factors can contribute to weight gain in the colder months, beginning with the weather. Cold or wet conditions can make it difficult to exercise outdoors; even leaving the confines of your warm home for a trip to the gym can be a battle! Colder weather can make you more likely to reach for comfort foods such as hot chips or a warm donut. Shorter days and longer nights can also induce chemical changes that can bring on cravings for sweet foods and carbohydrates along with feelings of lethargy and depression ¹.

This year, fend off winter weight gain with a double-edged approach to maintain, or even lose weight: be conscious of your diet and exercise regularly.

1. Tame your appetite

People tend not to worry about gaining a few extra kilos over the winter months, because loose-fitting, layered clothing can often hide excess weight. However, as the warmer months approach and we shed our layers, many of us also start to think about shedding those extra kilos as well.

To avoid packing on the pounds, try not to change your diet too much. Although you may not feel like eating salads, fruit and vegetables should still form a major part of your diet. Try to include plenty of 'sunshine-coloured' foods like red and yellow capsicum, pumpkin, squash, tomatoes and oranges.

Remember to eat your food slowly and savour every bite—it takes at least 10 minutes for your brain to register the signal from your stomach that you have had enough ².

Satisfy your cravings for comfort foods by treating yourself to some hot vegetable soup

with a crusty bread roll. Soup may also help you control your appetite. One study has found that people who eat soup before lunch tend to eat less food at that meal. Researchers are not sure why, but one possible explanation is that water in foods slows digestion and keeps you feeling satisfied for longer on fewer kilojoules ³.

If you do overindulge, don't fall off the wagon. You can make up for it by watching what you eat over the following days and doing some extra physical activity.

2. Exercise, exercise, exercise

Commit yourself to a regular fitness schedule. That way, when it's cold and wet outside you'll be less tempted to stay indoors and curl up in front of the television. You should try to dedicate at least one half hour of every day to doing some moderate physical activity. Moderate physical activity is activity that makes you breathe a bit harder and increases your heart rate.



Because winter weather may reduce the amount of outdoor activity you do, look for opportunities to build more activity into your day. Try taking the stairs instead of the lift, walk to a workmate's desk instead of emailing them, or try some new indoor activities like dance lessons or rock climbing.

Winter provides some great opportunities for activity that aren't possible at other times of the year. Embrace the cold and try skiing, snowboarding or tobogganing. Not only will you be staying active, you'll be having fun!

Staying active during winter also has the potential to elevate mood and reduce stress, which in turn may help you to avoid overeating.

Armed with these strategies to minimise overeating and maximise your activity, you should find that you will emerge from winter feeling fit, healthy and ready for the warmer weather.

References:

1. 'The Serotonin Connection' Hypoglycemia Association of Australia, Jun. 2006
2. Liu, Y et al (2000). *Nature* 405, 1058-1062
3. Bell, E.A. et al (1999). *FASEB Journal* 13(March 15):A870.

The Low Down on Glycaemic Index

Carbohydrates have received a bad wrap over the past few years. Diets such as Atkins and The Zone saw people cutting carbs and low-carb foods start popping up on supermarket shelves. Fortunately, in Australia this fad fizzled out and a far more sensible carbohydrate concept emerged: The Glycaemic Index. The Glycaemic Index was devised over 20 years ago, but has gained momentum over the past decade. You may have heard of the GI, or seen products labelled 'low GI'. So what does it all mean?

What is the Glycaemic Index?

Not all carbohydrate foods are created equal, in fact they behave quite differently in our bodies. The Glycaemic Index is a way of differentiating between the carbohydrates we eat and how the body uses them. When a carbohydrate food is eaten there is a rise and subsequent decrease in blood glucose (sugar) levels known as the glycaemic response. The rate at which a food releases glucose into the body is ranked on a scale of 1 to 100. Foods with a low GI (less than 55) are slowly digested and absorbed, leading to gradual rises in blood sugar levels. Foods with a high GI (greater than 70) are digested and absorbed quickly, leading to marked fluctuations in blood sugar levels.

How can GI be used?

The GI has many applications for a variety of population groups.

Diabetes

The strongest evidence for a health benefit from low GI foods is for people with diabetes. Low GI foods assist blood glucose control in people with diabetes, by helping to avoid the peaks in blood glucose levels.

Weight loss

A recent study by Australian researchers found that a high carbohydrate eating plan, based on low GI foods may be the most effective diet for weight loss, especially for women. The theory behind low GI diets is that rapidly digested, high GI foods cause fluctuations in blood glucose and insulin levels, contributing to hunger and inhibiting the breakdown of fat.

So will low GI foods help you lose weight? It is the total kilojoule intake in relation to energy expenditure that ultimately determines weight loss. However low GI foods may help you to feel fuller for longer and stop you raiding the fridge in between meals.

Sports performance

Attention to the GI of carbohydrate foods may be helpful for increasing sports performance. Consuming low GI carbohydrates within one hour before exercise, provides fuel for muscles without triggering rapid rises in insulin that can cause hypoglycemia. On the other hand, high GI foods and beverages consumed after exercise may help to quickly restore depleted carbohydrate stores in the muscles.

Energy levels

Low GI carbohydrates help to maintain steady blood sugar levels. This helps to sustain energy levels throughout the day, rather than fluctuating between extreme highs and lows.

What foods are low GI?

Knowing which foods are high or low GI can be tricky. Some foods, such as rice, have a different GI depending on the type. Jasmine rice for example, is high GI, yet basmati rice has a low GI. Generally, low GI foods include wholegrain breads and cereals, dairy products, pasta, legumes, corn, sweet potato, and many fruits and other vegetables.

High GI foods include cakes, biscuits, some breads, potatoes and some cereals.

Make the Switch

High GI food (GI)	Lower GI alternative (GI)
Broad beans (79)	4-Bean mix (38)
Jasmine rice (109)	Basmati rice (58)
Mashed Potato (91)	Sweet potato (44)
Rice pasta (92)	Fettuccini (40)
White bread (70)	9 Grain bread (43)
Bagels (72)	Fruit loaf (54)
Jelly beans (80)	Dried Apricots (30)

*GI figures from www.glycemicindex.com

What is Glycaemic Load?

Glycaemic load (GL) measures both the type and amount of carbohydrate in a serve of food. The GL is calculated by multiplying the GI by the amount of carbohydrate in a serve of food, then dividing by 100. A diet with a low GL appears to be protective against weight gain and lifestyle-related diseases such as heart disease and diabetes.

Low GI meal plan

Breakfast: Porridge or muesli with low-fat milk or yoghurt and toasted multigrain bread with cheese.

Morning tea: Low-fat yoghurt.

Lunch: Salad with 4-bean mix and tuna. Fresh fruit.

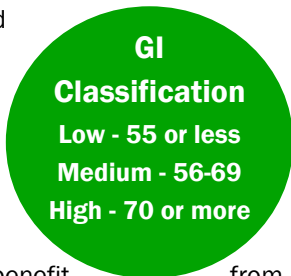
Snack: Fruit loaf with margarine

Dinner: Stir-fry vegetables with lean meat, egg-noodles and your favourite stir-through sauce.

Supper: Low-fat custard or ice-cream with canned fruit.

Part of a healthy diet

It is important to remember GI should not be used in isolation to other healthy eating principles. On its own, the GI value doesn't give you enough information, as it doesn't take into account the whole food, only the carbohydrate in it. Chocolate and ice cream, for example, generally have quite low GIs, but we certainly shouldn't be pigging out on them. On the other hand, there are many high-GI foods, particularly bread and potatoes, that are an important part of a healthy diet. Put GI into the whole nutrition context by choosing foods which are low in fat, especially saturated fat, salt and sugar, and high in fibre. Be sure to include a wide variety of foods in your diet every day.



Eating out... without blowing out

Whether it's a business meeting over lunch, a leisurely restaurant meal in the evening, or a fast-food meal with the kids, eating out is a part of our lives. We eat out because it's easy, it's quick, and it's fun. But is it healthy?

The good news is it can be. People have become more health conscious and now want healthy food choices whether eating at home or at their favourite restaurant. Fortunately most restaurants and cafes now try to meet diners' demands, so you'll find you have many more options to 'eat healthy' these days. Plan ahead, choose wisely, and you'll find foods that fit into your healthy eating goals. Below are some useful tips to help you 'eat out without blowing out':

Speak up

- If you're not sure how something is prepared, don't be afraid to ask. If it is cooked in butter or oil, you can always ask for it to be cooked without the fat.
- When ordering fish or meat, ask that it be grilled or broiled, and prepared without butter.
- Ask for sauces, gravy and salad dressings 'on the side.' Try dipping your fork in the salad dressing, then spear a piece of lettuce. You'll use less this way.
- Ask for substitutions. Instead of chips, request a double order of vegetables or salad. If you can't get a substitute, just ask that the high-fat food be left off your plate.

Watch the extras

- Quench your thirst with water
- When dining with companions, order first. That way you are

less likely to be influenced by their choices.

- Avoid filling up on garlic & herb bread which are soaked in butter. If you need bread ask for plain.

Portion control

- Order one course at a time. Allow at least 20 minutes per course—the time your body needs to register satiety signals. If you feel full don't feel obligated to keep ordering.
- Stay away from 'all you can eat' buffets and salad bars: It's too easy to lose track of the amount of food you've eaten
- Split the entrée or dessert with someone else.

Be Salad Smart

Studies show that people who eat a salad before the main course eat fewer kilojoules overall than those who don't. But some salads can be loaded with fat and kilojoules. Take a typical Caesar salad with chicken, cheese, bacon chips and mayo. Add fried croutons and the kilojoules add up to a whopping 2300kJ, with 36 grams of fat. Get the salad, but ask for just vegetables.

Draw the line

- Ask the waiter to take your plate as soon as you're full. This will help you avoid consuming extra kilojoules from picking at the leftovers.
- Eat slowly and enjoy the conversation. Stop eating when you are full.
- Don't feel like you have to clean your plate.

Eating by Cuisine

	Choose	Avoid	Dining Tips
Asian	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stir fry/steamed dishes with lean meat, fish or chicken • Steamed rice or noodles • Rice paper rolls • Vegetable/noodle soups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spring rolls • Satay dishes • Deep fried or battered dishes • Coconut-milk based dishes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Order fewer dishes than there are people at the table. • Avoid items described as 'crispy, golden brown or sweet-and-sour'.
Greek	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tzatziki dip • Grilled calamari and fish, Pita bread • Kebabs—lean beef, lamb and chicken • Stuffed vegetables 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baklava, kataifi • Pastry • Deep fried dishes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Steer clear of heavy cheese-topped dishes like moussaka or pastitsio.
Italian	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minestrone • Pasta or risotto with tomato-based sauces, Bolognese, or marinara • Green salad 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pasta with oil or cream • Lasagna • Garlic or herb bread 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Order the entrée size pasta and have with a salad. • Avoid items described as 'alfredo, carbonara, parmigiana, or manicotti.'
Indian	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vegetable and seafood curries • Rice and pappadams • Lentils, dahl 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deep fried dishes • Ghee (clarified butter) • Samosas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skip the appetisers—most are fried • Avoid the chapatti, naan or roti bread which have been fried or soaked in fat.
Mexican	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chilli con carne • Taco • Tortilla • Enchilada with beans • Burrito 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large serves • Cheese, sour cream • Nachos • Guacamole • Fried tortilla 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choose beans to fill your burritos instead of beef or cheese • Avoid chimichanga, relleno, or chalupa which are fried or deep-fried.

Nutrient Reference Values

The National Health & Medical Research Council recently announced the revised Nutrient Reference Values (NRV's) for Australians. The new NRV's provide recommended intakes for 33 nutrients based on age, sex and life stages.

What are they?

- 1. Estimated Average Intake (EAR):** The amount of a nutrient estimated to meet requirements of half the healthy individuals of a particular group. This is used in planning for groups, not individuals.
- 2. Recommended Dietary Intake (RDI):** The amount of a nutrient needed each day to meet the requirements of nearly all healthy individuals of a particular life stage.
- 3. Adequate Intake (AI):** This number is used when an RDI cannot be determined. The figure is either based on experimental data or median population intakes in an otherwise healthy population.
- 4. Upper Level (UL):** Upper limits have been set to avoid toxicity or adverse symptoms.

What's changed?

We now have 14 new nutrients with RDI's or AI's including carbohydrate, fibre, fats, omega-3, and some vitamins and minerals. In addition, daily requirements for four key nutrients have been increased:

- **Folate** - The RDI has doubled, to 400µg for men and women.
- **Calcium** - The RDI has increased by 200-500mg for men and women to 1000-1300mg per day.
- **Iron** - The range has increased for women, and is now 8-18mg compared to 12-16mg previously. The RDI for men has increased by 1mg, to 8mg.
- **Zinc** - The RDI for men has been increased to 14mg, and decreased for women to 8mg.

Healthy Bones Week (August 6-12)

Osteoporosis is a condition marked by thin and brittle bones, which affects more than 2 million people in Australia. Adults should include 3 serves of dairy foods a day to prevent osteoporosis.

One serve of dairy foods is equal to:

- 1 cup (250 ml) milk
- ½ cup (125 ml) evaporated milk
- 2 slices (40 g) cheese
- 1 small carton (200 g) yoghurt

It is also important to eat a balanced diet, maintain adequate intake of vitamin D, undertake weight-bearing physical activity and maintain a healthy body weight.

Eat more oily fish!

Australians should be eating oily fish meals at least twice a week for omega-3 fatty acids. But according to the National Heart Foundation of Australia many families aren't eating any at all.

New research published in *The American Journal of Psychiatry*, shows people with a diet low in fish oil are more likely to suffer mood disorders, cardiac problems and other health conditions.

The benefits of omega-3 - found predominantly in oily fish like tuna and salmon- have been well established. Have you had your 2 serves this week?

30

That's the grams of fibre we need to eat each day. Most Australians only eat half of this! Choose legumes, fruit, vegetables and wholegrain breads and cereals to naturally boost the fibre in your diet.

PUMPKIN AND PESTO PIZZA (Diabetic)

A simple but tasty pizza using roasted pumpkin and Ricotta cheese makes a quick gourmet delight.

Preparation Time: 10 minutes
Serves 2

Ingredients

- 150g pumpkin, thinly sliced
- 2 small pita breads
- 2 tablespoons Leggo's Traditional Pesto
- 2/3 cup baby spinach leaves
- 75g fresh Ricotta cheese

Method

1. Place pumpkin on a baking paper lined tray. Cook in a preheated oven at 200 °C for 10 minutes.
2. Spread Leggo's Traditional Pesto evenly onto each pita bread; top with cooked pumpkin and dot with Ricotta cheese. Place on the baking tray and cook for 5 minutes. Serve topped with baby spinach leaves.

COOKING TIME: 15 minutes

Nutritional Information Per Serve

Kilojoules 1020 , Protein 9.6g , Fat 9.8g
Saturated Fat 2.9g , Carbohydrates Total 27.6g , Sugar 4.7g , Sodium 481mg

TIP: Butternut pumpkin was used in this recipe, before cooking lightly spray with oil and season with cracked pepper.

