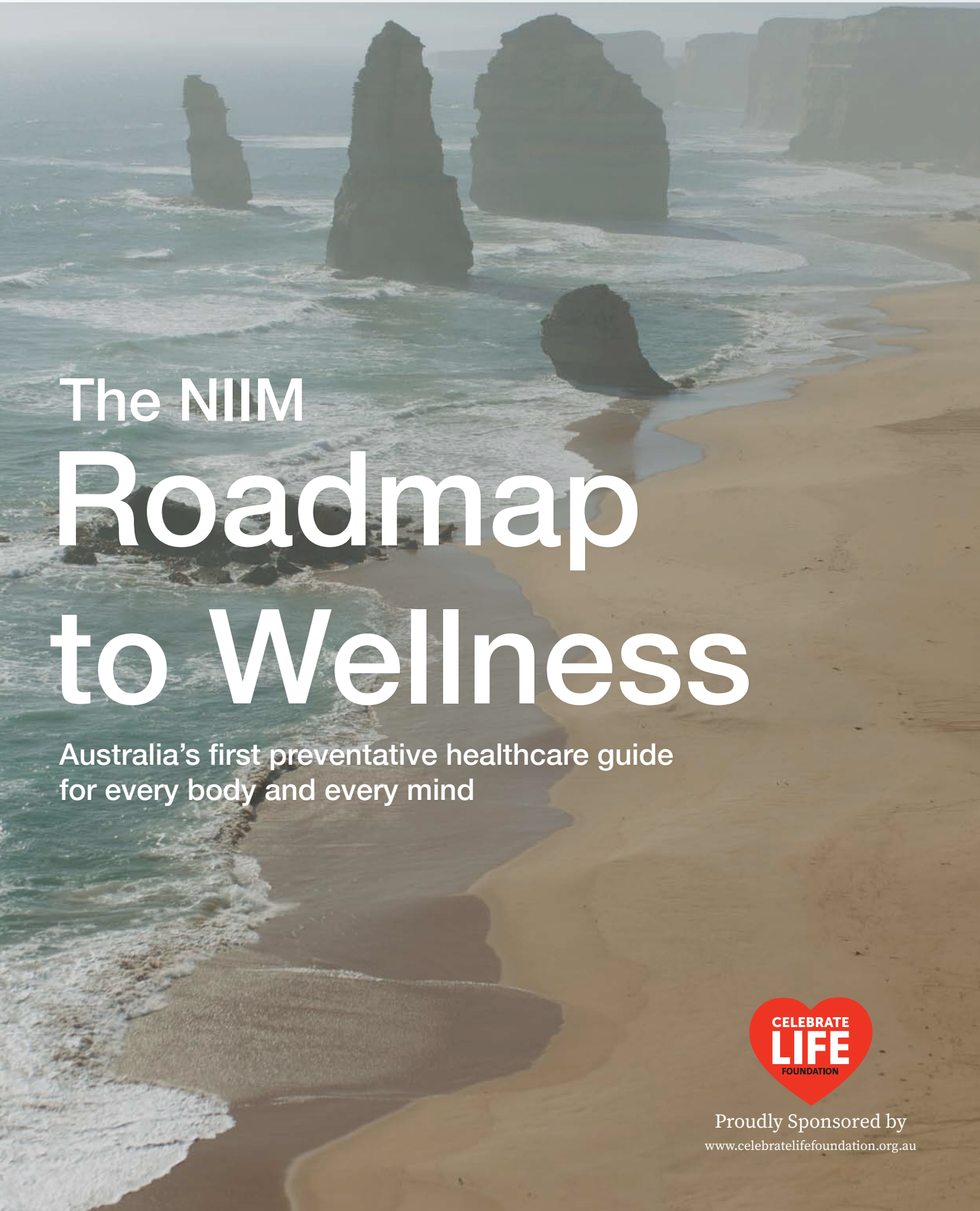
NIIM
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF INTEGRATIVE MEDICINE



The NIIM Roadmap to Wellness

Australia's first preventative healthcare guide for every body and every mind

CELEBRATE LIFE FOUNDATION

Proudly Sponsored by

www.celebratelifefoundation.org.au

National Institute of Integrative Medicine
11-23 Burwood Rd
Hawthorn VIC 3122
Australia
Tel 03 9804 0646 www.niim.com.au

Copyright © National Institute of Integrative Medicine 2015
Version 1.0

This publication is copyright, no part may be reproduced by any process except in accordance with the provisions of the Copyright Act 1968. The moral right of the author has been asserted.

This booklet is not intended to provide medical advice. Please consult your medical practitioner prior to implementing any recommendations contained in this booklet.

Contributing authors:
Please note: The contents of this document do not reflect the opinion of individual contributing authors. Contributing authors have not reviewed the final manuscript. Authorised by Stephen Bunce, Chief Executive Officer, NIIM.

Professor Avni Sali MBBS PhD FRACS FACS FACNEM
Dr Simon Armstrong BSc MHSc(Osteo)
Dr Trude Augustat MBBS FRACGP
Kelly Besim BHSc(Nut)
Tom Birch BHSc Cert III & IV (Fitness)
Liz Davies RN
Dr Ewald Enoider MBBS FRANCZP FACNEM
Dr Peter Falker PhD MSc
Dr Ian Gillam PhD MSc BSc(Hons) Dip.Phys.Ed FASMF
Ksenia Goureeve BSc
Tom James Cert III & IV (Fitness)
Dr Calan Khong MBBS FRACGP
Heather Millar BA (Psychology) Dip Professional Writing & Editing Dip Counselling Cert Holistic Massage
Megan Reilly Ad.Dip.Nat Ad.Dip.West.Herb.Med. Ad.Dip.Nut.Med. Ad.Dip.H.Sc.(Acu)
Wolfgang Marx APD MDietSt BHSc
Dr Amir Nekoee MBBS FRACGP
Dr Karin Ried PhD MSc GDPH Cert Integrative Medicine
Lindy Schneider Grad Dip Arts (Writing) B.Comm Dip Professional Writing and Editing Dip Counselling Dip Art Therapy
Professor Richard Silberstein PhD Bsc(Hons)
Professor Annette Webb MBBS FRACP MD

NIIM
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF INTEGRATIVE MEDICINE
www.niim.com.au

CELEBRATE LIFE FOUNDATION
www.celebratelifefoundation.org.au

The NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF INTEGRATIVE MEDICINE (NIIM) is a not-for-profit charitable organisation, which brings together research, education and practice in Integrative Medicine. Australia's premier integrative healthcare facility, the NIIM Clinic, provides an unparalleled team of integrative medical doctors, healthcare practitioners and innovative therapies.

CONTENTS

Preface

An Introduction from Professor Avni Sali 4

The National Institute of Integrative Medicine (NIIM) 5

Australia's Health Crisis 6

Introduction 8

Three Pillars of Preventative Healthcare 14

Mindfulness 15

Movement 22

Nutrition 28

A Lifespan of Health 43

Celebrating Healthy Children 45

Anti-Ageing 48

Strategies for Prevention 50

Maintaining Change 53

The Future is Wellness 55

Resources 56

365 Days of Wellness 58

AN INTRODUCTION FROM PROFESSOR AVNI SALI

Our health is our greatest asset. Regardless of our age or our situation in life, a focus on health and wellbeing should be one of our greatest priorities and one of our greatest investments. Today, the pursuit of vitality and wellness is more than simply trying to avoid disease. Every person – male or female, young or old – can set their goals towards the achievement of optimal health. This booklet is a simple yet instructive Roadmap to Wellness based on a growing body of evidence supporting an integrative approach to healthcare.

A lifestyle designed to promote optimal health is much easier to achieve than most people realise, and a few simple changes can bring many additional benefits to health, including a long and vital life.

In an era when we are seeing high levels of childhood obesity and high rates of cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes and other chronic diseases, I invite you to consider what the gift of good health can mean to you. I have witnessed many patients turn their lives around by making lifestyle changes that have contributed significantly to their health. Research studies have now clearly shown that lifestyle changes not only prevent illness, but can also play a crucial part in getting the best results in the treatment of illness. There is great need and great hope in adapting to a new philosophy of health creation, rather than focusing on just the treatment of disease.

Through the many decades of health research in which I have been involved, our findings have reinforced again and again the need to focus on the cause of disease, not only its diagnosis and treatment. Lifestyle factors such as nutrition, mindfulness and movement, which form part of the foundation of Integrative Medicine, have a direct effect on health. Medical advances can not only extend life, but also its quality, by incorporating a healthy lifestyle which includes stress management, regular exercise and a healthy diet.

Enjoy a new level of health in your life as you join the wellness revolution and develop your own Roadmap to Wellness. We owe it to ourselves, our families and the society we live in. As the saying goes, health isn't everything, but without it we have nothing.

Professor Avni Sali
Founder & Director, National Institute of Integrative Medicine (NIIM)

FACTS ABOUT NIIM

The NIIM Clinic has provided over 100,000 appointments since its opening in 2009.

The NIIM Clinic houses over 25 GPs, Specialists and Allied Health practitioners.

NIIM offers unique services including IV Vitamin Therapy, Chelation, Hyperthermia and the Integrative HealthCheck.

NIIM's research includes Hyperthermia, Circulating Tumour Cells, PDT, nutritional/supplement trials, innovative medical devices, and public health surveys.

Over 2000 people have taken the NIIM Complementary Medicine and Health short course. NIIM also provides post-graduate research programs in conjunction with leading universities.

AT THE NIIM CLINIC

Below are some of the most common lifestyle complaints impacting our patients

STRESS - Many patients have symptoms of fatigue, and disease risk factors that are classically linked to stress. Many patients do not get adequate sleep or relaxation.

EXERCISE - Many patients do not get sufficient exercise to keep happy and healthy.

VITAMIN D - Many patients have low vitamin D levels.

ENVIRONMENT - Regular exposure to toxins from personal care products, plastics, environmental and household substances.

DIET - Many patients do not have a healthy diet to meet their nutritional requirements, minimise disease risk factors, and maintain appropriate weight. Many patients do not consume adequate servings of fruit and vegetables.

THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF INTEGRATIVE MEDICINE

A not-for-profit charitable organisation, NIIM was established in 2009 by Professor Avni Sali, a pioneer of Integrative Medicine in Australia, with the help of community supporters.

Integrative medicine combines mainstream medicine with evidence-based complementary medicine to achieve optimal outcomes in health improvement, prevention and treatment of disease as well as patient satisfaction and wellbeing.

The integrative model focuses on the cause of illness and is well suited to the care of people with chronic illnesses including cancer, heart disease, diabetes and many other diseases.

Integrative Medicine places importance on illness prevention and patient wellness, including lifestyle assessment and intervention. Integrative medicine encompasses a 'whole person' approach with a supportive and empowering patient-clinician relationship.

NIIM's Mission

- educate health professionals and the public in Integrative Medicine
- conduct research into integrative treatments and technologies
- provide world class clinical practice of Integrative Medicine

NIIM's in-house clinic provides the community with unparalleled access to integrative medical doctors, complementary healthcare practitioners and innovative therapies under one roof.

Working together with a network of local and international partners, NIIM conducts research into the safety and efficacy of complementary medicines, and emerging treatments and technologies.

The Institute works to raise awareness of the role of Integrative Medicine in medical practice and public health. This is achieved through community campaigns, professional education, free public lectures and the media.

Through the work of NIIM, Professor Sali continues his lifelong ambition to establish Integrative Medicine as the leading model of healthcare. NIIM is committed to ensuring Australians receive the best evidence-based healthcare to achieve optimal health, now and in the future.

At NIIM, we empower people to take control of their health.

NIIM
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF INTEGRATIVE MEDICINE

AUSTRALIA'S HEALTH CRISIS

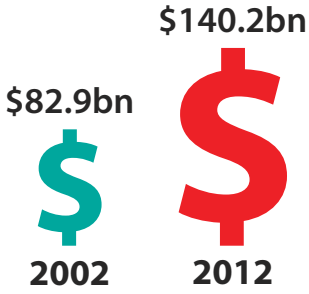
Some basic facts:

FACT
Three in five Australians are in the obese (or greater) category according to BMI.

FACT
70% of Australians aged 15 years and over were classified as sedentary or having low exercise levels.

FACT
Many people are not meeting Recommended Dietary Intake (RDI) levels for micronutrients. ABS statistics show that **94%** of Australians don't consume the right amount of fruit and vegetables every day.

FACT
Less than 20% of children eat the recommended five or more servings of fruits and vegetables each day.



FACT
The burden of healthcare costs on society has increased by almost 70% in the past ten years.

FACT
On average, sick days cost employers in Australia $2,741 per employee, per year.

FACT
Long periods of sitting are associated with

increased risk of lung cancer

increased risk of colon cancer

increased risk of endometrial cancer

FACT
Australia's population is ageing. The number of older Australians living with chronic illness places an enormous economic burden on the health care system.

Many Australians over 65 are living with co-existing chronic diseases, such as hypertension and asthma, cardiovascular disease and diabetes. Having multiple chronic diseases is associated with a reduction in mobility and quality of life, and increased psychological distress and hospitalisation.

A lifestyle approach to health can prevent chronic illness

The following are some of the basics of wellbeing being explored in this booklet:

Utilising the principles of **Integrative Medicine** such as nutrition, exercise and stress reduction, in the management of chronic disease can reduce visits to the doctor or hospital and other health services.

Meditation practice can effectively reduce stress, promote feelings of wellbeing, and is associated with reduced heart disease and mental illness.

Regular **movement** contributes greatly to reducing stress and increasing energy levels, enhances physical strength and resilience, improves immune system function and reduces risk of most diseases and illness.

Unprocessed (complex) carbohydrates release sugars slowly into the blood leading to a more stable blood sugar level and better regulation of appetite. Examples of unprocessed carbohydrates are vegetables, fruits, brown rice and sweet potato. Wholegrain pasta and breads are other great alternatives.

Good sources of **protein** include fish, lean meats, eggs, yoghurt, and low-fat cheese. Eating protein in the morning can help to maintain good energy levels and keep you feeling full until lunchtime, reducing the need for snacking.

Good fats are required for the healthy functioning of cells, the brain, immune system, skin and more. Fish, avocado and nuts all contain good fats. Bad fats are those that increase dangerous LDL cholesterol and include trans fats found in deep-fried foods, and certain saturated fats found in processed foods such as store-bought cakes and confectionary and hydrogenated oils.

Micronutrients, such as **vitamins and minerals**, are required by the body in small quantities. Dietary supplements can be a safe and effective way to keep up with your nutritional needs during times of deficiency or when it may be difficult to maintain adequate intake through diet alone.

Dietary fibre is essential for proper functioning of the gut and reduces the risk of a number of chronic diseases including heart disease, certain cancers and diabetes. Good sources of fibre are whole grains, legumes, fruit and vegetables.

INTRODUCTION

"A healthy Australia starts with a healthy Australian."
Australia has long held a reputation for having an active outdoor lifestyle - this provides a compelling picture of health and vitality. Health statistics, however, tell us a little more about the Australian people's general health and wellbeing and suggest we are at a critical moment in our healthcare history.

While the number of Australians who smoke has decreased and our level of alcohol consumption has generally decreased over the past two decades, our rates of obesity and levels of stress have increased and are now cited as being two of the biggest health issues we face. Three in five Australians are in the obese (or greater) category according to BMI. This has a direct influence on chronic illnesses such as cardiovascular disease and type 2 diabetes. The experience of stress is perhaps a modern symptom of contemporary life, however when research shows that one in five adolescents experience stress, and for all people stress has doubled in just over five years we should not ignore this health warning.

Around 70% of all visits to a general practitioner are believed to have a lifestyle-based cause. The good news is that if we manage our health through our lifestyle choices we can reduce our reliance on medicine, and become empowered champions for our own individual health and wellbeing. A healthy Australia starts with a healthy Australian.

Together we can develop a Roadmap to Wellness that supports every individual to live a long and healthy life – a wellness revolution centered on evidence-based research and choices that make a real difference in real life situations.

FACT
Obese children in Australia have between a 25-50% chance of becoming overweight adults.

FACT
The number of Australians with diabetes is projected to increase by over 400% between 2003 and 2033.

A Brief History of Medicine and Health

You may not know it but modern medicine is a relatively recent innovation in healthcare. The 'pharmacological revolution' that began in the early 1900s has brought us many new medications and treatments, and lifesaving advances in the form of antibiotics, anaesthetics, vaccinations and surgical treatments. Medicine's ability to treat infectious diseases and a host of acute medical conditions has certainly saved many people, and the work of dedicated doctors and researchers continues to provide breakthroughs that improve our lives in sickness and in health.

However, parallel to these developments there has been an increase in lifestyle related, and chronic, disease. The modern lifestyle of developed nations is less active, high in processed foods, lower in fruits and vegetables and, for many, includes high levels of chronic stress. The impact of these factors on health is now becoming a key consideration in medicine.

Lifestyle interventions that focus on achieving wellness, preventing disease or limiting its long term impact, are best achieved with the integration of conventional and complementary medicine.

Today Australians make as many appointments for a consultation with complementary health practitioners as they do with mainstream medical professionals. Research shows that over 70% of Australians use complementary medicines and therapies. More than 80% of GPs have referred a patient to a complementary health practitioner, and nearly 20% of GPs also practice a complementary therapy.

What is preventative healthcare?

In order to define preventative healthcare, we start by defining health. Health is described by the World Health Organisation as not merely an *absence of disease* but as a "state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing". In this definition of health not only is disease absent, but all systems of the human body are actively working in harmony to create balance. The goal of preventative healthcare is to achieve optimal health, not just good health.

Genuine health also depends on factors beyond the physical body such as psychological wellbeing, lifestyle choices, and the surrounding environment.

Preventative healthcare focuses on all areas of health and lifestyle to promote good health and prevent disease processes before they lead to illness. Preventative measures, such as a healthy diet and exercise program, are often largely self-managed, with educated and informed patients taking responsibility for their own health and lifestyle.

Preventative healthcare recognises the importance of

- Proactive health management
- The cause not just the symptom
- The body's capacity for healing
- A mind-body approach
- A focus on achieving wellness, rather than just avoiding illness
- A multi-disciplinary or integrative foundation that draws on all evidence-based treatments
- A long-term approach that focuses on optimal health
- The participation of the individual in their own healthcare
- Health promotion through education
- An individual, family and community approach

FACT
Spending on mental health care in Australia is increasing. In 2011-12, over $7.2 billion was spent on mental health related services. About 5% of all Medicare subsidies were for mental health related services, while 9% of all subsidised prescriptions were mental health related.

Benefits of preventative healthcare

For individuals, societies and workplaces, preventative health measures can offer many benefits, such as:

- Feeling happier
- Improving relationships
- Increasing work performance
- Increasing physical stamina and performance
- Sleeping better
- Coping better with stress
- Clearer thinking
- Reduced financial burden
- Connectedness with others, less isolation
- Less incidence of disease and injury
- Enhanced sense of sexual wellbeing
- Nutritional wellbeing and healthy dietary habits
- Weight management
- Better muscle and bone health, and improved mobility

FACT
On average, sick days cost employers in Australia $2,741 per employee, per year.
(A total cost to Australia of approximately $27.5 billion annually.)
Australian employees take an average of almost nine sick days a year.
This amounts to around 88 million sick days per year.

The increasing cost of healthcare

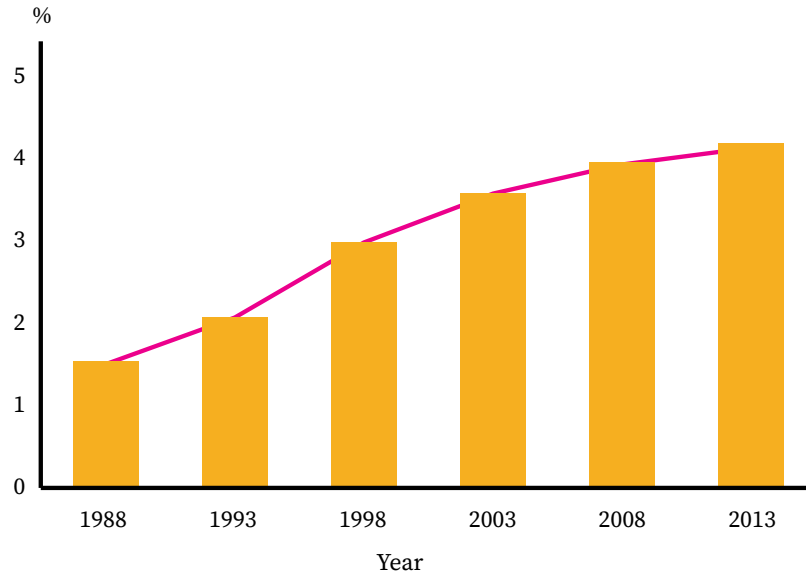
A growing population, an ageing population, an increasingly ill population – the burden of healthcare costs on society has increased by almost 70% in the past ten years. Expenditure on health in Australia was estimated to be $140.2 billion (and just under 10% of GDP) in 2011-12, up from $82.9 billion in 2001-02.

Of the total health funding of $121.4 billion in 2009–10, the Australian Government contributed 44%, and state, territory and local governments 26%.

A 2013 study by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare projects health expenditure will increase to $246 billion per annum by 2033. Our already strained health system must respond to rapidly growing demand.

Every Australian has the ability to adopt preventative healthcare approaches and help ease this burden.

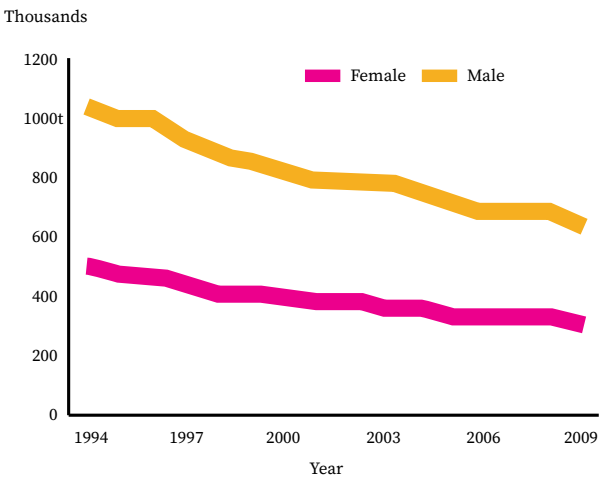
Trend in the prevalence of diabetes, Australia 1989–90 to 2011–12



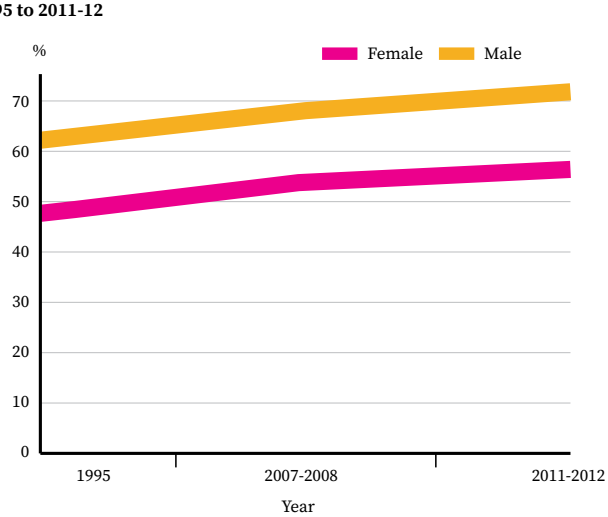
FACT
Each year, millions of people die of preventable illnesses. A 2004 study showed that about half of all deaths in the United States in 2000 were influenced by lifestyle.

REFLECTION
What three personal health issues concern you most?

Rate of major coronary events for people aged 40–90 years, by sex, 1994–2009



Proportion of persons 18 years & over who were overweight or obese 1995 to 2011-12



FACT
Average life expectancy for Australians has increased by 12 years since the 1960s.

FACT
It cost Australia $5470 per person for healthcare in 2009-10

On an average day in Australia

- 342,000 people visit a GP
- 742,000 medicines are dispensed by community pharmacies
- 23,000 people are admitted to hospital (including 5,000 for elective surgery)
- 820 babies are born (including 260 by caesarean section)
- 17,000 people visit an emergency department
- 400 programs are completed by individuals in alcohol and other drug treatment services

The Koukoulas Economic Report on Complementary Medicines

The 2012 Stephen Koukoulas economic report found that the use of complementary medicine in Australia is saving the economy at least $7.66 billion per year. The savings are achieved by employees who enjoy better health taking fewer sick days, visiting their GP less and using fewer prescription drugs.

Of the 11.499 million employed Australians in 2012, 82% report having used complementary medicines, and of those, 34% (or 3.206 million employees) report having taken fewer sick days because of their use of complementary medicines. The report calculated a total of 18.858 million fewer sick days taken over one year attributable to the use of complementary medicine. Given the average full-time wage, this equates to a savings of $5.095 million saved per annum due to fewer sick days taken by employees.

Of the population of Australians using complementary medicine, approximately 24% had a reduction of an estimated 1.2 GP visits per year, equating to a total reduction of 16.610 GP visits annually. Based on the conservative estimate using the lowest scheduled GP fee, this results in an annual savings of $591 million. Based on the average cost of a GP visit, this reduction represents a saving of $147.8 million for patients.

Of the population who use complementary medicine, 19% of users reported having been prescribed fewer medications with an average reduction of 2.2 scripts per year, amounting to a total reduction of 30.452 million scripts per year. Based on the Department of Health and Ageing estimates of the average cost of a prescription, this reduction saves the Australian government $1.425 billion annually. Users of prescription medications pay an average of $7.70 out of pocket; the reduction in prescription medication use adds up to an annual savings of $395.5 million for patients.

FACT
Stress related productivity reduction and absenteeism are directly costing Australian employers $10.11 billion a year.

FACT
Workplace stress is costing the Australian economy $14.81 billion a year.

THE THREE PILLARS OF WELLNESS

Wellness is based on three key lifestyle pillars - mindfulness, movement and nutrition.

A lifestyle that incorporates the three pillars of wellness recognises the need for play and rest as well as work and reward, with the ultimate goal of a life lived with less stress and greater enjoyment.

Mindfulness

With busy days and infinite choices it's easy to forget to slow down and be in the present moment. Being mindful means being present in the here and now, paying attention to what you are doing, who you are with, and the environment that surrounds you, while also looking inside and noticing how you feel.

Being aware of your experiences and your responses to them is an important way to manage stress and promote wellness, now and for the future.

The mindfulness pillar incorporates everyday mindful living, tools for stress reduction including meditation, and a focus on social connection.

Movement

An active lifestyle is a healthy lifestyle that promotes greater energy, stability, flexibility, fitness and quality of life. Walk, jog, run, cycle, jump, swim, splash about, kick the footy, hit the beach, play with the kids – it's all movement and it all helps.

Don't forget to combine your active time and social time with your friends and family. Grab a colleague for a more enjoyable walk at lunchtime, join a running group, or take a friend to spin class for a more fulfilling workout.

Nutrition

Our bodies are engines and how we fuel them counts. Forming and maintaining healthy eating habits is the best way to nourish and sustain good health. The Australian Bureau of Statistics has found that 94% of Australians don't consume the right amount of fruit and vegetables every day. Simply eating one extra piece of fruit a day is a great start.

FACT

Studies have shown that often those with a spiritual life, which need not be religious, have better health than those with no spiritual involvement. This may be due to a number of different factors: social aspects of belonging to a group, meditative practices, study of philosophy, and a sense of purpose and security in life reducing feelings of depression.

MINDFULNESS

"The body is the shadow of the soul"- Marsilio Ficino

FACT
Older Australians (aged 66-75 years) report higher levels of mental well-being than younger Australians, especially when compared with the 18-25 year old age group.

Stress is one of the most important influences on your health. When you are feeling good, your risk of illness is lower; when not, the risk of illness is greater. This is simply because your body works better when you feel good.

The relationship between stress and health does not always depend on how stressful one's lifestyle is, but rather on how much one actually perceives it as stressful. Where one person may find a situation stressful, another may not.

Excess stress is common in modern life and is not healthy. It can lead to an unfocused mind and cause irrational thoughts, including the projection of fears into the future, catastrophising, habitually recreating past anxieties and imagining stressors that are not even there. However, the body does not distinguish between real stressors and perceived or imagined ones, which is why psychological stress can have a physiological impact.

It is important to recognise that an individual's coping mechanisms may be more important than the situation itself. If the response to a stressful situation is unhealthy, severe or prolonged enough, it may have a very negative effect on health, relationships and behaviour.

Recognising when you have perceived a situation as stressful is a crucial step to resolving the stress response. However, many of us are accustomed to a constant level of pressure in our everyday lives and have trouble identifying when we are stressed. Stop and ask yourself how you feel. Are you stressed?

Becoming aware of this feeling allows you to take the necessary steps to decrease its effect on you, such as talking about the situation to a friend or health professional, or employing a relaxation technique.

FACT
The Stress and Wellbeing in Australia Survey of 2013 found that Australians reported increasing levels of stress and symptoms of depression and anxiety compared with the two previous years.

Stress reduction through the relaxation response can help to undo the harmful effects of inappropriate stress, and direct energy to the process of stress resolution and away from the stressor.

FACT
Financial issues remain the leading cause of stress for Australians.

Mindfulness meditation is a valuable tool for learning the ability to discriminate between real and imagined stress and there is now emerging evidence of the positive effects of meditation on the structure and function of the brain.

The Relaxation Response

Relaxation works best when it is a normal part of your routine, practiced consistently and regularly. Try to take time out each day to relax your body, your mind and calm your emotions.

There are a wide variety of ways you can do this – taking a slow walk outdoors, T'ai Chi or yoga, meditation, or taking part in an inspirational activity such as watching the sunset. This kind of active relaxation is more beneficial than passive relaxation such as watching TV as it also allows the mind space to develop tools to cope with stress, independent of external aids.

Harmful effects of stress

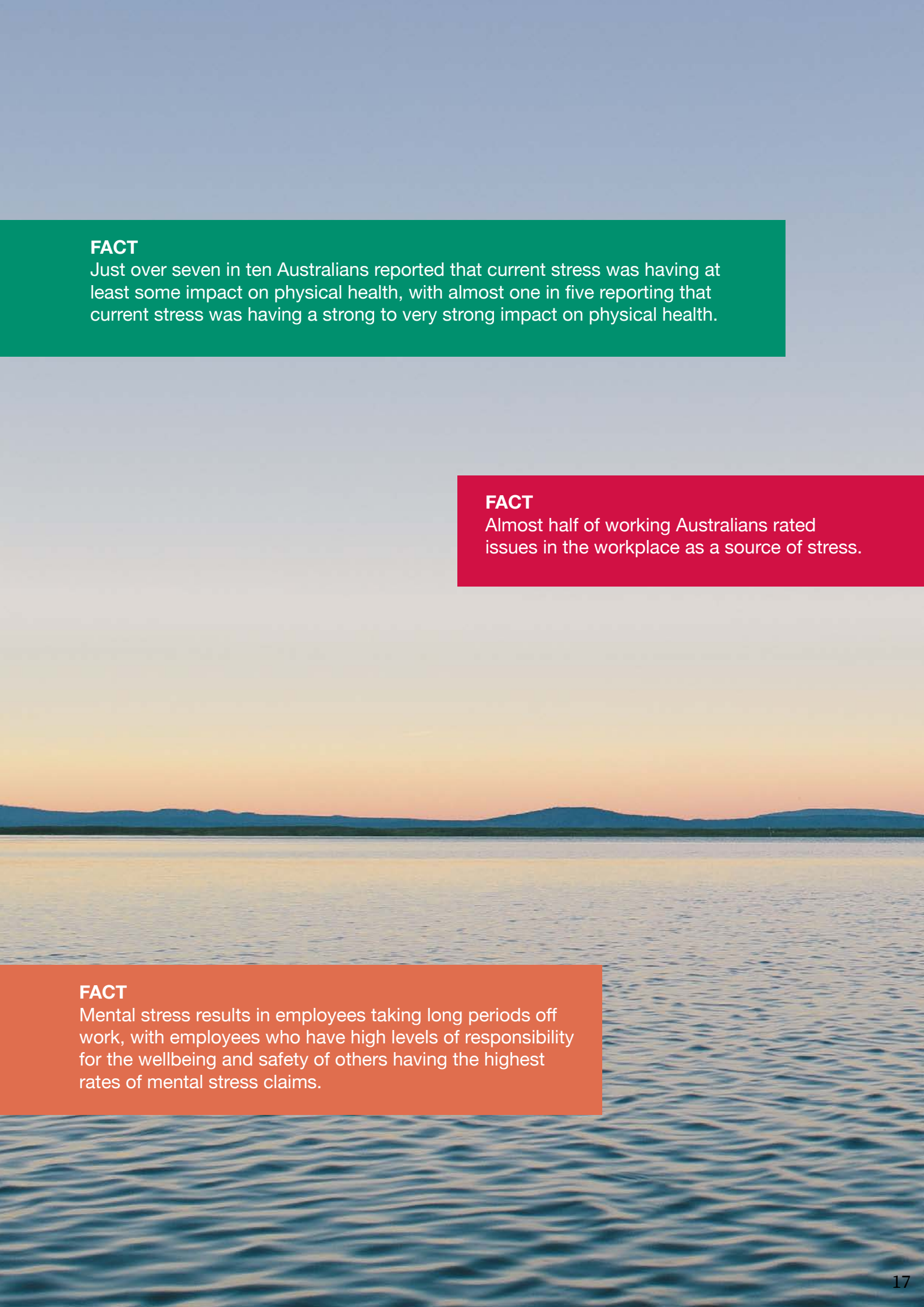
- Impaired critical thinking and decision-making processes
- Hormonal imbalance leading to mood swings and other problems
- Chronic illness
- Weight gain and metabolic disorders (e.g. imbalance of cholesterol, homocysteine, insulin etc.)
- Compromised immune system leading to increased susceptibility to disease

Signs of stress

- Trouble sleeping
- Difficulty getting up in the morning
- Irritability and/or low tolerance for others
- Anxiety
- Physical symptoms such as headaches and digestive problems

Stress-relieving activities

- Meditation, yoga, T'ai Chi
- Aromatherapy
- Acupuncture
- Massage
- Counselling
- Journal writing
- Exercise/movement
- Playing with pets
- Movies, concerts, other entertainment
- Gardening
- Being in nature
- Listening to music
- Creative pursuits - singing, dancing, cooking, writing, art and crafts
- Social activities



FACT
Just over seven in ten Australians reported that current stress was having at least some impact on physical health, with almost one in five reporting that current stress was having a strong to very strong impact on physical health.

FACT
Almost half of working Australians rated issues in the workplace as a source of stress.

FACT
Mental stress results in employees taking long periods off work, with employees who have high levels of responsibility for the wellbeing and safety of others having the highest rates of mental stress claims.

Reducing stress at work

- Take breaks by walking outside, or if this is not possible, around your indoor environment. This gets the body moving, improves circulation and can be energising
- Short breaks for morning and afternoon tea are also advisable, especially if taken with friends or colleagues
- Ensure you eat your lunch away from your desk and work environment
- Give your eyes a break. Focus on a scene or object at a different distance than your computer screen for a few minutes every hour
- Understand how your environment affects you. Include plant life, art, photographs, aromatherapy oils and anything else which will create a calming atmosphere in your work space

FACT

In a 1991 study, researchers assessed the stress of 394 healthy people over six months. The participants were then inoculated directly with five different cold viruses. The results showed that the likelihood of getting a cold appeared directly proportional to the levels of stress that a participant was experiencing at the time of exposure.

FACT

Every day we are exposed to hundreds of toxic metals and chemicals which place stresses on the body. The heavy metals that most commonly cause problems are mercury, lead, arsenic, cadmium (cigarette smoke), and iron. It is important to minimise exposure to chemicals used in pesticides, cleaning products, cosmetics and other household goods.

FACT

In a study, medical students were divided into two groups: those who kept a journal relating their feelings about disturbing or traumatic events, and those who kept no journal or a journal about trivial events only. The first group showed better immune function and fewer visits to a health clinic.

Personality and your health

The psychologist, Eysenck, identified four main personality types, which appear to affect disease risk.

Type 1

These people tend to suppress emotions and fail to appropriately deal with interpersonal stress. They tend to hopelessness, helplessness and depression.

Type 2

These people tend to anxiety, aggression, ambition and they express emotion inappropriately. They may fail to appropriately deal with interpersonal stress. Such people are more prone to heart disease.

Type 3

These people tend to be a mixture of Types 1 and 2.

Type 4

These people tend to live more in harmony with themselves and others. They communicate better, tend to optimism, are more self-aware and remain calmer under stress. There is far less incidence of illness among these people, particularly of cancer and heart disease.

Therapy may be able to address unhelpful personality traits and communication patterns, help to enhance coping mechanisms and as a result have a positive long-term effect on physical and psychological health.

Mindfulness meditation

Meditation is very effective as a stress reduction exercise. Most techniques direct the attention to focus or rest on one thing, and in the process, letting go of, but not struggling with, unnecessary and distracting mental activity.

It is a common experience that when the mind is in a distracted state, it wanders. Some of the wandering is unconscious inner monologue, while at other times it is stress-laden and the imaginary stressors are recreated vividly in the mind. This switches on the stress response and impairs ability to concentrate on the task at hand.

The practice of mindfulness meditation can help to bring the attention back to the body, to the task at hand, to the present moment. It improves the ability to concentrate in an effortless way and to combine relaxation with awareness.

Meditation is about tuning in and being focused, bringing the mind to a point.

Mindfulness meditation technique

It is recommended that this technique be practised initially for five minutes, twice daily. This can be built up to 10 to 30 minutes or longer if desired.

Choose a quiet place to practise the exercise without interruption. Sitting in a comfortable upright position, let the eyes gently close.

Become aware of each part of the body and release muscle tension consciously and methodically. Feel the breath as it passes in and out of the body. If distracting thoughts and feelings come into mind, carrying the attention away with them, be aware of them but let them go.

Now, become conscious of the sounds around you. Let them come and go and let any thoughts about the sounds come and go. Let go of any distracting thoughts which prevent you from resting and being in the here and now. Continue to do this with each thought that arises.

After you have practiced for your allotted time, slowly go backwards through the steps, becoming aware of the breath, then the body, then slowly allow the eyes to open.

Benefits of meditation

Meditation and other concentration exercises can be very valuable in facilitating stress reduction and promoting relaxation. A 1987 study compared five years of medical insurance utilisation statistics for regular meditators and non-meditators and found significant reductions in illness in the meditators.

- 87.3% less heart disease
- 55.4% less tumours
- 50.2% less hospitalisation
- 30.6% less mental disorders
- 30.4% less infectious diseases

The pleasure of happiness

Real pleasure comes from treating the body with utmost respect and supporting it to function at its optimal level. Looking after the body by eating well and exercising can foster a sense of joy and create a positive spiral upwards that is both sustaining and supportive of health and weight loss goals. Research shows a happy person tends to make better food choices overall.

Endorphins are powerful neurotransmitters in the brain that create feelings of pleasure and delight by acting on the opiate receptors also found in our brain.

Exercise is one way to create endorphins in the brain, but there are also many other opportunities for us to find pleasure and pleasurable activities in life.

Research shows endorphins are a powerful appetite suppressant, especially when combined with elevated levels of the hormone oxytocin, which is increased during intimate activities that involve bonding with others. Oxytocin has a number of functions such as creating the feeling of bonding when people share intimacy, and improving our feelings of contentment.

The pursuit of happiness is an important goal in wellness. In finding personal happiness and reducing the frequency and intensity of negative emotions many people benefit from individual counselling, psychotherapy sessions, or support groups - even a cup of tea and a chat with a friend is helpful. Writing in a journal can also be useful. The stress-relieving activities listed earlier on page 16 can also be a source of great happiness. It is also very important to have regular contact with relatives, friends or other social connections.

Take a moment to think of five things that give you happiness, especially things you haven't done in a while, and commit to doing at least one this week.

MOVEMENT

Exercise plays a vital part in promoting health, improving quality of life and lengthening life span. Studies have shown physical activity to have beneficial effects in preventing and treating a wide range of conditions, including heart disease, cancer, depression, osteoarthritis, osteoporosis, chronic lung disease and diabetes.

People who exercise are generally healthier than those who do not, and the concept of exercise as a form of medicine is growing in popularity.

To reap the benefits of regular exercise 30 minutes of exercise per day is recommended, either in one 30 minute block, two 15 minute blocks or three 10 minute blocks. Resistance exercise should be performed twice a week.

Regular movement contributes greatly to reducing stress and increasing energy levels, enhances physical strength and resilience, improves immune system function and reduces risk of most diseases and illness.

In order to incorporate movement regularly into a healthy lifestyle plan, it must be approached in a sensible way that enables its sustainability in the long term. This means finding exercise that is enjoyable and affordable, and can be maintained in all seasons.

Getting started

A well-balanced exercise regime should involve a warm up (and a cool down), stretching, aerobic exercise and strength or resistance training.

Together these exercises will burn energy, strengthen the cardiovascular system, including the heart and lungs, increase metabolism and muscle mass, and improve flexibility and endurance.

There is an exercise that suits you!

Consider your needs and wants when choosing an exercise that will keep you healthy and happy for years.

I need

- more social time with my friends.
- more alone time to clear my head.
- a gentle or slow paced activity to help me feel centred.
- something I can master and then do on my own.
- someone to motivate me to get up and moving.

I want

- an intense workout to get my body moving and heart pumping.
- to be challenged each workout with something new and difficult.
- to learn a new skill while I move.

Walking

Walking outdoors for at least 30 minutes each day is extremely beneficial for both mind and body. This can be done as a single walk of 30 minutes or more, or broken up into 10 or 15 minute sessions. Walking is an ideal form of exercise for people of all ages.

The only equipment required is a good pair of supportive shoes. Walking during daylight hours can have additional health benefits as it incorporates sunlight exposure for vitamin D synthesis, while a natural setting such as a park, a river or the beach, can enhance feelings of emotional and mental wellbeing.

Some exercise options to suit different needs:

- Personal training
- Dance classes
- Boot camp
- Horse riding
- Golf
- Martial arts
- Surfing
- Tennis
- Yoga
- Mountain climbing

FACT

Due to advances in healthcare and health education, Australians are living longer. However, while death from cancer and rates of heart attack are declining, the number of people living with chronic illness is on the rise. A large proportion of chronic diseases such as heart disease and cancer may be prevented with the lifestyle modifications emphasised in Integrative Medicine.

Aerobic exercise or 'cardio' (cardiovascular training, such as walking, jogging, dancing or cycling) is good for the heart, lungs and blood vessels. It increases heart and breathing rates, burning energy from the body's stores of glycogen and fat. This type of exercise is, therefore, the best way to burn energy, reduce fat mass and improve fitness.

Anaerobic exercise (weight or resistance training) utilises energy stored in the muscles when performing high intensity exercise such as sprinting or heavy lifting. This form of training increases muscle strength and endurance, and over time, results in increased muscle size.

Strength training may involve working against gravity or elastic/hydraulic resistance (such as weights, resistance bands or exercises that use the body weight as a form of exercise). To achieve improvements, muscles must be progressively 'overloaded' as they become stronger.

Over time, a combination of aerobic and resistance exercise will increase the body's metabolism, allowing it to naturally burn energy from food at a faster rate, even when sitting still.

Consistency is paramount in an exercise routine

Generally, it is more beneficial to the body to complete three or four 30 minute work-out sessions per week than one or two 1.5 hour sessions.

When beginning a new exercise regime, it is important to ensure that there are no health problems that may limit your ability to undertake your exercise program. You should see your doctor or other health professional before you get started.

How much exercise?

The recommendations from major health organisations, such as the World Health Organisation (WHO), suggest that performing at least 30 minutes of moderate intensity activity on most days of the week is sufficient to provide health benefits.

Older people (those over 50) should consider a daily brisk walk of 20 to 30 minutes, or a slower walk for 60 minutes, and should consider incorporating resistance exercise into their routine. Other activities can include swimming, cycling, lawn mowing, gardening, and other physical activities of daily living. Ordinary household chores have been shown to produce some of the same benefits as sports, such as a positive impact on mental health.

What's the harm in sitting?

Sitting for long periods of time is bad for us… in fact, it can be fatal.

Long periods of sitting has been linked to cancer, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease. A review in the *Journal of the National Cancer Institute* analysed four million people's answers to questions about their sitting behaviour and cancer incidence. The researchers examined close to 70,000 cancer cases and found that sitting is associated with a 24% increased risk of colon cancer, a 32% increased risk of endometrial cancer, and a 21% increased risk of lung cancer.

And the bad news is, you can't use exercise to fully combat the harmful effects; participants who spent their day sitting but also achieved the daily recommended levels of physical activity were at the same risk as those who spent their day sitting and did not get enough physical activity.

More time sitting means less time burning energy, and reduced metabolic activity. This can promote weight gain and obesity, which is a risk factor for disease. Being overweight or obese can also promote insulin resistance and inflammation, which may also increase the risk of cancer for people of above-average body weight.

But there is some good news. Getting up and walking around at least twice an hour can keep your skeletal muscles and metabolism turned on and lower the risk of disease.

FACT
Since the widespread use of cars, television and energy saving devices, inactivity levels have increased. It has been estimated that we miss out on 1.25 hours of walking per day.

FACT
According to a 2005 report by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, 70% of Australians aged 15 years and over were classified as sedentary or having low exercise levels. Of these, 48% recorded no exercise in the previous two weeks, while 52% recorded low levels of exercise in the previous two weeks.

Ways to increase physical activity

Structured exercise may include activities such as:

- going for a walk for 30-45 minutes each day
- swimming
- working out at the gym
- taking a class such as boxing or water aerobics

Lifestyle changes may include incidental activities such as:

- riding or walking to work
- walk to do the grocery shopping
- try a 'walking meeting' at work
- using the stairs instead of the lift

FACT
Health care spending on musculoskeletal conditions, such as arthritis and osteoporosis, constitute a significant proportion of health care costs. An estimated $5.6 billion is spent annually, placing musculoskeletal conditions as the 4th most expensive disease group.

Australia's Physical Activity & Sedentary Behaviour Guidelines

Being physically active and limiting your sedentary behaviour every day is essential for health and wellbeing.

The following recommendations from the Australian Department of Health are for all adults aged 18 – 64.

- Doing any physical activity is better than doing none. If you currently do no physical activity, start by doing some, and gradually build up to the recommended amount.
- Be active on most, preferably all, days every week.
- Accumulate 150 to 300 minutes (2½ to 5 hours) of moderate intensity physical activity or 75 to 150 minutes (1¼ to 2½ hours) of vigorous intensity physical activity, or an equivalent combination of both moderate and vigorous activities, each week.
- Do muscle strengthening activities on at least two days each week.

Movement is good for all ages

Childhood

Positive attitudes and habit formation; learning of fundamental motor activities, such as jumping, throwing, catching, hitting and kicking, which form the basis of school physical education classes and sporting activities

Adolescence

Counters developing cardiac risk factors; positive body image; setting up leisure and sporting activities for life

Adult

Maintaining health and fitness throughout life to undertake daily activities, maintain functional independence, social interaction and mental health to ensure a high quality of life, prevention of loss of work and income and premature death, cornerstone for quality of life in older years

Older Age

Conservation of function and quality of life

Health benefits of regular exercise

- Prevention of the development of many common chronic diseases
- Improved body composition, including maintenance of muscle mass, and reduced fat gain with ageing
- Improved mood and mental health
- Increased energy levels
- More restful sleep
- Reduced risk of illness and all-cause mortality
- Improved vitamin D levels if exercising outdoors

Energy consumed vs energy burned

Where no underlying medical issues are present, losing and maintaining weight is usually a simple matter of how much energy is consumed each day from food, versus how much energy is burned through exercise, daily activities and resting metabolism.

The following chart gives an indication of the amount of kilojoules in common foods and an approximate amount of time walking required to burn this amount of energy.

Food	Kilojoules	Minutes of walking required to burn Kilojoules (kJ)*
Jam biscuit	460	25
Milk chocolate, 4 squares	559	30
Sourdough bread, 1 slice	272	15
Hot chips, 150g cup	1255	65
Apple (medium)	270	15
lemonade, 250 ml	288	16

*Moderate walking pace based on 70 kg person

"To achieve a healthy mind and body, a person must first set an appropriate and sustainable exercise and nutrition plan. The plan should use existing guidelines to tailor exercise and meal strategies to the individual based on their body composition and goals. People benefit from the practice of recording and monitoring their progress in a structured way as it is both rewarding and motivational. Students reduce physical activity when they leave school as they lose the guidance of having a professional watch over them and keep them physically active. This type of discipline and accountability is needed in adult life just as much, if not more." Tom Birch, Personal Trainer

REMEMBER
When reading international food labels - 1 kilocalorie (also known as a calorie) equals 4.184 kilojoules (kJ).
1 Cal = 4.184 KJ

Words of Wisdom
"If we had a pill that conferred all the confirmed health benefits of exercise, would we not do everything humanly possible to see to it that everyone had access to this wonder drug? Would it not be the most prescribed pill in the history of mankind?"
- Dr R.E Sallis, 2008

NUTRITION

‘Let thy food be thy medicine and thy medicine be thy food’ - Hippocrates

Everyone has different dietary needs based on factors such as health, gender, genetics and age. These needs can change depending on life situations, such as illness, pregnancy, increased exercise and digestive health. However, there are a few basic guidelines for healthy eating that can be applied generally.

The general diet principles

Colourful meals

The colours of foods such as fruits and vegetables hint at what important nutrients are inside. Eating a variety of colours in your meals is a simple way to increase the amount of different nutrients in your diet. For example, red foods often contain lycopene, a powerful antioxidant, while yellow/orange foods contain carotenoids, which are converted to Vitamin A in the body.

Varied diet

Eating a varied, healthy diet decreases the risks associated with over-consumption of low nutrient foods. It also works on a similar principle to the ‘colourful diet’, in that it ensures a greater intake of a variety of important vitamins, minerals and other nutrients.

Vegetables and Fruit

A daily intake of vegetables and fruit is essential for a healthy diet. Eating a variety of seasonal fruits and vegetables provides your body with a great source of varied vitamins and minerals.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT
Diet is arguably the single most important behavioural risk factor that can be improved to have a significant impact on health.

Drinks

Alcohol

Alcohol should be consumed in moderation, remembering the effect it has on your body is determined by your gender, weight, and other factors subject to change, such as taking medication. Many alcoholic and mixer drinks are high in sugar and kilojoules. You can make a healthier choice, for example, by drinking red wine which contains antioxidants and is protective for the heart, rather than sweet white wine, and by drinking less each day overall - just half a standard drink of red wine provides the antioxidant benefits. The recommended maximum intake is no more than two standard drinks per day, if tolerated. If you are looking for a lower kilojoule option, try clear spirits such as vodka or gin mixed with mineral water. Non-drinkers are not encouraged to take up drinking for health benefits.

FACT
The recommended daily intake of alcohol for adult Australians is no more than 2 standard drinks per day for men and women

Coffee

Some studies have shown coffee to be protective in diabetes and Parkinson's disease. If you are a coffee drinker, you need not aim to eliminate coffee from your life completely to achieve a healthier lifestyle. However, it is recommended to drink no more than 1-2 cups of coffee per day.

Water

The recommended intake is 6-8 glasses of water per day (a minimum of 1.5 litres), however, this can vary depending on illness, exercise, spending time in the heat, and other factors. A good rule of thumb is to sip water or healthy, low-caffeinated, green or herbal teas throughout the day, and to listen to your body to regulate intake and adjust when needed. In the absence of illness, urine colour can be a good indicator of hydration - darker urine can indicate dehydration. Tap water should be filtered to remove chemicals, such as chlorine and trihalomethanes. Add fresh lime, lemon or mint for extra flavour.

FACT
The recommended daily intake of water is six to eight glasses per day

Juice

When juiced, fruit pulp (which provides the fibre) is removed, causing the fruit sugar to be absorbed much more rapidly and resulting in elevated blood glucose levels. Fruit juice therefore needs to be considered a high-sugar food and consumed in moderation.

Soft drinks

Soft drinks should be avoided or consumed in moderation only due to their high sugar content. Mineral water and sparkling water do not contain sugar and can be enjoyed regularly. Excess consumption of carbonated beverages may cause bloating, burping and flatulence.

FACT
Around 108,000 Australians received health treatment relating to drugs and alcohol in 2012-13. Alcohol remains the number one drug of concern, however treatment for other drugs is also on the rise. Counselling was the most common type of treatment, making up almost half of all episodes.

Tea

Tea has many health benefits, including anti-ageing, anti-inflammatory and cancer-fighting properties, as well as protection against age-related memory loss. Both black and green teas appear to have excellent nutritional value.

Just like coffee, caffeinated tea acts as a diuretic (meaning it increases urination) and water intake therefore needs to be increased accordingly.

Many herbal teas, made from high quality plants, have a variety of health benefits specific to each herb, for example peppermint tea may aid digestion. Organic, low-caffeinated teas - in particular green tea - can be drunk throughout the day.

Cocoa

An organic, good quality cocoa drink with low sugar content can provide the same health benefits as cocoa in other forms or good quality dark chocolate. To offset the bitterness of an unsweetened or raw cocoa drink, try adding honey. Cocoa has many health benefits including: anti-ageing properties, reduction in blood pressure, improvement in mood, cough suppression, protection against tooth decay, and protection against heart attack and stroke.

Milk

Dairy milk can be consumed without problems by most people in moderation, such as in tea and coffee, and in cooking. Organic varieties of dairy milk are also available.

Some people suffer from milk allergies, whereby their immune system reacts to milk proteins, causing an allergic response. Those who have a milk allergy should eliminate dairy from their diet as its consumption can cause symptoms such as rash, wheezing and vomiting. Other people are lactose intolerant which means they are unable to properly digest lactose, a key component of dairy milk. Symptoms of lactose intolerance include bloating, stomach aches, gas and diarrhoea after the consumption of dairy products. Many lactose intolerant people can tolerate a small amount of dairy, however consumption should be limited.

FACT
Overconsumption of energy dense foods and drinks, leading to excess energy intake and consequent increases in obesity, is now a key public health problem in Australia.

Some people who are unable to tolerate A1 type (standard) milk may be able to tolerate A2 type milk which contains only A2 beta-casein proteins, rather than both A1 and A2 type proteins. Organic soy milk, and other alternatives such as almond or quinoa milk, can also replace dairy milk for all purposes, including cooking, baking and drinking. Choose a sugar-free, easily palatable milk alternative that is free from oil additives.

Your healthcare practitioner can provide advice on managing problems of dairy allergy and intolerance.

Many kinds of sugar

There are many kinds of sugar, and it goes by many names. Different forms of sugar are found in a wide variety of foods, many of which do not taste sweet.

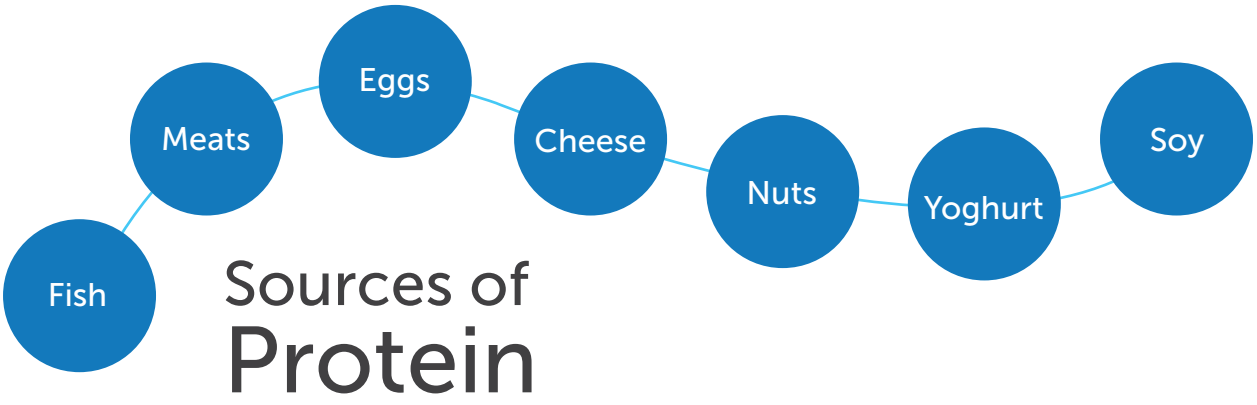
This table can help you to understand what's really in your food and make informed choices about how much sugar you include in your diet.

	What is it?	How it is made?	Where is it found?
Glucose (also called dextrose)	A simple sugar which is the main energy source in humans and is a component of carbohydrates. Excess glucose causes a sharp spike in insulin secretion, which can then be stored as fat.	Formed from the breakdown of other sugars and carbohydrates.	In small quantities in vegetables and larger quantities in some fruits. Also found in grains. The amount of glucose varies with the source of the carbohydrate.
Fructose	Another simple sugar known as fruit sugar.	Found naturally in plant sources, and can also be commercially derived from sugar cane, beets and corn.	Found in plant sources such as tree and vine fruits, flowers, berries, honey and some vegetables.
Sucrose	A molecule of glucose joined to a molecule of fructose.	Obtained from sugar cane or sugar beets.	Found in cane sugar and is used as common table sugar. A highly processed form of sugar.
Lactose	One molecule of glucose joined to one molecule of galactose.	Naturally occurring in the milk of mammals.	Found in milk and dairy products. Lactose can also be hidden in many other foods such as baking mixes, bread, cereals, chocolate, and spreads.
Maltose	Two molecules of glucose.	Broken down by the body to produce glucose from starch sources.	Starchy foods such as cereal grains, corn, potatoes, legumes, nuts and some fruits and vegetables.
Corn syrup	Primarily single units of glucose.	Syrup made from the starch of corn.	Corn syrup's major use is in commercially prepared foods as a thickener, a sweetener or to retain moisture in food.
High fructose corn syrup	Primarily a mixture of glucose and fructose single units.	Made from a group of corn syrups that have undergone processing to increase fructose to produce a taste that is sweeter.	A sweetener used in many processed foods and soft drinks due to its low cost compared to sugar.

Protein

Protein is required to build and maintain muscle, and is also the building block for many enzymes and other essential substances in the body. Good sources of protein do not add too many kilojoules to the diet. Eating protein in the morning can help to maintain good energy levels and keep you feeling full until lunchtime, reducing the need for snacking.

Good sources of protein include fish, lean meats, eggs, yoghurt, and low-fat cheese. Plant protein can also be included to achieve sufficient daily protein levels, including legumes (such as beans and lentils), nuts and seeds. Plant sources have a lower protein content than animal sources, however certain grains, including oats and quinoa, have a good protein content, and also some vegetables, including spinach, kale and broccoli.



Carbohydrates

Carbohydrates are complex sugars, and are important for energy and brain function as they are converted to glucose in the body, which is essential fuel for the body, especially the brain.

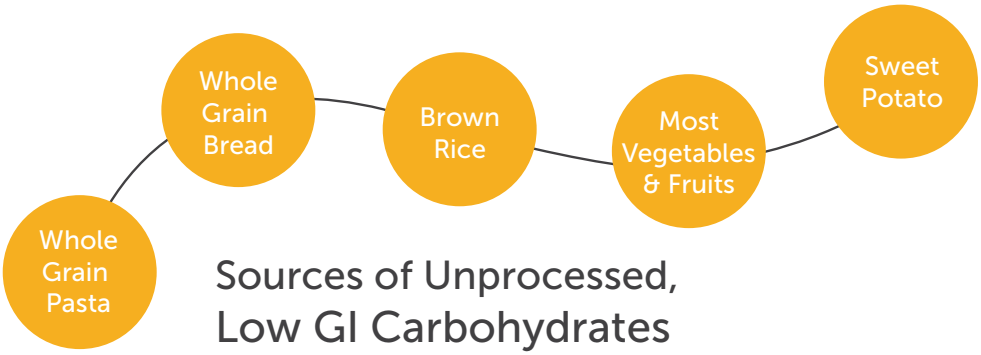
Consuming too many carbohydrates, however, without using the energy they yield can result in weight gain. The best way to maximise the nutritional value of carbohydrates is by eating unprocessed rather than simple carbohydrates, for example, eating wholegrain bread rather than white bread.

The glycaemic index (GI) of foods measures how rapidly the glucose from the food is absorbed into the blood and has been found to be a useful tool in assessing the health impact of eating certain foods. High GI foods are associated with unstable insulin levels and weight gain. For example, when pure glucose is consumed, it will appear in the blood more rapidly than any other food as it has a GI of 100, compared to a slice of multigrain bread, which has a GI of about 35. Although some exceptions exist, such as fructose which has a very low GI but has been shown to be a major contributor to why many people are overweight, the GI index is still useful as a general guide.

Simple carbohydrates are quickly digested and released as sugar into the body (i.e. high GI foods) causing spikes in blood glucose and a subsequent ‘crash’ often accompanied by lethargy, irritability and headaches. This can also result in hunger soon after eating. Examples of sources of simple carbohydrates with a high GI are sweets, cakes, biscuits, white bread, white rice and most pasta.

FACT
Two-thirds of the body's total immune system cells are located within the gastrointestinal tract.

Unprocessed (complex) carbohydrates release sugars slowly into the blood leading to a more stable blood sugar level and better regulation of appetite. Unprocessed carbohydrates are also often high fibre foods, which are good for digestive function. Examples of unprocessed carbohydrates are vegetables, fruits, wholegrain pasta and breads, brown rice and sweet potato. Legumes are also a good source of slow release carbohydrates, dietary fibre and protein.



Sources of Unprocessed, Low GI Carbohydrates

FACT
Based on 1990 costings, the total cost of poor nutrition in Australia was more than $5 billion per year. Given that the cost of obesity alone was estimated to be $8.283 billion per year in 2008, the current cost of poor nutrition in Australia is now likely to greatly exceed the 1990 estimates.

Fats

Fats may be classified as 'good' and 'bad' fats. Good fats are required for the healthy functioning of cells, the brain, immune system, skin and more. Fish, avocado and nuts all contain good fats. One very important good fat is Omega-3, with oily fish being the best source of this fat. One serve of fish can provide a substantial amount of the body's daily Omega-3 needs. Ideally, one serve of good fat foods should be consumed daily.

Bad fats are those that increase dangerous cholesterol (oxidised LDL cholesterol), and include trans fats found in deep-fried foods and certain saturated fats found in processed foods such as store-bought cakes and confectionary, and hydrogenated oils.

Sources of Good Fats

What are micronutrients?

Micronutrients are nutrients, such as vitamins and minerals, which are required by the body in small quantities. They are important in the regulation of all body processes, including energy metabolism and antioxidant activity. In general, foods are the preferred natural sources of micronutrients.

An ideal diet of fresh fruit, vegetables, whole grains, meat, fish, legumes, raw nuts and seeds should provide all the necessary micronutrients. In practice, however, many people do not maintain a healthy and varied diet, which can lead to a reduced intake of micronutrient-rich food sources.

Vitamin and mineral supplementation, such as in the form of a multivitamin, may be beneficial for people who do not have adequate micronutrient intake from diet alone.

FACT
Certain vitamins are required by the body to produce neurotransmitters. For instance, two important vitamins involved in production of serotonin are vitamin B6 and folate. Serotonin influences our mood, how we work and play, and our self-esteem.

Micronutrient requirements

The amount of vitamins and minerals that a person needs depends on many factors, and these needs change through life stages and circumstances. The National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) provides guidelines for recommended intake of these important nutrients, which are called Nutrient Reference Values (NRVs).

The NRVs include information on requirements of micronutrients, based on an individual's age, gender and reproductive status, needed to maintain good health and reduce risk of chronic disease. This government document is available for free download online from www.nrv.gov.au and may serve as a handy go-to reference.

Most healthy Australians do not have outright vitamin and mineral deficiencies, but many people may not be getting enough of some micronutrients to meet the needs of their lifestyle and maintain optimum health. For example, you may benefit from additional B vitamins when going through a stressful time, or from extra calcium if you are in a risk group for osteoporosis.

Changing needs

A lack of micronutrients can lead to a clinical deficiency. However, even before a deficiency can be detected by a doctor, not getting enough vitamins and minerals can impact your health.

FACT
Many people are not meeting Recommended Dietary Intake (RDI) levels for micronutrients. This is particularly the case for vitamin D, vitamin A, calcium, zinc and iron.

FACT
Micronutrients can be easily displaced in the diet by less nutritious foods e.g. if most of your meal is pasta, less of your meal is vegetables. There are endless and creative ways to implement the 'swap method' to replace less nutritious foods with nutrient dense ones.
Examples are:

- Swap the crackers for carrot sticks
- Swap the processed snack for a fruit salad
- Swap the chips/ crisps for nut mix

Although dietary intake of micronutrients is key, there are many reasons why you may not be meeting your needs, even with a healthy diet.

- **Decreased absorption** - Problems with absorption can result from illnesses affecting the gastrointestinal tract, such as Crohn's and Celiac disease, as well as food intolerances and allergies. Medications and alcohol can also change the way nutrients are absorbed in the gut.
- **Decreased storage** - Some nutrients are stored in the body and released for use as needed. Liver disease can interfere with storage, while chronic illnesses can deplete stores severely over time.
- **Decreased utilisation** - In a healthy person, not all nutrients absorbed will or can be used by the body. However, in chronic illness (including diabetes), recurrent infections, alcohol abuse and metabolic stress such as following trauma or surgery, the body's ability to utilise nutrients can be further impaired.
- **Increased excretion** - Medications and metabolic disturbances can cause the body to lose more micronutrients. Diuretics can cause potassium loss, calcium is lost in osteoporosis, and diabetes can lead to increased losses of magnesium.

Additionally, your lifestyle and life stage can increase your requirements of some nutrients; this can be the case with athletes, the elderly, pregnant or lactating women, and those undertaking extreme diets.

Micronutrients in practice

- Deficiency of micronutrients can lead to sub-optimal health and eventually illness.
- In some cases, vitamins and minerals can be effective treatment for certain illnesses and/or associated symptoms, even when the illness is not brought about by a deficiency in that nutrient.
- Emerging research is establishing links between micronutrient deficiency and illness, as well as discovering additional clinical uses of micronutrients.

Foods to avoid

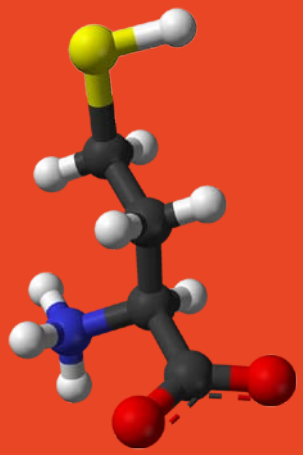
Foods to avoid due to their health damaging effects include:

Canola oil & other vegetable oils	Replace with cold-pressed extra virgin olive oil as a salad dressing, which has been shown to be protective for the heart and many diseases. Frying with olive oil at high temperatures should be avoided. Grape seed oil, rice bran oil or macadamia nut oil may be an alternative for more extensive cooking or frying.
Synthetic artificial sweeteners	Artificial sweeteners can contain a variety of chemical compounds. Excess consumption of some synthetic sweeteners have been associated with bowel discomfort such as bloating and laxative effects. Replace with Yellowbox honey, which has a considerably lower Glycaemic Index (GI) value than other types of honey. Stevia is a herbal sweetener alternative that is now widely available.
Trans fats	Increase risk of developing heart disease and stroke. Also associated with a higher risk of developing type 2 diabetes. Found in processed foods such as store-bought cakes, biscuits, some margarines and deep fried foods.
Sugar, salt and processed foods	Minimise the use of added sugar and salt. Buying packaged or takeaway foods containing sugar and salt confuses taste habits and trains you to crave more sugar and salt. It also increases the risk of heart attack, stroke and cancer.

Homocysteine

Homocysteine is an amino acid present in your blood. Elevated levels of homocysteine can cause an increased risk of arteriosclerosis which can predispose one to heart attacks, dementia, stroke and peripheral vascular disease. It is also associated with depressed mood, and can double the risk of developing Alzheimer's disease.

Elevated homocysteine levels may be decreased by reducing your meat intake, and increasing the consumption of green, leafy vegetables such as spinach and kale. If your homocysteine levels are above 12nmol/L and do not respond to dietary changes, a combination of vitamin B6, vitamin B12 and folic acid is usually effective at achieving a healthy level and can be found in a good quality multivitamin. Trimethylglycine can also be used - speak to your healthcare practitioner for more information.



FACT

There are more bacteria in the digestive system than there are cells in the body – trillions more!

Immunity and gut health

Our immune system is influenced by gut health, as is virtually every body system. Gut health also impacts on brain function, metabolism and weight control. Preventative healthcare begins with ensuring good gut bacteria levels.

Probiotics are live microorganisms, found in fermented foods or supplements, that promote good health by establishing an overall improved balance in the intestinal microflora. Common probiotics are Lactobacillus, Bifido bacterium and Saccharomyces boulardii.

Prebiotics are food ingredients that stimulate the growth and activity of one or more species of bacteria in the bowel.

A healthy diet will include quality sources of good bacteria such as:

Probiotics	Prebiotics
Fermented foods such as yoghurt, soured milk products, kefir, fermented vegetables such as sauerkraut and kim chi	Onion, garlic, leek, honey, artichokes, soy, wheat, barley, oats, almonds, pistachios and bananas

Gut bacteria may need a boost when:

- Recovering from a major illness, especially gastroenteritis, or surgery
- During and after a course of antibiotics or chemotherapy
- To help treat specific digestive discomfort or issues
- To support a healthy immune system to manage a range of ailments including eczema and some food allergies
- As a preventative or maintenance supplement for good health

Gut health is impaired in a number of disorders and diseases, including irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), which affects one in five Australians. A diet low in FODMAPs (Fermentable, Oligosaccharides, Disaccharides, Monosaccharides, and Polyols) can help alleviate these problems in many people. FODMAPs can be poorly absorbed in the small intestine and are then fermented by gut bacteria to produce gas, pain and bloating. Dietary advice from a health professional such as a dietician can help identify these foods.

FACT

70%-95% of serotonin is found in the gut - therefore it is essential to have healthy gut function for a healthy mood. Scientists have linked the absence of good gut bacteria in early life with reduced serotonin concentrations in the brain in adulthood.

Supplements

Dietary supplements can be a safe and effective way to keep up with your nutritional needs during times of deficiency or when it can be difficult to maintain adequate intake through diet alone.

The nutritional content of supplements can vary significantly by brand, intended purpose, and form (liquid, tablet, powder). It is important to understand some of the basics about the supplements you choose, and advisable to consult with a doctor or health practitioner for advice.

Omega-3 / Fish Oil

Omega-3 fatty acids are beneficial for brain function and mental health, cardiovascular function, and protection against inflammatory disorders. Adequate doses of omega-3 can be hard to achieve through diet alone and supplementation may be advisable for optimum health. Omega-3 supplements are usually in the form of fish oils, most commonly sourced from salmon, or krill oil. Omega-3 from krill oil may be more readily bioavailable in the body, however it can be considerably more expensive. Alternatively, plant-sourced omega-3 supplements are also available.

The dosage of your omega-3 supplement will depend on your diet and your relevant health goals. For example, if beginning a supplement regime in later life with the goal of reducing cardiovascular disease risk and to support healthy brain function, your doctor may recommend a higher dose than for a younger person looking to maintain general health. You may wish to discuss the benefits and optimal dosages of omega-3 supplementation with your doctor.

Probiotics

Having the right balance of gut bacteria is important for optimal health. It can be difficult to maintain healthy gut bacteria as factors like diet, illness and some medications can upset the balance of bacterial organisms. Probiotic supplementation can help to restore and maintain gut bacteria. To ensure that probiotic supplements survive in the digestive tract until they reach the lower intestine and can release the bacteria, supplement capsules should be enterically coated (meaning the capsule material will not break down in the acid of the stomach or small intestine), or the strains used should be resistant to the acidic conditions of the upper digestive tract.

There are many important strains of bacteria that are beneficial for health and different supplements will contain varying combinations of these, for example Lactobacillus and/or Bifidobacterium are found in many supplements, while others contain Saccharomyces boulardii, a yeast. It can be helpful to regularly rotate your probiotic supplement in order to include a variety of strains.

Supplements for Immunity

During the cold and flu season, or times of stress when you may be more susceptible to infection, an immune boosting supplement can help maintain a healthy immune system and protect you from pathogens or even reduce the length and severity of symptoms. Compounds that are known to strengthen the immune system include zinc, vitamin C, olive leaf, licorice and some mushroom species which have anti viral properties.

Multivitamins

A high quality multivitamin supplement can provide you with nutrients that may be more difficult to obtain in the recommended quantities from diet alone, such as zinc and selenium. Different multivitamins contain varying compositions of nutrients; a good quality product will contain vitamins and minerals in safe doses and in their most bioavailable forms. Some multivitamins have been specifically designed to meet the needs of a certain category of people, such as pregnant women, students, or the elderly, as well as catering to vegetarians and those who have gluten intolerance.

There is scientific evidence that multivitamin supplementation may reduce mortality from cancer and cardiovascular disease, as well as reducing the risk of eye disease. Additionally, the B vitamins and folate contained in multivitamins can reduce homocysteine, high levels of which have been associated with artery disease, dementia, depressed mood and poor cognition. There is also some evidence that a multivitamin supplement can slow down the rate of telomere shortening, which is directly correlated to the rate of ageing.

Multivitamins may contain compounds that can have adverse effects if taken in inappropriate doses. If choosing to supplement with a multivitamin, always read the label and do not exceed recommended dosage. It is advisable to discuss the use of multivitamins with your doctor to ensure the safest and most effective supplementation for your needs.

Vitamin D

Vitamin D is required for maintenance of bone density and its deficiency can lead to the reabsorption of calcium from bones. It is also essential in the functioning of the immune system. The majority of our vitamin D comes from exposure to sunlight, which causes a reaction in the skin that leads to its synthesis in the body; unlike other vitamins, vitamin D intake from food is minimal. Consequently, vitamin D deficiency is common, particularly in the winter months, when we spend less time outdoors and many of us work indoors in offices.

There is some debate about the level of vitamin D required for optimum health, however a simple blood test ordered by your doctor can reveal an insufficiency or deficiency.

The amount of vitamin D required for supplementation in winter months to maintain adequate levels in the body is very different from the amount required to replenish vitamin D when there is an existing deficiency. As vitamin D is a fat soluble vitamin, it can be stored by the body for a long time in fat stores, and therefore there is a risk of vitamin D toxicity if too much is taken (although this is rare). It is therefore a good idea to talk to your doctor about vitamin D supplementation to get the best results for your health.

Vitamin D supplements can be found in two forms - vitamin D2 (ergocalciferol) and vitamin D3 (cholecalciferol). Studies have shown vitamin D3 to be much more effective at raising vitamin D levels in the body and is recommended when choosing a suitable vitamin D supplement.

FACT
Getting the right amount of calcium and vitamin D, as well as being physically active and not smoking, are important steps to prevent osteoporosis and bone weakness.

19,000 Australians aged over 50 were hospitalised in 2011-12 with minimal-trauma fractures of the hip. Almost three-quarters were women.

Other Supplements
Nutritional compounds and extracts may be helpful in the treatment, management and prevention of chronic diseases. As these are often more specific, it is advisable to discuss these with your doctor if you think you may benefit from supplementation.

Cocoa
Cocoa, most abundant in high-cocoa dark chocolate (greater than 70% cocoa content), has many health benefits, including anti-inflammatory, anti-thrombotic, blood sugar regulating, blood pressure modulating, and neuro-protective properties. Cocoa is rich in important compounds such as flavanols and theobromine, as well as magnesium and other useful trace minerals, including calcium, iron, manganese, phosphate, potassium, and zinc.

Garlic
Garlic has several medicinal properties, including benefits for cardiovascular health and immunity. Recent research indicates that fermented or aged garlic can reduce blood pressure in hypertensive people similarly to common blood pressure medication. Garlic has also the potential to modulate slightly elevated cholesterol levels.

Additionally, due to its prebiotic and antimicrobial properties, garlic can strengthen the immune system,

while stimulating growth of the friendly bacteria in the digestive tract. Supplements in the form of fermented or aged garlic are effective and very well tolerated.

Green Tea Extract

Green tea contains nutritional compounds known as polyphenols which can reduce cholesterol and other fats by inhibiting their absorption and enhancing their excretion. For this reason green tea extract can be found in weight loss products, however it may also have benefits as a cholesterol lowering supplement. Green tea extract can also have other cardio-protective benefits like reducing the chance of blood clots and maintaining the integrity of heart and blood vessel tissue. Green tea has also been shown to be protective against artery disease, cancer, osteoporosis and other chronic illnesses.

Some green tea supplements contain caffeine, which can result in side effects in some people. Before taking green tea supplements for weight loss or cardiovascular support, it is advisable to talk to your doctor to ensure that green tea extract is likely to be beneficial based on your health profile.

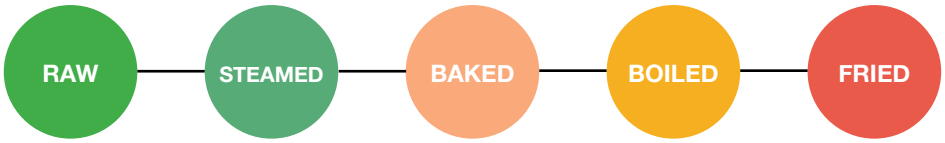
Cinnamon

Active compounds in cinnamon have been shown to reduce blood glucose in people with type 2 diabetes, pre-diabetes and metabolic syndrome. By improving the body's sensitivity to insulin, cinnamon not only reduces blood glucose but also the amount of insulin the body must produce. This is a particularly powerful property of cinnamon as high insulin levels are associated with cancer growth, cardiovascular disease, and development of diabetes, as well as acne.

Cooking

Generally, the less processed a food is, the better for you it is, as it retains more nutrients.

The following list describes cooking methods in order of how well they retain food nutrients:



MOST **LEAST**

Steaming is best for cooking. When steaming, ensure vegetables maintain their crispness. Boiling liberates 50% of important nutrients into the water. If frying, opt for a quick fry in water or oil with a high heat tolerance (high smoke point) such as sesame oil, rice bran oil or macadamia nut oil.

"The best diet is one in its purest form - as close to nature as possible." Megan Reilly, Naturopath

FACT

Most of the burden of disease due to poor nutrition in Australia is associated with excess intake of energy-dense and relatively nutrient-poor foods which are high in sugars or salt, and/or inadequate intake of nutrient-dense foods, such as vegetables and fruit.

A LIFESPAN OF HEALTH

Your Roadmap to Wellness has already started. Simply by reading this booklet you have taken a big step towards the destination of optimal health.

Whether you are part of a large extended family or just starting out in life on your own, the principles of preventative healthcare can be lived in everyday life.

Your efforts will not go unnoticed by others in your household, or your community. With emphasis on individual needs and preferences, a lifestyle based on health and wellness can be a shared goal through which mutual support and encouragement can make wellness the new norm.

Preventative healthcare is for everyone at every stage of life.

Preconception

The health of both mother and father prior to conception has an influence on the future health and wellbeing of a child throughout his or her lifetime. Research has found that environmental factors play a huge role in the development of every individual, even before conception. Environmental factors such as maternal diet and stress can impact the expression of genes of a child even before it is born, a process known as epigenetics. The expectant mother's nutrition continues to greatly affect the child's future health, from conception until birth and beyond. For example, there has been growing evidence that vitamin D levels during pregnancy also are important for a child's ongoing development.

Infancy

Good maternal health and breastfeeding in early life have been associated with better health outcomes in children. This underscores the importance of maternal and child nutrition for preventative healthcare.

Childhood

Young children who grow up with healthy dietary and lifestyle choices as their norm are more likely to make better choices as adolescents and adults. They are the promise of a healthier Australia in the future.

Adolescence

Rapid periods of development – physically, mentally and emotionally – make preventative healthcare especially vital for adolescents at this stage of development. Specific, lifestyle-focused changes at this time can greatly benefit body image, relationships, mental health and stress management.

Young adults and parents-to-be

Healthy families are typically a priority at this time of life. However, people in this transitional stage of life should also remember to focus on their own health as preventative health practices earlier in life can have a profound effect on longevity. Conversely this is a time when unhealthy lifestyle habits may start to really show as symptoms. Lifestyle practices implemented now can avert and reverse major illnesses; address your risk factors and see a health professional now to discuss your goals for your family and personal quality of life.

Mid-life

Particularly relevant in this age group, poor diet and lack of exercise may soon surpass tobacco as a leading cause of death. However, making lifestyle changes that involve nutrition, movement and mindfulness can still confer significant benefits.

Ageing

Healthy ageing comes from inside our cells. Providing our bodies with the right nutrients, combined with purposeful living, is the best protection we have against disease and chronic illness. Slow ageing is not random – preventative healthcare can support your vision for a long and vital life.

ACTION

Start a preventative health program today. Small changes quickly add up to big improvements. The opportunity we have to live longer is now greater than at any other period in human history.

FACT

It doesn't matter at what age you start making lifestyle changes to improve your health and wellbeing – you are never too old or too young.

CELEBRATING HEALTHY CHILDREN

Are our children healthy? Preventative health has the greatest benefits when implemented from childhood.

Parents and carers are the primary role models for good health. They have the greatest influence on children and the same principles of preventative health apply regardless of age – mindfulness, movement and nutrition.

Studies indicate that obesity runs in families, and that one in three Australian children is obese. The obese child typically becomes the obese adult.

Consequently the need to address issues of weight gain very early in life is now considered one of the most important interventions we can make in an attempt to reduce adult obesity and its associated diseases and mortality.

A commitment to health and wellbeing should start at an early stage of life to give children the best chance of becoming healthy, happy, and vital adults.

Children have much to teach us about happiness, play and life balance. As Albert Einstein said, '**Play is the highest form of research**' and growing bodies respond well to health interventions based on playful curiosity and preventative principles.

Here are some kid-friendly tips to add to what you (and they!) already know:

Mindfulness

- A meditation practice is a great skill to have at any age
- Breathing exercises and visualisation are great beginner activities suitable for children
- Children experience stress and recent research indicates this is on the rise
- Avoid overscheduling children
- Many activities can be done mindfully
- Yoga, art making and other activities involving creative expression, need not be adult-only activities. Look for child specific or family sessions and participate together

Movement

- Children are made to move, and this is connected to brain development
- Being out in nature regularly may assist in the development of healthy habits
- Engage children in incidental physical activity - grow food, run and jump outside, climb trees safely, walk/scoot/cycle instead of driving where possible
- Allow kids some space and time to explore independently and make mess
- Screen time can be managed to age appropriate/educational content in time-responsible segments – intersperse with physical activities and digital-free moments

Nutrition

- A child's needs will vary at different stages of development
- Overfeeding and underfeeding are both dangerous
- A nutritious diet is best achieved by choosing a variety of fresh 'real' foods that are colourful
- Encourage healthy snacking and avoid using sweet 'treats' as rewards
- Read labels on foods – highly processed foods, including fast foods, are best avoided. If an ingredient can't be pronounced, reconsider eating it!
- Portion size is important to watch – most foods are adult-size serves and need to be reduced for children
- Developing brains need relatively higher amounts of omega-3 fats - the best sources include marine cold water fish, meat from grass-fed livestock, eggs and (edible) seaweed

What about allergies?

An allergy occurs when a person's immune system reacts to substances in the environment that are harmless for most people. These substances are known as allergens and are found in house dust mites, pets, pollen, insects, moulds, foods and some medicines.

Depending on the allergen and where it enters your body, you may experience different symptoms.

Sensitivity reactions to food are considerably more common in children and often decrease towards puberty.

For more information on allergies in children, please visit the Australian Society of Clinical Immunology and Allergy (ASCIA) website at www.allergy.org.au

Allergic reactions and intolerances can be difficult or even dangerous to manage; advice from a health professional specialising in this area is vital prior to commencing restrictive diets in children.

TIP

Go for the actual rather than the virtual – an afternoon at the skate park has more health benefits for kids than spending the same time playing a skateboard game online.

FACT

Less than 20% of children eat the recommended five or more servings of fruits and vegetables each day.

TIP

There will be times in a child's life where a probiotic supplement may also be necessary to replenish the healthy gut flora and support natural immunity, for example after taking antibiotics.

While regular consumption of raw fermented foods like cheese, yoghurt and kim chi can deliver ongoing supplies, supplementation can provide a more concentrated load of viable bacteria and may be more effective in producing a therapeutic effect.

Nutrition essentials for children and adolescents

The following list elaborates on some key principles recommended by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC):

- Where possible, encourage and support breastfeeding. If there are problems with breastfeeding enlist the help of health professionals in this area earlier rather than later
- Children and adolescents need sufficient nutritious foods to grow and develop normally. Growth should be checked regularly for young children, and physical activity is important for all children and adolescents
- Enjoy a wide variety of nutritious foods and choose unprocessed over processed food whenever possible
- Children and adolescents should be encouraged to eat plenty of vegetables, legumes, fruits and cereals (including breads, rice, and pasta – preferably wholegrain)
- Include lean meat, fish, poultry and/or alternatives
- Include milks, yoghurts, cheese and/or alternatives
- Low-fat milks are not suitable for young children under two years of age
- Care should be taken to limit unhealthy fat and to moderate total fat intake
- Low-fat diets are not suitable for infants
- Choose foods low in salt
- Consume only small amounts of sugars, like those found in jams or fruit juices
- Care for your child's food. Prepare and store it safely. Food hygiene is especially important in the preparation of infant formulae
- Flavoured milk is not suitable for children at any age
- Encourage children to drink enough water (filtered is best)
- Soft drinks and alcohol are not suitable for children or adolescents
- Where possible avoid artificial sweeteners, preservatives and colouring agents

ANTI-AGEING

A healthy lifestyle that prioritises disease prevention means we can live long and live well.

What is ageing?

Ageing is a natural process in the body that is brought about by cell death. Cells replicate a finite number of times after which they cease to operate – a natural process called senescence. It is normal for cells to wear out; the skin and lung cells are usually the first to show signs of wear and tear. These 'mortal' cells are thought to contribute to more than 80% of deterioration and diseases associated with human ageing.

It doesn't matter how old you are today, how you choose to live will influence your health tomorrow and into your later years. Preventative health measures have the added bonus of slowing the ageing process!

Life expectancy in Australia (combined genders) has increased from 70 years to 82 years since 1960 – a combination of healthier lifestyles, better living standards and advances in medical care making a considerable difference to mortality.

Integrative Medicine, with its emphasis on wellness, focuses on the idea of *healthy life expectancy* – how long we expect to live a healthy life rather than simply *life expectancy*.

REFLECTION

How long do you think you might live?
How long would you like to live?
If we are living longer, would you like to be healthier when you are older?

Slow ageing or anti-ageing medicine aims to extend healthy, disability-free life by slowing the ageing process, which can be advanced by lifestyle factors such as poor diet and stress. Integrative Medicine incorporates factors that promote slow ageing, protecting and replenishing the body from the inside out.

FACT

Average life expectancy in Australia (as at 2012):

Men 79.9 years

Women 84.4 years

Telomeres

One of the new research frontiers in DNA and ageing relates to the health of telomeres, which are the protective regions on the end of DNA strands, first discovered by Australian researcher and Noble Prize Winner, Prof Elizabeth Blackburn.

Shortened telomere length is linked with cellular ageing. Telomerase is an enzyme that adds new DNA to telomeres and lengthens them. A healthy lifestyle, in particular nutrition, stress management and movement, is proven to affect telomerase enzymes and telomere function.

10 tips for a long and healthy life

1. Move naturally – be active, incorporate movement into daily tasks. Exercise. Walk, swim, cycle, practice yoga, walk the dog, tend to a garden or engage in any other kind of physical activity.
2. Reduce your total energy intake. Start by eating 20%, or one fifth, less than you normally would at every meal.
3. Eat more plant-based foods and reduce intake of red meat and processed foods.
4. Alcohol should only be drunk in moderation - red wine may be beneficial due to its antioxidants, and for relaxation.
5. Find your purpose in life and do what you love – try new things.
6. Always make time and have strategies to relieve stress and relax – take breaks, even from technology.
7. Make sleep a priority – restorative sleep is critical to health.
8. Participate in your community – a sense of belonging and engagement is critical. Volunteering provides great satisfaction.
9. Make family a priority – nurture your closest relationships.
10. Connect with others who also share your values for a long and healthy life – social connectedness is essential for good health.

FACT

Chronic stress shortens telomeres and accelerates the signs of ageing.

STRATEGIES FOR PREVENTATIVE HEALTHCARE IN EVERYDAY LIFE

How can you be proactive about your own healthcare?

That's as easy as:

1. Annual check-ups - regular monitoring and health checks
2. Disease screening
3. Lifestyle changes and goal setting

When was the last time you had your …. tested?

- Cholesterol & Triglycerides
- Liver function
- Thyroid function
- Iron
- STDs
- Homocysteine
- Blood glucose
- Hormone profile
- Kidney function
- Vitamin D
- B12 and other essential micronutrients
- FBE & platelet aggregation

Three great reasons to see your GP for an annual check up:

- Check how you're going – even if you are feeling well
- Identify health issues early
- Develop your unique history of how your healthy body functions

Try to consider your annual check up like a service for health – just like you would your car. Dread going to the doctor? Find a GP you love and you won't have to worry about each visit, making you less likely to put it off. When deciding on a good doctor for you and your family, look for someone you trust and who makes you feel comfortable. Your GP should listen not just to your health problems, but to your concerns. A great doctor will work together with you to manage any current illnesses and actively promote your preventative health.

Disease screening

Screening tests are useful for all individuals. Screening reduces the risk of developing a serious disease. Results should be thoroughly discussed with your GP. Based on your health history and profile, you may fall into a group that benefits from regular screening for a specific disease. Talk to your doctor about what screening tests you should be doing regularly.

Screening for all individuals

- Regular blood pressure checks, fasting cholesterol and blood glucose from the age of 50, or earlier if you have a significant family history of high blood pressure, stroke, heart disease or diabetes. Early detection of abnormalities and lifestyle modification can often reduce the risk of development of these diseases.
- Homocysteine. High homocysteine has been associated with increased risk of heart attack, dementia, stroke and peripheral vascular disease, as well as depressed mood, and development of Alzheimer's disease.
- Vitamin D. Low Vitamin D is associated with impaired bone health, diabetes, mental health conditions, impaired immunity, cancer and other diseases.

- Faecal occult blood screening for all people over 50 years old, or earlier for those with a family history of bowel cancer. Lifestyle modification is well recognised to reduce the risk of bowel cancer in 'at risk' individuals.
- Preventative vaccinations as recommended by your GP, such as when travelling, and flu and pneumonia vaccines as appropriate.
- Household safety check to identify hazards in the home, such as unsafe electrical appliances, water quality, checking smoke alarm batteries, and any mobility needs such as grab bars in the bathroom.

Regular screening tests for **men** should also include:

- Regular testicular self-examination to detect possible testicular cancer. Any concerns should be raised with your GP.
- Prostate screening remains controversial. In men with a family history of prostate cancer, regular prostate examinations and blood PSA testing is recommended. Other men who choose to undergo screening should understand the implications of positive screening tests (and the possibility of false positive tests), and the potential complications of further investigations, when embarking on the screening test.

Regular screening tests for **women** should also include:

- Regular pap smears (typically every two years) from 18 years of age or two years after becoming sexually active, whichever is later, until 70 years of age. Pap smears are designed to detect abnormalities in the cells of the cervix, which can in time lead to cervical cancer. The early changes detected on pap smears do not normally cause any symptoms and thus screening is very important. Treatment is readily available for abnormalities detected on pap smears.
- Regular breast self-examination to detect any lumps or formations. Any concerns should be raised with your GP.
- Breast screening is generally recommended for women over 50 years old, or earlier for women with a family history of breast cancer. These tests can detect early stage abnormalities, which improves the chances of survival.
- Women with a significant family history of ovarian cancer should consider regular screening tests, including a blood test and pelvic ultrasound.

Healthy behaviours for hygiene and infectious disease prevention

Positive Lifestyle choices

- Avoid smoking and second hand smoke
- Ensure alcohol consumption is moderate
- Avoid substances of abuse and drugs
- Develop safe practices that support your own sexual health
- Manage your exposure to infectious diseases and make good hygiene your routine – wash hands, be mindful of airborne particles – yours and others!
- Nurture healthy personal relationships
- Create a healthy non-toxic environment in the home and at work
- Live the three pillars of preventative health everyday – Mindfulness, Movement and Nutrition

FACT

While the average number of teeth affected by decay in adults has decreased, the proportion of people reporting adverse oral health is on the rise.

Don't forget oral hygiene!

Poor oral hygiene has been linked to a number of health issues including inflammation and heart disease.

Some basic tips:

- Limit sugar and alcoholic drinks, and avoid tobacco
- Don't snack too frequently between meals, and if you snack, avoid sugary or acidic snacks
- Gently brush your teeth morning and night for two minutes, using a circular motion with a soft toothbrush
- Gently floss once a day
- Wait half-an-hour after eating to brush your teeth, as the acids in foods temporarily soften tooth enamel
- Don't forget to book your regular dental checkup

SET YOUR GOALS

Remember changes are best made in small, manageable, and consistent steps.

TIP

Set clear goals that are SMART

- Specific
- Measurable
- Achievable
- Relevant
- Timely

TIP

Get the help of professionals, and the support of family and friends.

TIP

Don't forget your number one goal is a long healthy happy life! Celebrate Life Every Day.

MAINTAINING CHANGE

What are your most important reasons for adopting a preventative healthcare lifestyle?
Take a moment, and jot down your top five.

These reasons are not only your incentive to make changes, but to maintain those changes over time. Now is the time to develop your plan and establish the goals that will set you on your path to wellness. An individually tailored plan can be your greatest ally and there are many resources you can use to develop a clear plan for yourself, including goal setting diaries and online planning programs.

You can download an app for your phone or computer to help you, for example, to track your exercise goals and/or provide you with nutritional information at your fingertips. You can even get apps for meditation.

A personal support team is also invaluable. Start with a trip to your GP who may also be able to refer you in the right direction for support services. Many medical centres now offer access to a broad range of integrated medical and therapeutic services.

The **National Institute of Integrative Medicine (NIIM)** in Melbourne is an invaluable resource, with practitioners who work together to offer evidence-based therapies that support you medically, physically and psychologically.

Your best interests are served by consulting with health professionals that consider a whole person perspective of health and wellbeing.

Even with the best preventive healthcare lifestyle, there may be times when things go wrong, or you experience some type of illness. However, the healthier you are in your everyday life the less likely you are to develop a serious illness or develop secondary symptoms, and the more likely you are to recover more readily and resist many illnesses.

Many people adopt a preventative healthcare lifestyle when they already have pre-existing health issues. For these people, this approach to wellness has many benefits such as:

- Better management of pain and other symptoms
- Improved quality of life
- The potential for fewer episodes of illness
- The opportunity to reverse some diseases
- Improved recovery from illness
- Setting a great example for others

Sustain to maintain

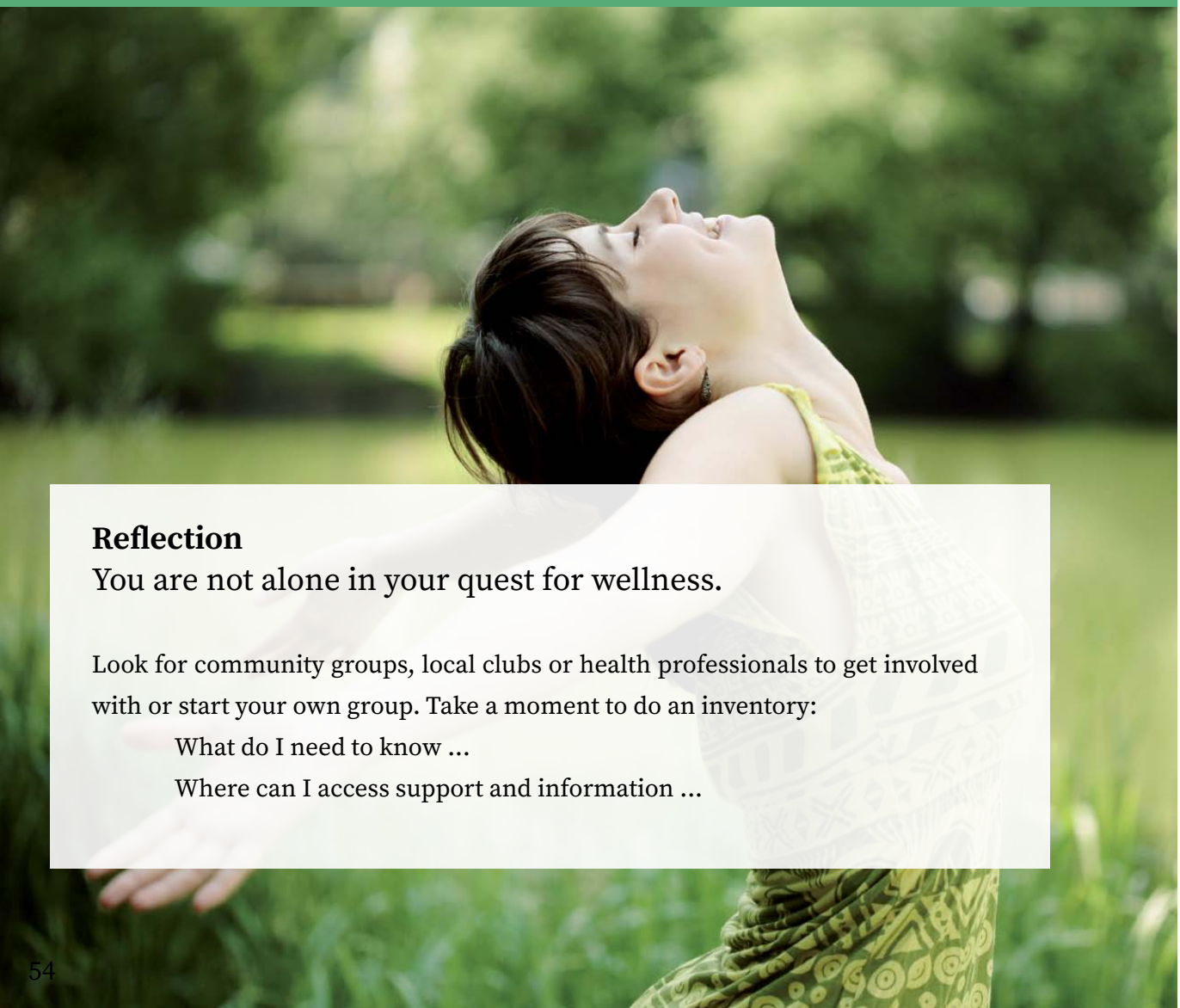
As with any changes we make our to lifestyle, the most drastic and therefore the most motivational results often occur in the first few weeks.

This is true for a new exercise routine, but can also be applied to the new practices you are developing for mindfulness and a nutritious diet.

It is important to ensure the changes you make are sustainable in the long term. Use the following as a simple measure of sustainability:

Is this change...

1. **Appropriate?** Make changes within your limits. Gradual and steady change is best.
2. **Enjoyable?** Variety and interest is critical. The support or involvement of family and friends and trying new things can be helpful.
3. **Flexible?** Persistence is important but there will be times when your routine is disrupted. Don't let this affect your momentum – healthy change is now an ongoing part of your life so keep going for the overall health benefits.



Reflection

You are not alone in your quest for wellness.

Look for community groups, local clubs or health professionals to get involved with or start your own group. Take a moment to do an inventory:

What do I need to know ...

Where can I access support and information ...

THE FUTURE IS WELLNESS

It's impossible to come up with a downside for a person enjoying a healthy lifestyle, a family or community actively preventing disease, or a nation being well.

You may feel bombarded with information regarding the best way, or the right way, to do things. We trust the Roadmap to Wellness has given you reliable, evidence-based information that makes change achievable. Continued education about how your body works best is one of the keys to your commitment to a long and healthy life.

Health professionals can provide individually-tailored solutions and expert help to implement lifestyle changes in the most effective way.

This takes a personal investment of time, energy and resources but is an investment with payoffs that cannot be overestimated. Seek out the right guidance and your path to wellness will be steady and rewarding.

TIP
Stay in touch with your GP and other health professionals and reassess lifestyle strategies as your needs change.

You can reduce your risk rates for major illnesses and slow the ageing process. You can support a bigger picture in the management of national health expenditure through disease prevention, and support future investments in improving health and research.

And most importantly, you can be well and enjoy life to its fullest.

Thank you for joining the wellness revolution. Our best wishes for a happy and healthy life full of Movement, Mindfulness and Nutrition.

RESOURCES

Take your health into your own hands!

The following books and websites are recommended by Professor Avni Sali and the National Institute of Integrative Medicine to assist you in making the best health choices for you and your family.

Websites for health

National Institute of Integrative Medicine www.niim.com.au
NIIM Certificate of Complementary Medicine and Health www.niim.com.au/education
NIIM Integrative HealthCheck www.niim.com.au/healthcheck
Celebrate Life Foundation www.celebratelifefoundation.org.au

A Healthy and Active Australia
www.healthyactive.gov.au

Australian Government – Health and Safety
www.australia.gov.au/topics/health-and-safety

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
www.aihw.gov.au

Better Health Channel
www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au

Cancer Screening (Department of Health)
www.cancerscreening.gov.au

CSIRO Wellbeing Plan for Kids
www.csiro.au/science/wellbeingplanforkids

Department of Health – For Consumers
www.health.gov.au

Eat For Health http://www.eatforhealth.gov.au

Healthy Kids www.healthykids.nsw.gov.au

My Aged Care (Department of Social Services) - Healthy and Active Living
www.myagedcare.gov.au/healthy-and-active-living

National Health and Medical Research Council – Guidelines and Publications
www.nhmrc.gov.au/guidelines

Nutrient reference values www.nrv.gov.au

Shape Up Australia www.shapeup.gov.au

TGA Complementary Medicines
www.tga.gov.au/industry/cm.htm

Australian Dental Association - Dental Health Week www.dentalhealthweek.com.au

Australasian Integrative Medical Association
www.aima.net.au

Australasian College of Nutritional and Environmental Medicine
www.acnem.org

Australian Food and Grocery Council – Health and Nutrition
www.afgc.org.au/health-and-nutrition.html

Beyond Blue www.beyondblue.org.au

Complementary Medicines Australia
www.cmaustralia.org.au

Eat to Defeat
www.eattodefeat.org

Exercise & Sports Science Australia
www.essa.org.au

IM Gateway www.imgateway.net

Food Insight www.foodinsight.org

Kids Matter www.kidsmatter.edu.au

Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia
www.prostate.org.au

Science Daily www.sciencedaily.com

World's Healthiest Foods www.whfoods.com

Books for health

A Guide to Evidence-based Integrative and Complementary Medicine
Prof Avni Sali, Dr Vicki Kotsirilos and Assoc Prof Luis Vitetta -
Churchill Livingstone, Elsevier Australia 2011

Anti-cancer a New Way of Life
Dr David Servan-Schreiber - Scribe Publications 2008

Daughters and their Dads
Bruce Robinson - Macsis Publishing 2008

Good Health in the 21st Century
Dr Carole Hungerford - Scribe Publications 2006

Know Thyself
Dr Craig Hassed - Michelle Anderson Publishing 2006

Life Over Cancer: The Block Center Program for Integrative Cancer Treatment
Dr Keith I Block - Bantam Dell 2009

Living Calm In A Busy World: Stillness Meditation
Pauline McKinnon - David Lovell Publishing 2011

New Frontiers in Medicine
Dr Craig Hassed - Michelle Anderson Publishing 2005

Omega-3 Connection
Andrew Stoll - Free Press 2001

Sarah's Last Wish: A Chilling Glimpse into Forced Medicine
Eve Hillary - Synergy Books 2010

So You Have Prostate Cancer Too!
Dr Brian J Meade - Michelle Anderson Publishing 2010

The Essence of Health
Dr Craig Hassed - Random House Australia 2008

You Can Conquer Cancer
Dr Ian Gawler - Michelle Anderson Publishing 2001

You Don't Have to Die from Cancer
Dr A Khazam - Hill of Content 1998

Live Your Best Life
Dr Lily Thomas & Greg de Jong - New Holland 2011

Integrative Medicine 3rd Edition
Dr David Rakel - Elsevier Health

Textbook of Natural Medicine 4th Edition
Jospeh E.Pizzorno & Michael T.Murray - Elsevier Health 2012

365 DAYS OF WELLNESS

JANUARY

1. Get out into the garden today. Studies show that gardening is as effective – or better – at fighting stress than other relaxing activities.
2. Nurture a healthy friendship today. The people in your life deserve your time and attention.
3. Make a point to really listen without judgement.
4. Check your waist measurement today. If it's more than 80cm for women and 94cm for men you may be at an increased risk of some lifestyle-related chronic diseases.
5. Spend half an hour reading, to escape, to learn or to relax. Reading keeps the brain agile and reading regularly can prevent cognitive decline.
6. Sit down and create a plan to incorporate strength training into your routine twice a week to keep you strong now and into older age.
7. Can you touch your toes today? If not, start practicing! The flexibility involved in toe touches – stretching your shoulders, back and legs – is a great way to prevent injury.
8. Make today an active day! Take the stairs, stroll outside, park further away, walk to the shops; incidental exercise is an important and fun component of a healthy lifestyle.
9. Check your diabetes risk today. Take the free risk assessment test at lifeprogram.org.au or call 13 RISK (13 7475).
10. Try out interval training. Alternate one minute jogging with one minute walking, working up to twenty minutes, for proven fat burning, improved fitness, and increased metabolic rate long after you have finished.
11. Remember to breathe today. Whether you're performing your daily activities or taking some time out from the day, try focusing on your breathing to feel calmer and more relaxed.
12. Do a crossword or play a mind game like Sudoku today. It's a workout for your brain and may help reduce your risk for Alzheimer's.
13. Make an effort with how you look today – when you feel good about yourself, your body produces more 'feel-good' chemicals such as serotonin.
14. Include a different physical experience today, like swimming in the ocean, walking in the bush, or rowing along a river to stimulate your body and mind.
15. Make time to play. Organise mini golf or karaoke with friends, throw a frisbee with the kids, arrange a play date for your dog. Play is important for adults to reduce stress, exercise the mind, and nurture relationships.
16. Try a new way to cook 'fat-free'. Steam, grill or braise your dinner today.
17. Begin strengthening your core today – it will help keep your back strong, prevent falls and help with bending, twisting and lifting.
18. Eat nuts today. Nuts are also a good source of dietary fibre and provide a wide range of essential nutrients.
19. Make sure you get enough calcium today by including a selection of dairy products, leafy vegetables, fish, tofu, Brazil nuts and almonds in your diet.
20. Make time to do the things that are important to you today. Is there an activity you've been neglecting? Stop missing it and start doing it!
21. It's time to improve your fridge health. Throw out anything old and anything you'd like to stop eating. Re-stock with plenty of fresh produce, yoghurt, vegetable dips. (Bonus tip: store washed, cut vegetables and fruit in airtight containers so you can easily reach for a healthy snack.)
22. Make an appointment today to see your dentist for a check-up.
23. Enjoy a glass of red wine today to reap the benefits of its powerful antioxidants. No more than two standard glasses a day for men and women is recommended for healthy alcohol consumption.
24. Cook a meal from scratch today.
25. Make a point of expressing gratitude. Thank your barista when you grab your coffee, remind a loved one you appreciate their input, tell a colleague you are grateful for their help.
26. Actively cut down on your salt consumption today – read food labels, avoid processed food and takeaway, and put down the salt shaker.
27. Food poisoning is more common in summer than at any other time of year, so today make sure your fridge temperature is below 5 °C and your freezer is at minus 15 °C to minus 18 °C.
28. Learn to make a home made version of a favourite sauce, dressing or marinade. You'll find the taste is easily reproducible or can even be improved on, and many store-bought varieties contain unnecessary salt and sugar.
29. Get involved… Make the phone call and commit to volunteering or helping out in any way you can.
30. Boost your levels of vitamin B today – it's essential for brain health. Eat wholegrain cereals, leafy greens and dairy foods.
31. Speak less and listen more today. We have two ears and one mouth – use them wisely.

FEBRUARY

1. Aim to eat breakfast every day, starting today, to maintain appetite control and healthy weight.
2. Make sure you eat two servings of fruit today. Add a banana to your breakfast, pack an apple in your bag, or swap dessert for a kiwi fruit.
3. Get active around the house today. Clean and tidy, work on the house or get into the garden to burn kilojoules and uplift your environment simultaneously.
4. Stay sharp today – studies have shown a whiff of fresh rosemary or rosemary essential oil can increase alertness. Try burning these oils in your study or office.
5. Today, make your exercise a social event. Find a friend or family member to be active with so you can motivate and reward each other.
6. Discover a new herbal tea. Have you tried tulsi, rosehip, or lemongrass and ginger?
7. Take a packed lunch today – it's a healthier alternative to buying your lunch and will save you money too.
8. Make a commitment today to a daily 30 minute walk. It's low impact, requires minimal equipment and can be done at any time of day.
9. Invest in some exercise equipment to use at home, such as a workout DVD, stationary bike, skipping rope or hand weights.
10. Exercise your brain with others. Grab a friend and book in to see a talk on a subject you're both interested in.
11. Make today's physical activity fun! Swap your regular routine for kayaking with a friend, organise a friendly soccer match, or swim at the beach with the kids.
12. Mindfulness meditation has been shown to help people perform under pressure while feeling less stressed, so begin today. You can start with just five minutes!
13. Walk barefoot on the beach or on the grass today. This relaxing way of being in nature is sure to make you walk slowly, be present and be more mindful of your surroundings (and yourself).
14. Make time to take a short nap today. A 25 minute snooze can help to improve mood, alertness and performance.
15. Practice deep breathing if you feel stressed. Deep breathing is sometimes used to treat anxiety disorders, sleep problems and even general body aches.
16. Focus on raw foods in your diet today. Fruits, vegetables, sprouts, nuts, seeds and fresh herbs can all be easily included in meals and snacks and contain enzymes, vitamins, antioxidants and fibre.
17. Would you enjoy more social interaction in your workout routine? If so, do some research and join a group! You can try a dance class, yoga studio, running group, or sports team.
18. Remember to smile – smiling releases serotonin, dopamine and morphine, giving you a natural high!
19. Talk to a friend about how you feel. Whether it's about a difficulty or a triumph, or just about life, talking about your feelings with others can give you insight and perspective, helping

you to maintain good mental health.

20. Stay hydrated at work by keeping a one-litre bottle of water and a glass on your desk; aim to drink the whole bottle before you leave work for the day.
21. Reassess your schedule and your energy levels and commit to a sleep routine that supports your needs. Set a time to go to bed that ensures you can wind down at night and also get enough sleep. Set a wake up time that allows you to use your mornings effectively, for example by getting in some exercise or simply by having time to eat a nutritious breakfast.
22. What kind of music do you like to listen to? When was the last time you played it? Turn on your favourite tunes today for an instant mood booster.
23. Work out your humour muscle today! Watch a funny movie, book tickets to a comedy show, or read jokes with your friends and family. Laughter can help strengthen the immune system, boost energy, reduce pain, and protect you from stress.
24. Make a personal health plan. A written health plan can keep you on track.
25. Spend time today with people who make you feel good.
26. Explore your spiritual side. If you have ever wanted to look into meditation or other practices, start today.
27. Make time to do the things that make you feel good today.
28. If you need to lose weight, begin today to lower your daily intake by about 400 kilojoules. If you do it every day, it'll add up to kilos over a year.

MARCH

1. Eat before you go to the supermarket today, so you are not tempted by unhealthy options.
2. Meditation has been shown to lower anxiety levels, and may lead to increased creativity and improved memory. Make a commitment to 10 minutes or more today.
3. The Inuits have a low incidence of heart disease due to the amount of fish they eat. Eat like an Inuit today by including fish in your diet; try it for breakfast, lunch or dinner!
4. Ask for help. Don't feel you have to do it all yourself.
5. Today, look for incidental ways to move your body – for example, walk or cycle to the local shops, instead of driving the car.
6. Turn off the TV and computer. Give up one hour of screen time to do something fun, active or social instead.
7. Organise an activity that's good for the whole family today, such as hiking, canoeing, or bike riding.
8. Take a few minutes to stretch your whole body when you wake up in the morning. Stretching boosts circulation and digestion, and eases back pain. You might find you feel more energised.
9. Take up a new hobby or learn a new skill today. Learning new things can improve your brain health and help you meet new people.
10. Resolve to be as mindful of your thoughts as possible, to think positively.
11. Be aware of portion sizes. Choose a medium-size plate and don't overfill it.
12. Cook a colourful meal. Foods with bright, rich colours have a range of different compounds that you need.
13. Be aware of your energy levels. If you are a morning person, complete difficult tasks early in the day.
14. Eat some honey today – it's antibacterial and anti-inflammatory.
15. Enjoy a cooked breakfast today. It kickstarts metabolism, and is important for mood and brain health.
16. Switch to olive oil for salad dressings or to drizzle on bread instead of butter. Olive oil has a long list of health benefits and is best for you when un-heated.
17. Enjoy a nutritious breakfast this morning. If you constantly find yourself rushed in the mornings, consider adjusting your sleep schedule to give yourself time for a proper breakfast and reap the benefits of improved nutrition and active metabolism.
18. Garlic, onions, spring onions and leeks all contain compounds that are beneficial for you – find a way to incorporate some in your meals today.
19. If you've been relying on cakes, biscuits or bars for morning or afternoon tea, today is the day to swap these for a piece of fruit and a handful of nuts.
20. Eat berries today. Blueberries, strawberries and raspberries contain plant nutrients known as anthocyanidins, which are powerful antioxidants.
21. Cook a curry today. Hot, spicy foods containing chillies or cayenne pepper trigger endorphins, the feel-good hormones. Many curries also include the spice turmeric which contains the powerful anti-inflammatory chemical curcumin.
22. Today resolve to keep a journal and write every day.
23. Try swapping full cream milk for low fat milk or even an alternative, like almond milk, today.
24. Give someone you love a hug today to show them your are grateful for their presence in your life.
25. Up your antioxidant level. Antioxidants, found in fruit, nuts and vegetables help your body ward off diseases and strengthen your immune system.
26. Try eating exclusively 'real' food today. Eat nothing that is processed or comes packaged. This may be harder than you think at first!
27. Cut down on caffeine today: only drink it in moderation, and drink more water to counteract its dehydrating effects.
28. Make the arrangements to do one thing you have always wanted to try. Perhaps a fun run or a cooking class?
29. Draw up a table of the benefits of being active versus the costs of remaining sedentary for you personally.
30. Drink a cup (or two or three) of green tea. Green tea contains polyphenols which have been shown to boost heart health and help prevent cancer.
31. Today, aim for a regular eating pattern. A planned pattern of eating is more likely to include the recommended number of serves from the five food groups.

APRIL

1. Meet a friend for a walk – or a swim, or a Zumba class. Make exercise fun!
2. Eat some broccoli today. It may help to keep your gums healthy, and is an excellent source of vitamin C.
3. Exercise for 30 minutes today and make a note of how much better you feel. Physical exercise improves oxygen delivery to the brain helping your memory, reasoning abilities and reaction time.
4. Indulge in some dark chocolate (70% cocoa or greater). If you're not used to the taste you may find it bitter at first, but a little bit each day will soon see you start enjoying the taste as well as the health benefits.
5. Play a board game today – it will give your brain a workout and make a social activity a healthy one.
6. Eat an avocado today. They're rich in monounsaturated fat and vitamin E, both of which promote healthy skin.
7. Drink peppermint tea today. It's good for your digestion.
8. Switch your exercise time to the morning today – research shows if you exercise in the morning, you're more likely to stick with it.
9. Avoid dehydration – carry water with you to drink today when you are out and about.
10. Aim to get to bed early today and enjoy around eight hours of peaceful sleep.
11. Eat a tomato today. Tomatoes contain lycopene, a powerful cancer fighter. They're also rich in vitamin C.
12. Do something to exercise your mind today – brain puzzles are easily accessible online or in the newspaper.
13. Make time to relax today. Excess stress hormones like cortisol can be harmful to the brain – and your waistline!
14. Have a stimulating conversation today – explore, examine and enquire.
15. Stretch for 10 minutes today (and every day!). Regular stretching improves your balance, strength and flexibility.
16. Go the entire day without complaining. This may be harder than you think!
17. Let some lavender into your life. A few drops of lavender essential oil in your bath may ease stress and help you unwind.
18. Prevent low blood sugar today. Eat regular, small healthy meals and keep fruit and veggies handy to substitute for sugar-laden snacks.
19. Drink herbal teas such as camomile or tulsi today to soothe your frazzled nerves.
20. Use your muscles today. Exercises such as the plank, sit ups and push ups help build muscle mass, which burns

calories even as you sit and relax.

21. Go dancing today – take a class, go out, or dance in the comfort of your lounge room. Your body will reap the rewards, and if you introduce some complex moves your brain may get a workout too.
22. Walk for an hour today – it can help you lose body fat, improve your fitness and avoid disease.
23. Sit less today. Adults who sit less throughout the day have a lower risk of early death. Try standing to work, walking meetings, or meet a friend for a workout rather than an indulgent dinner.
24. Start your day early today. Starting your day under pressure time-wise can make for a stressful day.
25. Low on energy? Get some exercise today – even a brisk walk can be more effective than a nap or cup of coffee at fighting fatigue.
26. Take care of your emotional health today – take time out to stop, relax and breathe. Ask yourself how you feel.
27. Set clear goals today – write a list of everything you need to do, then tick them off. It will help prevent you from feeling overwhelmed.
28. Pick one habit you want to get rid of, and take one step today towards breaking it.
29. Is there something you've always wanted to do for your health, but never got around to doing? Make a commitment to doing it today.
30. You can't control what happens to you, but you can choose how you react to it. Choose to be happy today.

MAY

1. Switch from white bread to wholegrain, sourdough, rye or spelt, today.
2. Make a note of your total screen time today, you might be surprised at how many hours you accumulate each day. Consider substituting some of your screen time for a walk in nature or a social activity.
3. Vitamin D helps to maintain healthy bones and muscles. Today, get outside in the sunshine to boost your levels, but be careful not to burn!
4. Feel stressed and in need of some relaxation? Get a massage today.
5. Make some time today to draw up or review your healthy eating budget. To maintain a healthy diet and lifestyle, it must be financially sustainable.
6. Try a yoga class today. Yoga eases stress, lowers blood pressure, slows heart rate, and increases flexibility.
7. Make an effort today to talk about what's bothering you. Sometimes, just talking about it can help - discuss difficult problems with friends or a counsellor.
8. Drink some herbal tea today – a tasty way to improve hydration. Try ginger, mint, jasmine or lemongrass.
9. Take the stairs instead of the lift.
10. Today, take a deep belly breath (or several). The dose of oxygen will make you feel happier and more alert.
11. If you have a sweet tooth, balance it with some bitter foods such as endive, radicchio, cooked greens or olives.
12. Chat to your friends. Just 10 minutes of daily chatter may help to improve mental function and preserve memory.
13. Today, check out local exercise options in your neighbourhood where you can be active, such as leisure centres, sports clubs, parks, walking trails and swimming pools.
14. Kickstart your day by including a satisfying and healthy high protein breakfast that is quick to prepare and a pleasure to eat. Think chia, eggs, quinoa or salmon and search for some recipe ideas.
15. Doing nothing can be deadly, so move as much as you can today by including incidental as well as structured exercise.
16. Spend no more time watching TV than you do exercising today.
17. Eat a banana today. People whose diets are rich in potassium may be less prone to high blood pressure.
18. Moderate activity is great for your heart and overall health. Take a walk today.
19. Make time and space for human connection in your life today. Whether this is with your partner, friend or family member, connecting closely with people makes you feel good.
20. Brush your teeth for at least two minutes today, and floss. Many people don't brush for long enough.
21. Focus on the simple things today. Appreciate the taste of an apple, or the warmth of the sun. You may find your mind is clearer and you feel calmer.
22. Pop a probiotic today. 'Good' bacteria may help restore the balance of bacteria living in the gut.
23. Get your garlic on today. It's antiviral and antibacterial and is believed to boost immunity.
24. Re-energise your work or home environment today by placing a pot plant in your line of sight. A fern, tree, or flower can brighten up any space.
25. Make a hearty soup today. Soups made from quality ingredients are a good source of minerals and vitamins.
26. Eat slowly and mindfully today. Take the time to taste and enjoy your meals; you might be surprised to find you feel more full with smaller portions.
27. Most people rank personal finance as their number one stressor, so write a budget for your finances today.
28. Limit your fat and sugar intake today. Identify a meal or snack that is a source of unnecessary fat or sugar and substitute with a healthy alternative.
29. Feast on fibre today – whole grains, whole fruits, cruciferous vegetables… your digestion will thank you for it.
30. Plan a date night with your partner or an evening out with a friend today.
31. Declutter your house today. Start with your pantry and fridge to remove old and unhealthy foods, then move on to your wardrobe and cupboards. Throwing out things you no longer use can make you feel more relaxed and free up space in your life.

JUNE

1. Don't turn on the television during meals, instead chat to your friends or family and focus on eating mindfully.
2. Plan a fish dinner today. Fish is a superfood packed with vitamins and minerals, and a major source of omega-3 fatty acids that are good for the brain.
3. Watch a comedy movie today. Laughing eases stress, promotes social bonding, lowers blood pressure and may boost your immune system.
4. Eat some sprouts today – they are a powerhouse of nutrition.
5. Stick to your bedtime today and ensure 7-8 hours of sleep. Make your rest a priority and you'll thank yourself for it.
6. Call a friend today. Social support has been linked to a lower risk of heart disease.
7. Eat some mushrooms today to top up your vitamin B and D levels.
8. Avoid catching a cold today. Wash your hands often and well.
9. Invite your neighbour over for a cup of tea today. Relationships with neighbours can be important determinants of health.
10. Take time for yourself today in a restorative way. Catch up on some reading, pamper yourself, or simply spend some time alone relaxing.
11. Learn more about something that amazes you today.
12. Make time for fun today.
13. Women: check your breasts today.
14. Park an extra block or two away from your destination today and walk.
15. Increase your vitamin D levels today by going for a walk outdoors and enjoying sensible sun exposure.
16. Try an anti-aging pill today: it's called exercise.
17. Play with your pet today. They help relieve pain, reduce tension, lower blood pressure and combat depression.
18. Eat beans today; they can help to reduce your risk of colon cancer and heart disease.
19. Do one thing today that you've been putting off. Accomplishing a task or chore that you have been avoiding will relieve your mind.
20. Men: add tomatoes to your diet, they can help protect you from prostate cancer.
21. Plan a date night with your friends today. Share an interesting meal or a great movie and catch up with the people who matter most to you.
22. Check your medicine cabinet today: throw out any medicines or supplements that are out-of-date.
23. Stop eating before you are full. It may feel challenging at first, but you're likely to feel satisfied rather than over-stuffed!

24. Look for an opportunity today to try something different or fun – put up your hand, and say yes to trying a new experience, a new food or exotic recipe. Spontaneity can be fun.
25. Are you holding on to anger or resentment towards someone? Let it go today. The health benefits of forgiving someone are significant.
26. Men: check your testes today.
27. Take it easy today – make an effort to deal with your emotions constructively – you're more likely to live longer than an angry person.
28. An apple a day keeps the doctor away. The old saying is true because of the free-radical fighting power of the antioxidants in them. Eat one today!
29. Combat the risk of catching a viral disease by eating an orange or two today. Polyphenols in oranges help protect against viral infections.
30. Cook extra for dinner and take healthy leftovers for lunch rather than relying on takeaway or instant meals.

JULY

1. Today, when you first sit at your desk, take note of how you approach the beginning of your work day. Whether you start the day stressed and craving coffee or positive and energetic may indicate potential areas for lifestyle changes.
2. Build up your immunity with some quality probiotics.
3. Plant a mini herb garden on your kitchen window sill. Use the fresh or dried herbs to flavour your food in place of salt.
4. Ask what you can do for someone today. Helping others, whether it's for people close to you or strangers you meet during the day, can make both parties feel great.
5. Replace harsh cleaning products with non-chemical, natural alternatives in your bathroom and kitchen.
6. Buy yourself a new wholefoods cook book.
7. Replace the table salt in your pantry with sea salt or a salt substitute.
8. Write a list of all the things you are grateful for – people, experiences, little things. Focusing on these things can help you think more positively and remind you not to take life for granted.
9. Set up a plan to ensure 7-8 hours sleep every night this week.
10. Remove all highly processed foods from your pantry – to the rubbish bin.
11. Get your vitamin D levels tested and top up if needed.
12. Keep your neck covered when you go out today, and all through winter.
13. Visit a farmers market for bargains on some healthy and fresh produce for your week.
14. Include high vitamin C foods in your meal plans.
15. Explore buying fruit and vegetable boxes from online retailers for home delivery.
16. Listen to relaxing music or ambient sounds while working at your desk or relaxing at home.
17. Try a nut based milk alternative, such as almond milk, in your tea or coffee.
18. Stand up to make phone calls to reduce the amount of time spent sitting. Remember, stasis is the basis (for many health issues).
19. Switch off the TV early and make time for a relaxing activity that will support restful sleep.
20. Book to attend a workshop or seminar led by someone who inspires you.
21. Wake up 15 minutes early and use the time to set goals for the day ahead.
22. Write a journal entry. Writing down feelings and experiences can help you process and deal with emotions in a positive, constructive way.
23. Find out more about fun bike paths in your area.
24. Find a few minutes of sunshine on this winter's day for some direct sunlight on your face, neck and arms. Maintaining vitamin D levels is especially important in the winter months.
25. Look into volunteering at a local charity today. Giving back to a cause you believe in will make you feel great and connect you with like-minded people.
26. Treat yourself to a healthy, wholesome, satisfying homemade lunch and take it to work. Remember, a healthy lunch can be more delicious than takeaway.
27. Explore some recipes that use seaweed such as kombu, wakame or arame. This superfood is packed with trace minerals and antioxidants.
28. Give yourself a treat and take a walk at lunchtime to get your blood moving and clear your head.
29. Use filtered water for drinking and in all cooking.
30. Have a processed food-free day.
31. Slow down.

AUGUST

1. Book a massage for yourself.
2. Spices bring extra flavours to meals you are preparing and many have health benefits as well.
3. Commence a practice of mindful eating. Consider each mouthful and be present to your meals.
4. Book your annual medical check-up.
5. Borrow or invest in a pedometer and see how your average day checks in against the optimal 10,000 steps a day.
6. Coconut oil is a tasty substitute for other oils and has a very high melt point so it won't go rancid. Try it in your cooking.
7. Start a food diary and write down everything you eat for a week/month.
8. Have your eyes tested.
9. Start each day with a glass of warm water with a slice of lemon to immediately counter that morning dehydration.
10. Use raw cocoa in your cooking. It can add an unexpected flavour to healthy slices and desserts.
11. Turn off all technology one hour prior to bedtime.
12. Spend an afternoon with a child – in their world not your own.
13. Get out of your comfort zone! Try out a new activity such an indoor trampolining, roller skating or rock climbing.
14. A piece of wholegrain toast drizzled with olive oil and sprinkled with ground flaxseed is a great mid afternoon snack. Try it as a substitute for a muffin or other sugar-laden snack.
15. Set up a playlist on your smartphone with motivating music that keeps you moving.
16. A pet is proven to be great therapy. Consider adopting a furry friend.
17. Letter writing is an excellent way to work through many feelings. You don't even need to send it to get the benefit. Try writing to release any feelings you've been holding onto today.
18. Blueberries are great snacks and powerful antioxidant treats. Buy them frozen for a cheaper alternative and defrost for a quick snack.
19. Try honey as a sweetener replacing sugar.
20. Set a goal to be participate in a fun run such as Colour Run, or an organised fundraising walk.
21. Order brown rice instead of white rice.
22. Freeze fruit purees in ice-cube trays to add to smoothies – great for when your favourite fruits are not in season.
23. Where possible use glass for the storage of foods.
24. Adding cinnamon to dishes can hep regulate blood sugar.
25. Place a sheet of nori on a wrap before you add your fillings. You won't need to season and will top up your iodine at the same time.
26. Make today a meat-free day. Get creative with delicious vegetarian substitutes.
27. Grow aloe vera in a pot by your door. Break off a piece as needed – a terrific balm for burns and wounds.
28. Homemade air-popped popcorn is a much healthier option than packaged popcorn, and a very economical, delicious snack.
29. Walk barefoot on the grass at lunchtime. You'll feel like you've had a real break before heading back to the office.
30. Probiotics may help conditions such as eczema. Include a good quality probiotic in your routine today.
31. Sugar-free pastilles can be purchased at most health food shops and can satisfy sweet cravings. Buy a packet today and use as a substitute for more substantial sweet snacks.

SEPTEMBER

1. Green tea is a great source of antioxidants – include it today.
2. Take a 'blossom walk' today and take the time to notice the first signs of spring. You'll likely slow down, feel more relaxed and return refreshed.
3. Honey can soothe a raspy throat. Try it in black or herbal tea as a healthy sweetener option.

4. Make your own muesli or wholegrain blends for breakfast. Commercial brands can be high in fats and sugars, especially if they contain dried fruit.
5. Find a way to inspire and motivate yourself today. Setting new goals, recognising your recent achievements, or listening to an inspirational speaker.
6. Dark chocolate can suppress coughing. Try a couple of squares of 70 percent cocoa as a delicious afternoon snack.
7. Buy unsliced loaf bread and cut to the thickness you desire, you will end up consuming less overall.
8. Leave the office on time today.
9. Superfoods can be useful additions to your everyday diet, and may provide extra nourishing support in times of illness or stress. Find a superfood that you enjoy and use it in a recipe such as a smoothie or muesli.
10. All body systems are in a constant state of repair. Good nutrition – for example from foods high in calcium, iron and zinc – is the foundation of effective repair. Today, try to maintain a well balanced diet by including no less than five servings of vegetables and two servings of fruit.
11. Replace white vinegar with apple cider vinegar in your pantry. Apple cider vinegar has antimicrobial properties and has been linked with reduced blood glucose and LDL cholesterol.
12. Go for a day without sugar. Remember that sugars are often hidden in unexpected foods such as bread and pasta sauce, so this may be an enlightening challenge.
13. Adopt a vegetarian diet a couple of days this week.
14. Check the height of your desk and the settings on your chair support your best posture. Sitting correctly is critical to health and you may find that a few adjustments make a big difference.
15. Steam inhalation can help ease nasal congestion during hayfever season. A few drops of tea tree oil or eucalyptus in the water may also be beneficial.
16. Clean out a kitchen cupboard and donate what is not needed to charity.
17. Use raw cocoa powder and your preferred milk to make a nutritious bedtime drink with this amazing superfood.
18. Look for wholemeal pastas at your supermarket and eliminate 'white' and refined pasta from your diet.
19. Leave the skin on fruits and vegetables – extra fibre and nutrients are in the skin.
20. Skipping is an effective cardiovascular workout that can be done without leaving home. Try a few minutes jumping rope to get your blood pumping in a quick burst of exercise.
21. Plant food is good for you – eat in plentiful amounts and in good variety daily.
22. Do some neck, shoulder and back stretches at your desk today. Print out some guidelines and attach to the wall.
23. Thoroughly wash all fruit and vegetables as soon as you get them home from shopping and before you store them. For added convenience, cut up some carrot and celery sticks and store in an airtight container. Fruit and veggies that are ready to eat straight from the fridge make a much more tempting snack option than if you have to prepare them first.
24. Choose raw nuts – roasted nuts are typically high in saturated fats and salt.
25. Your body has around three million sweat glands so keeping skin clean and healthy is vital.
26. Outsource and delegate today – no-one can do everything.
27. Like motivational and inspirational heroes on Facebook so your daily feed contains good positive energy. Alternatively, bookmark websites that have positive themes so you're only one click away from inspiration.
28. Pick a cause or charity you are passionate about and take action – make a monthly pledge or attend a meeting and see how you can be more involved.
29. Today, make all your supermarket choices 'no added salt' or low sodium where possible.
30. Engage in 'nuerobics' – challenge your brain in ordinary tasks. Brush your teeth with the other hand today.

OCTOBER

1. Get your hit of Omega-3 – fish – for dinner today.
2. Acknowledge a stranger whilst waiting for your coffee today.
3. Clean out your wardrobe and donate your unwanted clothes to charity.
4. Keep an exercise diary to track your successes and keep motivated.
5. Put dried legumes in water to soak at breakfast time. They will be ready to use in cooking for the evening meal.
6. Today substitute tahini as a spread instead of margarine.
7. Review use-by dates on items in your pantry and dispose of as indicated.
8. A high quality protein such as eggs at breakfast time is a great way to start the day. You may find the extra protein at this time keeps you feeling fuller.
9. You eat 21 meals a week so what you eat 2-3 times a week is unlikely to matter if the rest of your meals are nutritious. Plan your healthy and nutritious meals for the rest of the week, but allow yourself two treat meals to keep motivated.
10. Find fun activities that you enjoy that get you moving – and you won't feel like you're exercising.
11. The best diet for you will depend on your age, health status, activity levels and nutritional profile – seek tailored advice from a qualified health professional.
12. When relaxing in front of the TV, use the advertising breaks to get up and do some push ups, squats or other exercises.
13. Cereals should not contain any added sugar – some processed cereals can contain up to 50 percent sugar! Find healthier substitutes for anything with added sugar.
14. Eat a fermented food today. Sauerkraut, miso soup or kombucha are great sources of living organisms, which are important for digestive health.
15. Give yourself a complete rest day once a month. Find out what this means for you – pampering, heading out of town, or staying in your pyjamas all day – and do it guilt free.
16. Natural foods provide nutrients that protect against disease – avoid processed foods.
17. It's best to keep sipping water all day – by the time you feel thirsty you are already dehydrated.
18. Try doing 10 squats while you wait for something today – for the kettle to boil, while on hold, or while talking on the phone. Do 12 tomorrow.
19. Take a partner dance class and combine movement with social engagement.
20. Park your car on the highest level of the carpark rather than take the first space available. Take the stairs to ground floor.
21. Laughter is great exercise. Spend 10 minutes today engaging in activities that make you laugh out loud – you may be surprised how great you feel.
22. Progressive muscle relaxation is a great way to know how your body is feeling and can be practised at your desk, or on the train without anyone knowing.
23. Building core muscles brings stability and balance to the whole body – this is especially important as we age.
24. Reply 'I'm fantastic' instead of 'not bad' when someone asks you how you are.
25. Avoid takeaway foods, especially if fried. Look for healthy takeaway alternatives such as sushi and salads.
26. Plan your next meeting to be held at an outside location.
27. Cut down your portion size by 20 percent. Leave some food on your plate.
28. You can line dishes with thin vegetable slices (eggplant, carrot or zucchini) instead of using pastry.
29. Mix up cardiovascular and strength training activities over the week.
30. Keep your fluids up while you are moving. Sip as often as possible and take rehydration breaks.
31. Try a meditation exercise just before eating a meal. A healthy meditation practice will put you in tune with your body and you may find you eat differently when calm and relaxed.

NOVEMBER

1. Take yourself out on a date – see a movie solo, or enjoy a special dinner for one. Enjoying your own company can recharge your batteries.
2. Try a dandelion root 'coffee' today in replacement of regular coffee. Great for your liver and caffeine-free.
3. Think of a time when you were truly

happy. Evaluate against what you are doing to make yourself happy and healthy now.

4. Raw foods have lots of active enzymes and aid digestion. Include a fresh salad alongside cooked meals.
5. A probiotic supplement is best taken first thing in the morning or last thing in the evening. Stock up on a good quality probiotic supplement and add it to your morning or night time routine.
6. Motivation to move, and keep moving, increases significantly by the inclusion of music. Play your favourite music today while exercising, walking, or doing household chores.
7. Make a pot of green tea and sip it throughout the day. Keep warm in a thermos if desired.
8. Health is an investment in the future. Make a deposit today by adding 10 minutes to your chosen healthy activity.
9. Take a five minute mini-break from your desk every hour.
10. Consume the food you prepare within 24 hours to ensure vital nutrients are preserved.
11. Small periods of mindfulness practice several times during the day add up. A few minutes regularly may even be more beneficial that long stretches less often.
12. Listen to your body today. What is your body telling you through your energy levels, your skin, your sleep patterns, your digestion and your body composition?
13. Reduce, or preferably avoid, energy drink consumption. If you are a regular consumer, make a plan today to remove energy drinks from your routine and substitute for healthier alternatives.
14. Take a few minutes to reflect on the improvements in health and wellbeing you have achieved so far. Congratulate yourself!
15. Try a new exotic fruit you've never had before.
16. Reverse your meal sizes today – eat a large breakfast, a medium lunch and a small dinner.
17. Take three minutes to notice the meal in front of you. Consider the colours and textures, the source of the foods, and the hands that have prepared it.
18. Invest in the right exercise gear for the right conditions. You need to be warm, dry and comfortable in winter, and cool, supported and unrestricted in summer.
19. Walking meditations are great when you are time poor. You can combine a walk with your mindfulness practice. Try it on your daily walk today, or during lunchtime at work.
20. Peas, beans, lentils and soya beans are all nutrient dense and excellent sources of proteins – they make terrific meat substitutes.
21. Use your breaks at work, or during your daily activities, to get back into your body by stretching, breathing, walking or a short meditation.
22. Have a car-free day. Walk or ride to your destinations and leave the car at home.
23. Put spaces in your spaces – every time you transition from one activity to another take a moment to pause and notice yourself.
24. Invest in a 'do not disturb' sign for your door – in the office, and at home!
25. Enrol in a weekly meditation class to help you set the habit and learn additional techniques.
26. Call a friend you haven't spoken to in a while. Social networks are vital for good health.
27. Organise a pot luck dinner with your neighbours or extended family. Progressive dinners are gaining popularity again.
28. Unplug your modem for 24 hours this weekend.
29. Leave your mobile phone in another room when you sit down to eat. Focus on the food and the people at the table.
30. Set an intention each morning before you get out of bed. Intentions set the tone of your day, and help you focus on what is real for you.

DECEMBER

1. Substitute every second alcoholic drink with sparkling mineral water.
2. Serve yourself one plate of finger food (rather than continuous snacking) so you can manage how much you are eating at functions.
3. Good digestion begins with chewing.
4. Expand your perspective – nothing is so important that you need to lose sleep over it.
5. Make your own rehydrating water by adding a little salt, a teaspoon of sugar and a slice of lemon to a cup of water.
6. By combining foods that take a similar time to pass through the digestive tract, you are giving good support to your digestive system.
7. A well organised healthy kitchen is an important step to a well organised diet.
8. Make it a habit to take three deep breaths whenever you think of it – perhaps on the hour, or even each time you go to the bathroom.
9. Download an app that lists the nutritional qualities and kilojoules in common foods you eat. Look them up.
10. The kidneys cleanse around one litre of blood per minute. Potassium is important for kidney function – a reason to eat bananas, white beans, leafy greens or avocado today.
11. Try eating fruit and salads first at mealtimes so you feel full and reduce your intake of less healthier foods.
12. Many exercises/activities do not need equipment or specialised clothing. Eliminate excuses and take a walk.
13. If you follow the principles of a healthy diet as part of your lifestyle, you are much more likely to control your weight than if you follow an extreme diet for short bursts. Plan for the long term today.
14. When washing your hair, two teaspoons of apple cider vinegar in the rinse water is a cost-effective conditioner, and eliminates the potentially harmful chemicals found in many packaged haircare products.
15. Soaking almonds and other nuts in fresh water overnight will increase their enzyme activity and make them easier to digest.
16. Try a new grain today – buckwheat and quinoa are two often overlooked grains that are nutritious substitutes for rice and pasta.
17. Changing habits takes time and it is natural to relapse from time to time. If this occurs simply take stock and start over, and don't be too hard on yourself.
18. Avoid skipping meals, especially breakfast. If you find yourself in a rush and have to eat on the run, snack on fruits and raw vegetables in resealable containers until you can make time for your next meal.
19. Plan to have your healthiest morning ever this week. Start with eight hours of sleep, drink a glass of warm water with lemon upon waking, practice meditation or goal setting for the day, and follow up with a healthy, satisfying breakfast.
20. Choose fresh fruits and yoghurt over pastries when at a catered breakfast.
21. Giving or receiving a hug for 20 seconds is one of nature's best anti-depressants.
22. Serve or order smaller portions of meat – make sure they are lean cuts.
23. Listen to your body – some days you may need to go easy. Let your body guide you.
24. Read labels carefully – many well-marketed 'health foods' and vitamin or electrolyte waters have unnecessary amounts of sugar and other additives.
25. Celebrate good health today and exercise with a friend. A power walk can be great catch-up time, and if you are celebrating the Christmas season, is a great post-meal activity.
26. Prepare a post workout snack and drink before you start so you don't feel compelled to make 'on-the-run' choices that undo the good work you have done.
27. Always carry a small container of almonds in your bag for a quick snack.
28. If you mostly meditate indoors, today is the day to take it outside. Find a shady tree or open space that appeals to you.
29. Practice the art of saying no, especially to something that you know is not right for you, today.
30. Identify people in your life that 'live in the present moment'. Take a moment to jot down three or four things you notice about them and contemplate these ideas in your meditation.
31. Create a mood board/collage of what a healthy life looks like for you for a new year. Cut pictures from magazines or draw yourself being healthy. Take a photo of your collage and make it your screen saver on your computer.

BONUS TIP Celebrate life every day.

About the National Institute of Integrative Medicine (NIIM)

A not-for-profit charitable organisation, NIIM was established by Professor Avni Sali, a pioneer of integrative medicine in Australia with the help of community supporters.

Our mission is to educate healthcare professionals and the general public in integrative medicine, and to conduct research into integrative medical treatments and technologies. Our NIIM Clinic provides the community with access to integrative medical doctors, allied and complementary health practitioners and innovative therapies.

The Institute works to raise awareness of the role of integrative medicine in medical practice and public health. This is achieved through community campaigns, professional education, public lectures and the media.

About the Celebrate Life Foundation

The philanthropic arm of Swisse Wellness Pty Ltd, the Celebrate Life Foundation was created to inspire wellness throughout the community and help 'bend the trend' of increasing rates of preventable disease.

The Celebrate Life Foundation supports charity programs that promote a greater awareness and understanding of the three pillars of lifelong wellness: Mind, Movement and Nutrition.

NIIM
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF INTEGRATIVE MEDICINE
www.niim.com.au

CELEBRATE LIFE FOUNDATION
Proudly Sponsored by
www.celebratelifefoundation.org.au