



Make Eating Well Easy

While the old saying ‘You can’t out exercise a bad diet’ may still be true, it turns out regular exercise is a great way to motivate and support maintaining a good diet.

Exercise and nutrition have always been closely linked. Whether it’s understanding the fuel needed for working out, a lifestyle plan that incorporates changes to both food and physical activity, or just understanding that both exercise and good nutrition are needed for living a long and healthy life. For most of us nutrition doesn’t have to be complicated with the help of some basic recommendations to get started.

Sugar - There is no shortage of research that will confirm that reducing the amount of sugar, and thus the amount of processed food will contribute to your health. When it comes to sugar the less we consume the better. It is important to note that sugar provides calories but has no nutritional benefit, so there is no health benefit whatsoever in consuming it. It’s about taste and convenience. Reducing sugar intake can take some time, and while it may seem satisfying to go ‘cold turkey’, a measured approach that can be maintained will get better results in the long term.

Fat - The area around animal vs vegetable fats is full of debate with continuing research giving us more information. Too much fat is not good for us, and regardless of its source, should not be over consumed as too much of any food, be it ‘good’ or ‘bad’ is not the best option for our health. Many processed foods contain high quantities of fat without much nutritional value, so a diet full of whole foods is going to be better for you. By reducing the consumption of processed and fast food overall, your fat content will be reduced.

Energy Drinks - When seeking a quick boost of energy pre-workout, to beat thirst or to just get a kick to aid alertness, some people turn to energy drinks. However energy drinks often have high levels of sugar and they aren’t the hydration and energy solution they may claim to be. Any performance gains are likely to be swiftly lost, as caffeine also has diuretic properties, leading to dehydration. For the majority of exercisers, the best fluid for performance is water, with the good news being that it is free and easy to access.

Supplements - From taking vitamin and mineral tablets, protein powders, through to superfood products, if there’s a result you want, there’s a supplement promising to help get you there faster. With such a massive quantity of supplements for sale on their own, or in enhanced foods available in stores and online, it can be a challenge to sort out what is going to help you be your healthiest self. The best way to check in that the supplements you are planning to take are healthy for your specific circumstances is to speak with a professional who understands how the body works and is not going to try and sell you an unproved quick fix.

Real food - No one chemical, food or supplement is going to make you healthier. In fact, it's our reliance on processed food that is causing much of the damage. Real food, in as close to its natural form is going to have better health results than anything out of a packet or from a fast-food outlet. Combine plenty of unprocessed food in a balanced diet with treats kept to a minimum, and combine regular exercise to help maintain a healthy weight.

If you are one of the many people looking at making better choices about what you eat, there's good reason to think that your first choice should be to start exercising. Often the commonly described benefits of exercise tend to be the more obvious ones such as increasing wellness, energy levels and weight reduction, but it's clear that these benefits are the tip of the iceberg, with benefits such as habit changing gains being just as valid.

If looking for specific nutrition advice, reaching out to an allied health professional who specialises in nutrition is a good option. If you are not sure who to speak with, ask your registered exercise professional for a recommendation.

Contact details for further information about the exercise industry:

NZ Register of Exercise Professionals, Registrar Stephen Gacsal

Email: stephen@reps.org.nz telephone: 0800 55 44 99 website: www.reps.org.nz

NZ Register of Exercise Professionals (REPs) - Independent not for profit quality mark of exercise professionals and facilities. Using REPs Registered Exercise Professionals is the "warrant of fitness check" that exercise professionals and facilities meet New Zealand and internationally benchmarked standards to deliver safe exercise advice and instruction. REPs is affiliated globally to other national exercise professional registers representing over 210,000 exercise professionals through the International Confederation of Registers for Exercise Professionals (ICREPs) - www.icreps.org

Exercise Association of New Zealand, Chief Executive Richard Beddie

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Exercise Association of New Zealand - Not for profit exercise industry representative organisation. Its mission is to proactively support a sustainable exercise and fitness industry in New Zealand by growing participation in structured exercise through advocacy, information and industry standards.

