



Eat Well - Be Well

Sometimes looking after your health from a nutrition perspective can seem overwhelming. There are a huge range of messages and advice available online, from friends and family, as well as guidelines generated by Government organisations.

Often it can feel like everywhere you turn the advice is different, and that there's so much to do to make a change if eating better and living well is your aim.

The key point is that we do need to be taking care of what we eat. Despite all the advances in health and science that should be helping us live a longer and healthier lives, we are facing a future where many of us have a shortened life due to unhealthy food choices, and a lack of regular physical activity.

However, taking care of your health through what you eat doesn't have to be complicated. Incremental and realistic changes that can be sustained over a long period are much more effective than a complicated or intensive eating plan that is only sustainable for a short time frame.

Here's a few steps you can take right now to improve your health through what you eat.

Reduce Sugar - When it comes to sugar the less we consume the better. For some this may mean a complete removal from their diet, for others a reduction. It is important to note that sugar provides calories but has no nutritional benefit, so there is no health benefit in consuming it. It's about taste and convenience.

Eat Real Food - Real food, in as close to its natural form is going to have better health results than anything out of a packet or fast-food outlet. Combine plenty of unprocessed food in a balanced diet with treats kept to a minimum, and with regular exercise to help you maintain a healthy weight.

Reduce Fat Intake - Too much fat is not good for us, and regardless of its source, should not be over consumed as too much of any type of fat, be it 'good fat' or 'bad fat', 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.

Exercise - It is true that you can't out exercise an unhealthy diet, but exercise is an important contributor to health. While the latest diet product may claim that you can lose weight effectively and maintain good health without exercise, the World Health Organisation reports that physical activity is fundamental to energy balance and health. The Ministry of Health recommends lifestyle approaches rather than single factor approaches to weight management.

So instead of looking for a quick fix, look at making sure you eat a well-balanced diet. It's also a good idea to talk to a registered exercise professional who can give you the best advice on making exercise a part of your health plan.

Contact details for further information about the exercise industry:

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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

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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.

