



Welcome to Facts On Food

Welcome to the May edition of Facts On Food, the Border Dietitians newsletter. This month we celebrate Food Allergy Awareness Week and International No Diet Day. We think about the many benefits of being physically active. There is a recipe for a no nut slice that kids can take to school instead of a muesli bar, as well as another nutrition myth to be busted.

Food Allergy Awareness Week 2011, 8th to 14th May

A food allergy is a reaction to a protein in food by the immune system, which thinks that the food is harmful and attacks it by releasing histamine and other chemicals. 90% of allergic reactions are caused by 8 foods: milk, peanuts, eggs, wheat, tree nuts (e.g. walnuts, pecans), soy, fish and shellfish. Reactions range from mild to deadly, and symptoms can include:

- Swelling – throat, tongue, lips, eyes, face
- Hives, eczema, itchy red rash
- Vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal cramps, stomach pain
- Tingling, itchiness or metallic taste in the mouth
- Difficulty breathing – wheezing, shortness of breath, repetitive coughing, trouble swallowing
- Paleness, drop in blood pressure, loss of consciousness

The number of children with allergies has been increasing over recent years. In the five years from 1997 to 2002, peanut allergy in children doubled. A recent study from Melbourne's Royal Children's Hospital and the University of Melbourne showed that food allergy can affect as many as 10% of infants aged around 12 months.



Most children outgrow their food allergies to milk, wheat, egg and soy by 5 to 10 years of age, but allergies to peanuts, tree nuts, fish and shellfish tend to be lifelong. Food allergies cannot be cured; they require complete and strict avoidance to prevent reactions. This involves label reading, asking questions of people preparing food, and careful food preparation and cleanup to avoid cross contamination. It is also important to be

prepared in case of a reaction and carry epinephrine, or an 'Epi pen', with you at all times. For more information about food allergies, visit the Food Allergy and Anaphylaxis Network at www.foodallergy.org.

International No Diet Day, 6th May

Friday the 6th of May marked the annual celebration of International No Diet Day, which aims to promote healthy lifestyles and the danger of diets. There are many reasons to give up the unproductive 'diet cycle' and follow a healthy lifestyle that can be enjoyed and maintained long term.



Diet's simply do not work in the long term, and can actually lead to weight gain over time. The dieting mindset can also lead to unhealthy relationships with food, eating and our bodies, which impacts on both our physical and mental wellbeing. Dieting also deprives our body of the nutrients we need and can significantly reduce our energy levels and stamina. In short, dieting will not make you happy or give you the body satisfaction you desire. In fact, it can reduce your metabolic rate and make it easier for you to gain weight when you start eating normally again.

We would be a nation of healthier and happier people if we followed a healthy, well balanced diet instead of the numerous fad diets that set us up for failure. If you want advice on how to make healthy, lasting changes to your diet, why not think about making an appointment with one of the Border Dietitians.

In the News – Activity and Mental Health

The National Physical Activity Guidelines for Australians recommend that we do at least 30 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity on most, preferably all, days of the week. Walking, cycling, running, tennis, dancing are all examples of moderate-intensity activities. This recommendation relates to sufficient activity, the amount of activity we need for health benefits, and only measures activity related to fitness, not incidental activity such as walking around at work or in the supermarket.

The 2007-08 National Health Survey found that 73% of Australians aged between 25 - 65 years had low or sedentary levels of physical activity. This physical inactivity doesn't only make it easier to gain some extra kilos; it is the third biggest contributor to cardiovascular disease and increases your risk of osteoporosis and some cancers.



The effect on mental health is also becoming clearer. Numerous studies have found that exercise reduces symptoms of depression, with at least 30 minutes of exercise a day on 3 to 5 days a week having a comparable antidepressant effect to drugs such as Zoloft. New findings are also showing that exercise improves cognition and memory due to increased brain activity in memory-related regions of the brain, which in turn can reduce your risk of cognitive decline and Alzheimer's disease.

So now you know about the numerous benefits of being physically active, how do you get started? Firstly, see your doctor before any significant increase to your exercise program. Then start by setting short term goals to keep you motivated, ease into exercise by beginning with low intensity activity every other day and gradually increase the intensity, frequency and duration of your exercise. If you struggle to stay motivated, why not try joining a sporting team or walking with a friend?

Recipe – Choc Muesli Slice

Makes: 20

Ingredients:

1/2 cup plain flour
1/2 cup plain wholemeal flour
1/2 tsp baking powder
3 - 4 tbsp cocoa powder
1/3 cup brown sugar
3 tbsp oat bran
1/2 cup sultanas
1/3 cup dried cranberries
1/3 cup dried apricots, chopped
1/3 cup dark chocolate bits
70g margarine, melted
2 eggs
1/2 tsp vanilla essence
1/4 cup skim milk



Method:

1. Preheat oven to 170°C. Lightly spray slice pan with oil and line with baking paper.
2. Mix the flours, baking powder, cocoa powder, sugar and bran together in a large bowl. Add dried fruit and chocolate bits. Mix well.
3. In another bowl, mix margarine, eggs, vanilla and milk. Add to flour and mix until well combined.
4. Pour into lined tin. Bake in oven for 20 mins or until firm. Allow to cool, then cut into 20 pieces.

	Per Serve	Per 100g
Energy	494 kJ (118 Cal)	1330 kJ (318 Cal)
Protein (g)	2.7	7.2
Total fat (g)	4.6	12.5
- Saturated fat (g)	1.5	4.1
Carbohydrate (g)	16.2	43.6
- Sugar (g)	9.9	26.6
- Dietary fibre (g)	1.4	3.8
Sodium (mg)	66	178

Each serve provides 1 carbohydrate serve/exchange.

Facts on Food and Good Nutrition

With so much information out there about health and nutrition, it can be difficult to know which advice to follow. Our Accredited Practising Dietitians (APDs) expose the truth behind a popular nutrition myth.

Myth: Avoid seafood to lower your blood cholesterol.

Fact: Just like eggs, seafood often gets a bad name because it contains cholesterol. However, the dietary cholesterol found in seafood, other meats and eggs has little effect on blood cholesterol in most people. The most important factors that raise blood cholesterol are saturated fats and trans-fatty acids. Saturated fats are usually found in meat products and packaged foods, and trans-fatty acids are found in packaged snack foods, deep-fried foods or margarine containing hydrogenated oil.

Some seafood can actually help to lower your cholesterol because of the omega 3 fatty acids it contains. Oily fish such as salmon, herring, mackerel, sardines and fresh tuna are rich sources of omega 3, whilst white fish and other seafood such as prawns, lobster, scallops and crab are lower sources. It is recommended to consume 2-3 serves of 150g oily fish per week for heart health.

For more facts on food, visit the Border Dietitians website at www.factsonfood.com.au.

What's In Season?



FRUIT: Apples, Bananas, Custard apples, Kiwifruit, Lemons, Nashi, Pears, Pomegranates, Persimmons, Quinces, Rambutan.

VEGIES: Beetroot, Broccoli, Brussel sprouts, Cabbage, Capsicum, Chinese greens, Fennel, Leeks, Mushrooms, Parsnip, Potato, Pumpkin, Silverbeet, Spinach.

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