



Hypoglycemic Health Association of Australia

working to prevent diabetes

HYPONEWS

December 2017 (Volume 33 No.3)

ISSN 1836-9839

The Newsletter of the Hypoglycemic Health Association of Australia is distributed to members of the association and to health professionals with an interest in **nutritional medicine and clinical ecology**. Past newsletters are also available on the website.

Our next Public Meeting will be at
12.30pm on Saturday 2 December 2017

**at Kogarah Library
O'Keefes Lane, Kogarah**

Our guest speaker will be Maxine Haigh-White who will be speaking about:

“Healing Power of Hemp Oil”

- *Can you please **RSVP to Kerrie or Linda on 9553 0084** to assist with the organisation of the catering. If anybody could assist with afternoon tea in any way, please advise at the time of your RSVP.*
- *We cannot provide the date of the next meeting until after the December 2017 meeting. It is likely to be late March or early April 2018. Please ring Kerrie or Linda on 9553 0084 after the December meeting to find out the date.*

DISCLAIMER: The articles in this newsletter are not intended to replace a one-to-one relationship with a qualified health professional and they are not intended as medical advice. They are intended as a sharing of knowledge and information from research and experience in the scientific literature. The Association encourages you to make your own health care decisions based upon research and in partnership.

In this Issue:

- Treasurers Report
- My First Encounter with the HCG Diet
- The New HCG Diet Plan
- Dry July Website – some good tips on reducing alcoholism and regaining health and fitness
- Sue Litchfield's Recipes

PATRONS

- Dr George Samra
- Steve McNaughton BE (NSW)

PRESIDENT

- Dr George Samra

SECRETARY

- John P Natoli

TREASURER

- Sue Litchfield

AUDITOR

- Michael Pendlebury (Chartered Acc't)

INTERNET

- Justine Dunn

PUBLICITY

- Josie Vendramini

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

- Susan Ridge

Maxine Haigh-White, Naturopathic Practitioner, Herbalist, Nutritionist & Educator

A Naturopath, Nutritionist and a passionate Herbalist with more than 14 years of clinical experience Maxine currently holds an Advanced Diploma in Western Herbal Medicine, a Bachelor in Western Herbal Medicine, an Advanced Diploma in Nutritional Medicine and completed her Masters in Health Science in 2011 (UNE), blending traditional medicine and an evidence based medical model of science & research within the philosophy and application of Complementary Health Care.

Previously Department Head of Faculty for Herbal Medicine, a clinic supervisor and lecturer in Naturopathic Diagnosis; Herbal Medicine and Marketing your Business at Nature Care College in St Leonards. Maxine is a lecturer/speaker advocating the use of Kitchen Medicine; holding workshops in the community as well as in-store.

Treasurer's Report

By Sue Litchfield

Don't forget that renewals are due in February 2018. Currently fees are \$50 for 3 years, and \$35 for 3 years if you are a pensioner (fees have not increased for 10 years).

If you are currently receiving a hard copy of the newsletter and you would like to have the newsletter sent to you electronically (and save the cost of postage), please call Sue Litchfield 0418 217 364 or email suelitchfield@live.com.

We currently have \$3,400 in our cheque account, and \$2,089 in our accounts reserve account (savings account). Our term deposit is around \$8,000 and due to be re-invested in February 2018.

My First Encounter with the HCG Diet

By Susan Ridge (Newsletter Editor)

When I contracted ME/CFS Chronic Fatigue Syndrome) in 2001, I put on 20kgs of weight in the first 12 months, and could not budge the weight – I tried the Atkins diet (high fat diet) and the Dukan diet (high protein and low-fat diet). Neither of these diets worked for me. I was interested to read in the Dr Dukan book that if women are having trouble losing weight on his diet, it could be due to a hormonal issue (including possible thyroid issue).

I approached Dr Samra in October this year for a weight loss program and he put me on the HCG 500 calorie per day diet. I obtained the bio-identical (not homeopathic) hormone from T & J Pharma (Tas and John) at their Kogarah pharmacy. I began taking the hormone straight away as it only has a shelf life in the fridge of 28 days. I particularly liked the first 2 days of the diet where I had to eat as much food as I could to trick my brain into thinking there was a glut of food available. Even though I enjoyed the eating, the subsequent heart burn was not worth it!

I then started into the HCG "diet" where I started the day with a cup of green tea, followed by 2 small 250 calorie meals every day for the next 4 weeks (ie, 500 calories per day). I mainly ate salads each lunchtime (celery, cucumber, tomato, parsley lemon juice and some form of protein, be it eggs, fish, chicken, turkey or beef). For dinner I usually ate spinach or cabbage with a protein same as lunch) plus I managed to squeeze in a kiwifruit or an orange or some strawberries. Food preparation was very easy, except that I still had to cook the meals for my family!

I had to stop the low calorie part of the diet at 4 weeks (and missed the last week) because I was travelling to Tasmania for a 2-week holiday. While I was in Tasmania I wasn't able to stick strictly to the maintenance diet for the 3 weeks, but I did try and eat sensibly though, and tried not to exceed the 1500 calorie per day maintenance diet.

I lost 9.4 kgs during the diet part, put back on 1 kg from the trip to Tassie, and I am now starting to plan my second go at HCG. Interestingly, since I have been back from Tassie, I have taken off another 2.2kgs in the first week (without the hormone), so I am going to monitor my weight daily to see if the trend can continue.

The interesting part of the diet is that I took measurements every day of waist, bust and hips, and while my hip and waist reading were dropping considerably each day, my bust measurement

fluctuated upwards by a cm or 2, and then remained the same (making my husband very happy!).

I did not feel hungry during the diet, and my energy levels were constant throughout the day.

This diet has given me new hope that I can get to my best weight and stay there. It is very difficult for many women to lose weight after the menopause, and also when you sustain an injury that stops you from keeping up a good physical training program. I found the diet incredibly easy, and was always excited to weigh myself in the mornings to see how much weight I had lost each day.

For the people who have hypoglycemia, Dr Samra modifies the HCG diet to include a breakfast component, and after reading several articles on the internet, it appears that the diet can be moulded to suit the individual, even increasing the allowed calories per day. **A word of caution, though, is that in my readings, there were some articles relating to a couple of deaths caused by very low calorie diets, so you should always conduct your diet with the help of a medical professional (and particularly if you are a really bad hypoglycemic who gets extremely low blood sugar readings from fasting).**

I learnt a lot from this diet as I purchased a set of kitchen scales and started to look at calories per food based on weight. It is surprising how all of my favourite foods are Soooo fattening (particularly the nuts and the coconut milk curries). It was also surprising to see how much protein I was consuming, particularly in the evening, and the large amount of starchy vegetables. I have been able to “tweak” this to plan the maintenance program to ensure the weight will stay off....

The NEW HCG Diet Plan

(extract from the internet article at: <https://hcgdietinfo.com/new-hcg-diet-plan/>)

How the NEW HCG Diet Started

Chances are, you've heard of the infamous HCG Diet, the diet that requires injections of HCG hormone (human chorionic gonadotropin) and an extremely strict 500 calorie per day diet. The diet has been associated with extreme weight loss, with reports of dieters losing a pound a day.

Since published, the diet has been controversial at best. The reason? To begin with, the original protocol came with some pretty strict and unique rules to what we are familiar with in the weight loss world. For example, the restricted 500 calorie diet only allowed one vegetable per meal, prohibited the use of body lotions, oils, and specific personal hygiene products. In addition, exercise was prohibited on the diet. Completely opposite of what modern diets suggest for weight loss. Completely opposite because this is the first diet that took a medical, hormone and body chemical approach to weight loss- something modern cultures are not used to.

In addition to this unique approach to losing weight, no doctor could explain exactly how the diet worked, leaving critics to pin the weight loss on the strict diet, caloric restrictions, and also suggesting the use of HCG was a placebo effect at best. The only problem with this was... millions of successful HCG dieters were walking proof that the diet did exactly what it claimed; dramatic weight loss that was kept off for years (even decades,) low calorie diet but no hunger, adipose fatty tissue reduction but muscle retention while on the plan, and the list goes on.

With all the success stories pouring in, more and more doctors started taking the diet seriously and applying modern health science to understand, not only how the diet worked but how to improve it using the knowledge and medicine we have today. The result? The original Simeons protocol has evolved into the NEW HCG Diet.

What is the NEW HCG Diet?

The NEW HCG Diet continues on as a new approach to weight loss. As Dr. Oz (TV Personality in USA) and countless other authorities have now come to conclude, the diet works and is supported by countless studies and clinical trials.

The key differences between the original protocol and the NEW HCG Diet:

- Dosage is customized, with a higher dosage than previously published
- Guidelines for the protocol are based on the patients age and gender
- Food diets now range from 500 to 1500 calories and are based on the patient's needs and history
- Lipotropic injections and B12 are used to increase fat loss and reduce the chances of plateaus
- Exercise is now encouraged on the diet and again, based on the physical state of the patient

How Does the HCG Hormone Work for Weight Loss?

There is a surprisingly simple answer to this question: HCG does not make you lose weight – the diet makes you lose weight. However, the HCG injections (or bio-identical hormone) change *how* you lose the weight. According to Dr. Sheri L. Emma, a recently featured guest on the Dr. Oz Show, HCG creates chemical reactions in the body that result in a number of benefits when used for weight loss:

- By patient report, **HCG reduces feelings of hunger**. This allows them to eat very little comfortably. Why? The presence of HCG in the bloodstream takes the appetite away. In pregnant women, HCG often causes feelings of nausea in the early stages of pregnancy.
- HCG is a pro-hormone (also referred to as a super-hormone) which helps the body make **more** hormones. Since **hormone deficiency or imbalance is a common reason for weight gain**, whether it's your thyroid, or menopause (or andropause), this hormone offers help.
- **HCG injections** have been shown to raise blood levels of HCG with a lower dosage of HCG than drops, pills or sprays. The reason for this is that injections place the HCG directly into the bloodstream where other forms of HCG must go through the digestion process, which loses some of the potency before entering the blood.

HCG, as a pro-hormone, stimulates the increase of more hormones in the body. By elevating natural hormone levels in the body, (this includes testosterone) the HCG hormone is actually creating an anabolic state (muscle-building) which counteracts the catabolic state of muscle breakdown. The hormone receptors that are present on all muscle fibres in the body, respond to the increased hormone levels in patients taking the HCG hormone. The result of all of this.... HCG taken while on the diet is what keeps the patient from losing muscle.

Why is this important?

During most diets and fads, any prominent and immediate weight loss is due to a drop in muscle in the body. Since muscle weighs more than fat, the loss of muscle looks impressive on the scale while ultimately the patient is losing exactly what is needed to truly burn fat. Not only this, but this loss of muscle is extremely hard on the physical body, shape and metabolism. Since the metabolism is slowed significantly, and fat burning muscle has been lost, the dieter will inevitably regain the lost weight as fat tissue.

The NEW HCG Diet however, protects the body's muscle tissue and the body's chemistry then results in pure fat loss. This results in surprisingly fast and dramatic shrinking in inches and

clothing size. The result? A leaner, toned body with more muscle and less fatty tissue along with a strong metabolism and easy to maintain weight loss long after the diet has come to an end.

How to Start the NEW HCG Diet Plan

Because the diet requires the use of prescription HCG, a doctor or nurse practitioner must approve the patient for treatment. The most obvious is to find a local doctor that you feel comfortable with, that will work with you to customize the HCG Diet protocol to fit your personal health profile and needs.

HCG DIET PHASES

HCG Diet Phases in a nutshell: Each HCG Diet Plan has a **protocol**. Each protocol consists of rounds that have specific phases. Each phase has a **unique purpose**. The HCG Diet Protocol consists of separate phases. Together, they are referred to as a “round.” Dieter’s typically lose 15 to 20 lbs per round (say 7 – 10 kgs). If more weight is needed to be lost, there is a break after the final phase, and then another round is started. Repeat until goal weight is reached.

HCG Diet protocols include the following 4 phases. Note on protocol variations: Some protocols actually include 3 and 4 as the same “Maintenance phase” and have only 3 phases total. Other protocols, including Dr. Simeons Original protocol, do not include phase 1, loading phase. This can be a personal preference, however we will say that the following phase example, has shown great results from our readers, and has certainly appeared to be the most successful.

An Example Round of HCG Diet Phases:

- **Phase 1 of the HCG Diet** is the loading phase. Also known as the preparation phase. This phase is not on all HCG Diet protocols but it is on most and is very popular. During this two-day phase, the dieter eats as much healthy fats as possible in preparation for starting the next phase. They are also welcome to eat as many “cheat” foods as they would like, with the intention of satisfying cravings prior to beginning the next phase where these foods will not be allowed.
- **Phase 2 of the HCG Diet** is the weight loss phase. This begins on day 3 of taking HCG where the dieter adheres to a specified calorie intake and carefully selected food list. For most dieters, this is the most challenging phase of the plan because there is very little room for error.
- **Phase 3 of the HCG Diet** is at the end of HCG is discontinued and the same foods from phase 2 are still eaten, but increased slowly. In this stage, this is a reintroduction period where calories and foods are slowly adjusted to maintain weight loss.
- **Phase 4 of the HCG Diet** is the phase of continuing weight maintenance for life-long health and fitness.

Tips to Help Quit Drinking Alcohol

Extracts from internet article on the “Dry July” Website: <https://www.dryjuly.com/>

Note: if you think you might have a problem with alcohol, it's important to recognise that Dry July does not represent a "cure". More serious alcohol issues require skilled professional help to be resolved - talk to your GP or check out the Australian Psychological Society's Find a Psychologist resource at www.psychology.org.au.

Trying to quit drinking? Think it is too daunting and have no idea where to begin?

Many people who want to quit drinking find it difficult to know how to start and maintain their sobriety. It can be easy to say but to put into practice a drinking-free lifestyle is often much more challenging. Psychologist Sarah Gibson provided a few tips to those participating in Dry July to help quit drinking for the month of July.

1 - Tough goals become easier to commit to when they are closely linked to our values.

Remind yourself each and every day of how Dry July relates to the kind of person you want to be: someone who helps people who are dealing with serious illness, someone who invests in their own health, someone who embraces challenge

2 - Be aware that there will be times that the Dry July challenge is likely to be very uncomfortable – and have a strategy in place for these moments.

Urges inevitably arise when we first change a habitual behaviour, especially when a drink after a bad day can feel so damn good. Interestingly, it's not as much about having huge reserves of willpower to eliminate these urges, as it is about managing the reality that we humans are simply not wired to avoid pleasurable stimuli. Rather than trying to block out an urge to drink, try these mindfulness strategies, based on the approach of expert coach and therapist, Dr Russ Harris, to stay on track:

3 - Recognise that the urge to have a drink is simply a combination of thoughts, bodily sensations and feelings, NOT an order that must be followed on autopilot.

The urge itself may feel uncomfortable, but it cannot harm you in any way. In fact, the real harm tends to arise from how we respond to the urge. Trying to make the discomfort of an urge disappear, either by willing it away or by giving into it, moves us further away from the goal of abstaining.

4 - Accept the urge to drink when it turns up.

Rather than judging the urge as “bad”, simply notice it as it arises and acknowledge it. Make room for it and let it be. While the goal here is not to control or minimise the discomfort, you will probably find that this “expansion” technique reduces it as a welcome side-effect!

5 - Notice that cravings will intensify and subside.

Watch this unfold in your mind's eye with detached fascination, as if you were a curious scientist. Now notice that you have experienced a strong urge mindfully, without it pushing you around! Notice that your valued goals can guide your behaviour during Dry July, rather than your urges!

6 - Consciously re-commit to your values-oriented actions of abstaining during Dry July.

Committed actions might include avoiding the “faces and places” that you associate with drinking. You might talk to your after-work wingman to explain why you'll be laying low, without being judgmental. Set yourself up for success by avoiding bars and clubs until you're feeling more confident. Find a really delicious non-alcoholic substitute drink for the times you are mingling with people who are drinking. ***(HHA Editor's note: this can be difficult as most alternate drinks are also high in sugar!)***

Health

Having a Dry July has great health benefits. Each year our participants report **sleeping better**, having **more energy and productivity** and of course, **no hangovers!** So, you're not only helping others, you're helping yourself. It's a win-win!

Here are some of the benefits you could experience by going dry this July:

- Clear your head
- Increased energy levels
- Sleeping better / snoring less
- Weight loss
- Sense of achievement
- Save money

Managing Sugar Cravings

We all seek the taste of sweet foods naturally in our diet, however it can be easy to crave excess high sugar foods for many varied reasons.

We have 5 basic recognised tastes – sweet, sour, bitter, salty and umami (savoury) however we can become imbalanced in our food choices due to stress, low energy, eating on the run, looking for psychological reward or treat or nutritional deficiencies, just to name a few.

Refined sugar is addictive due to the release of dopamine from the brain. Dopamine is one of the principal neurotransmitters involved in creating substance dependence on things like alcohol. The excess dopamine that is produced gives rise to powerful feelings of pleasure; however, these excess levels also take a long-term toll on brain chemistry and promote substance dependency (like **sugar cravings**) which can contribute to obesity, type two diabetes and nutritional deficiencies.

When assessing a person's current eating plan, it is not uncommon to discover the following habits which can cause imbalances and sugar cravings to occur:

- Missing breakfast
- Added sugar in breakfast cereals
- Lack of protein and/or excessive complex carbohydrates during meals
- Dependence on alcohol, consuming 1-3 units per night
- Coffee and tea with sugar or chocolate (45-50% refined sugar) mid-afternoon or after dinner

If some (or all!) of these eating practices sound like yours, keep reading for 10 tips to help regain your balance.

Top 10 healthy tips to manage sugar cravings

This section of the Dry July Website was written by Peter Rule

1. Eat breakfast, lunch and dinner more slowly, with small healthy snacks in between if hungry
2. For breakfast, enjoy protein rich foods such as eggs, yogurt, chia seeds or muesli with nuts
3. For lunch and dinner, fill your plate with healthy foods, low in carbohydrates (vegetables and salads) along with a palm sized portion of lean protein (fish, chicken, lean meat, eggs, tempeh or legumes)
4. Before reaching for chocolate when you need a pick me up snack, try a small handful of raw nuts and seeds with a few raisins for sweetness, hummus with veggie sticks or a small tub of yogurt
5. Eat a variety of whole real foods with good fibre to increase consumption of nutrients, the feeling of fullness and to improve metabolism
6. Cravings can sometimes be caused by slight dehydration so make sure to drink plenty of water throughout your day
7. Add some cinnamon to your cooking or tea. Cinnamon is excellent for insulin efficiency and used for treatment of Diabetes, metabolic syndrome X and insulin resistance
8. Try Licorice tea, as it has a sweet taste and is an adrenal tonic which is helpful for low energy levels
9. Eat fermented foods such as sauerkraut, kimchi, kombucha, kefir or probiotic foods which provide beneficial bacteria to the gut and can assist in reducing sugar cravings

10. If stressed – practice deep abdominal breathing, become mindful of stress related eating habits and distract self with a walk, get out into fresh air, drink water, talk to someone or book a Golden Door Retreat and come and do all of above!

Psychologist tips for Surviving Dry July

Written by Sarah Gibson on Dry July Website

Thinking of taking on Dry July? Wondering if you've got the willpower to see it through? For so many Australians, the prospect of a dry thirty-one day stretch can seem as gruelling as any marathon. If you're the kind of person for whom the word "dry" usually only comes before "martini", Psychologist Sarah Gibson shares a few tips to help you rise to the challenge.

Tough goals become easier to commit to when they are closely linked to our values.

Remind yourself each and every day of how Dry July relates to the kind of person you want to be: someone who helps people who are dealing with serious illness, someone who invests in their own health, someone who embraces challenge. Remember that such values-oriented action can have profound psychological wellbeing benefits as well as the obvious physical benefits of abstaining. It's not just a win-win. It's a win-win-win.

Be aware that there will be times that the Dry July challenge is likely to be very uncomfortable - and have a strategy in place for these moments. Urges inevitably arise when we first change a habitual behaviour, especially when a drink after a bad day can feel so damn good. Interestingly, it's not as much about having huge reserves of willpower to eliminate these urges, as it is about managing the reality that we humans are simply not wired to avoid pleasurable stimuli. Rather than trying to block out an urge to drink (which has been shown to make the urge "rebound"), try these mindfulness strategies, based on the approach of expert coach and therapist, Dr Russ Harris, to stay on track:

Recognise that the urge to have a drink is simply a combination of thoughts, bodily sensations and feelings, NOT an order that must be followed on autopilot. The urge itself may feel uncomfortable, but it cannot harm you in any way. In fact, the real harm tends to arise from how we respond to the urge. Trying to make the discomfort of an urge disappear, either by willing it away or by giving into it, moves us further away from the goal of abstaining. And this moves us further away from the values that we are trying to live up to by taking on Dry July.

Accept the urge to drink when it turns up. Rather than judging the urge as "bad", simply notice it as it arises and acknowledge it. Make room for it. This is not the same as wanting or embracing the urge. It's just letting it be. Observe it as you would a passing car, or leaves on a stream. Breathe into and around the uncomfortable bodily sensations that accompany the urge, imagining that part of your body "expanding" around the sensation. While the goal here is not to control or minimise the discomfort, you will probably find that this "expansion" technique reduces it as a welcome side-effect!

Notice that cravings will intensify and subside, like waves on the ocean. Watch this unfold in your mind's eye with detached fascination, as if you were a curious scientist. Now notice that you have experienced a strong urge mindfully, without it pushing you around! Notice that your valued goals can guide your behaviour during Dry July, rather than your urges! High five yourself! (For more in-depth resources on mindfulness techniques for managing urges, check out Dr Harris' website, actmindfully.com.au.)

Consciously re-commit to your values-oriented actions of abstaining during Dry July. Committed actions might include avoiding the "faces and places" that you associate with drinking. You might

talk to your after-work wingman to explain why you'll be laying low, without being judgmental. Set yourself up for success by avoiding bars and clubs until you're feeling more confident. Find a really delicious non-alcoholic substitute drink for the times you are mingling with people who are drinking. And when you can't avoid an upcoming trigger, like a wedding, date, or work function, practise the mindfulness response to urges outlined above in advance. You wouldn't run a marathon without limbering up first, would you?

Kickstart Yourself Back Into Movement

Written by Leanne Hall on the Dry July website

We've all been there. Hitting the gym regularly, eating really well and feeling fabulous. Then it happens. Maybe we over eat at a work function, or take a week off the gym because we've been feeling unwell. Or maybe we just feel bored with our current fitness routine. Whatever the trigger, the result is the same. Motivation takes a drastic nose-dive and we find ourselves frustrated, and perhaps even depressed at the fact that we just can't seem to pull ourselves together and get back on track.

So how can you get back on the health and fitness wagon? Well, here are my tips to help get you back to your healthy self again!

Identify Obstacles

When motivation disappears, the first question you need to ask yourself is this: "Why?"

Identifying what went wrong gives you insight into what you need to change. For example, there is little point in trying to follow the same gym program if the reason your motivation plummeted is because you were bored, or not enjoying your exercise. Likewise, trying to follow a bland and boring eating plan is a sure way of ensuring that you will "slip up" and either over eat, or make unhealthy choices.

So instead of resurrecting the same old eating plan or fitness routine, shake things up a little and try something new and enjoyable!

Be Realistic!

Are you really going to get out of bed at 5.30am in winter to do boot camp? You need to be realistic, which may mean starting from scratch. Resuming an unrealistic health and fitness routine may work for a little while, but it ends up being exhausting and impossible to sustain. Remember, if you can't maintain your routine long term then you can guarantee that "falling off the wagon" will become a regular thing!

Instead, think about setting up a routine that takes into account your lifestyle, and preferences. For example if you tend to work late during the week, plan ahead by having a "food prep" afternoon on the weekend. If you hate early mornings, schedule your workouts in the afternoon or lunchtime, and always make sure you schedule in 2 rest days per week.

Turn down your inner critic

While that little voice in your head that yells "I can't" and "I'm a failure" may not be going anywhere soon, you can choose how much attention you give it. Turning down the volume means acknowledging your inner critic, but not giving it your attention. In most cases the inner critic represents a fear. Usually fear of failure, and of not meeting expectations. Remember, just because you fear something may happen, doesn't mean it will happen (even if it HAS happened in the past).

So, if you are confronted by a screaming inner critic each time you think of going back to the gym, try making it your friend – by acknowledging it, reassuring it, and then moving past it. Or, pick a phrase like “just do it”, and don’t give that inner critic a chance to change your mind ;-)

Set Yourself up for Success

If you are a fly-by-the-seat-of-your-pants kind of person, you may find that sticking to a health and fitness routine falls to the bottom of the priority list.

This is where planning comes in. To start, you need to decide that your health is a priority. Only then can you schedule it in to your diary and set boundaries around the time that you allocate. Put your workouts and meal pre-time (even grocery shopping) in your diary, and practice saying “no”. Having a big night of drinking the night before a morning workout is a sure way of setting yourself up to fail. Remind yourself of what your priorities are – and if that night out is more important, then change your workout the following day to the afternoon. Just don’t throw in the towel all together! You will regret it!

Reward Reward Reward

There is no better way to stay motivated (or get back on track again), than to set goals and then reward yourself when you achieve them.

If you’ve been off the wagon for a while, or if you are starting a health and fitness routine for the first time, it’s important to start small. Signing up for a 10km run might sound like the perfect goal – however if you can’t run more than 2km without feeling like you are about to pass out, then that “goal” can quickly turn into an excuse to give up.

Start by making 1-2 small changes/goals each week. Remember it takes several weeks for behavior change to become a habit, and roughly 6-8 weeks to change the preferences of your taste buds. This is the critical zone, where motivation is poor and the urge to give up is at it’s strongest. This is why setting small achievable goals is so important. By rewarding your success, you feel more confident in your ability to keep going.

Always Remember: There is no Such Thing as Perfect!

Research suggests that it takes several weeks of repetitious activity for a new behavior to become a habit. However, the same research also suggests that missing the odd day does not have a negative impact at all.

In other words, it’s ok to stuff up. In fact, it’s completely normal. The most important thing is what you decide to do next.

It’s common for a “slip up” to turn up the volume of your inner critic. “See, I knew you would fail again”. Sound familiar? This is an extremely common trigger for falling off the wagon.

So instead of listening to that inner critic again, recognize that the “slip up” has simply awakened your fear. By acknowledging this, and accepting that slip-ups are normal, you will be able to get back on the wagon the next day. It’s also important NOT to be overly restrictive or hard on yourself – this kind of self-punishment only serves to lower your self-esteem and increase guilt.

Finally, if slip-ups become regular, remember that it’s not you who have failed – it’s the diet/fitness routine that’s failed.

At the end of the day, it’s about finding what works for you. This may take some time, and trial and error – however by reflecting on why something may not be working, you will increase the likelihood of finding what will work. No more falling off the wagon!

Sue Litchfield's Recipes

ROAST CHICKEN

Ingredients:

- 1 chicken (at least a no. 15)
- ½ loaf of stale bread of choice (made into breadcrumbs)
- 1 Granny Smith apple grated
- 1 small onion grated
- 3 tablespoons raisins (optional)
- 1 teas mixed herbs
- Salt and pepper
- 1 egg beaten
- 1 tablespoon grated orange rind
- ½ cup sherry or freshly squeezed orange juice

Method:

1. Mix together the breadcrumbs, onion, apple and raisins, add egg, herbs, salt and pepper, and lastly the sherry.
2. Stuff into the chicken.
3. Place in a preheated moderate oven and bake according to the weight of chicken.
4. I add peeled potatoes and pumpkin/sweet potatoes an hour before the chicken is cooked.

EASY LEMON CHICKEN

Ingredients:

- 4-5 chicken thighs (chicken breasts can also work)
- 2 tablespoons Lemon Pepper Seasoning
- ¼ cup butter
- ½ cup chicken broth
- 2 garlic cloves minced
- Juice of one lemon

Method:

1. Preheat oven to 375°F.
2. Season the chicken thighs with the lemon pepper seasoning.
3. Bake on a greased baking sheet for 15-20 minutes or until completely cooked through.
4. Grill the last couple of minutes to get the crisp tops.
5. In a medium skillet, add the butter and cook over medium high heat.
6. Continue to whisk for a few minutes until the butter starts to become frothy and brown.
7. Add in the chicken broth, garlic, and juice of one lemon.
8. Add the chicken thighs to the skillet and coat in the sauce. Let simmer for a couple of minutes before serving.
9. This was great served over rice with the brown butter lemon garlic sauce drizzled on top!

NOUGAT

Ingredients:

- 2 cups moon macadamias, lightly toasted
- 1 cup other nuts, e.g. pistachios, almonds, lightly toasted
- 1 cup buckwheat, lightly toasted in a small pan until golden
- ½ cup Medjool dates, blended to small pieces
- 1 cup organic maple or agave syrup
- ½ cup almond butter
- 2 tablespoons peanut butter

Method:

1. Line a small baking tin with baking paper and set aside.
2. Blitz 1½ cups macadamias, ½ cup other nuts and toasted buckwheat in a blender/food processor well.
3. Roughly chop the remaining macadamias and nuts separately. In a bowl, combine buckwheat, blitzed and chopped nuts, and dates.
4. In a large pan, heat the maple/agave syrup, almond butter and peanut butter over low heat, stirring until combined.
5. Add the buckwheat/nut/date mix and combine well.
6. Transfer to a baking tray.
7. Carefully flatten to a 1-2cm thickness then refrigerate for at least 2 hours before cutting into rectangles or squares.

PAVLOVA

Ingredients:

- 4 egg whites
- ½ cup rice syrup
- ¼ teaspoon sweet leaf Organic Sweetener
- ½ teaspoon vanilla

Method:

1. Preheat fan-forced oven to 150°C.
2. Line a baking tray with baking paper.
3. Place egg whites into mixing bowl with speed set at maximum.
4. Beat until egg whites are stiff.
5. Continue on maximum speed and slowly add rice syrup.
6. Add stevia and vanilla and continue beating until mixture is thick.
7. Place on baking tray and spread to 23-25cms round (this pavlova will be quite high) – if you want a thinner pavlova, spread wider and allow less cooking time.
8. Place in oven and bake for 45 minutes, turn off and leave pavlova in the oven to cool.
9. Serving suggestion: spread some passionfruit butter on the pavlova, top with whipped cream, and decorate with sliced banana, strawberries, blueberries and kiwifruit.