LET'S GET FIT!

The human body is designed to move. And yet many of us spend hours sitting every day – at our desk, in our car or watching TV. The physical and mental benefits of kicking our sedentary habits are well worth the time and effort to get into a good fitness routine. Here are our top tips to move more and sit less.

THE BENEFITS

Reduced risk of major illness
such as heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes, cancer by up to 50%

Stronger bones
Lower risk of fractures and osteoporosis

Esp weight bearing exercise

Stronger muscles
After the age of 30, we lose 5% muscle mass every 10 years

Resistance training to reverse ageing effects of muscle loss

Better fitness and energy
Heart is stronger, more oxygen circulating

Better energy production in our cells

Healthy weight and body composition
Burns calories but more importantly:

Increased muscle mass means better capacity to burn fat

Mood boosting
Reduces risk of depression by up to 30%

Releases feel-good endorphins (runner's high') and serotonin

Boosts confidence

Improved brain function
Up to 30% lower risk of dementia

Increases connections between neurons

Brings oxygen to the brain

Improves memory

Lower stress and better sleep
Reduces stress hormones adrenalin and cortisol

Meditative effects of getting 'in the zone'

CREATING YOUR EXERCISE PLAN

Build it into your day:
Take the stairs

Walk or cycle instead of driving

Walking meetings

Active holidays

Energetic gardening and housework

Aerobic activities
- at least 150 min per week

Running
Cycling
Dancing
Rowing
Tennis
Swimming
Sports
Brisk walking

Try high intensity interval training: Sprint 8 protocol resulted in middle aged women losing 27% body fat in 8 weeks by doing 3 x 20min workouts per week.

Muscle strengthening
– at least twice a week

Weights

Resistance bands

Target large muscle groups for the greatest benefits

Circuits and other bodyweight workouts (e.g. squats, push ups, plank, sit ups, lunges)

Flexibility and balance
– at least 2-3 times a week

Yoga, pilates, Tai Chi, stretching – holding poses at least 60 seconds keeps your joints healthy and reduces muscle strain

GETTING AND STAYING MOTIVATED

Find activities you enjoy

Make it social: Park Run, team sports, fitness buddies

Block the times out in the diary

Commit to a Challenge

Build recovery into your routine

Give your muscles time to repair

Ask your GP for guidance on safe levels of intensity before increasing your physical activity

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TOP TIPS FOR HEALTHY SUSTAINABLE WEIGHT LOSS

A healthy BMI is considered to be in the 18.5 to 24.9 range however BMI, like the number on the scales, doesn't always tell the full story. Looking at our body composition including fat %, muscle % and even visceral fat (fat around the organs) provides a more accurate measure of a healthy physique. The goal of a leaner and stronger body - reducing body fat and increasing muscle – is more sustainable and healthier than shedding pounds through short term diets.

WHAT LEADS TO HEALTHY WEIGHT LOSS?

KEEPING CALORIES IN CHECK

2500 calories for men
2000 calories for women
Max to maintain weight

Crash diets are not the answer however: we can only fight hunger with willpower for so long if our diet doesn't meet our energy and nutrient requirements.

INCREASING VEGETABLE AND FRUIT INTAKE

May counter genetic tendency to put on weight

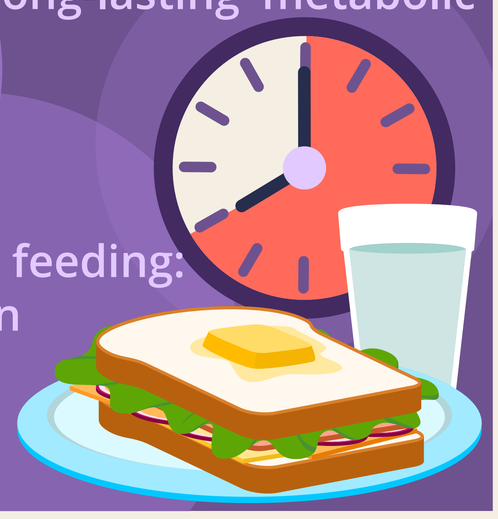
Green leafy veg, berries, citrus

INTERMITTENT FASTING – FOR ACCELERATED RESULTS

Studies show long-lasting metabolic benefits

5:2 diet

Time restricted feeding: eating within an 8hr window

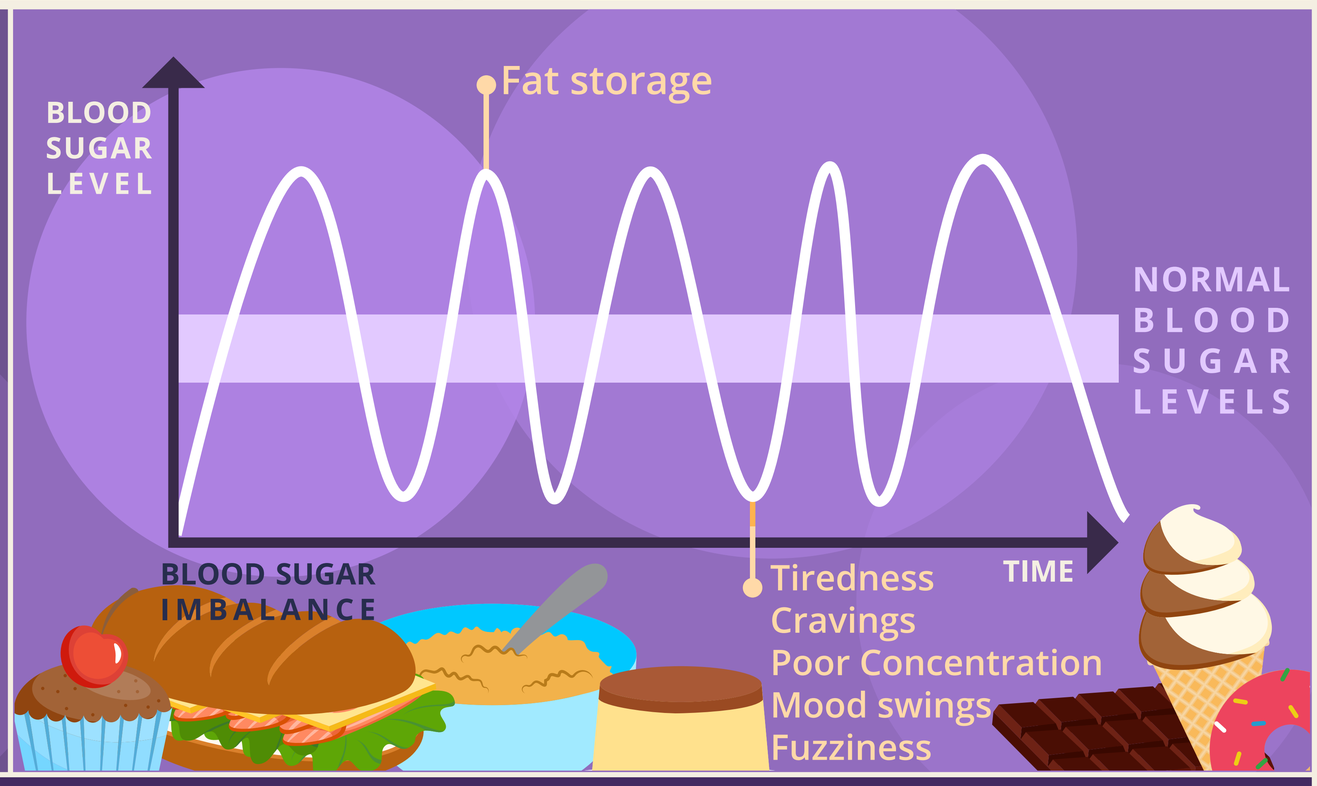


THE FOUNDATION: EFFICIENT METABOLISM

-what happens in our body that determines whether the food we eat gets stored as fat or used as energy.

Balancing blood sugars to keep insulin in check (insulin triggers fat storage)

- Minimise added sugar and alcohol
- Replace refined carbs with complex carbs
- Protein with every meal



EXERCISING

Helps insulin sensitivity and reduces fat storage

Walk just 15mins after meals

Resistance training to maintain lean muscle mass and burn more fat

High intensity interval training (HIIT) – highly effective for reducing body fat

FEELING STUCK? COULD THESE BLOCKS BE GETTING IN THE WAY?

1 LOW MUSCLE mass reduces fat burning capacity

2 STRESS cortisol hormones lead to fat storage –can be emotional or physical including over exercising and crash-dieting

3 LACK OF SLEEP increases appetite and cravings, reduces insulin sensitivity

4 LOW THYROID HORMONES slower metabolism

Get your levels checked by your GP

5 GUT BACTERIAL IMBALANCE affects our metabolism and fat storage

Increase fibre rich and probiotic foods

6 ENVIRONMENTAL CHEMICALS known as 'obesogens' may cause hormonal disruptions.

Wash fruit and veg, minimise chemical air fresheners and plastic containers

7 FOOD SENSITIVITIES may cause bloating

Most common: gluten, dairy, yeast

8 HORMONAL CHANGES decreased oestrogen at the menopause can affect our metabolism, making healthy diet and lifestyle habits even more important

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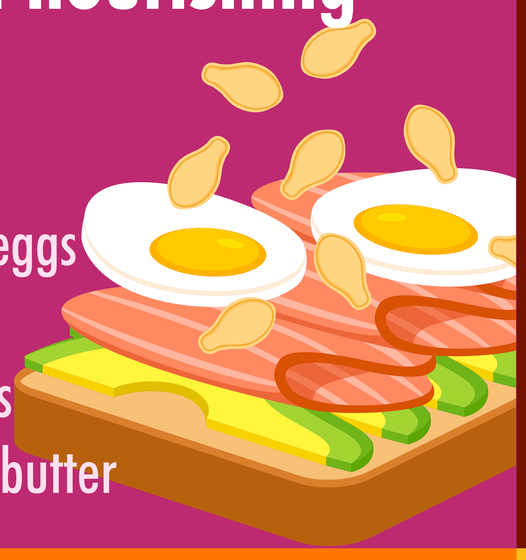
SUGAR CRAVING BUSTING TIPS

Why do we get sugar cravings?

It's a vicious cycle. Too much sugar in our daily diet creates blood sugar spikes (with a short release of happy hormones) followed by crashes… making you feel fuzzy-headed, irritable and desperate for a large blueberry muffin. Behind the scenes cravings are driven by our hormones and stress can make them much worse. The hormone insulin plays a key part. If our cells are insulin resistant we struggle to utilise glucose for energy. This leaves us craving more and with higher levels of glucose circulating in our blood stream, putting us at risk of diabetes type 2. Whether you've been diagnosed or want to take preventive measures, you'll benefit from these tips:

1. Set yourself up with a nourishing protein rich breakfast

- Porridge with seeds and berries
- 1.5 slices of rye bread with 2 boiled eggs / kippers/cream cheese and smoked salmon/ Avocado and pumpkin seeds
- high protein smoothie including nut butter



2.Plan some healthy snack attacks!

- 2 oatcakes with nut butter
- Nuts and seeds
- Hummus and crudites

3. Add ½ teaspoon of cinnamon to smoothies, porridge, yoghurt, coffee

Cinnamon has been shown to curb blood sugar by improving insulin sensitivity

4. Move!

Even moderate exercise such as brisk walking helps your body metabolise sugar by increasing insulin sensitivity

5.Get some magnesium

Cravings can be the result of a diet low in this trace mineral. Include almonds, cashews, oats, beans, dark green leafy veg and even dark chocolate. Add Epsom salts to your bath!

6.Boost your serotonin (happy chemicals) naturally

Rewire your brain from using sugar as a treat to relying on other ways to boost happiness: go for a walk, get some daylight, be absorbed in something you enjoy

7. Up the dose of healthy fats

Fats from coconut oil, olive oil, avocados give us a feeling of satiety and help prevent hunger pangs

8. Sugar free hydration

Dehydration can make us crave sweet foods. Minimise high sugar drinks (or those with artificial sweeteners), such as sports drinks, energy drinks, sodas, and even fruit juice (except for tomato). Replace with water, infused with fruit or with a squeeze of lemon , kombucha or herbal teas.

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