

Sensible Weight Loss

As we begin to hit our winter months at this time of year it becomes harder to go out for that walk or run when it's freezing and raining outside. Also with the Christmas foods filling the shelves at the supermarket it becomes harder to resist temptation with all the chocolates and festive treats lurking around. Before you know it the hard work you've put in all year round suddenly becomes pointless if you don't keep an eye on your exercise and eating levels of this time. People often begin crazy fad diets in an attempt to shake off those few pounds in the New Year; however as we all know these diets never work! (Not in the long duration anyway)

Very low calorie diets (VLCD) – why they don't work!

Well apart from being impossible and unrealistic to maintain them they normal only promote weight loss in the form of lean tissue and water. (Not your fat stores!). In fact these diets often force your body into 'starvation' mode - when the body doesn't get enough calories to meet its daily requirements it actually retains and stores more fat from the food you eat. This is due to fat being the highest energy source within the body. So, when you do start to introduce foods as part of a normal balanced diet (which VLCD are not) you could actually end up putting on weight.

Ok, in order to achieve weight loss you need to take an honest look at your diet and at the kinds of foods you are eating. If you know you have a high intake of saturated fat and eat a lot of foods such as cakes, crisps, pastries, chocolate, etc then your option is simple....you need to replace these foods with alternatives such as fruit, seeds, nuts, rice cakes etc. I know it's not as easy as that but try to opt for healthier alternatives to these foods. So instead of eating a packet of kettle crisps, choose a packet with fewer calories and less saturated fat, such as French fries or quavers. (Even better rice cake varieties)

Exercise makes you eat healthy – when you exercise your body releases feel good hormones called endorphins. So working out can help your body and mind to feel better. Remember though not to undo all your hard work in the gym by making bad food choices!

on the PULSE

Sportspark Christmas Opening Times



Thursday 24th Dec – CLOSED

Friday 25th Dec – CLOSED

Saturday 26th Dec – CLOSED



Thursday 31st Dec – CLOSED

Friday 1st Jan – CLOSED

Sportspark will operate with **NORMAL OPENING HOURS** on all other dates. Have a Merry Christmas!!

Healthy Christmas Dinner Tips

1. To reduce your fat intake, cut the skin off your turkey. It will make a fat saving of 50%. If you really do love the skin on the turkey, then to reduce your fat intake, take a supplement such as Proactol.
2. Instead of a huge plate of roast potatoes, serve baked potatoes instead which only contain 0.4g of fat instead of 9g if you stick to your roast potatoes.
3. Say no to streaky bacon and you will save yourself 84 calories and 6.7g fat.
4. If you are a bread sauce lover, you are able to save yourself another couple of grams of fat by making your sauce with semi-skimmed or skimmed milk rather than whole milk.
5. Go large on brussel sprouts and carrots. Low in fat and high in antioxidant nutrients which will fill you up meaning you won't be tempted to go for seconds.
6. Have your Christmas pudding but instead of brandy cream or butter, use custard with semi-skimmed milk. That's almost a 50% reduction in the fat content.

Enjoy your Christmas dinner, after all it only comes round once a year, but use some of these calorie saving tips if you are a little concerned with what you are eating.

SUPPLEMENTS

A Generic perspective

By Matt Gurney

So you walk into GNC/ Holland & Barrett or even Tesco's now!! You will see a supplement to sustain, enhance and "complement" your every physiological requirement. Let's get straight into it, there is limited scientific knowledge that supplements will give you something that a balanced everyday diet can't provide. However that is definitely not to say they do not work, or that there is not a place for them within sports performance and well – being. What is unique about supplements is the convenience they provide and a detailed break down of what is included within the make – up of the specific substance. Again to contrast, if most of our grocery products went into the same depth as such supplements with regard to their nutritional label specifications, one the label would take up the entire packaging, secondly most members of the public would get bored and be slightly confused trying to interpret such labels. The fact is good quality fresh groceries do in fact contain such amino acids, lipoproteins and vital vitamins and minerals, just without the scientific break down of each bio-molecule plastered all over them.

In my view, supplements do have their place, but only as a "supplement" to compliment a balanced diet. The convenient factor for instant consumption pre, during and post workout aids performance and recovery. Also a positive from such products as multivitamins, do illustrate exactly the substances content. This way specific dietary measurement can be recorded and monitored for a health conscious plan.

Most popular Supplements

Protein supplements

Supplementing your diet with protein shakes/powders/ cereal bars can aid recovery and speed up the rate of protein synthesis (Muscle build / gain). Protein supplements do not only have a purpose for muscle hypertrophy (Size and mass) but also to maintain lean muscle mass for gym users who rack up the miles on the cardio equipment, therefore depending on energy status, may in fact be burning muscle therefore leaning towards a negative protein balance post intense workouts. Brands and prices will vary due to the quality of the protein power, branding and whether there are other substances included such as creatine phosphate or a substantial amount of branched chain amino acids.

Green Tea Extract

Green Tea Extract promotes a rapid metabolism and also lowers bad cholesterol levels in the bloodstream. The majority of which have no significant scientific evidence.

Glucosamine

Glucosamine is scientifically proven to reduce arthritis pain, cartilage re-synthesis and renewing synovial fluid around the joints. Again our own body produces glucosamine however depending on the scenario of the user will depend on the quantities needed. A couple of examples will be an arthritis patient who regularly takes Glucosamine in order to reduce pain, a contrasting example would be a soccer player recovering from a cartilage tear therefore for a sustained period of time during the rehab may take glucosamine to speed up recovery rate.

Caffeine

Caffeine is a substance used to enhance performance and increase potential workout intensity. It is an ergogenic stimulant that increases awareness and arousal. This substance is scientifically proven to enhance performance and workout intensity, however a high volume of studies have been taken with endurance athletes. Doses will differ between athletes and also some first time users may feel slightly strange!!

The Placebo Effect

Ok so the placebo effect may also come into play with sport supplements. The very fact psychologically you are aware of taking such "enhancers" may lead to a superficial mentality that such supplements are having an immense impact on your training, if this is the case, why the hell not!!

If it's giving you a boost and you have never seen such increases in health, fitness and let's be honest looks! Then so be it!!

Exercise and Sleep

Nearly everyone makes excuses for missing workouts, and nearly just as many people make excuses for not prioritising another key to healthy living: Sleep. Making exercise and sleeping seven to nine hours a daily part of your life can help reduce the risk for obesity, diabetes, heart disease, stroke and even some cancers. It makes sense that burning more energy during the day should translate to a better night's sleep.

Studies on adults have shown that exercise has a similar effect on sleep patterns. In one particular study, aerobic exercise improved the sleep quality of insomniacs. If patients walked or jogged on the treadmill for 50 minutes a few hours before bedtime, they fell asleep quicker, woke up less often during the night and increased their total sleep time.