

Top Healthy Eating Tips

Eating healthily can feel like a challenge both from the *time* aspect for preparing fresh meals, as well as knowing *what* to cook, when dietary advice seems to be constantly changing. Wherever you look, something else is the latest superfood, which all adds to the confusion.

As a shift worker, you are at greater risk of some chronic health conditions, such as cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, and obesity. It's important to know that, **but it doesn't define you**, as you can reduce that risk through your diet and lifestyle.

Making the right food choices for you and your family can be transformative to your health.



1. Choose nourishing fuel – Nutrients Over Calories.

Whilst a calorie is an indicator of the units of energy that a food or drink provides, it tells us nothing about the nutrient content, or the *function* of that food. The nutritional benefits of 300 calories of white bread, avocado and broccoli are not the same! Our body needs a balance of macronutrients (carbohydrates (including fibre), protein, fats and fluid) along with micronutrients (vitamins, minerals and phytonutrients) to help release energy from our food.



2. Reduce intake of ultra-processed foods

Ultra-processed foods can have much of their original goodness stripped away in the factory process, and many industrial-based ingredients added for shelf-life, flavour and texture, rather than those you might find around your kitchen. Foods such as packaged biscuits, cakes, doughnuts, pies, crisps. An over-reliance on these can have an inflammatory effect on you. Low-grade, long-term inflammation can be an underlying cause of many health conditions.



3. Eat a Rainbow!

No singular berry or stick of broccoli is going to solve all your health problems, so rather than trusting the next faddy superfood, try to include a range of colourful fruit and vegetables to every meal. Powerful plant chemicals known as phytonutrients are responsible for the different colours, each containing its own boosting blend of vitamins, minerals, fibre. Aim for 5 vegetables and 2 fruits per day, or 30 *different* plant foods per week.



4. Switch to healthy wholegrains for fibre!

White versions of bread, pasta and rice mean the fibrous outer layer of the grains have been removed. This fibre helps prevent our blood sugar spiking and diving, which is a good thing, and can help reduce the risk of type 2 diabetes. Fibre also feeds our beneficial gut bacteria, and this can positively affect the health of our whole bodies.



5. Hydrate!

It's so important to stay hydrated, aiming to drink 6-8 glasses of water in a 24-hour period – about 2 litres, depending on your activity levels and build. Water, tea & coffee count, but watch the sugar content of fizzy drinks and fruit juices. Alcohol does not count. Good hydration supports brain, gut health, detoxification, eyes, skin and musculo-skeletal health.