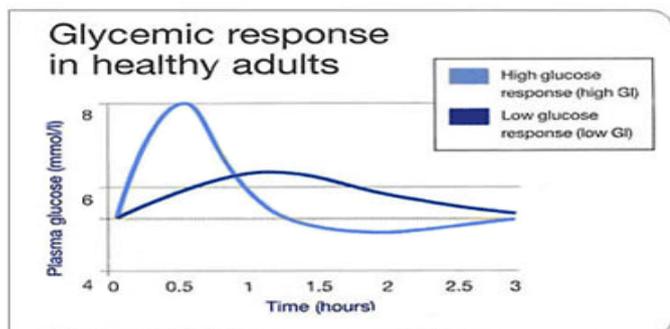


HEALING & SELF-CARE WITH GOOD FOOD

Eat Yourself a Favour!

OH NO, NOT MORE CONFUSING DIET ADVICE! Is there anything more confusing than diet advice? Here's some general advice on eating in a way that can help your healing and build wellbeing. Among all the uncertainty we can be sure that the only thing your body can use to re-build itself is what you eat and drink. Strong tissues and energy and immune and healing systems are built from good food. The advice? **Eat Food!** Food is the way nature grew it, or it lived - and not processes concentrated stuff - like sugar and white flour. Next? **GET PLEASURE!** - *If you are eating food* - then pleasure is the most important ingredient. The tastes, smells, colours, textures are there in nature to guide us - and without it our body is not satisfied. **How you eat** matters: do you rush and stuff it down? Well in that state you are making a lot of adrenaline and your autonomic nervous system is all geared up for 'fight or flight'... and when it is, it shuts down the gut and digestion...not the way you need to be to get the best from the food. So relax, make a ritual of it, take it slow, enjoy the flavour and texture (eat mindfully - this is another way the meditation training will help) and appreciate the company - especially your own. Do you want to care for your body - or are you depriving it of what it really needs? Love and food are entangled.



EVEN OUT YOUR DIPS AND SPIKES IN YOUR BLOOD SUGAR - Avoid processed carbs and get better and steadier energy levels. Refined carbohydrates ('Carbs') give a fast rise in the blood sugar - that sounds like it would be useful, but the body immediately reacts by making more insulin and this pushes the blood sugar back down and makes a 'dip' in sugar that can give you low energy and a number of symptoms. (If any symptom is made immediately better by eating that is suspicious of a lowish blood sugar level).

Also, you then run with a high background level of insulin, and this drives the 'metabolic syndrome': it keeps fat in the blood and produces high cholesterol, it also increases the risk of diabetes, high blood pressure, obesity, and hormone changes (like the polycystic ovarian syndrome). What are the main culprits that spike up your sugar level? Well of course sugar itself (and it is in a massive number of processed foods), other sweet things, and things that turn quickly to sugar in your blood - like white flour. Learn more about this by reading about low **refined** (processed) carbs way of eating like the Glycaemic Index/Load www.glycemicindex.com.

WHAT - EAT MORE FAT?

Yes build your brain and natural anti-inflammatory.

Yes, did you know that the brain is made up of 60-80% of fat? The body needs fat and it is a great 'slow burn' way to get energy, it improves taste and it satisfies appetite. but there are some things you need to learn. If you are still taking high refined carbs - see the box on blood sugar - then you will *not* safely handle the fats - high processed carbs plus higher fat is a bad idea.

You want a range of fats including the 'Essential Fatty Acids' (EFAs) - the body needs these but it can't make them. They are also called omega oils and we need a range of these (like omega 3,6 and 9) in a good balance (the Western diet has too much 6 compared to 3).

Ideas? - eat 3 portions of oily fish per week (some 'long chain EFAs' only exist in fish) - like sardines, kippers, mackerel, herring, salmon and tuna (not too much tuna because of the pollution levels). Cook with olive oil, butter, coconut butter (not other vegetable oils) and use EFA rich oils on salads or added to soup or cooked vegetables - these oils are kept in the fridge and not heated in cooking - some examples are flax seed oil or brand name omega mixed oils (like Dr Udo's and supermarket blends). You can also get fish oil supplements - this is different from cod liver oil (which is also a good idea for things like its Vitamin D and A content).

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SLOW YOUR AGING – Eat Rainbow Colours.

‘Antioxidants’ stop our tissues breaking down (‘rusting’!). They help protect us against many illnesses including some cancers, and they slow down aging and degeneration (Sorry, nothing stops it all together!). They are in *fresh* foods especially fruit (and especially the dark ones like berries) and vegetables. Eat a range of colours of food as each colour has different antioxidants. Fresh herbs have 30 times more antioxidants than fruit!

IMPROVE YOUR MOOD!

When researchers fed volunteers by a tube either high fat or high carb food – they found the high carbs produced more anxiety! Turns out the hormone that makes our gall bladder contract (CCK) in response to fat is also a brain neurotransmitter and it makes us ‘affable and relaxed’ (Is that you?). So it seems those French know how to do it with their nice slow meals and cheese and cream!

VARIETY AND THE SPICE OF LIFE

By now you will be getting the idea that we need a whole range of food sources... so think of all the varieties available to you and remember things like: a range of **nuts** (brazil, almonds, walnuts etc) (by the way peanuts are a vegetable not a nut); **seeds** (say sunflower, sesame, flax, pumkin), **spices and herbs** (like garlic, ginger, chilli etc). **Probiotics** (friendly gut bugs) help digestion and inflammation and infection in the gut, live yoghurts (watch for the sugar though) and probiotic tablets can help. **What about chocolate** I can hear you say? Try the sugar free raw variety and feel the difference! (eg www.detoxyourworld.com)

BUILD STRONG TISSUES AND IMMUNE SYSTEM. – get protein sources everyday.

Get body building protein – eggs, nuts, milk and dairy food, a range of meats and fish, lentils and beans – and include some organ meats like liver and haggis.

GO ORGANIC WHEN YOU CAN

As well as tasting better and having less risk of carry over of chemicals like pesticides – organic foods have more natural protective molecules – for example, tone study showed around 17 times more natural salicylates (natural aspirin compounds) in organic vegetables compared to ordinary vegetables.

FOOD ALLERGY? Ah even more controversial – steer clear of extremes and shaky tests and fear. It’s true wheat upsets a lot of people and you do get allergies – discuss with your doctor if need be.

WHAT ABOUT SUPPLEMENTS?

This is controversial, is it better to waste a bit of money than miss out on possible benefits - but they are no substitute—go for real live energy filled foods (or sunshine)! You could consider a general vitamin/mineral supplement, and cod liver oil or fish oil*. Anything else would be going into individual advice and that is beyond the scope of this handout. Many Scots have low Vitamin D levels (given our weather) and need supplemented.

* For 20% discount for my NHS patients on Nordic cod liver oil, ProEFA fish oil, or Bio-D-mulsion Forte Vitamin D Phone 0845 076 0402 and quote code ‘592’. I have no link to the company, minor income goes to charity.

A Good Cook Book is ‘Nourishing Traditions’ by Sally Fallon. New Trends publishing. ISBN 0-9670897-3-5
Other **background books:**
In Defense of Food: An Eater's Manifesto: Pollan M. Thorndike Pr, 2008.
Eat Your Heart Out: why the food business is bad for the planet and for your health. Lawrence, F. (2008). London, Penguin Books.
Nutrition and Physical Degeneration Weston A. Price. 2008 Version of the classic book on the effects of Western diet.