

Boost your energy ...and lose those niggly kilos!

Stay in shape this winter with our 7-day easy-to-follow diet



tip Although olive oil contains the same kilojoules as butter, it's better for your heart. Studies show we eat less of it than butter, so you can save around 210kJ per serving.

The Rules

Following a plan doesn't mean you can't have a little of what you love to eat... here are the dos and don'ts

× NO BIG PORTIONS Large portions not only contain lots of kilojoules, they take a long time to work their way through your system, making you feel more sluggish.

✓ EAT LESS, DO MORE Weight loss is down to one simple equation: you need to eat less and do more. By reducing your portion sizes and upping your activity, your energy levels will soar as your waistline shrinks.

✓ MAKE TIME FOR YOUR BREAKFAST Keeping blood sugar levels steady helps to prevent overeating – and skipping meals will make your blood sugar levels plummet. So just slurping a smoothie in the morning (see Saturday of our 7-day eating plan for the ideal breakfast drink) is better

than nothing and can help to prevent lunchtime overeating.

✓ TUCK INTO SNACKS As even the odd few kilojoules tot up pretty quickly, say no to any unnecessary sweets and treats. Instead, plan healthy, energising snacks around your personal danger times, such as that mid-afternoon lull.

✓ BE CONSISTENT As far as your eating goes, make a plan and stick to it.

× BANISH YOUR TRIGGER FOODS If milk chocolate is your weakness, don't test your willpower by keeping any in the house. Buy a small stash of 'make do' treats, such as extra dark chocolate – something that will satisfy your hunger pangs, but that's not really your thing.

It worked for me...



Cape Town-based nutritional therapist and contributor to the *South African Journal of Natural Medicine*, Hannah Kaye, says this approach to eating and exercise helps put the spring back in her step.

'I believe in taking an integrated approach to my health, which means I use diet, lifestyle (exercise is key) and, if necessary, nutritional supplements to maximise my potential. Certain supplements can help us cope with the fast-paced world we live in and have their place. When it comes to burning kilojoules, exercise that gets my heart rate up is the way to go. However, when I want to burn fat, weight and resistance training work best.'

It looks sooo tempting, but this eating plan is only 7 days so I can resist!



Burn kJ, save energy

Try some of these ideas to make exercise, well, almost, fun, instead of it feeling like it's a chore.

Rearrange the furniture Thinking of a new look in the lounge this winter? Spend an hour moving your furniture around and you'll have burnt off nearly 2 100kJ.

Go light with the mayo Switching just 3½ tbsps Hellman's Real Mayonnaise to the extra light variety will save you 1 260kJ.

Coffee swap Switching from three tall lattes with full cream milk to three skinny cappuccinos will save you 1 260kJ. You won't notice the difference!

Smart choice Swapping a slice of decadent chocolate cake for a chocolate chip cookie will save you around 1 260kJ.

10-minute 'at home' circuit training Do your tricep dips on the edge of the couch, step-ups on a stair, walking lunges across the room and crunches on a rug.

tip To burn a lot of kilojoules, you need to use the large muscle groups. Include as many squats to work the bum and thighs as you can throughout the day: squat while you're on the phone, brushing your teeth, looking in the fridge... you get the idea!

Guilt-free treats

When you need an energy boost, these tick the box, says Hannah Kaye:

✓ **Mary-Ann's Seed Bar, R11,95:** this is a wheat-, sugar- and dairy-free snack that's also high in protein and calcium.

✓ **Dream Cookies, Chocolate Crunchies, R25,60:** free of egg, dairy, yeast, wheat, sucrose, colourants and preservatives, these chocolate crunchies also have a low GI, which means they won't cause blood sugar spikes. Have one with a cup of herbal tea in the afternoon.

✓ **Sprouts Kitchen Apple and Cinnamon munchies, R32,95:** made with fresh organic apples and cinnamon, these raw food bites also contain sprouted buckwheat, which is rich in enzymes, minerals and phytochemicals. Great on the palate and for the environment.

✓ **Lindt 70% Cocoa Dark Chocolate, about R27,95.** Try chocolate that's at least 70% cocoa and is rich in antioxidants called flavonoids, thought to lower stroke risk.



5 simple energy tricks

1 Plan your food choices For weight loss and super-high energy levels, eat less carbs at lunch and have a lunch that's mainly protein-based. That's tuna without a spud, plenty of seeds and nuts, no bread until dinner.

2 Even if it means setting the alarm 30 mins earlier, working out aerobically in the morning boosts oxygen flow, keeping you alert and focused throughout the day.

3 Take 5 minutes' downtime You feel exhausted by thinking too much. Grab 5 minutes and head to a quiet place. Breathe in for a count of 4 and then out for a count of 4, focusing on your breathing. This can also help to stave off comfort eating pangs.

4 Get enough sleep We don't all need 8 hours' sleep a night but, whatever it takes to keep you ticking over, make sure you get it. Research has shown a link between not getting enough sleep and overeating.

5 Ditch the fat For optimum energy levels, cut down on fatty foods. It slows your digestive system, making you feel sluggish and lethargic.

Safe supplements to rev you up

Over-the-counter supplements to give you a boost. Hannah Kaye recommends:

SOLAL 3-PER-DAY, R248

High potency multivitamin and mineral to boost immune function and support a healthy lifestyle.



ENZYME PROCESS ADRENUCLEO, R192,38

Adrenal gland support if you're highly stressed or fatigued. From health shops or enzymeprocess.co.za



AMIPRO DIGESTIZYME, R162,95

Affordable plant-based digestive enzymes if you suffer from bloating or indigestion.



ABSOLUTE ORGANIX OMEGA PURE, R198,95

100% vegan source of the important omega-3 fatty acids EPA and DHA for cardiovascular health. Also safe during pregnancy.



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Your tasty 7-day eating plan

Breakfast

MONDAY

Fruit & honey salad
150g fruit salad with 1tsp honey and 1tbsp low-fat yoghurt.

TUESDAY

High-energy muesli
Mix 30g of oats, 10g flax seeds and a small fistful of chopped dates with 1tbsp light Greek yoghurt.

WEDNESDAY

Banana porridge
Slice 1 banana and add to 30g cooked porridge with a sprinkle of cinnamon, 1tbsp low-fat yoghurt and a little honey. 'Cinnamon aids in balancing blood sugar,' advises Hannah.

THURSDAY

Sugar-free bircher muesli, soaked overnight in water, with grated apple and 1tbsp low-fat plain yoghurt.



FRIDAY

Scrambled eggs made with 1tsp yoghurt, a pinch of turmeric powder, 1tbsp parsley and a slice of rye toast. Eggs are a great source of protein and contain essential fatty acids.

SATURDAY

Pick-me-up smoothie
Blend 1 banana with a little honey, a handful of wheatgerm, 1tbsp plain yoghurt and a dash of cranberry juice.

SUNDAY

Plain smoked salmon wholewheat bagel.



Lunch

Prawn & avocado
You'll need a handful of prawns and 1 small avocado.



Chicken & cherry tomato salad with olives
Grill 1 small skinless chicken breast and serve with ½ small punnet of cherry tomatoes, mixed leaves, sliced peppers, olives and spring onions.



Baked pepper
Halve 1 pepper, scoop out the seeds and fill with a mixture of brown rice, cherry tomatoes, pesto and olives. Bake for 25-30 mins. 'The rice is high in magnesium, a natural calmer,' says Hannah.



Salmon bun
1 poached egg with 2 slices smoked salmon on a toasted wholewheat bun. 'The omega-3 fatty acids in the salmon are essential for cardiovascular and mental health,' advises Hannah.



Stuffed tuna pita
Fill 1 medium pita with 1 small tin of tuna in brine, sweetcorn, chopped peppers and tomatoes, and 1tsp low-fat mayonnaise.



Chicken kebabs
Thread 50g chicken cubes, onions, peppers and tomatoes onto skewers and grill for 10 mins. Serve with 2tbsp mint leaves and plain yoghurt as dressing, and a 50g portion of basmati rice.



Chicken & veggies
Roast 1 skinless chicken breast for 20 mins with a handful of sliced new potatoes, butternut and red onion. Serve with mangetout.



Dinner

Warm lentil salad
Fry a red onion, red pepper and baby marrow in olive oil, add 2 tomatoes, 1tsp balsamic, fresh ginger and lentils – heat through. This nutrient-dense dish is packed with minerals.



Moroccan chicken
Cut 1 small skinless chicken breast in strips. Fry with chopped onion and garlic in a drizzle of olive oil. Add 1 sliced baby marrow, tomatoes, cumin and coriander. Cook for 10 mins, then add ½ can chickpeas and sugar snap peas. Serve with 60g couscous.



Big meal Greek salad
Serve 300g calcium-rich halloumi slices – instead of feta cheese – with a mix of tuna chunks, yellow pepper, cucumber, tomato and pitted black olives.



Minty chops & roasties
2 small minty lamb chops (trim the fat), served with 50g mini roast potatoes (lightly brushed with olive oil) and asparagus.



Baked fish & veg
Serve 1 small portion of baked hake/sole with 75g roasted vegetables of your choice. 'Swap veg containing starchy carbs (eg potatoes) with patty pans, butternut and leeks, which aid liver detoxification,' says Hannah.



Beef & broccoli stir-fry
Marinate 50g lean beef strips in soy sauce and sesame oil with fresh coriander and crushed garlic. Stir-fry with sliced onions, a little ginger and some chilli. After 5 mins, add broccoli florets and cook until bright green. Serve with egg noodles.



Pasta primavera
Add 4 handfuls baby spinach leaves, 10 broccoli spears and some peas to 50g cooked pasta/fusilli. Grate over some lemon zest and Parmesan.



Snack

2 oatcakes with dollops of hummus.

1tbsp sunflower seeds (these are an excellent source of essential fatty acids – the good fats that help to boost brainpower).

1tsp peanut or, even better, almond nut butter on 1 whole-wheat cracker.



Small tub low-fat cottage cheese with 2 handfuls of sliced fruit and almonds.

½ a melon with low-fat yoghurt.

Piece of feta and an apple.



2 rye crispbreads with 2tsp guacamole.