

ask the *experts*

Your one-stop shop for fitness, nutrition, motivation & more. You ask, we answer!



Nutrition
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Nutrition editor



Fitness
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Fitness editor



Cooking
Lucy Kelly
Senior food editor



Motivation
Heidi Schwartz
2009 Slimmer of the Year Finalist

Q I often don't feel like cooking for myself when I'm home alone – even if I have all the ingredients it's hard to get inspired. Any thoughts on easy meals ideal for one person?
Susan Oulabi, Guildford, NSW

Lucy Kelly replies

A You can make a few quick stand-bys without a recipe faster than you can order takeaway, have it delivered or pick it up yourself. Try buying a piece of fresh salmon, white fish fillet, three lean lamb cutlets, a small pork or chicken fillet or a thin veal or beef steak on the way home from work.

While you're at the supermarket, buy some baby potatoes, baby carrots, a handful of sugar snap peas or any variety of colourful vegetables that you feel like eating. Simply wash and chop your vegies and pop them into a steamer. In the 5–10 minutes it takes for the vegies to cook, you can cook your fish or meat.

With salmon or white fish, it always pays to line the grill tray with foil. Place the fish skin-side down and grill for 5–7 minutes or until golden on top and almost cooked through. Serve your fillet with a squeeze of lemon and plenty of freshly ground black pepper.

For your three lean lamb cutlets, grill on both sides until browned and just cooked through. Serve them with a spoonful of mustard or mint jelly and your vegies.

Cut pork or chicken fillets into 1cm-thick slices and fry quickly in a pan on both sides until cooked through. Serve the pork with apple sauce and vegies. Toss some lemon juice and crushed garlic in with the chicken at the last minute, then serve with cranberry sauce.

Pan-fry veal or beef steaks on both sides until cooked to your taste. Add lemon juice and baby capers to veal at the last minute, and serve horseradish cream with steak.

Write to Lucy with your cooking question and you could win the chance to make your own tasty hot chips at home. With **Tefal ActiFry** you need only a small amount of oil to cook your favourite meals. The **Tefal ActiFry** is valued at \$349.95. See more at www.tefal.com.au



Write to Lucy at Ask the Experts, Locked Bag 2020, Broadway, NSW 2007, Australia or email editor@weightwatchers.com.au



Q I'm thinking about taking a vitamin supplement. Is this recommended when you're on a weight-loss program?
Anthea Sorenson, Brisbane

Emma Stirling replies

A Dietitians promote the food first principle: to optimise your health and wellbeing, you should meet nutrient requirements from food first before looking to supplements. A great way to enhance your nutrient intake is to focus on food variety and nutrient density. Nutrient-dense foods provide substantial amounts of vitamins, minerals and other nutrients with relatively few kilojoules. They include fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low-fat dairy foods, lean meats, fish, legumes and eggs.

It can be challenging, however, to meet nutrient requirements on a kilojoule-restricted weight-loss plan. Weight Watchers recommends a daily multivitamin as part of the *Good Health Guidelines*, and recommends discussing the need for additional supplements with a health professional.

Taking properly formulated daily multivitamin and mineral supplements may help if your diet falls short of requirements. Talk about it with your GP.

Q I still have quite a bit of weight to lose and am afraid going out will sabotage my efforts. How did you find the confidence to socialise while slimming down?
Joan Kerr, Wollongong, NSW

Heidi Schwartz replies

A Socialising was one thing I avoided when I was overweight. But a big part of my weight-loss journey was discovering myself – who I was and what I wanted from life. I didn't want to have to hide anymore; I wanted this to change.

Initially it can be very daunting putting yourself out there in social settings but with the support of friends, and knowing that I was doing something to improve my life, I started to feel I could do anything. I started slowly going to lunches, dinner or movies, and then became more adventurous. It was on my first girls' night out clubbing I met my fiancé Glen. Life is out there waiting for us to live it!



Q So much change happens during menopause. Can exercise help?
Louise Street, Denistone, NSW

Martha Lourey-Bird replies

A Exercise is extremely beneficial during menopause as it can protect against changes that occur in a woman's body at this time – particularly the increased risks of cardiovascular disease and osteoporosis. In addition, studies have shown that women who are physically active experience fewer and milder menopausal symptoms.

Exercise decreases the risks of osteoporosis by strengthening bones and maintaining your peak bone mass. Do weight bearing exercise such as walking, dancing, lifting weights or stair climbing on most days of the week.

Heart disease may be prevented, or at least reduced, as regular exercise helps to maintain better cholesterol levels, stronger blood vessels and a healthy weight. Try 30 minutes of cardio activity (like walking, cycling, swimming, fitness classes or dancing) on as many days of the week as you can.

During exercise, feel-good hormones are released that can enhance your mood for up to several hours afterwards. Try daily physical activity and regular planned exercise in an enjoyable and/or social environment.

While muscle loss has more to do with ageing than menopause, it can also affect the pelvic floor muscles and has the potential to bring on urinary incontinence at this time. Try weight training exercises for the total body at least twice a week. Bicep curls, half push-ups, lunges, squats and pelvic floor exercises are all good examples.

Weight gain and change in body shape are also possibilities during menopause. Exercise is extremely beneficial in combating this, so look out for opportunities to be active every day in as many ways as you can and focus especially on activities you enjoy or that are social.



If your letter to Martha is published, you'll win a pair of women's sports shoes from Rykä. Don't forget to tell us your shoe size when you write in to *Ask the Experts*, Locked Bag 2020, Broadway, NSW 2007, Australia or email editor@weightwatchers.com.au