

ask the EXPERTS

This month, sugar in fruit, how to dance yourself slim and keeping cool while working up a sweat.

Nutrition

I often use fruit as a sweetener in desserts, especially yoghurts or custards for the kids. Obviously, there are benefits to using fresh fruit, but should I be concerned about the natural sugar content of the fruit? Also, my four-year-old is super keen to try a new snack bar that's labelled '99 per cent fruit'. Is there any nutritional value in these products? I'd love your opinion.

Colleen Scott, New Lambton, NSW



Fruit is one of the most nutrient-dense food groups and is packed with an array of essential vitamins and minerals for glowing good health. Eating fruit makes a significant contribution to our intake of vitamin C, beta-carotene, folate and potassium. However, it's the dietary fibre content that fills us up and can boost weight-loss efforts, which is one of the reasons why all fresh fruit and most vegetables now have zero **ProPoints** values. You don't need to be worried about the natural sugar in fresh fruit if you're using the whole fruit, like blending up strawberries for yoghurt or baking apples or pears with the skin on. Just keep in mind that when fruit is juiced, dried or processed, the skin, seeds and dietary fibre are often left behind, along with some essential nutrients and antioxidants. At the same time, the natural sugar content becomes concentrated, which increases the kilojoules or **ProPoints** values.

As for fruit snack bars, these (and dried fruit) can be high in sugar and impact on dental health if eaten daily by children. Offer fresh fruit as often as you can, but mix up the variety – peel and cut up oranges and melon and try something new like frozen grapes.



Emma Stirling
Nutrition editor



Allan Bolton
Men's consultant

Sticking with your exercise routine in winter can be tough! My best tip is to layer up. Dressing in thin layers

allows you to peel layers off as you go and help regulate your temperature. It also means you'll be warm when starting out, can avoid uncomfortable overheating after you've warmed up and get warm again as you cool down. The most important is the base layer. Worn next to the skin, it should be made of wicking material, examples of which include polypropylene, silk, polyester, Thermax, Thinsulate and wool. This material directs moisture away from skin to keep you warm and dry. The outer layers provide insulation and allows the wicked moisture to escape, meaning you don't get overheated.

health

I like to run outdoors and am keen to exercise through winter, but it's so cold! I dress for the cold, but tend to get overheated. How can I wrap up without getting too hot?

M. Sanders, via email



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FITNESS

I'm not a gym fan and was thinking of joining a dance class to lose weight. What do you suggest?

Suzanne Manning, Newcastle, NSW



Martha Lourey-Bird
Fitness editor

The great thing about dancing as a form of exercise is that the fun factor disguises the effort factor. You don't have to be a great dancer either – as long as you're moving, then you're exercising. For a fantastic workout, try belly dancing. This Middle-Eastern style works hips, pelvis, stomach and arms. Latin-inspired Zumba gets you sweating and works the whole body with easy-to-follow routines. Pole dancing involves spinning, swinging and strength-focused floor work. It's harder than it looks, but worthwhile since

it builds strength and tones arms, thighs, your upper back, core and bottom. Ballroom classes range from classical waltz to energetic salsa. Visit www.dance-australia.com.au to find a class near you.

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food

My husband is a big meat eater and would happily eat it every night. How can I subtly introduce variety but still keep him happy?

Kirsten Bryce, via email

It's fine to have lean red meat three nights a week, then chicken, pork, fish or a vegetarian option on the other nights. Try to include a pasta or noodle meal each week using less meat and lots of vegetables. When cooking meat, use the Weight Watchers Filling & Healthy Foods as a guide – the healthiest cuts of meat are highlighted in green in recipes. When you're cooking beef, the leanest cuts come from the leg and rump, and include rump, silverside, topside, round and fillet. Less healthy cuts are sirloin, chuck, Scotch fillet, T-bone and mince (unless it's made from lean cuts). With lamb, cuts from the leg

and middle are best, such as leg roasts, steaks, mini roasts, rump, cutlets, racks or loins, lamb fillets, lean loin chops or butterfly steaks. Less healthy lamb cuts include forequarter chops, chump chops, shanks and shoulder. As for chicken, the breast is the leanest choice, but all lean, fat-trimmed skinless chicken is a healthy option. All cuts of lean, fat-trimmed veal, goat, kangaroo, rabbit and venison are excellent meat choices as well.



Lucy Kelly
Senior food editor

Got a question? Email us at editor@weightwatchers.com.au or write to us at Ask the Experts, Locked Bag 2020, Broadway, NSW 2007, Australia.



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