

# ask the

# EXPERTS

This month, healthy sushi choices, how to store bananas and the link between weight and testosterone.

## cooking

Do bananas go brown more quickly if you store them with other fruit? And do you have a snack idea for them?

Leonie Kenmare, via email



Lucy Kelly  
Senior food editor

Bananas contain high levels of the gas ethylene, which makes them and nearby fruit ripen more quickly. If you have an avocado that you want to ripen, put it in a

brown paper bag with a banana. Bananas left at room temperature continue to ripen over the space of a few days. To slow down the ripening process, put them in the fridge or in a sealed plastic bag. Since all fruits have 0 **ProPoints** value, bananas are an excellent inclusion in your **ProPoints Plan**. For a tasty snack, top a piece of wholegrain toast with mashed banana and 2 teaspoons of the Egyptian spice blend dukkah, at 3 **ProPoints** values per serve.

.....  
If your letter to Lucy is published, you'll win a luxurious hydrating skincare pack from **Advanced Natural** valued at \$384.50. Just click on [www.advancednatural.com](http://www.advancednatural.com) for more information about their petrochemical-free range of products.



## nutrition

*I love takeaway sushi and eat it three times a week, choosing four pieces with tuna, avocado and carrot. Can you suggest other healthy options? And what is the ProPoints value per serve?*

S. Hardyman, via email



Emma Stirling  
Nutrition editor

When it comes to food court fare, Japanese cuisine is one of the lowest kilojoule options. A bento box with salmon or tuna is a good choice, since this kind of fish is high in heart-friendly omega-3 fatty acids, as well as being a good source of protein. Seaweed 'nori' rolls contain valuable nutrients, including iodine, which is vital for a healthy thyroid. Carrot and cucumber sushi have 0 **ProPoints** value, but keep in mind that California rolls with avocado clock up

1 **ProPoints** value per tablespoon. If you're choosing hand rolls, be aware that many now include deep fried prawns or meat with mayonnaise, which bumps up their **ProPoints** values significantly. As a guide, one chicken and avocado hand roll is about 5 **ProPoints** values. The only downside to sushi is the high salt load from the soy sauce, so try not to drown your sushi in it. Instead, enjoy boiled spinach with sesame seeds or a seaweed salad, which are both delicious and low in **ProPoints** values. While you're at it, boost your antioxidant intake with a 0 **ProPoints** value cup of hot green tea.

# fitness

*Does doing regular exercise really reduce my risk of developing lifestyle diseases such as diabetes? Or is that just a fitness myth?*

Mel, Townsville, Queensland



**Martha Lourey-Bird**  
Fitness editor

No matter what your age, regular exercise benefits you both physically and mentally. Specifically, it helps protect against heart disease and stroke, high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes, obesity, back pain and osteoporosis, all while enhancing your mood and reducing stress levels. Ideally, you should do three different kinds of exercises. Cardiovascular exercises (think walking, jogging, swimming, rowing and cycling) make you huff and puff. Do them moderately (so you can still talk) for 30 minutes a day, five days a week, or vigorously (so you can't talk) for 20 minutes a day, three days a week. Resistance exercises

build strong muscles and bones, speed up your metabolism and improve body shape, posture and tone. Pump, circuit classes and exercises such as push-ups, squats and lunges are all extremely beneficial. Aim to do one to three sets of eight to 10 exercises at least twice a week.

Flexibility exercises help to improve your range of motion, posture and mobility. Stretch all the muscles you can (think hamstrings, chest, back, calves) by holding the stretch to the point where you feel mild discomfort, but no pain (10 to 30 seconds). Do this two to three days a week.

.....  
If your letter to Martha is published, you'll win a pair of women's sport shoes from Ryki. Don't forget to tell us your correct shoe size when you write in.



# men's health



**Allan Bolton**  
Men's consultant

Is it true that men's testosterone levels decrease progressively as they get older?

Harry Douglas, via email

Testosterone levels peak between the ages of 20 and 30, then gradually decline (by about a third) until the age of 80. Some men experience a greater drop-off much earlier. The Florey Adelaide Male Ageing Study linked higher waist and BMI measures to lower testosterone levels – irrespective of age. We can't avoid ageing, but we can manage our weight to get the most out of life.

Got a question? Email us at [editor@weightwatchers.com.au](mailto:editor@weightwatchers.com.au) or write to us at *Ask the Experts*, Locked Bag 2020, Broadway, NSW 2007, Australia.