

ask the EXPERTS

This month, easy ways to enjoy pomegranate, beating the 3pm slump and secret men's business.

nutrition

I often hit the vending machine for a Red Bull when my energy flags in the afternoon. Is it safe to drink every day? How else can I get an energy burst?

H. Wallace, via email



Emma Stirling
Nutrition editor

While caffeine gives some people a kick, everyone is affected in different ways. High caffeine consumption can result in headaches, poor concentration, anxiety, sleep disturbances and jitteriness. As well as caffeine, Red Bull contains taurine, an amino acid and a building block of protein. There's nothing dangerous about having an energy drink each day, as long as you factor in your total caffeine intake and the ProPoints values per serve. As a rule of thumb, stick to 300mg of caffeine a day for good health and space out beverages. Eating for energy means making sure your diet is full of nutrient-rich foods to help fuel your brain and body. For example, research shows that inadequate intakes of iron can lead to feelings of exhaustion. Also, make sure you eat smart snacks mid-afternoon, like a low-GI tub of yoghurt or a small handful of raw nuts, to help you feel fuller for longer.



cooking

I've heard that pomegranates taste great and are really healthy. I'd love to eat them, but have no idea how to incorporate them into meals. Any recipe suggestions?

Caroline Barnes, Bonogin, Queensland



Lucy Kelly
Senior food editor

Pomegranate seeds go well with any Middle Eastern, Moroccan or Greek casserole, salad, marinade or dressing. Throw a few into your next tabouli or Greek-style salad, or sprinkle them over slow-cooked lamb and serve with thick Greek yoghurt. The juice can be used in salad dressings or marinades instead of lemon juice or vinegar. It also tastes fantastic on its own as a juice. You only use the seeds and the juice of a pomegranate. To get the seeds out, cut the fruit in half. Hold one half in

the palm of your hand, cut-side down, over a bowl, then tap the skin with a heavy handled knife or rolling pin. Firmly squeeze the shell in several places to help release the seeds, which should just fall into the bowl. Pieces of the white connective tissue will also fall (along with all the juice) and these need to be picked out and discarded.

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men's health

How old do I need to be to think about getting my first prostate exam?

Jeremy Gardiner,
Brisbane, Queensland



Allan Bolton
Men's consultant

Prostate cancer is, in fact, the most commonly diagnosed cancer type and the second leading cause of cancer death among Australian men. For men over the age of 70, it's not always life threatening. Yet, on the other hand, if you're younger and have rapidly growing prostate

cancer, the disease can be fatal. Make an appointment to see your doctor to discuss your individual level of risk and the need for a prostate exam. Prostate cancer is rare in men under the age of 45, but as you move into your late 40s and early 50s, raise the issue with your doctor. That's if he or she doesn't bring it up first. Early detection can improve your chance of a successful outcome.

fitness

I drive to and from work, spend all day sitting down and am starting to see the effects on the scales. Is there a solution?

Casey Willow, Avalon, New South Wales



Martha Lourey-Bird
Fitness editor

To break the sit-down cycle, think of exercise as a three-step process:

STEP 1: Move more, sit less

Add up the amount of time daily you spend sitting, (for example, 7½ hours), then convert it into minutes (450). Calculate 10 per cent of this figure (45 minutes), then reduce the amount of time you sit each day

by this amount. You can do this by taking two 15 minute walks and doing 15 minutes more housework.

STEP 2: Increase your daily incidental activity

Always have a glass of water on your desk. It's not only healthy, it creates more opportunities to walk: you have to get up and refill, as well as go to the bathroom. Also, park further away from work, walk between floors or get off the bus a stop earlier.

STEP 3: Schedule exercise into your week

Make at least three exercise dates in your diary every



week. This could include a group exercise, such as boot camp in the morning; a team sport, such as touch footy at lunchtime or basketball on the weekend; an evening exercise class, such as spin, Pilates or yoga; or a solo lunchtime activity, such as swimming or power walking.

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