

Obesity headlines and a nice cup of Tea!

As we inch towards Spring, and the promise of warm long evenings, it's time to come out of hibernation and enjoy all that life has to offer. A run in the park, joining a group sport meeting or even making the effort to walk home from work will all help to lift your spirits due to a healthy release of the feel-good endorphins in the brain.

With new research and headlines reporting the dangers of obesity, there can't be a better time to take control of the fight against this killer disease. This month we report on the latest obesity headlines and offer some solutions on how to take control of your health.

We also have guest writers adding some extra zest to the ever-growing WeightMatters community. **Joel Proskewitz** reports on **Goal-Setting** and **Catherine Saxelby** refreshes us with **Super Foods for Energy: Tea**.

Enjoy the read, and let us know how we can improve this monthly dip into the world of weight-related health.

Headlines

Life expectancy, obesity and diabetes at all-time high

Life expectancy in England has reached an all-time high, but so have levels of obesity and diabetes. Data released by the Department of Health show that life expectancy at birth is now 81.7 years for women and 77.5 years for men. **However, 24.4% of women and 23.6% of men are obese and 4.2% of women and 5.6% of men have diabetes.** The figures are included in the 'Health Profile of England 2008' document.

Our **Cognitive Behavioural Emotional Therapy (CBET)** can help you take control of your eating and reduce your health risk from Obesity.

Concern over blood sugar levels in 30% of youngsters

One in three young people with diabetes have 'dangerously out of control' blood sugar levels, the Information Centre has warned.

The centre's National Diabetes Audit showed that 30% of young people have HbA1c levels above 9.5%. It also found that 60% of adults with diabetes are not receiving annual checks to review blood glucose. In information from 4,873 practices, 40% of adults with diabetes had blood glucose levels in the 'increased risk' range.

Our specialist **Diabetes Dietician** can help you lower your blood sugars and insulin intake, and still let you live life to the full!

Obesity surgery soars by 40%

The number of people in England having obesity surgery has soared by 40% in the last year, according to the NHS Information Centre. The latest figures show that there were 2,724 operations, including stomach stapling and gastric bypasses, among adults and children in 2007/8. The overall number of hospital admissions for obesity increased by 30% from 3,862 admissions in 2006/7 to 5,018 admissions in 2007/8

Our team of specially trained **Eating Therapists** can help you explore all options available to you, and we can support you if you decide to have Obesity Surgery.

Super Foods for Energy: Tea

By Catherine Saxelby

When you're busy and feel overloaded, nothing picks you as quickly as a quick cup of tea. Now there's new research to prove that tea out-guns coffee when it comes to lifting your mental performance and overcoming fatigue throughout the day.

Your grandmother would have told you what I'm about to say - there's something about tea that refreshes and helps you relax and revive!

Honestly whenever I feel a little 'worn out' or in need of a break, I love a cup of good old-fashioned tea. English Breakfast with a shot of milk is the favourite brew but I'm also partial to a delicate Ceylon and most things herbal like lemon and ginger or anything with a little peppermint.

For years, scientists have been puzzling on what it is about tea that recharges your batteries. They knew tea contained modest levels of caffeine - around half or a third of what's in coffee - but the lift you get was not simply a caffeine effect, as powerful a brain stimulant as caffeine is (and one of the key reasons we love our java).

One experiment in the 90s had volunteers consume three hot beverages and then take a maths test requiring concentration, memory and focus (something all of us would dearly love each morning!). Those who drank hot water with added pure caffeine fared better than those who just drank a cup of hot water (the control group). But those who sipped the tea outperformed the rest. So the researchers concluded - there was something else in tea apart from its caffeine.

New findings about tea

Now researchers believe they have found the answer. It's a natural amino acid called theanine (pronounced thee-ah-nee) that virtually unique to tea. It works on our brain to enable us to stay alert yet relaxed. It's a different feeling to that jolt of adrenalin we get from a strong coffee. It lets you pay attention to the task in front yet still take in what else is happening around you without overstimulation.

A recent Australian review, conducted by Dr Janet Bryan from the University of South Australia, has analysed the findings from 15 peer-reviewed studies on the benefits of theanine and caffeine in tea and how they work together.

It reveals that tea, consumed regularly throughout the day, can help maintain alertness, attention and accuracy, and soften the more acute negative effects of higher doses of caffeine.

The caffeine-theanine combo

It seems that tea's combination of a low level of caffeine and the theanine is the key. Tea has caffeine, but in low doses, and the combination of that with the theanine, has an effect on the performance of complex tasks such as switching attention and being able to ignore distraction - tasks that may be hindered by overstimulation and which are important tasks for today's hectic lifestyle.

In contrast, a high dose of caffeine, like the spike you get from coffee, actually appears to hinder alertness in the long run.

The report indicated that tea is significantly associated with lower perceived fatigue than coffee. The theanine in tea exerts slow and constant effects resulting in a relaxed yet alert state of mind.

More health benefits from tea

The advantages of tea don't just stop at brain power. Don't forget that tea, both green and black, is a healthy way to stay hydrated. Tea has 4 top health benefits. It:

1. is a great source of antioxidants known as flavonoids. Antioxidants help maintain healthy cells and tissues by reinforcing our body's natural defence system and may slow the ageing process and ward off cancer.
2. contains virtually no kilojoules or calories when drunk on its own (without milk or sugar).
3. keeps your heart and blood healthy - there is a link between regular tea consumption and heart health. Drinking three cups of tea per day may decrease the risk of heart problems by 11 per cent.
4. helps you cut back on caffeine overall so you get a good night's sleep and avoid the "coffee jitters" (irritability and shakiness if you overdo the caffeine).

“Reproduced with permission from nutritionist Catherine Saxelby. For more healthy eating tips, go to www.foodwatch.com.au”

The Key Ingredients

By Joel Proskewitz

A Goal is defined as: **“attaining a specific standard of proficiency on a task, usually within a specified time limit”**

During my career, I have had many people approach me and ask what benefits can be derived if they only train 2 to 3 times a week? So the question is: "Don't we need to train 6-7 times per week to get fit and healthy?" Well, I have a different outlook when it comes to training for health and well being; the most important ingredients in the mix are none other than consistency and sustainability. Studies have shown that people engaging in regular exercise 2-3 times per week for a consistent period, have achieved more realistic and beneficial gains than a person who trains with super intensity for 6 days per week for 5 weeks and then fails to sustain the exercise program. Many commercially available "body transformation programs" claim to change you in a matter of weeks, but what they fail to disclose is what happens to you after you have completed the program; where to from there? Is it really possible to continue at the prescribed intensity, duration and radical diets these programs advocate? Definitely not; and so the question of sustainability becomes a concern. Assuming that the commitment aspect is already in place, the client wishing to achieve long lasting gains-which is always the best route-should approach exercise programs with the view to working through a progressive, stage by stage program, where the goals are well thought-out into both short and long-term phases and sustainability can be maintained.

Lets use the example from the financial world; compounding interest. It is common knowledge that if you start to save a small portion of your earnings from an early age versus a larger portion a decade later, the former will generate a greater return in the long run. Fortunately, the human body is a more complex machine and the rewards of a long term exercise regime can be achieved from starting at any age. The points to remember though are consistency and sustainability; these are the key ingredients to you achieving your health and well-being goals.

With most things in life, goals need to be put into perspective and need to be attained from a position of reality. Having clients of all different ages, allows me, through extensive experience, research and training to prescribe challenging programs with more realistic and attainable results from a long term, progressive and goal oriented outlook. Lastly, with reference to the above definition of a goal, always remember that with health and well-being, there is never a finish line, the goalposts are constantly changing!

Joel Proskewitz, NSCA-CPT, IKFF-CKT, FreeMotion Master Trainer
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THIS MONTH

- **Obesity Headlines**
- **Super Foods for Energy: Tea**
- **Goal-Setting**
- **The Kitchen**
- **Beautcamp Pilates**



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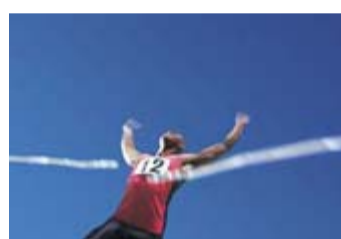


First Class Free



Super Foods for Energy: Tea

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The Key Ingredients

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