



Nutrition- Back to Basics

Have Christmas and the New Year's Holiday Season left you feeling a few kilos heavier? Are you guilty of eating larger meals, saying goodbye to your usual eating pattern and constantly snacking on leftovers? Did alcohol, chocolates and sugary sweets become part of your everyday diet plan?

If you answered yes to any of these, then its time to kick the unhealthy habits, get rid of the sugar and fat and give your body the nutrition it needs.

Here's a quick guide from Accredited Practicing Dietitian Rebecca Gawthorne, to get you 'Back to Basics' with your Nutrition and feeling healthier, lighter and more energised this summer.

Five Nutrition Back to Basics:

1. Back to Basics with Food



Get back to basic, wholesome, unprocessed, natural foods. How many foods in your diet come packaged or in a box? Whilst some healthy foods may conveniently come pre-packaged, many are highly processed. Fibre and other vitamins are removed or destroyed and preservatives, salt and sugar added.

Clean out your kitchen, get rid of the refined processed foods and add some basic wholesome foods, particularly fresh fruits and vegetables, back into your diet. Stock your fridge and pantry with fresh, healthy fruits and vegies. Always keep some chopped up salad vegies and a fruit bowl at work ready for a quick meal or snack. By stocking up on wholesome foods, you are setting yourself up for success.

2. Back to Basics with Routine

Get back into a basic routine of three meals and two to three snacks each day. Plan what you will eat and when.

Always kick start your day by eating a healthy breakfast such as fresh fruit and low-fat yoghurt, rolled oats, home-made muesli or a low- GI breakfast cereal. A nutritious breakfast helps improve mental performance, reduces craving for sweets and makes it easier to follow your routine for a healthy eating pattern for the rest of the day.

When it comes to lunches, plan and prepare your week's lunch over the weekend, especially if you work full-time. Make sure your options include a combination of protein and carbohydrates, plus your vegies. Have some of the basics prepared ready for the week ahead. Try steaming some brown rice, baking lean chicken and chopping up some vegies.

Alternatively, you could do a healthy shop at the start of the week and stock up on some wholegrain crackers, tins of beans, salad vegies and fruit to keep in the office or your car in a freezer bag.

And don't forget to plan your snacks, including dessert. Planning your snacks will get you into to a healthy routine and help you avoid grazing throughout the day.

3. Back to Basic Fluids

Get back to basics with your fluids. Alcohol, caffeine-laden energy drinks and soft-drink (including sugar free and diet varieties) should not be part of your everyday fluids. Rethink your drink and swap these for the natural tap water. If you drink mostly water with a little tea or coffee each day, your weight and health will be much better off for it long run.

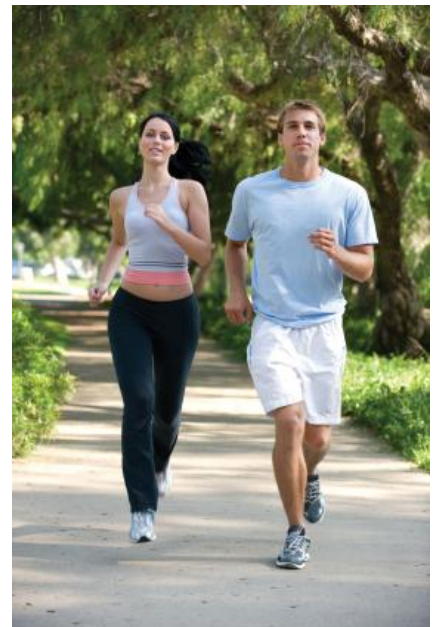


4. Back to Basic with Micronutrients

Get back to basics with your micronutrient intake. Its not uncommon for people who eat large amounts of food to have low levels of key nutrients such as iron, calcium, zinc, iodine and Vitamin D. Eating lean red meat 3 times each week will help you get the iron and zinc you need. Seafood (including sushi) a few times a week will help you get the iodine you need.

5. Back to Basic Lifestyle

Get back to basic with your lifestyle. The hectic Christmas and New Years period has finished, so make sure you get back into your basic exercise routine. Be sure to get out of the office or house during the day and get a blast of sunshine to ensure that your Vitamin D levels are not too low. Vitamin D is important for bone health and low Vitamin D levels have been linked to depression. Getting out and going for a walk in the sun during the day will also help reduce stress and help you relax.



Nutrition Getting Back to Basics Checklist:

- Clean out pantry and fridge
- Stock up on wholesome, unprocessed, natural foods
- Fill a fruit bowl and chop up salad vegies
- Plan weekly meals including breakfast, lunch and dinner
- Keep a water bottle handy
- Include lean meat at lunch or dinner
- Schedule a daily break and walk in the sun



**Written by Rebecca Gawthorne
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