

Issue A12

“Real confidence comes from knowing and accepting yourself -- your strengths and your limitations -- in contrast to depending on affirmation of others”

**JUDITH
BARDWICK**
Sociologist

Calling Young Australian Women:

Cervical cancer is the second most common cancer among women worldwide and is almost always caused by the human papillomavirus (HPV). Until now, the only effective way to prevent it has been to have regular Pap smears for early detection. Now, with a new vaccine, young women and girls can be immunized against the strains of HPV that cause 7 out of 10 cervical cancers.

See page 2 for a link.

Welcome

Firstly, my apology for the delay in preparing this newsletter. We have been bunkered down over the past couple of months completely revamping our program reporting systems. We are delighted with the world class outcome -- previous participants please see below. The changes also brought a new look to our website; we have changed the colours and look of this newsletter accordingly.

Alternative email address: We lose contact with many people when they retire or change jobs. Thus you are now welcome to provide a second, non-work, email address to receive the newsletter. The address will not be used for anything other than sending this newsletter and you can unsubscribe at any time. Simply reply with the additional email address as the subject.

Trans Fats: There has been a good deal of hype surrounding Trans Fats and their impact on health, so our one page feature article this issue explores the topic.

Young women and parents of girls: Please give special attention to the note on the left hand side of this page regarding cervical cancer. The prevention advice has changed.

For those of you who have followed Scott McTaggart's (staff member) running feats: He recently represented Australia in the world mountain running championships in Switzerland. Prior to leaving he competed in a race up the steps of Sydney Tower -- by winning that event he will take part in the Empire State race in the US in February. Hmmm, our general physical activity advice is a little more restrained.

Stay well and keep looking after your number one asset -- you!

Rob Edwards and the Health Futures Team

New Report and Resources Facility (for previous participants)

Readers who have taken part in a Health Futures program in the past will have received a results and/or resources CD Rom (or a paper report if before 2001). We have just released a vastly enhanced secure online facility -- CDs are no longer available.

May I offer you the opportunity to access this new facility. Simply reply to this email and include the word "Activate" in the subject. A username and password will be emailed to you (these can be changed after logging in).

PLEASE NOTE:

- Results are not added to the secure online service until you request it. The service is "opt in" only.
- There is no fee for the service as long as your request is submitted before 31 October 2007. Nor are there any renewal or subscription fees in the future -- it's yours indefinitely.
- The facility does not have any advertising or products for sale (other than information about Health Futures services as mentioned in our web site).
- If you are currently taking part in a Health Futures program you will be offered this new report facility during that process.
- Please be mindful that this offer is sent to many thousands of past participants and, to ensure security, activation is a manual process. Therefore please expect a delay of up to three weeks before we respond to your request.

The facility gives you easy access to all of your past results (if you participated in a health appraisal), support material specific to the test parameters, summary for the family doctor, 45 mini books on a wide range of topics, extensive articles, contacts for over 200 organisations for further information, over 90 recipes, a personal health diary, goal setting program and more. In total more than 3000 pages of searchable information.

If you still have contact with people who have left your organisation and who have taken part in our program, please forward this email so they may take up this opportunity as well.

“Every one of us is given the gift of life, and what a strange gift it is. If it is preserved jealously and selfishly, it impoverishes and saddens. But if it is spent for others, it enriches and beautifies.”

IGNAZIO SILONE
Writer

Don't Forget:

To 'chill out' for a while each day.

Studies are telling us that our lives are fuller of things and events more than ever before.

Make sure you can finish each day knowing that you took at least a small period of quiet time to relax. It's very good medicine.

And The Winner Is!

We had a big response to the Bledisloe Cup competition, celebrating Carrie and Clyde Rathbone taking part ownership of Health Futures. Unfortunately there can be only one winner. Congratulations to Jenny Dunstan (Dept. Education Science and Training) in Canberra. Jenny and her partner Andrew attended the game in Melbourne 30 June. Considering the popularity of the competition we have decided to do the same again next year -- good luck then.



Worth a Look!

www.health.gov.au/cervical_cancer For information about cervical cancer vaccinations.

www.foodstandards.gov.au/newsroom/fact_sheets Here you will find a fact sheet about trans fatty acids. Plus many other quality resources.

www.foodwatch.com.au Here you will find details of Catherine Saxelby's new book "Zest". It includes 120 healthy and interesting recipes (below is an example). In her usual style the book has a good deal more than a list of recipes. A significant portion of the book is devoted to simple healthy eating advice, meal plans, portion sizes, and alternatives. Plus each recipe has a neat paragraph about the health characteristics of one of the key ingredients. We recommend it as both quality health education and a good cook book.

For ACT residents Catherine is presenting a keynote address "Tea: Traditional Beverage or Functional Food. Antioxidants and Beyond." It's at the National Convention Centre (ACT) Wednesday 17 October 6:30 to 9:00 pm. For information and a registration form email: info@foodwatch.com.au

Chicken Chilli Con Carne

Serves 4

This makes a good change from the usual beef chilli. It is lower in fat and has a lighter flavour. If you prefer to be traditional, simply replace the chicken with 500 g of beef mince.

Ingredients:

1 tablespoon canola oil
500g chicken mince
1 large onion, chopped
2 garlic cloves, crushed
2 teaspoons plain flour
2 teaspoons ground cumin
1 teaspoon ground coriander
1 teaspoon ground chilli
1 cup salt-reduced beef stock
400 g can diced tomatoes
1 teaspoon dried oregano
400 g can red kidney beans, rinsed and drained
chopped coriander
steamed low-GI rice and green salad to serve.

Method:

Heat oil in a large heavy-based saucepan on high. Brown the mince for 3-4 minutes. Transfer to a plate. Reduce the heat to medium and sauté the onion and garlic for 3-4 minutes until tender. Add the flour, cumin, coriander and chilli and cook, stirring, for 1 minute. Mix in the stock gradually, stirring to scrape up the sediment from the base of pan. Return the mince to the pan with the tomatoes and oregano and stir well. Bring to the boil then reduce the heat and simmer, covered for 30 minutes. Uncover and simmer for a further 15 minutes until the sauce has thickened slightly. Stir in the kidney beans and heat gently for 2-3 minutes. Sprinkle with coriander and serve on a bed of rice with salad.

Super ingredient: Kidney beans. Like all legumes, kidney beans fill you up and rank among the lowest foods for GI - kidney beans have a GI of 28. This means they take a long time to be digested, and the glucose enters your bloodstream more slowly than almost any other carbohydrate - even multigrain bread or porridge. If you can swap some of your potatoes or rice for beans, you're way ahead in the filing-power stakes. Kidney beans are an excellent source of protein for vegetarians. And for meat eaters they 'extend' the protein value of a meal - when you add a can of kidney beans to a recipe, you save on cost yet still have a nutritious high-protein dinner.

Trans Fats (Trans Fatty Acids or TFA)

We've all heard of 'bad' saturated fats and 'good' monounsaturated fats, now we're hearing more and more about trans fats. Are trans fats as bad for you as the media says?

What are trans fats?

Trans fats are chemically classified as types of unsaturated fatty acids where the molecules have been "rearranged" so that they act like saturated fatty acids in the body.

There are two ways in which trans fats are created: 1. They occur naturally in meats such as beef, lamb, goat and venison, as well as the other food products that come from these animals such as milk, cheese, butter and cream 2. They are formed during the manufacture of solid commercial fats. During this process, liquid vegetable oils are hydrogenated to transform them into solid and semi-solid fats.

Trans fats are harder than their counterparts and have many advantages for manufacturers. These hardened fats can be made from cheap plant oil and are then used to make items such as biscuits, potato crisps, pies and pastries. Use of trans fats in these foods results in an extended shelf life without the need for refrigeration.

Where do you find trans fats?

For centuries we have been consuming them in small amounts in butter, milk, beef and lamb. The good news is, there is no evidence that the natural forms of trans fat, found in foods like dairy products, are dangerous. However, the manufactured forms of trans fats are a different story.

Most animal fats like butter naturally contain around 3 per cent of their total fat as trans fat. If you compare this to a hydrogenated commercial shortening which is used in baking, you will be alarmed to find that the shortening contains a high 30 per cent as trans. That's 10 times more than what is naturally occurring in animal fats - and that's why health professionals are worried about trans fats.

Manufactured foods likely to contain high levels of trans fats include: Solid cooking margarines, instant noodles, biscuits and cookies, doughnuts, packet cake mixes, deep-fried fast food items such as French fries, chips, wedges and nuggets (these foods have been deep-fried in partially hydrogenated oils unless they tell you otherwise [sometimes they advertise they cook in cottonseed oil]), frozen foods such as spring rolls, crumbed chicken and fish fingers, baked goods including apple pies, meat pies, sausage rolls and croissants, fried salty snack foods such as potato crisps and corn chips, microwave popcorn, non-dairy coffee whiteners.

Is it on the label?

At present, manufacturers are required to list ONLY the total fat and saturated fat - but not the trans fat. You will only see the amount of trans fat if a claim such as 'Low in saturated fat' or 'No cholesterol' is made. Most margarines and oils usually list trans fat on the nutrition information panel as most are trans fat free.

What do trans fats do to you?

Like saturated fats, trans fats are 'bad' fats in that they increase both your total cholesterol level and your "bad" LDL cholesterol level. Trans fats also lower your "good" HDL cholesterol level and cause a deficiency of essential fatty acids. All of these effects combined significantly increase your risk of developing heart disease, the leading cause of death in Australia.

Trans fats are also believed to cause inflammation, particularly in people who are overweight. Inflammation increases the risk of atherosclerosis (plaque build-up in blood vessels), sudden death from cardiac causes, diabetes and heart failure. Trans fats may also disrupt activity of the blood vessel lining, causing disturbances to blood flow that contributes to heart disease, chest pain (angina), leg pain and impotence in males.

5 easy steps to avoiding trans fats:

- Where possible, use oil instead of margarine and butter. For instance when baking a cake, look for a recipe that works well using oil instead of solid fats - banana cake is good.
- Choose a soft spread over a hard margarine (cooking margarine). Most spreads today are made with less than 1 per cent trans fat.
- Avoid buying commercial cakes, slices, biscuits, muffins, quiches and pies. Instead try baking these at home using butter or soft margarine.
- Avoid bought pastry, including shortcrust and puff.
- Avoid deep-fried fast food unless you know a low-trans oil has been used. In any case, these foods are not the healthy take-aways you should eat regularly.

Trans OR saturated fats - the real worry?

The Heart Foundation wants all Australians to limit their intake of *both* saturated and trans fats, and now gives their recommendations in the form of '*saturated plus trans*' fats. The Heart Foundation believes that because we consume considerably more saturated fats than trans fats, a lower intake of saturated fats will have a greater impact on heart health.

What you need to remember is that you shouldn't choose foods based on trans alone - so don't be fooled by a claim on a label of 'trans free'. Instead, try to choose products with the lowest total saturated plus trans fat content possible.

How Do You Rate Yourself?

This page is presented with each news letter just to prompt readers to consider these important issues

	Rating	Goals and Actions
Physical Activity		
Body Weight		
Alcohol		
Cigarettes		
Dietary Fibre Intake		
Dietary Fat Intake		
Sugar Intake		
Fluid Intake		
Stress Management		
Time to Relax		
Back Care Exercises		
Cholesterol/Triglyceride		
Skin Self Checking		
Check Stools for Blood		
Breast/Testicular Self Check		
PAP Test		
Mammogram		
Prostate		
Dental Check Up		
Eyes Checked		
Other		

Back Issues and Health Futures Services

For back issues visit www.healthfutures.com.au and click Newsletters.

If your organisation wants detailed information about Health Futures services visit www.healthfutures.com.au and click Contact Us.

Print this page, then enter a "Rating" from 1 to 5 as to how well you take care of yourself in that particular area. 5 means that you are very proactive in managing that particular aspect of your lifestyle; 3 means there is room for improvement, 1 means it is in a pretty bad way.

This is not designed as a detailed analysis. Just approximate how you are going for each point, for example: "Dietary Fibre Intake" ask yourself: do I eat whole meal bread, include plenty of vegetables, have a couple of pieces of fruit each day, choose whole grain cereals and so on?

Use the low ratings to identify areas that may be improved -- opportunities to invest in your future health and well being.

Enter "Goals and Actions" in the space provided.

Make a diary note to revisit the table every couple of months.

Don't do this in a hurry (it's far too important), take some time to ponder where you are at and how you can make positive change in the context of the other demands on your energy and time.

Have a great day