

Latest News:

June/July will see us launching our exciting range of innovative workplace health and well-being services. Contact us for all of the information!

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Health Futures Pty Ltd/ 1300 720 323
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Welcome

Winter is upon us. Images of snow, warm fires and whole, hearty meals spring to mind.

Unfortunately winter can bring with it sub zero temperatures, the flu, and the interruption to outdoor activities. With a few weeks still to go before the seasonal change, now is the best time to establish the healthy routine that will see you through the next 3 months.

Winter is a wonderful time to make healthy lifestyle changes. There are lots of great winter activities to enjoy. Although the days are shorter, the longer nights provide a perfect

opportunity to relax and get plenty of rest. Winter is also a good time to enjoy healthy home cooked meals while spending time with friends and family.

It's also the perfect opportunity to quit smoking! Read on for my reasoning...

This month Health Futures will launch a range of new and innovative workplace health and well-being programs (indoor and outdoor). We look forward to working with you over the coming months!

Best wishes,
Carrie Rathbone and the Health Futures Team.

The Flu and the Swine Flu

The Swine flu outbreak in America, and in other areas around the world, has been most unsettling. Although we're certainly not short of pig jokes this month, there is a serious side to this problem. Guard yourself and your family.

Swine Flu is a type of influenza (flu) virus that causes respiratory disease that can spread between people.

The symptoms of swine flu in people are similar to the symptoms of regular human flu and include fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue.

The spread of this virus is thought to be happening in the same way that

seasonal flu spreads, from person to person through coughing or sneezing. Take steps to protect your family and yourself:

1. Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
2. Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
3. Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
4. If you get sick with flu, it is recommended that you stay home from work or school and limit contact with others. See your GP for treatment.

High Cholesterol: Where do you begin



As rust is to pipes, cholesterol is to blood vessels. Too much cholesterol and/or triglycerides in your blood may cause fatty deposits to form on the inside walls of the arteries. This is called arteriosclerosis. These deposits may become large enough to block the blood vessels completely and prevent normal blood flow.

Elevated cholesterol is a major cause of coronary heart disease and stroke, which together account for over one quarter of all deaths in Australia. Careful consideration of the lifestyle factors within your control is a priority if your cholesterol is not ideal.

There are two ways to treat high cholesterol, and the choice of treatment depends on the overall risk of heart disease. One way to lower cholesterol and/or reduce this risk is with simple lifestyle changes including changing your eating habits, managing weight, increasing physical activity and quitting smoking (see page 4 article). The second way is to combine lifestyle changes with cholesterol-lowering drugs.

Lifestyle change is the preferred method for many good reasons. It is a fairly broad term, allowing for endless options. Most people can easily list 5 changes they can make to their routine (examples are to drink more water, include more fibre, include fish, eat more fruit and veggies). Consider your list today.

It's worthwhile reading up as much as possible on the subject too. Educating yourself makes it easier.

A word of warning when researching cholesterol online: many information websites discussing cholesterol are actually selling products and medications. The information you are reading may be heavily angled to promote their sales. Your best source of information is your GP, or your online Health Futures resources. Please email us if you do not have your access information and would like to look online. Here you can research the topic, browse the recipes, and seek out contact with specialist organizations for the topic.

Ask yourself:

1. Am I at my ideal weight?
2. Can I limit saturated fat?
3. Can I exercise regularly?
4. Can I limit processed foods?
5. Can I choose higher fibre foods?

Chances are you are able to tackle one of these areas immediately and with relative ease. Continue to ask yourself these questions.

Follow up by planning to address one of these issues per month (no particular order necessary). Within 6 months you will be well on the way to better health.

Make this month the month to know and understand your cholesterol result.

"Imagination is the eye of the soul."
- JO JOUBERT

5 Healthy Winter Lunches

For those of you who base your lunch on salads and fruit in the warmer months, you may find it a challenge to substitute with something warmer in the cooler months. Here are some suggestions.

Warm salad: Use left over vegetables from the night before. Combine spinach leaves and feta and a touch of balsamic and voila - it can even be warmed in your microwave at work.

Soup: Butternut, Broccoli, Minestrone, Tomato! The options are endless. Swing by your local bakery and select a fresh grain roll to accompany it. Homemade soup is best but there's an excellent range of already prepared options at your supermarket.

Grain bread sandwich: Fill it up with lean chicken, veggies, salads and low fat cheese. Can be served toasted if you so wish!

Microwave meals are an easy to prepare alternative. Lean Cuisine and weight watchers are two tried and tested (low sodium, low fat) brands. Their large selection is sure to offer something to suit your taste.

Last night's dinner: Cooking a little extra the night before, and packaging it up nicely makes for a very quick and easy lunch the following day. Invest in some good quality microwave-able containers.

Baked Apples: Keeping the apple whole, core it and stuff it with crushed almonds, muesli and honey. Place 4-6 on a tray, cover in foil and bake for 45 minutes at 180°C. These can be warmed in the microwave at work. A delicious replacement for that apple pie you would otherwise have in the afternoon with your tea. Visit our online recipe section for more!

Enjoy!

Get a Good Nights Sleep

Did you know that the foods you eat will determine the quality of your sleep? Consider the following to increase the length and quality of your slumber.

Warm milk: Often given to us by our parents when we were younger. Do you know how it works? Dairy foods contain tryptophan, which is a sleep-promoting substance. Other tryptophan-containing foods include bananas, oats, and honey. Snack on these prior to hitting the sack.

Complex Carbs: These complement dairy foods by increasing the level of sleep-inducing tryptophan in the blood. So a few perfect late night snacks to get you snoozing might include a bowl of cereal and milk, yogurt and crackers, or bread and cheese.

Some foods will have the opposite effect and are therefore not recommended before you go to bed. Aim to avoid:

Caffeine: A stimulant found in the obvious (Coffee), and the *not* so obvious (Chocolate, cola, and some medications). Aim to remove caffeine from your diet after lunch each day.

High Fat, heavily spiced Foods: The more saturated fat, or heavily spiced food you consume during the day, the less likely you will be to have a restful night.

Alcohol: Although this can help put you to sleep, it has proven to result in more restless, disrupted sleep.

I hope you can find something here to help you sleep better. Whatever your vice, keep it small.

“There is really no such thing as bad weather, only different kinds of good weather.”
- JOHN RUSKIN

Winter: the time to Quit.

Health Futures Pty Ltd

PO BOX 4422
MANUKA
ACT 2603

PHONE:
1300 720 323



We're on the Web!

See us at:

www.healthfutures.com.au

"A habit can not be tossed out the window. It must be coaxed down the stairs one step at a time." - Mark Twain

Reasons why winter is a great time to Quit Smoking:

Smoking Outdoors: With today's strict no-smoking bylaws, most smokers find themselves spending a lot of time smoking outdoors. If hanging around in the freezing temperatures to smoke a cigarette doesn't seem like such a good idea anymore, winter is the perfect time to kick the habit.

Winter can be a great time to eat healthy foods and control your weight:

A lot of smokers, especially young women, believe smoking will help them control their weight. Many smokers are also afraid to quit because they think they will gain weight. The average weight gain for people who quit smoking is less than 4.5 kg. Consider our online recipes for some great ideas.

Winter is a wonderful time to get out and active. Bad weather always looks worse through a window so why not grab your hat and gloves, go outside and enjoy the fresh brisk winter days? (Think of the fun had skiing or tobogganing).

It is still possible to eat and snack on healthy, low-fat foods. Our grocery stores still stock fresh fruits and vegetables. There are also healthy snacks to choose from such as air popped popcorn, low fat crackers and low fat yogurt, etc.

You can start a new hobby! The long winter months are a nice time to learn a new craft such as knitting, woodworking or learning to play a new instrument. By

doing so, you will keep your hands busy which may increase your chances of successfully quitting.

Preparing to quit:

Identify your smoking triggers and decide how you will deal with them. For example, if you smoke after meals, get up and go for a walk instead; or if it's too cold or dark, hop on a stationary bicycle.

Tell everyone that you are quitting and ask for their support. People who have more support from their friends and family find it easier to make healthy changes.

Make a list of the reasons why you want to quit smoking and the benefit of doing so. For example: I will save money.

After you quit:

Get out and get active! Spend more time outside; go for a before-dinner walk; begin a new outdoor sport such as skating or skiing.

Manage your stress levels. Take advantage of those long winter nights to get plenty of rest and spend quality time with your friends and family.

Snack on low fat foods and/or seasonal fruits to reduce cravings.

Remember that every day you remain a non-smoker you are reducing your risk of heart disease, cancer and lung damage.

Notice Board:

If you are interested in past issues please visit www.healthfutures.com.au

Have a great month!