

Health Futures Pty Ltd/ 1300 720 323
Newsletter Issue A32



Welcome

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Welcome to the Spring edition of In Good Health. A little behind schedule but with good reason.

This month we launched the newest version of our online E-Health Resource facility. Those of you who have logged in will notice that you now have access to many more health books, industry contacts, up to the minute health articles, personal planners, recipes and more.

If you have participated in our programs before, but do not yet have your own online E-Health access, please reply to this email with 'activate' in the subject and we will set up your secure online account.

In this month's newsletter Health Futures' staff discuss a broad range of health topics. These are in response to the enquiries and requests we receive from you, our participants, about various health issues, conditions and treatments. We will continue to cover your requests in each newsletter, please keep sending them through.

Of course if you'd also like to check in or let us know how you are tracking, we would love to hear from you.

Have a great month,

Carrie Rathbone and the Health Futures Team.

Water - Just how much is enough?

This is one of those tricky questions we as health professionals face. Unfortunately there is no 'one size fits all' response. The amount of water required for good health varies from person to person based on size, weight, activity levels and environment.

Aside from the "8 cups per day" approach, there is also the "Replacement Approach" which looks at replenishing the amount of water lost each day.

The average urine output for adults is about 1.5 litres (6.3 cups) a day. Combine this with the additional litre (4 cups) we lose through breathing, sweating and bowel movements, and you're looking at around 10 cups. Because food contributes to our total

fluid intake (about 20%) each day, this leads us back to the rule of thumb of 8 cups of water per day.

One thing we can say for sure is that water is essential! Every system in the body depends on water to flush out toxins, transport nutrients and provide a moist environment for the ears, nose and throat tissue. Physical size, general health, pregnancy, breastfeeding, activity levels and our environment will influence our individual requirements.

A hydrated person will rarely feel thirsty and will produce colourless / slightly yellow urine. Important to be aware though (although uncommon) it is possible to drink too much water, so listen to your body.



Sleep – *Amelia Glenville*

Adults require between 7.5 - 9 hours of sleep per night, but most often achieve only 6. Busier lifestyles and more demanding work schedules are fast becoming the reason for poor sleep quality or less sleep altogether.

It's well known that a lack of sleep results in lower energy levels and a lower threshold for stress but it has also been linked to depression, weight gain, learning difficulties as well as high blood pressure and elevated cholesterol.

Some of the signs of sleep deprivation include:

- Needing an alarm to wake up.
- Constantly hitting the “snooze” button.
- Feeling sluggish in the afternoons.
- Feeling sleepy in meetings and warm rooms.
- Feeling you need to nap through the day.
- Falling asleep while watching TV or relaxing in the evening.
- Feeling the need to sleep in on weekends.

If any of these apply to you, or you are looking for ways to improve your sleep time and quality, consider these ideas:

Starting a Sleep Schedule: Aim to have a sleep and wake time that is consistent, even during weekends. The body loves rhythm and will respond very well to consistency. This is an obvious challenge for shift workers. *If you are a shift worker, please respond to this newsletter email with “Shift Work” in the subject and we will send you resources.*

Design a Bedtime Ritual: Do the same thing every night before you go to bed. A cup of tea while reading a few pages of your book, having a warm bath or listening to some music in bed – what ever works for you! Make sure that it's relaxing and doesn't take much energy.

Managing your Stress: Stress is the most common cause of poor quality sleep. Pressure at home or work, or an ever-increasing “To-Do” list may be the cause.

Aim to be as organised as possible at work. Each afternoon, write down a list of tasks for the following day. This maximises the efficient use of time and may save you a few hours each day.

Putting a pen and paper by your bed at night can help too. Writing down things that you need to remember the following day assures you they will be there when you get up.

Keep a diary. A journal allows you to organise your thoughts and feelings. Recording your thoughts can be helpful to put things in perspective and can be a great release.

Consider talking to a professional. Some life events such as death, divorce or financial trouble are very stressful and require stronger resources.

Physical Activity: A run, walk or swim, can greatly increase your sleep quality.

Exercise will result in physical fatigue, a requirement when it comes to feeling sleepy. It is also fantastic for stress management and burning off steam. Be careful not to exercise too close to bedtime, otherwise it may have the reverse affect and leave you too energised to sleep.

Experiment with these techniques until you find the right combination for you. If your sleep doesn't improve, there is some great information in the *Sleep Patterns* section in the online resources.

Sometimes these techniques just aren't going to cut it - speak with your GP when your sleep just isn't improving or you think that you may not be coping.

“Health is not a condition of matter, but of mind.”

- MARY BARKER EDDY

Resilience – *Amelia Glanville*

We have all, at some stage, been absolutely astounded at how well someone has managed to stay afloat (emotionally, psychologically and physically) through the most awful situations, and at other times have been deeply concerned about another's lack of "buoyancy" in the same situation. What makes these people different? It's a skill or trait referred to as resilience.

Resilience, an ability to manage and recover from life's challenges, has been noted as a key differentiator in situational management coping and recovery.

Resilience isn't a magic bullet, fixing all of your problems, it is all about bouncing back and recovering. One of the biggest misconceptions is that resilient people are those with the stiff upper lip, toughing it out on their own - resilience is all about asking for help when you need and using the resources you have available.

Some people are lucky enough to just "have" the personality traits needed to get through the tough times, whereas some of us need a bit of help.

Here are some ways to improve your resilience:

"I am awesome!" - develop a positive self image; think of yourself in a positive way. You are worth getting through this as unscathed as possible!

Keep up the network – resilient people ensure they are constantly building and maintaining their social networks. Your family, friends, colleagues and neighbors can be a great support network in a time of crisis.

Positivity – use the "glass is half full mentality". When times are looking a bit dim, make sure you take time to appreciate the things that are going well.

Take the lead – try to be proactive about the situations that are not great but that you can change. Everyone has to take responsibility for his or her own happiness!

Stop wasting time! – sometimes we have to realise that there are some things that we just can't change. Stop banging your head against the proverbial wall, and put your energy into working around it.

Eye on the prize! - always have your destination in mind; what are your goals, what kind of person do you want to be? There are always going to be set backs, but by staying focused on the goal, you can stay motivated and in control.

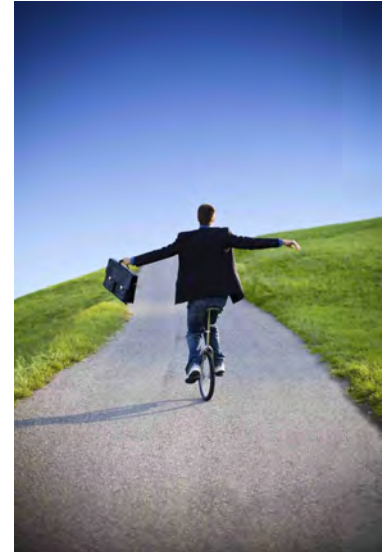
Optimism – do your best to maintain a positive outlook and look for the positive outcomes. These may be difficult to find at times, but they are in there somewhere!

Never stop learning – every event or disaster has a lesson to be taken away. Do your best to take the new knowledge with you and you never know when it may come in handy!

It's ok to be a bit selfish – make sure that you take care of yourself. Tend to your own feelings and needs whether they are physical or emotional. The hard times can be even more difficult if you don't have your health. Take time out for the things that you enjoy doing.

These skills don't appear over night. They take practice and perseverance but the dividends are worth ten times the effort.

If you are trying these out and you don't feel like you are progressing or developing, or just don't know where to start, don't be afraid to ask for help, speak to your GP or mental health provider.



"Happiness does not depend on outward things, but on the way we see them."

- LEO TOLSTOY

Are you Battling Hayfever? – Cheryl Cuthbertson



Contact Us

ADDRESS:
PO BOX 4422
MANUKA
ACT 2603

PHONE:
1300 720 323

Or visit us at:

www.healthfutures.com.au

Spring is in the air and for some of us that means itchy, puffy watery eyes and a red stuffy nose, i.e. Hayfever. The medical name for this condition is Allergic Rhinitis and it occurs when the body over reacts to a substance (allergen) that would otherwise be harmless to people. It can occur at any time of the year as an allergic reaction to dust mites, mould and animal fur or hair but more so in Spring.

This is because, at springtime, there are a lot of allergens in the air and when these are inhaled the body releases histamines that cause hayfever symptoms.

There are some things we can do to prevent or limit the symptoms of hayfever.

Try:

- to stay indoors if it's a high pollen count day or if it is windy.
- to choose plants for your garden that are pollinated by birds or insects, rather than plants that release their seeds into the air.
- to replace your lawn with bricked or paved areas.
- to smear petroleum jelly (like Vaseline) inside your nose to stop the pollen from touching the lining of your nose.
- splashing your eyes often with cold water to flush out any pollen.
- reducing your exposure to dust and dust mites, animals and animal hair or fur (dander).

Fortunately there are also medications available to treat hayfever and you should speak to your doctor or pharmacist for advice on which would be the best treatment for you.

Antihistamines – These treat the symptoms associated with hay fever and can be bought over the counter at a pharmacy without a prescription. It is important to note that there are different types and what works well for one person may not be as effective for another. Therefore, it can be worthwhile trying different types to find the most effective one for you. Such as Claratine (Loratidine), Zyrtec (Cetirizine) or Telfast (Fexofenadine)

Corticosteroids – Corticosteroid nasal sprays are often the most effective treatment for allergic rhinitis. Many brands are available with a script from your doctor.

Medicated Eye Drops – Eye drops can help with irritation and redness and are available from the pharmacy with a prescription.

Decongestants – These can help to reduce nasal congestion but should not be used for more than three days. Ask your pharmacist to recommend one for you.

Allergy Shots - If your allergies are persistent and severe, you may wish to see your GP and obtain a referral to an Immunologist. An immunologist can begin treatment that involves regular injections of the allergen so that you can become less sensitive.

It is important to manage your hayfever with your health care professional to prevent any complications from arising.

Notice Board:

If you would like to receive more information on the following health topics, please reply to this email with the topic of interest in the subject:

Back Care Exercises
Golf Stretches
Shift Work
Gaining Weight the Healthy Way