

Health Topic of the Month - May 2011

Nutrition & Healthy Eating

INTRO

These days it is not uncommon to feel lost in a world of FAD diets, with different nutritional trends being put out there seemingly every day.

With so much information to divulge and wade through, it is no wonder that people find themselves unable to continue on some of these diets for more than a few weeks.

It is always almost an impossible challenge to give up your current eating habits one week and begin a completely new diet the next, yet we are continually striving for this and constantly finding ourselves back where we started!

Poor diets and eating habits are closely linked to many of the most common diseases in the country. There are more cases than ever of type 2 Diabetes, obesity, coronary heart disease and cancers, so the need for a healthy diet is becoming more vital than ever.

The truth is it only takes a few simple changes each week to form good eating habits and get you on track. If you stick to the basics, and use the following points as guidelines, you won't go far wrong.

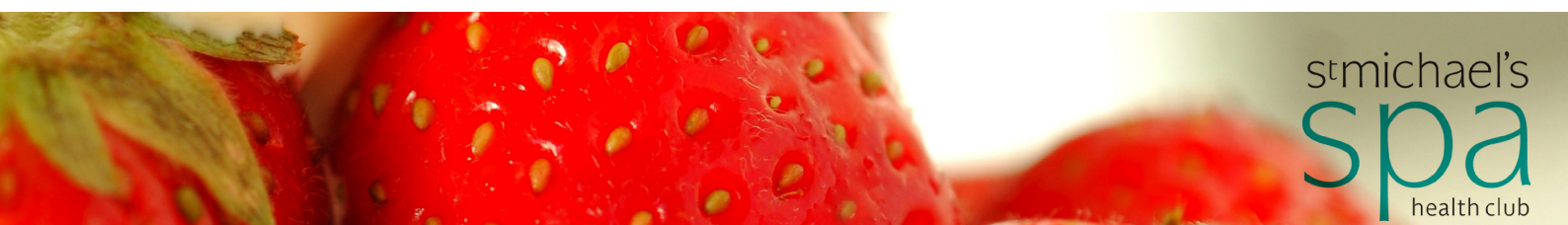


Health Topic of the Month - May 2011

Nutrition & Healthy Eating

WE'D ADVISE THE FOLLOWING...

- Eat a good, healthy breakfast consisting of porridge, whole cereals and fruits with semi-skimmed milk and low-fat yogurt. This should be the biggest meal of the day!
- Eat a rainbow... brightly coloured fruits and vegetables contain many cancer fighting anti-oxidants as well as those all-important vitamins and minerals.
- Plan your meals in advance and where possible, buy fresh and locally sourced products that haven't travelled half way around the world.
- Try 5 – 6 smaller meals throughout the day, offsetting the need to go hunting for that snack and avoiding those hunger pangs!
- Aim to eat complex carbohydrates such as pasta, whole grain bread and basmati rice as this will provide you with slow release energy.
- Hydrate! Aim to consume 2.5 litre of water per day. The human body is 75% water; it's what we were designed to drink!
- Unsaturated fat, the good fat! This is found in nuts, seeds, avocados, oily fish such as mackerel and tuna, as well as olive oil. This helps reduce the amount of cholesterol and provide us with the essential fatty acids we need.
- Rewarding yourself! Allowing a small indulgence of your favourite treat every now and then is a great feeling and can be very motivating, but watch out for the frequency and quantity.
- Pay attention to food labels and learn to buy healthy foods.
- Eating before going to the supermarket so you won't buy too much food and will help in avoiding temptations.
- Eat slowly, enjoy your food and if you feel full stop eating!

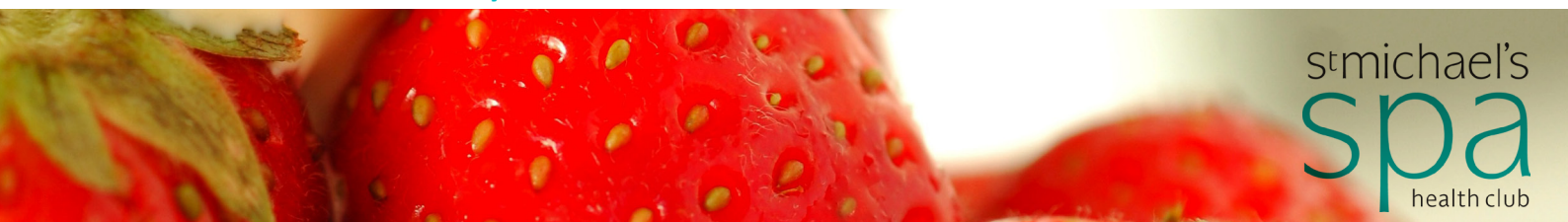


Health Topic of the Month - May 2011

Nutrition & Healthy Eating

TRY TO AVOID...

- **Refined sugars.** 'If it sticks to your teeth, it's probably bad for you!' A simple yet effective rule which I use when it comes to sugar consumption. We are consuming too much refined sugar these days, making our blood sugars fluctuate quickly and putting ourselves at risk of Type 2 Diabetes and tooth decay amongst others.
- **Saturated fat.** This is found in biscuits, ice cream, crisps, fast food and animal products such as butter, meat, sausages and pies. This raises our blood cholesterol over time, increasing the risk of heart disease, obesity and stroke.
- **Skipping breakfast!** This is one of the worst things you can do. A big, healthy breakfast is vital for getting us going and providing us with enough energy to last through the day, as well as kick-starting your metabolism.
- **Salt.** The need to add salt to our food is becoming less and less. Salt is added to the majority of foods these days, so be careful about adding that extra pinch. Too much salt is a main cause of high blood pressure and CHD.
- **Too much tea, coffee, soda and alcohol makes you dehydrated.** We were not designed to drink these in vast quantities! They lead to loss of energy, feeling fatigued, drowsy, lethargic and bring on headaches and stress.
- **Eating after 7pm.** As your metabolism (the rate you burn energy) slows down in the evening, the more food you consume, the more likely it is to stay on you, giving you that bloated, uncomfortable feeling.
- **Too much protein.** Over consumption of protein can lead to kidney damage in the long term. Try different sources of protein found in beans, lentils, nuts, seeds, peas, tofu and soy products.
- **Artificial sweeteners,** many of which are found in cordials and juices. They contain products such as aspartame which has been known to lead to cancers.
- **Processed food and ready meals!** With next to no nutrients, packed with fat, sugar and salt, need I say more?



Health Topic of the Month - May 2011

Nutrition & Healthy Eating

REALISTIC GOALS

Whatever your goal is, set yourself realistic targets week by week and put them in a place where you will see them (on your fridge, bedside table or mirror). They can be simple goals; for example:

'This week I AM going to stop my mid-morning tea and biscuit binge, and instead I WILL drink a glass of fruit juice / water and snack on fruit and nuts'

Once this becomes a normal habit, you can then move on to your next goal and begin piecing the puzzle together which will ultimately form your long-term goal.

Remember – it takes 4 to 6 weeks to form a new habit and get into a new routine.

Losing 10kg in a week is nothing to cheer about; it is more than likely that weight will be lost through water and muscle, not fat! Aim for a weight loss of no more than 2 – 3lbs per week.

Many people become more successful at long term weight loss when their motivation changes from 'I want to be thinner' to 'I want to be healthier'. Think about fuelling your body correctly using the right combination of food so that it can perform well, keeping you happy and healthy from the inside out. Once this happens, you will find that weight loss will be a side effect! Look after your body well and it will look after you.

Remember, it is a marathon, not a sprint. It is unfair to expect a complete diet change in a few days, or even a few weeks!

Good Luck!

