



MAYFAIR
WE CARE

Mayfair cares

**HEALTH & SAFETY
NEWSLETTER**

[Click here to visit our blog](#) for more helpful tips and advice across a range of topics.

February 2019

6 steps to a healthy heart

Over 30 per cent of all deaths each year are due to heart disease, claiming almost 18 million lives each year. But it doesn't have to be that way.

Heart disease isn't inevitable with age, showed a study published in *The Lancet* in 2017. After studying an indigenous tribe living in the Bolivian Amazon, researchers found the lowest reported levels of coronary artery disease of any population so far recorded.

Their secret is not really a secret at all. We've known for years what steps will reduce your risk of heart disease and this is exactly what the Amazonian tribe do. They are naturally physically active and while not vegetarian, eat a plant-based diet high in unrefined carbohydrates.

We may not live in the Amazon but we can take their lead and make some immediate changes.

3 habits to adopt right now

1. Get a move on. Activity is key to nearly every aspect of your health including

protecting your heart. Aim for 30 minutes of exercise at least five times a week. Hit the treadmill, walk around your neighbourhood, go for a swim or visit the gym – whatever best fits into your life.

2. Eat right 90 per cent of the time. Base your meals around plant foods – fruit, vegetables, wholegrains, legumes, nuts and seeds – and include healthy fats like olive oil, small amounts of red meat and fatty fish like salmon and mackerel.

3. Chill out. Chronic mental or emotional stress is now believed to be a significant risk factor for heart problems. Any way you can reduce your stress load – yoga, meditation, walking your dog, reading, playing music or socialising – will benefit your heart.

3 checks you must have

1. Blood pressure. What you don't know can hurt you. The biggest risk factor for both heart disease and stroke is high blood pressure, says The Heart Foundation. High blood pressure is called a silent killer because there are no obvious symptoms so many people don't realise they have it.

2. Cholesterol. Total cholesterol is not as useful to know as the levels of the harmful cholesterol (LDL) and the beneficial type (HDL). Make sure both are measured after you've been fasting overnight.

3. Blood sugar. Even if you don't have diabetes too much sugar in your blood can damage your arteries, so ensure you get this checked too. ✕



WHAT'S INSIDE

Fibre: your secret health weapon	2
Who says you must have a six pack?	4
How to set boundaries at work	5
Don't take your hearing for granted	6



February 4 is World Cancer Day.

Organizations and individuals around the world unite to raise awareness about cancer and work to make it a global health priority. This year's slogan is 'We can. I can.'

© Copyright Healthworks® 2019.

May not be copied, sold, distributed, reproduced in either part or full in any other form.

Fibre: your secret health weapon



Eat more fruit and vegetables. Snack on nuts and seeds, and make sure your grains are wholegrain, not the white fluffy type. The jury is well and truly in when it comes to the health benefits of plant foods and it looks like fibre could be an important reason why.

Experts have told us for many years just how important fibre is to our health. Dietary fibre, we're told, can help you slim down, cut your risk of developing diabetes and help you avoid heart disease, arthritis and colorectal (bowel) cancer.

Colorectal cancer is the third most commonly occurring cancer in men and the second in women. There were over 1.8 million new cases in 2018, 17,000 of these in Australia. Early work in Africa first linked colorectal cancer to insufficient fibre and more recent studies have supported this. Most of us don't eat enough fibre, falling short of the recommended 30g a day for men and 25g for women.

Think of fibre and you're likely to think 'roughage'. That's the fibre that makes us

regular, the kind we associate with bran, wholegrain bread and fibrous vegetables like broccoli and cabbage. Technically known as insoluble fibre, it escapes digestion in the small intestine and promotes regularity by mechanically irritating the bowel as it passes through the large intestine (colon), drawing in water as it does.

Soluble solution to cholesterol

But fibre is so much more than just roughage. It's a group of carbohydrates that our bodies lack the enzymes to digest, so they pass into our colon largely unchanged.

Have you ever wondered why oats are particularly good at lowering cholesterol? It's down to a fibre they contain called beta-glucan, which is a type of soluble fibre. Soluble fibre dissolves in water forming a

gel-like substance. It can bind to cholesterol and help flush it out of the body and can also slow down the absorption of sugars into the bloodstream, explains nutrition research scientist Dr Tim Crowe. "You'll find soluble fibre in barley, oats, legumes, vegetables and fruits," says Crowe.

Make your own fuel for your gut bugs by cooking and cooling potatoes, rice and pasta.



Resistance movement

Much of the starch we eat is quickly digested in the small intestine. One type of starch, however, is resistant to digestion and so is classified as a type of fibre. Once resistant starch enters the colon it provides a particularly important food for the bacteria there. These then go on to produce substances called short-chain fatty acids, which are believed to reduce the risk of colorectal cancer but also seem to act as anti-inflammatory agents throughout the body.

You'll find resistant starch in barley, oats, legumes and green bananas. You can also produce it yourself by cooking and cooling rice, potatoes and pasta, a process that changes the nature of the starch. Even if you then heat these up later the resistant starch remains.

Gut power

We've known for many years that fibre is good for us. Now we're starting to understand why and it could be because the different types of fibre feed the diversity of bacteria in our guts.

Indigestible fibre that reaches our colon is indigestible only to us. The thriving population of gut bacteria rely on fibre (often called prebiotics) as a food supply and researchers are now convinced that many of the benefits of a plant-based diet can be put down to the knock-on effects of a healthy gut microbiome. By keeping our gut bugs happy we're keeping our intestines and immune system happy too. ✕

Grain drain

Food trends come and go and right now grains are taking a battering, thanks largely to the gluten-free and Paleo movements. This is unfortunate, says nutrition scientist Dr Joanna McMillan.

"Restricting the types of fibre you eat can have profound effects on the diversity of your gut bacteria and the ratio of beneficial microbes to those less beneficial," says McMillan. Without sufficient grains you see an increase in bacteria that munch on the mucous lining of the gut, which may increase gut permeability (leaky gut) and cause low-grade inflammation, she explains.

We don't yet know what this means in terms of long-term health outcomes although there is evidence suggesting links to obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular disease and poor mental health.



Who says you must have a six pack?

Are you obsessed with achieving the perfect body? It could be doing you more harm than good – and that applies to men, too!

No matter where you live, there's a general preoccupation with fitness levels - six-packs, muscle tone and body fat percentages. Statistics show that it's not just women who are affected by poor body image either; it's impacting both genders, with 45 per cent of Western men saying they are unhappy with their bodies in some way.

The idealised body is flashed before our eyes at every turn: on television and social media, and in magazines and advertising. For women, that means super-thin while for men it's the opposite. They are expected to be shapely and muscular. Women have long been placing their health at risk with fad diets and fasting, laxative misuse, compulsive exercising, and vomiting, to shrink themselves into what they believe is a more acceptable size. Men on the other hand are more likely to abuse steroids along with fad diets and compulsive exercising.

Are you overly focused on your body?

If your mood is being affected by how you feel about your body, you are noticing that you are obsessed with your body shape, or if you are developing destructive behaviours (like crash dieting, binge eating or compulsive exercising), then professional help is worth considering – both in terms

of healthy eating and psychological issues. Your GP is a good place to start or you can book an appointment with a dietitian or nutritionist, counsellor or psychologist who is trained to help you change negative beliefs and behaviour patterns. Google psychologists to find one in your area. ✕

Body image

Having a positive body image means you are able to accept, appreciate, and respect your body.

You won't necessarily avoid feeling any insecurities or think your body is perfect, but you will be able to acknowledge any insecurities for what they are and believe that your body is right for you.

Improving your own body image can be hard, but it's certainly doable. Googling "positive body image" will come up with results that are tailored for your area and will include links to sites and places that can help you improve your perceptions.

A sad state of affairs

Women perceive their bodies as heavier than their ideal and as heavier than men prefer. The reverse is also true for men. Men estimate women prefer a male body about 14kg more muscular than their own body.





How to **set boundaries** at work

What might seem like ‘all fun and games’ to one person could be hurtful to another. Are your boundaries being crossed in the workplace?

We’ve all been there. A co-worker comments on the contents of your lunch box, asks prying questions about your love-life, comments on your appearance, makes culturally inappropriate remarks, or tells dirty jokes. If interactions with a coworker regularly leave you with feelings of discomfort, resentment or guilt, it’s time to set some boundaries.

It’s okay to set boundaries

Setting boundaries doesn’t have to be as scary as it sounds, although it’s natural to be concerned about how speaking up could affect your workplace relationships. But tolerating behaviour that leaves you feeling uncomfortable and stressed is detrimental to your health. Boundaries are designed to protect you and not to make things even harder. The secret is to implement change in a subtle but effective way. Here’s what you need to know.

Don’t go on the attack

Chances are the offender didn’t mean to offend and most of the time the person is just clueless rather than nasty. That doesn’t

mean you have to put up with it, though.

Set the boundary: Approach the situation in such a way that shows you’re aware the person didn’t mean to offend (or at least you’re giving them the benefit of the doubt). Reassure them that we all say things without thinking sometimes but that it would be nice to eat together without having to discuss what’s in your lunch box.

Don’t label

Dirty jokes or culturally inappropriate remarks can seem like just a bit of a laugh to some but can leave others feeling resentful.

Set the boundary: Labelling people as sexist or racist (and sometimes they are!) can lead to defensive behaviour, especially if they’re acting out of ignorance more than anything else. Instead of accusing, first try explaining how the comment makes you feel – uncomfortable, resentful or just plain intimidated. The offender is less likely to get defensive and more likely to understand how and why their careless comments can be stressful for those involved. ✕

Friendly or full on?

It’s great to have friends in the workplace but colleagues who are over-friendly can put you in a difficult position if they overshare intimate details about their private lives and ask about yours.

Religion and politics are all off limits at a dinner party but when it comes to work relationships that unspoken rule extends to even more topics, such as money and sex. Don’t feel pressured to overshare in return and in time the other person will get the hint. If not, it’s okay to point out that you prefer to keep your personal life and your work life separate.

“True strength is found in standing firm, yet bending gently.”

Author unknown.

© Copyright Healthworks® 2019.

May not be copied, sold, distributed, reproduced in either part or full in any other form.

Noise alert!

Just because a sound isn't annoying doesn't mean it's safe. Exposure to loud or continual noise is a key factor behind hearing loss and it can often come from our workplace.

Would you know if you had a hearing problem? You might not notice the tell-tale signs at first. Maybe you ask people to repeat themselves, even when it's quiet. Perhaps you get tired from concentrating hard to understand what people are saying or you find it difficult to work out what direction sound is coming from.

Often it can be co-workers or family members that spot the problem before you do, accusing you of not listening to them or not responding when they call your name.

It's easy to get used to loud background noise without appreciating how damaging it can be. Apart from affecting the delicate hearing mechanisms in your ears, exposure to constant and excessive noise can also

trigger headaches, raise your blood pressure, cause fatigue, irritability and digestive disorders, and increase your susceptibility to colds and other infections.

Reducing noise pollution at work

- Always use personal hearing protection such as ear plugs or ear muffs if provided.
- If you are permitted to listen to music through your earphones make sure those around you can't hear it, as this is a sign it's too loud and potentially damaging.
- If you are in charge of noisy equipment, try to run it early or late in the day when fewer people will be exposed.
- Make sure you spend part of your day working in quiet areas too. ✕

How loud is too loud?

Noise is measured in decibels. Experts believe that damage to hearing occurs when noise levels are higher than 85 decibels, about the loudness of heavy traffic. The louder the sound, the less time you can safely listen to it. Use an online noise simulator to find out about the potential of different types of music, work tools and everyday activities to damage your hearing by visiting hearingawarenessweek.org.au/too-loud.



466 million
or over 5% of the global
population live with
disabling hearing loss.



WORLD HEARING DAY March 3

On World Hearing Day 2019, the World Health Organization will draw attention to the importance of early identification and intervention for hearing loss.

Many people live with unidentified hearing loss, often failing to realize that they are missing out on certain sounds and words. Checking one's hearing is the first step towards addressing the issue.



Ask an expert about ...

Sore neck and shoulders

Q I'm an office worker so spend most of the day at a computer. At the end of each day my neck and shoulders are tight and sore. What can I do to help prevent this?

A A common complaint reported by office workers is neck and shoulder pain, says physiotherapist Adam Crisp. This is often due to poor ergonomics, holding a position for far too long, and a lack of physical activity. But with a little time and care you can minimise the development of neck and shoulder symptoms.

First, optimise ergonomics. Position your monitor at eye-level within arm's length, keep your shoulders relaxed when using the keyboard, use a headset if you're on the phone a lot and keep all frequently-used items within easy reach.

It's essential to change your posture regularly. Aim to take a break from your desk every 20 to 30 minutes to minimise postural fatigue. Walk to a colleague's desk instead

of ringing or emailing, refill your water glass or bottle regularly or use a sit-to-stand workstation if available.

Use a reminder on your computer to schedule stretching breaks. Regularly stretching your neck and shoulders helps mobility, reduces pain and tightness and lessens fatigue from holding a position too long.

An exercise band can also help. Using one throughout the day activates muscles that can often become lazy when you're at your desk – most commonly the upper back and shoulder muscles.

Finally, I'd recommend a heat pack. This is an excellent way to relax muscles and reduce the development of pain and tightness.

App of the month

Do a spot check

We love the sun but, by the age of 70, many of us will be diagnosed with skin cancer. So if you have any skin concerns, like new moles or ones that

have changed, it's a good idea to get them looked at as soon as you can. But if you just can't get to a GP or skin specialist straightaway, you can use an app like Firstcheck. Simply take a photo of the area of concern, send it off to a registered skin specialist, and they'll get back to you within 72 hours. Available for free from the App Store and Google Play.

Are you too negative?

How do you know if you're thinking negatively? Well, are you always a critic? Finding fault with yourself and those around you? This is an example of negative thinking and usually stems from feeling insecure about yourself, and often feeling like you're not good enough.

So, instead of criticising, try encouraging yourself and others. Give your friends or co-workers a compliment, and give yourself a pat on the back when you know you deserve it. This will help improve your self-esteem and feelings of wellbeing. ✕

Breathe a sigh of relief

Do you have asthma? If so, it might pay to watch your sulfite intake. Sulfites are antioxidants found naturally in food but used as preservatives to keep dried fruit like apricots from turning brown and to prevent unwanted bacteria from spoiling wine. The most common adverse reactions to sulfites, including wheezing, chest tightness and coughing, are estimated to affect five to 10 per cent of people with asthma. Next time you have a glass of wine or a bowl of muesli with dried fruit, pay attention to your symptoms to see if sulfites could be the culprit.

wellatwork™

Published by: Healthworks®

Suite 3.06, 55 Miller Street Pyrmont NSW 2009 Australia
ACN 624 842 351 **Phone:** 1300 90 10 90

Website: www.healthworks.com.au

Editorial Team:

Editor: Jenny BOSS MHumNutr

Deputy Editor: Debbie Duncan

Subscriptions: Janelle Gibb

Email: well@healthworks.com.au

Healthworks® wellness, health, and safety products and solutions are a trademark of Bodycare Health & Wellbeing Pty Ltd (ACN 624 842 351), registered in Australia. Well at Work™ ©2019. All rights reserved. No part of this work may be re-sold, reproduced or copied in any form. The information in this publication does not provide medical advice for individual problems. For advice and treatment, consult your doctor or health care professional. Well at Work is printed on an environmentally responsible paper. The pulp for this paper is sourced from certified, well managed sustainable plantations and the paper mill is ISO 14001 accredited.



News Bites



Take a weight off

Lifting weights for less than an hour a week could reduce your risk of having a heart attack or stroke by 40 to 70 per cent, according to a new study. And you don't have to join a gym.

Lifting any weight that increases resistance on your muscles is the key, say researchers from Iowa State University. "My muscles don't know the difference if I'm digging in the yard, carrying heavy shopping bags or lifting a dumbbell," says Duck-chul Lee, the study's lead author. ✕

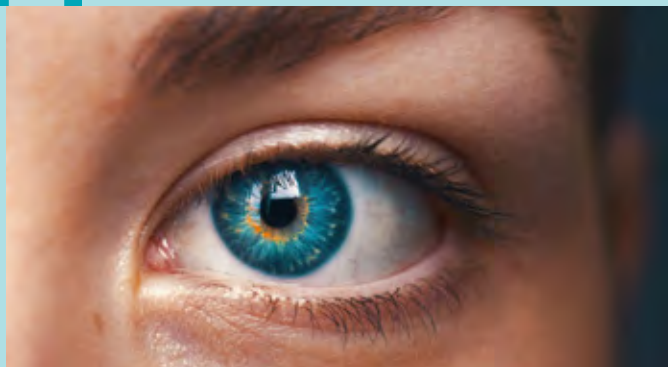
Lights out

We've all heard about blue light and how it can negatively affect our sleep, but scientists are reinforcing the importance of finding ways to regulate our body clock and reduce the negative effects of blue light exposure. How? By taking opportunities to expose ourselves to the natural light cycle of night and day. Here's what to do:

- Try to spend time in daylight each morning and limit blue light from devices at night.
- Replace cool/white-coloured lightbulbs with warmer-coloured ones.
- Go camping for the weekend. Avoiding all artificial light sources, even for a short time, could help reset your body clock.

1

THING YOU CAN DO TODAY



Give your eyes a break

If you don't plan on giving up your phone, computer or tablet anytime soon, it's time to learn to look after your eyes.

Staring at screens all day won't necessarily damage your eyesight, according to the experts, but it could cause computer vision syndrome or eye strain, which can leave you with dry, irritated and tired eyes.

Try the 20/20/20 exercise

Every 20 minutes spent using a screen, you should try to look at something that is 20 feet away (about six metres) from you for a total of 20 seconds.

How far is six metres anyway?

No need to get out the measuring tape. It's not important to be precise, simply try to focus on an object outside your window, such as a tree or sign across the street.

Why 20 seconds?

It takes about 20 seconds for your eyes to completely recover and relax.

Have trouble remembering to rest your eyes?

Make your screen work for your eyes for a change and download an app to help you. Eye Care 20 20 20, free from the App Store and Google Play, will prompt you to do the exercise regularly. Simply click start when you begin your screen time. ✕

EAT SMARTER

How to get the best from your veg

Vegetables have their highest nutrient content right after being picked. Eat them there and then and you'd think you'd get the best health value from them but there's more to it than that.

Is raw better than cooked? Eating vegetables in their natural raw state provides the body with the highest amount of fibre. But when it comes to nutritional value, cooking vegetables the right way can make the minerals, vitamins and antioxidants they contain more digestible.

What is the right way to cook vegetables? Researchers have found that lightly cooking vegetables can break down the cell walls of the plant, so that they are easier to digest. To help preserve the nutrients in vegetables make sure to cook them until they are tender but still firm, recommend health scientists from the University of Kentucky.

For the best nutritional value? Overcooking your vegetables probably isn't the smartest thing to do – at least when it comes to your health.

The researchers recommend lightly steaming vegetables to get the best from your cooked veg but for the optimal nutritional value go for variety. Eat some raw and some cooked vegetables every day. ✕



MAYFAIR
WE CARE

Mayfair cares