



Eating for Health

There is increasing evidence of the benefit of a healthy diet in helping people feel well with long term conditions such as pain.

Gut bacteria/organisms are central to health, extracting the nutrients from our food, and can lead to health or illness. A large variety of good bacteria is associated with health and wellbeing.

Choosing a good diet can help how you feel by:

- Reducing inflammation in the body
- Improving the number of 'good' bacteria in the gut

This can reduce many of the problems that patients who have pain struggle with:

Tiredness & Fatigue
Weight Gain
Gut problems
Headaches

Disturbed Sleep
Pain
Mood Difficulties

There is a tendency for people to reach for 'comfort' or convenience foods – usually high fat, high sugar, processed foods. These can

- Increase inflammation and
- Damage the gut bacteria balance (dysbiosis)

The key aims are to

1. Improve the number and variety of good bacteria (variety of plants, fasting and fermented foods)
2. Increase antioxidants (found in highly coloured plant foods)
3. Increase fibre content (found in whole plant foods)

WHEN to eat?

Fasting (such as time restricted feeding) reduces inflammation, insulin levels and allows the cells of the body time to clean up. Improves blood pressure, blood sugar, energy levels, brain fog. Longer fasts can help with weight loss.

It can take a bit of time for the weight to start reducing but keep with it. Once your body alters its metabolism it gets much easier.

Time Restricted Feeding

Eat all your food in a 6 -10 hour 'eating window'

The rest of the time is the 'fasting window'

During the fast drink lots of water and only black/ green tea or coffee (no sugar or milk)

Use an app such as Zero to track fasting times.



WHAT to eat?

- ✓ Predominantly plant derived foods
- ✓ A lot of plant variety – aim for
 - 30 different plants a week
 - & EAT THE RAINBOW daily!! – a variety of highly coloured plants = high antioxidants
- ✓ Whole foods
- ✓ Low in processed foods and sugar/artificial sweeteners
- ✓ High in good fats – nuts and seeds (also high in fibre and antioxidants)
- ✓ Fermented foods

Brightly coloured veg (particularly in the skin so don't peel)

- Spinach, kale, watercress, fennel,
- Broccoli, red cabbage, brussels, cauliflower
- Celery
- Red onions, shallots, leek, garlic
- Carrots, parsnips, sweet potatoes, beetroot
- Squash, courgettes
- Olives
- Legumes: lentils, chickpeas, beans, peas
- Wholegrains – eg brown rice, pasta, bread
- Grains such as buckwheat, wild rice, quinoa,
- Oats
- Berries
- Whole fruit
- Nuts (& nut butters/cheese): walnuts, hazelnuts, almonds, brazils
- Seeds: chia, flax, pumpkin, sunflower
- Olive oil, coconut oil
- Dark chocolate and coffee/tea
- Herbs e.g. rosemary, thyme, peppermint, parsley
- Spices esp. Turmeric (with pepper)

Fermented foods such as live sauerkraut, live plain yoghurt (fruit yoghurt will have sugar), kefir, miso, kombucha. These improve the balance of bacteria in the gut.

Introduce new foods slowly – need to grow the bacteria to process them.

Take home message

Choosing a healthy diet can really help how you are feeling. Make positive steps to:

- Increase vegetables and beans/lentils
- Increase good fats – nuts, seeds,
- Increase wholegrains
- Reduce 'junk food' – ready meals, crisps, cakes, biscuits.
- Reduce sugar and sweeteners



Ask yourself:

- Is this food that I am about to buy or eat going to help me feel well?
- How is it going to support my nutrition?
- What one change can I make to what or when I eat?

Resources:

Books:

- The Doctor's Kitchen: **Dr Rupy Aujla** – why food is medicinal and the science behind it as well as easy recipes
- Spoon Fed: why almost everything we've been told about food is wrong **Tim Spector**
- The 4 Pillar Plan; The Stress solution; Feel better in 5, all by **Dr Rangan Chatterjee**.
- Brain Changer: How diet can save your mental health - cutting-edge science from an expert. **Professor Felice Jacka**.
- The Diabetes Code: prevent and reverse type 2 diabetes naturally. **Dr Jason Fung**

Podcasts:

- **Dr Rupy Aujla**: The Doctor's Kitchen: Covers the ways in which diet and lifestyle can help you achieve your healthiest life.
- **Dr Rangan Chatterjee**: Feel Better, Live More (for example Episode 87 is an interview with patient with fibromyalgia). Interview with Tim Spector is podcast 131

YouTube talks:

- **Dr John Cryan**. Eg 'Feed Your Microbes' <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vKxomLM7SVc>
- **Tim Spector** a number of videos on nutrition and diet
- **Jason Fung** on intermittent Fasting. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VlhrYjVhOk>
- **Lucy Ward** Eating for Health <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zwj95RtLNgM>

Websites:

- Plant based health online – lots of helpful resources <https://plantbasedhealthonline.com/resources#articles>

Recipes and cooking ideas:

- **The Happy Pear** – online whole food plant based recipe ideas and courses
- Healthy cooking on a limited budget <https://cookingonabootstrap.com/>
- Deliciously Ella <https://deliciouslyella.com/> also has an App
- Bosh recipes <https://www.bosh.tv/> Fabulous plant based recipes