



Volume 2, Issue 12  
December 2006

## Maybe The Question is..... Not *What* But *Why*?

Often when people are trying to get fit, loose weight or simply be healthier they do a lot of research to find out the best way to achieve this goal. They buy books, search the internet and buy vitamins and supplements. They are searching for the answer to their 'what' question. What food do I need to eat? What exercise do I need to do? What health problem do I have?



Maybe the focus should be directed slightly differently. Most of us know that sensible eating and regular exercise are usually a good start for anyone desiring change. How about focusing on more 'why' questions. *Why* can't I commit to an exercise program? *Why* do I overeat at meal times, even when I am full? *Why* do I lose motivation when it comes to exercise? *Why* do I fill my trolley with unhealthy, processed food when I know what I should be buying? *Why* do I lose control of my eating on weekends, holidays or special events? *Why* do I chop and change exercise programs, gyms or personal trainers? *Why* do I binge eat when no one is around? Deep down we often know what we should be doing but somehow it becomes hard to put these things into action.

I find a good place to start is looking at our stress levels. Everyone has some level of stress in their lives. It's important to admit to yourself when stress is getting on top of you and that maybe its time to address it. Once stress levels are under control you will have a clearer mind and be able to make more sensible and informed decisions about food and exercise.

17 Adolphson Ave  
Nth Ringwood 3134  
9870 4050

So, identify areas of you life that are causing you stress. Write them down in order of biggest to smallest, with a good explanation. Write down how you are currently dealing with this stress. Write this as an outsider looking in. Try and remove yourself from the picture. Now, looking at how you are currently dealing with these situations try and see other ways to manage the stress. If you can't actually change the situation then changing your perception, focus and manner in which you handle it can make a huge difference. Things like yoga and meditation are very popular as is acupuncture which is becoming more and more recognised as effective for stress, anxiety and depression.

When you identify why you seek comfort in food it can become a lot easier to tackle over eating or binging. When you discover what you need to change, remove, or add to your life then turning to food for comfort becomes less of a priority.



Diversion is always a good tool and exercise can be a positive one. Going for a walk, having a session with your trainer or simply lying in a quiet space and stretching are all ways of taking your mind somewhere else. Also when you are fitter and healthier you are likely to be more in tune with your body and less inclined to sabotage your health.

Removing temptations and being organised are essential when trying to make change. If you think you're addicted to eating snacks after dinner then have a healthy one planned, removing all 'nasty' treats from your home. Eating correctly during the day and not skipping meals prevents drops in blood sugar and hunger, helping you to control what you decide to eat. Hunger is a big trigger for over eating. You can't think straight when you're in this state and will always most likely lead to you making bad food choices.

In regards to exercise, consistency is the key. If one day you don't have time for an hours walk then just go for 20 minutes. It's still worth the effort and it does make a difference.

Once a person's stress levels are reduced they can always make more reasonable choices about their food and exercise. A lot of mental energy is consumed through stress so of course it's hard to be motivated when we're in a negative state. So maybe take a different approach if you're one of these people who keeps struggling. Start with your thoughts, what ever is going through your mind over and over. Address this and I promise you everything will fall into place.

Kylie

## Beef Satay Patties

### Ingredients:

600 g lean beef mince  
2 teaspoons cornflour, (\*)  
3 teaspoons mirin, (\*\*)  
1 teaspoon sesame oil  
2 tablespoons Tamari  
2 cloves garlic, crushed  
2 teaspoons fresh ginger, grated  
1/4 cup smooth peanut butter (organic only!)\*\*  
2 tablespoons freshly chopped coriander

### Method:

1. Combine all ingredients in a large bowl. Mix well.
2. Place teaspoons of meat mixture onto an oiled baking tray.
3. Cover tray with aluminium foil.
4. Bake at 180°C for 15 minutes.
5. Remove and serve if patties seem firm to the touch.

### Notes:

\* Cornflour, believe it or not, is sometimes made from wheat. There are normally two brands on the shelf, one of them is made from corn, one from wheat. Check the label.

\*\* Mirin is a type of Japanese wine. Buy it from an Asian grocer.

\*\*\* When you buy fresh, organic peanut butter, you are getting exactly that. Freshly ground peanuts, containing all the good oils, and fresh butter. Nothing else is added. You'll find it in health food stores.

Happy cooking, Paul

Food is made up of different constituents that you have probably heard about before, like protein, carbohydrates and fats. The body breaks down all foods into these basic constituents, and uses them for specific purposes. Bits and pieces are despatched all around the body for its various uses, via the blood stream. Ideally, we would match our food intake exactly to our body's requirements but, of course, practicalities get in the way, like availability and our dreaded taste buds. Let's have a closer look at what exactly our body does with the food we feed it.

## What Is Our Body Made Of?

**Muscle.** Our muscles are the main functional parts of our bodies and they are made of protein. Mostly, they are the only things that move. Muscles make our bodies and limbs move, and they make our internals move - heart, lungs etc. Our muscles constantly need repair and maintenance, especially when you are recovering from exercise, and protein is what muscles require.



**Fat.** The main reason we need fat on our bodies is for energy storage. Back in the good ol' days when we were cave-people, we regularly had to go for days on end without food due to scarcity. When food is scarce, our fat reserves are converted to energy for our bodies to survive on. Other than that, body fat is not much required for today's human bodies. At least in Australia, food shortage is not such a problem (quite the opposite).

**Water.** Water is the medium in which the body exists. In between all the little parts, the body is made of water, around 70%. Just as we need to drink water, all our cells need to drink water too. In fact, the reason we drink water is so water can be carried to every part of the body, so that our little cells can drink water too, transporting valuable nutrients and flushing out waste at the same time.

**Bones.** As we all know, the framework of our body is the skeleton. Our bones are made of mostly calcium. Calcium

is required the most while we are young and growing, which is why babies drink their mother's milk. As we get older, some calcium is still required to maintain our bones and to ward off such diseases as osteoporosis.

## Nutrients

In small, but very important quantities, the body requires other things to keep itself going. These include vitamins, minerals, and essential fats. There are hundreds of nutrients in our bodies, and all these are needed to maintain all body functions.



## Energy

Our bodies need fuel to keep us moving and keep us warm. The body converts some of what we eat into energy. Energy mainly comes in the form of carbohydrates, which we eat as sugars and more complex carbohydrates. Energy is also derived from the proteins and fats we eat. Everyone's body is different, and our requirements change, but typically there is a certain amount of energy we require per day (calories or kilojoules). Everything over that amount is converted to fat for energy storage. (Our bodies are not smart enough to know that, in our modern age, we actually don't need this energy storage).

## Food We Eat

When you are eating or planning a meal - consider what your body requires, and consider what you are feeding yourself. When thinking this way, it becomes easier to provide your body with what it needs. Also, we become aware of what our body doesn't need. Let's look at what the food we eat actually contains.

**Protein.** Proteins are mainly animal products, like meats and fish. (Remember, our muscles are made from protein. Animals' muscles are the meat we eat). Protein is also found in eggs and dairy foods. Legumes, like lentils, dried beans and soy beans also contain high levels of protein.

**Fat.** Fat is obviously present in meats, and we can often see this. All oils are 100% fat. Therefore, everything fried in oil is fatty. Fats are also found in nuts and dairy foods.

**Carbohydrate.** All sugar is carbohydrate. Everything high in sugar is high in carbohydrates. When ever you hear the term 'complex carbohydrates', this refers to long chains of sugars. Starch is a complex carbohydrate. Breads, cereals, pasta, rice and potatoes are all complex carbohydrates. Fruits and most vegetables are basic, fruit-style carbohydrates.

**Nutrients.** Nutrients are present mostly in fresh, unprocessed foods, like fresh meats, fruits, vegetables, and nuts. They contain the many vitamins and minerals provided for us by nature. Nutrients can easily be destroyed, so the more a food has been processed, normally the less nutrients are remaining.

Pulling all of the above together, it's clear how important it is that we structure our food intake for good health, addressing our body's needs from a physiological requirement, not a taste bud request! Our body needs mainly protein, nutrients and energy. The reason I put energy last in this list is that, if we eat vegetables, fruit and meat for protein and nutrients, you'll see from above that energy is derived from all these sources anyway! High energy foods like pasta and cake give you huge amounts of energy without giving you anything else you need. They contain a lot of 'dead' calories with hardly any nutrients.

So when it comes to the food you are feeding your body think carefully about what you are actually providing for your body. Is it really food and is it the best choice you could make?

Paul



The information provided in this newsletter is for general educational purposes only. It is not intended to be relied upon as, nor to be a substitute for, specific professional advice. If you are currently under the care of a medical practitioner, you have any injuries or you are taking prescription medication, it is recommended that you seek professional advice prior to starting any fitness program.