



Food versus exercise – What’s more important for weight loss?

Weight loss and weight gain revolve around calorie consumption and expenditure. Put simply; we lose weight when we consume less calories than we expend and we gain weight when we consume more calories than we expend. In order to lose fat, we must create a calorie deficit, which can be achieved either through exercise or diet. So which gives us the biggest bang for our buck? The answer lies somewhere in between.

Here’s a simple example of the differences between eating and exercise. A 100g chocolate bar could easily be eaten in under one minute. The approximate amount of energy in that bar

is 2200 kJ (500 calories) and would be enough to fuel the body of a sedentary office worker for around five hours with no other food needed. The amount of exercise you would need to burn off the energy from the chocolate bar is a 7km run or 90 minute walk.

Therefore, making some concerted changes to the “input” side of the energy balance equation can reap large benefits for weight loss.

Diet has shown to play a bigger role in weight loss in the short term, however, studies indicate that exercise plays a bigger role in helping people keep the weight off in the long

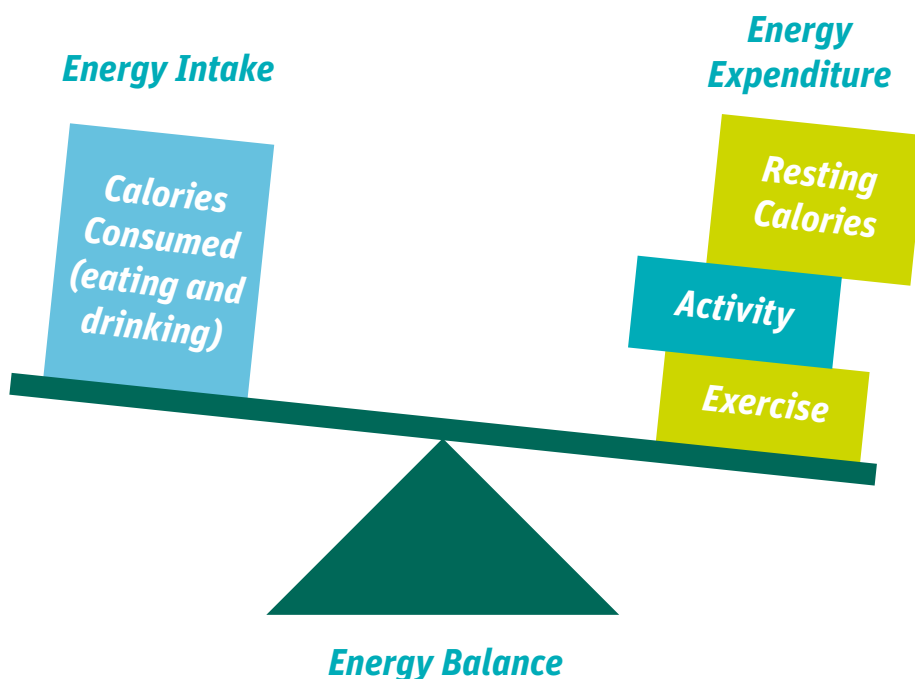
term. In addition, exercise has several other positive effects such as boosting our mood and protecting our bodies from disease and injury.

Long-term successful “weight losers” make a conscious effort to adopt at least one weight loss strategy from the following list:

- ▶ Increase fruit and vegetables
- ▶ Increase exercise
- ▶ Decrease kilojoules
- ▶ Decrease fat intake
- ▶ Decrease processed packaged food and drink
- ▶ Decrease portion sizes
- ▶ Decrease overall quantity of food

These strategies are consistent with recommendations by nutrition and health professionals for safe and appropriate weight loss.

Small and realistic lifestyle changes will always be the best recipe for achieving and maintaining a healthy weight.





Exercising in summer safely

Exercising in hot weather, even if you have a high level of fitness, increases your risk of heat stress.

When you exercise in hot weather, keep these precautions in mind:

- ▶ Exercise in the early morning or in the evening when the temperature is cooler
- ▶ Find alternatives to exercising outdoors such as working out in an air-conditioned gym, walking laps inside a shopping centre, climbing stairs in an air-conditioned building or doing some laps in a swimming pool
- ▶ Drink plenty of water before, during and after exercise
- ▶ Don't exercise if you feel unwell or are recovering from an illness
- ▶ If you are unfit or new to exercise be extra cautious when working out in the heat. Reduce your exercise intensity and take frequent breaks
- ▶ Wear light coloured, loose fitting clothing. Cotton fabric is the best choice as it absorbs sweat
- ▶ Wear sunscreen
- ▶ Certain medical conditions or medications can increase your risk of heat related illnesses. If you plan to exercise in the heat, talk to your doctor about precautions

Homemade Nut & Cranberry Oat Bars

Ingredients:

- ▶ 3 cups of rolled oats
- ▶ 1 cup of mixed nuts - raw, unsalted and chopped (almonds, cashews, walnuts, any combination you like)
- ▶ 1 cup of dried cranberries - chopped
- ▶ 2 tablespoons of light brown sugar
- ▶ 1 tablespoon of chia seeds / poppy seeds (optional)
- ▶ 2 tablespoons of plain flour
- ▶ 30g of vegetable / canola oil
- ▶ 4 tablespoons of rice bran syrup

Method:

Preheat oven to 180c.

Mix all the dry ingredients (oats, nuts, cranberries, seeds, flour and sugar) together until the flour has thoroughly coated all the ingredients in the bowl.

In a saucepan heat the rice bran syrup and the oil on low heat until it's combined and heated

through. Pour the wet ingredients over the dry ingredients, mix them well until the mixture becomes sticky.

Line a medium size roasting pan with grease proof paper then pour the mixture into the lined pan. Use the back of a spoon to press the mixture down until it has a smooth surface.

Bake in the oven for 25 - 30 mins or until the oats turn golden colour.

Take out of the oven and leave to cool in the tin.

Once cooled, cut into bars.

Notes:

You can swap the dry ingredients for any dried fruits or nuts you have.

Instead of making into bars, you can also break them up in small chunks to make a granola for breakfast.

For a special treat, you can also melt dark chocolate and drizzle it on top of the bars and sprinkle a tiny pinch of sea salt to enhance the flavour.



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