byebyebridget.com

Nutritional Basics

Understanding Food Sources

Firstly you need to understand a little about foods and what your body uses them for. All foods are broken down by the body into 3 main food groups and these are: carbohydrates (includes fibre), protein or fats.

Most foods will be predominately one food source for example oil is 100% fat, while others will contain all 3 food groups, eg milk, which contains some carbohydrate (sugars), fats and proteins.

Carbohydrates

- Carbohydrates (Carbs) are foods that have a sugar base and/or fibre (or cellulose) as it's smallest chemical structure.
- Most carbohydrates tend to be plants.
- These include foods such as sugar, jams, bread, flour, pastas, pastries, rice, fruit, vegetables and alcohol
- They give you 4 calories of energy per gram.
- Carbs are used by the body for energy and some as a source of fibre.

Carbs are broken down by your body to the small units called glucose which is a form of sugar. The body then stores glucose as glycogen in the muscles, liver and spleen for when it is needed.

A small amount is always circulating in the blood stream and this is referred to as "your blood sugar level " or BSL.

Alcohol is broken down into glucose therefore is a carbohydrate. It actually provides more sugar/energy than most carbohydrates (alcohol gives you 7 calories per gram).

A large intake of carbs (50-60% of your diet) is important if you participate in prolonged exercise.

A moderate consumption (40%) is all that is need for you if you do light exercise have a sedentary job.

Proteins

- Animal products or products of animals (eg milk, eggs) tend to be the best sources of protein.
- Nuts, seeds and legumes also contain moderate amounts of protein. Protein sources include animal products, beans, legumes, tofu and nuts.
- The smallest part a protein can be broken down to is called an amino acid.
- Proteins are used for new tissue growth, repair of tears and immune factors.
- Your diet should be 20 – 30% protein!

Vegetarians need to eat a range of non-animal protein sources to ensure they get all the amino acids.

Some people have problems breaking down proteins so need digestive enzymes.

Fats

- Fat forms the wrapping of your body's cell and assists with keeping you warm and protecting your organs.
- Fat sources include: oils, butter, margarine, hidden fats (like in meat) nuts, cream and icecream.
- Your diet should be < 30% in fat intake with greater focus on the good ones.

Saturated fats are derived from animal sources (eg pork crackling), coconut oil and palm oil. They are solid at room temperature and are harder for the body to break down. They are associated with a higher incidence of heart disease, diabetes and other degenerative diseases.

Unsaturated fats on the other hand are OK and even beneficial to eat.
Sources include deep sea fish, seeds, nuts, flax seed oil, olive and sesame oils. These fats are liquid at room temperature and contain the beneficial fatty acids . At low levels of intensity exercise (eg walking) nearly all energy is derived from fat, so walking in a great strategy for losing fat.

Bridget's fat loss Tip

Ingestion of carbs will decrease fat being used as the body will be provided with lots of energy and will have no need to use up fat stores for energy. Cutting back on high glycaemic foods is important when trying to lose weight.

When trying to lose weight, you will need to cut down on alcohol.

2 glasses of alcohol is the equivalent to a 1 hour walk.