



## 10 things you didn't know about 'Eating Smart'!

**Written by Eat Smart Nutrition Consultants**

There is so much nutrition information in the media it's a wonder anyone knows what to eat or drink any more! One minute eggs are good for you, the next they are loaded with cholesterol; this month drinking plenty of water is essential, the next month, we're all drinking too much water! This month we're looking at 10 little known ways to Eat Smart....

1. **People keep telling me I should eat more than 3 times per day!** Recent research looked at the benefits of eating 3 meals per day as opposed to 6 small meals or snacks per day. There was no difference in people's weight control provided the energy (calories or kilojoules) were the same by the end of the day. So for those busy people out there who struggle to fit in morning and afternoon tea, 3 meals per day is great!
2. **Dairy products won't make me gain weight?** Actually they might help you lose weight! Research over the last few years has found that those people who consume 2-3 serves of low fat dairy products per day were better able to control their weight than those with lower intakes. Dairy products are also a great source of calcium for our bones but also contain lots of other beneficial nutrients like protein, carbohydrate and magnesium. Low fat dairy products are recommended such as light, skim or reduced fat milk; low fat yoghurt; reduced fat cheese and low fat custard and ice cream.
3. **Lite or light doesn't mean its light in fat or energy!** Lite or light may mean its light in colour such as light fruit cake, light in texture such as "Lites" chips or light in flavour such as light olive oil. It may mean its reduced in fat or energy but read the label to avoid being caught out!
4. **Brown rice is healthier than white rice.** Brown rice is higher in fibre than white rice but both are relatively low sources of fibre in the diet. Most brown rices are also high in glycaemic index. Many people also complain about the cooking time and texture of brown rice. Low GI white rices such as Basmati or Doongarra are good choices. If you like brown rice try Mahatma which is a low GI brown rice.
5. **Drink wine for good health!** Red and white wine does contain good amounts of antioxidants but only in small doses. A 750mL bottle of wine contains 7 standard drinks. 1 glass of wine is sufficient for antioxidant benefit so a bottle wine should last 1 person for a week! Drinking more than 3-4 standard glasses (1/2 bottle) per day negates these positive effects so make sure you're not over doing it! A review of the research on wines beneficial effect on heart health showed 150mL (1 glass) per day reduces cardiovascular risk by 32%.
6. **I've heard nuts are good for me, but aren't they high in fat?** Yes nuts are high in fat but the majority of the fat in nuts is the heart healthy mono and polyunsaturated kind. 50g of nuts (the size of the packet you get at a bar) has as much fat as a Big Mac but nuts can reduce your cholesterol where as a Big Mac is likely to increase it. Walnuts and almonds have been shown to have the most beneficial effect due to their fibre, vitamin E (a great antioxidant) and good fats content. 30g per day is suggested for good heart health.

7. **I was always told to eat everything on my plate!** People often eat until all the food on the plate is gone rather than eating until they are satisfied. We have all heard the excuses about starving children in Africa (are you actually going to send your leftovers to them?) and about throwing money in the bin but remember it's better to go in the waste than around the waist! What is more costly, throwing food away or paying for gym memberships, weight loss pills and shakes and medical appointments? Try putting your cutlery down in between bites, chewing more slowly, drinking water in between mouthfuls and taking at least 10 minutes to eat a meal. Stop when you are no longer hungry rather than when you are full.
8. **Your stomach has a capacity of ~500mL or 2 cups.** That means if the food on your plate totals more than 2 cups you are over-filling your stomach. Use a smaller plate or put less on your plate for good health!
9. **Chocolate is good for you, or is it?** Research on dark chocolates beneficial attributes showed 100g per day reduced cardiovascular risk by 21%. Before you go out and eat 100g of dark chocolate remember that a 100g serving has 2200kJ which is equivalent to a cheeseburger, small fries and a coke so if you're watching your weight go easy on the chocolate!
10. **Bland food can make you gain weight!** If you're eating bland food that you're not enjoying this can lead you to seek out tasty and often high energy (calories or kilojoules) food afterwards such as chocolate, ice cream, cheese etc. Spice up your meals by adding herbs, spices, flavourings, sauces and marinades so you enjoy your meal and finish it feeling satisfied rather than deprived. Try a new recipe, take a gourmet cooking class or invite someone over for dinner to spark your interest in tasty food!

Eating Smart is not just about choosing healthy food but also about enjoying what you're eating. So sit down to 3 or 6 meals per day which are no greater than 2 cups in capacity but only eat until you're satisfied; add some dairy, nuts, wine and chocolate to your day; spice up with food with flavour; rice is nice whatever colour it is and don't think lite is always light!