

# Viva!

H E A L T H

## FEEDING YOU THE FACTS

### HEALTHY WEIGHT

Achieving a healthy weight isn't about being thin, it's about having a healthy body that works well and isn't held back by inflammation, achy joints, high blood pressure or high blood sugar.



### EAT FIBRE-RICH FOODS

Fibre binds water and increases the food bulk in your digestive system, which helps you feel fuller. It also slows down carbohydrate (sugar) absorption from food – that means fibre-rich foods give you a steady energy supply and delay hunger.

Choose wholegrains (wholemeal bread, whole wheat pasta, brown rice, jumbo oats), fresh fruit and vegetables, pulses (beans, lentils, peas, chickpeas) and nuts and seeds. Avoid white bread, white rice, processed snacks (sweet or salty), sugar and sugary 'healthy' foods, such as sweetened breakfast cereals, granola bars and flapjacks.

Fruit contains natural sugars but you don't need to avoid fruit because the high fibre content slows down sugar absorption. Aim for at least three portions a day and three or four portions of veggies.

### GOOD AND BAD FATS

We've evolved to have a taste for fatty foods because fat is a rich energy source. That's why we tend to eat too much but the fact is, we need only a small amount of essential fats, which you can get from a tablespoon of ground flaxseed or chia seeds or a small handful of walnuts.

As a rule of thumb, don't use more than a teaspoon of oil per portion when cooking, use fatty spreads on bread only in a thin layer and when snacking, set your limit to two tablespoons of nuts and seeds at a time. One tablespoon of nut butters or tahini per portion should be the upper limit.

Deep-fried and fat-soaked foods (crisps) should be an occasional treat only and don't forget to read labels when shopping – many foods contain surprisingly high amounts of fat.

# PROTEIN IS YOUR FRIEND

It takes your body longer to digest protein so, protein-rich foods are more filling. It just so happens that many protein-rich vegan foods are also great sources of fibre – lentils, beans, chickpeas, soya, tofu, tempeh, wholegrains, nuts and seeds.

# TREAT YOURSELF

We don't want to give up our favourite treats. To manage your treat habit, allow yourself a small amount of what you fancy and pair it with something healthier – two biscuits and a piece of fruit or two squares of dark chocolate and some nuts, a few olives instead of crisps. Don't overindulge and pick your treats wisely so they're a small addition to your overall diet but never a staple.

If you know that treat rationing isn't going to work for you, try to go without and replace your favourite treat with something healthier. After three weeks, you'll start feeling that it's your new normal.

# PORTION LIMITS?

If you need to lose weight it is likely that you need to reduce your portion sizes. It's really important that what you eat is healthy too! If you make your diet low in fat, high in fibre, plentiful in protein, avoid processed foods and focus on wholefoods, you may find that you fill up more and for longer, so this is easier to do. Your meals will fill you up sooner than if you eat fat-soaked, sugar-rich foods and you'll be able to achieve a healthy weight.

Set sustainable rules to reduce your calorie intake – eg two slices of bread for breakfast or eight tablespoons of muesli; or one cup (instead of two) of brown rice with a meal. Keep an eye on portion sizes and fill up on fibre.

# GET THE BLOOD FLOWING

Being physically active is natural and healthy for us – it makes us feel better because it releases feel-good hormones, stimulates our muscles and bones and lubricates our joints. When you're trying to lose weight, it's always better to up your physical activity rather than severely limit your food intake. The gym is an option but not a must. Go for a walk, hike, use the stairs, dance, cycle, jog or do yoga.

If you slip up and give in to cravings or overindulge at a party, don't beat yourself up – it's only human! Jump back into your healthy routine and feel good about not giving up.

