

Food News

Volume 8, issue 3

April 2022

Sustainable changes: for your health and for the health of the planet!

This months edition of Food News looks at how you can create sustainable lifestyle changes that you are more likely to continue! and ways you can reduce your carbon footprint through sustainable diets.

We will also discuss dietary fibre intake,.

Inside this issue:

Truth or Myth	2
Sustainable diets	3
In season	4
Social media & sticking to goals	5
Trending	6-7



Warwickshire Eating and Drinking for Health Group

Food News

is produced by the Education and Choice sub group of the Warwickshire food forum

The group meets four times a year, virtually at the moment but hopefully in different

locations across Warwickshire later in the year. If you would like to attend a meeting, please contact the editor. Details on the back page.

Truth or Myth

Are plant based meat (PBM) alternatives healthier for us?

Since the rise of plant based diets in an attempt to reduce our carbon footprint, we are seeing more of a variety of plant based meat alternatives on the supermarket shelves. Due to its rise in popularity, new research has been published which compared the nutritional profile of PBM alternatives and meat products.

What did the study involve?

The survey compared 226 meat products against 207 plant based meat alternatives, stocked by 14 retailers in the UK.

Products were put into 6 main groups:

Sausages, mince, meatballs, plain poultry alternatives, and breaded poultry alternatives.

The nutrients analysed per 100g were: total and saturated fat, energy density, protein, fibre and salt.



RESULTS: Plant based meat alternatives appeared to have a more beneficial nutrient profile, as they were lower in energy density, total & saturated fat and protein. They contained higher amounts of dietary fibre compared to meat products.

BUT: Salt content was significantly higher in the PBM alternatives; the 'plain poultry alternatives' had double the amount of salt compared to poultry meat. Nearly 75% of the PBM products did not meet the current UK salt targets. As the current average salt intake in the UK is 8.4g per day (recommended 6g/1 teaspoon per day), this is concerning. Too much salt in the diet can increase blood pressure.

The study did not measure the differences between important vitamins and minerals such as iron, and Vitamin B12, so it was unable to conclude the overall nutrient profiles between meat and PBM alternatives.

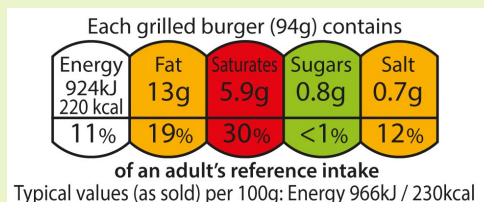
Therefore it's advisable to compare products using food labels to make informed choices.

SUMMARY: PBM are:

- ✓ Lower in total fat and saturated fat.
- ✓ Lower in energy
- ✓ Higher in fibre
- ✗ High in Salt

Take home message: Read and compare food labels!

Useful tools to help with this are free smartphone apps such as: NHS Food Scanner and FoodSwitch.



Sustainable Diets

Veganuary' 2022 was the biggest it has ever been, with record numbers of people signing up to the challenge.

Lots more of us are becoming aware of the impact we are having on the planet. If you are wanting to find out ways to reduce your carbon footprint this year through dietary changes, we have summarised the main points below from the EAT-Lancet Planetary Health Diet and the British Dietetic Association (BDA) Blue Dot Campaign.

For more information on how to adapt your favourite meals to climate friendlier versions, please see: BDA Blue Dot Campaign Meal Swaps under the further reading resources on the last page of this Food News Issue.



- Eat more plants and include lots of variety

At least five servings of fruits and vegetables consumed per day.

Eat wholegrain carbohydrate sources (rice, wheat, corn). Reduce intake of refined grains and sugar.

- Moderate meat intake

Include plant based protein where possible (nuts, seeds, lentils, beans, pulses, tofu). At least 50g of nuts and 75g of legumes per day.

If possible, buy fish from sustainable sources. Look for the Marine Stewardship Council or Aquaculture Stewardship Council symbols. Or choose alternative sources of omega-3 fatty acids.

Try to include meat free days and aim to reduce your intake of red and processed meat.

- Moderate dairy intake

Moderate levels of dairy intake e.g. 250g of dairy per day.

- Limit intake of highly processed foods which are high in saturated fat, salt and refined sugar.

The more processed a product is the higher the impact that product has had on the environment. Try to get sources of dietary fat from plant based, unsaturated products such as olive oil, seeds and nuts.



TOP TIP: Choose seasonal fruit and veg that is locally produced or go for frozen, dried or tinned variants – especially for fruit.

What's in Season?

Here is a list of what fruit and veg are in season this April

Fruit

Rhubarb

Vegetables

Artichoke, Beetroot, Cabbage, Carrots, Chicory, New Potatoes, Kale, Morel Mushrooms, Parsnips, Radishes, Rocket, Sorrel, Spinach, Spring Greens, Spring Onions, Watercress.

Cooking in season

The Lets Get Cooking Group have been chatting about ways to use veg in season. Here is what they shared about cabbage. To join them, go to ["Cooking Made Easy" on Facebook](#)

SAVOY CABBAGE IN SEASON

Savoy cabbage is a favourite; full of goodness and high in fibre and Vitamin C.

Cut into strips and fry off with a little garlic before tossing in some walnuts, oil/butter and cooked pasta with your favourite herb.

Cut it into wedges and roast in a tray with a tomato sauce with added smoked paprika, ground cumin and coriander. Coat the cabbage and roast for about 40-45 minutes at 180C.

Shred finely and use in coleslaw with carrot. Add a little sesame oil instead of mayonnaise.

Leftover cooked cabbage is great stirred though leftover mash and - you could even turn them into some potato cakes or bubble and squeak for breakfast.



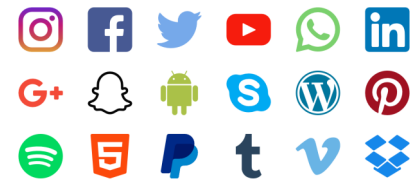
New potatoes are now in season so here is our low down on using them.

New potatoes have thin, wispy skins and a crisp, waxy texture. For this reason, you don't have to peel them; just wash the skin.

They are young potatoes and unlike their fully grown counterparts, they keep their shape once cooked and cut.

To cook, boil in water with a little salt in until they fall off a knife that you have stuck through. There are different varieties that have different flavours so try them plain. Serve hot or cold. Go to :

lovepotatoes.co.uk/recipes/boiled-new-potatoes/ for the details.



Sticking to New Year Resolutions

We are bombarded with lots of health information through websites, apps and social media. It can be difficult to navigate and may feel overwhelming at times.

Social media can either influence or sabotage your diet and lifestyle choices. Therefore, being mindful of what you are exposed to, and where the information is coming from is important. Always check the credibility of the resources and watch out for red flags such as: social media comment sections, group chats, celebrity or influencer blogs, entertainment websites and clickbait/exaggerated headlines.

At this time of year, New Year resolutions tend to fall short. So what if this has happened to you? If it has then this is completely okay! Instead of seeing this as a 'failure', why not see it as a learning opportunity? Ask yourself, what got in the way of your goal? How will you be able to overcome this in the future? Did you have an all or nothing mind-set?

Research shows that people are more likely to stick to their New Year resolutions if they adopt small consistent changes that fit around their lifestyle. These small habits over time eventually lead to bigger results. It helps if your goal is planned and thought out. For example: if your goal was to increase your intake of fruit and vegetables, ask yourself: how many are you wanting to increase it by? When are you going to do it? Do you need to prepare meals in advance? And are you going to be doing this by yourself or with friends/family.

There are some great online resources to help you plan your goals such as the free NHS Weight Loss Plan. It personalises your plan based on your goals.

It seems fitting to mention self-compassion and the impact this can have on our health. Is your inner critic being too harsh? A lot of people do not realise that their inner critic is holding them back.

Research shows that people who engage in self compassion techniques are more likely to stick to their health goals and engage in health promoting activities.

Wellbeing apps such as headspace also have guided meditation courses on how to become more self compassionate and offers a 7 to 14 day free trial.

For more information on how to be more self compassionate, please see the links provided under the further reading, references and resources section.

Trending now: Fibre



Dietary fibre is contained plants that we eat but which doesn't get digested in the small intestine. Instead, it is completely or partially broken down (fermented) by bacteria in your large intestine. Fibre includes carbohydrates called polysaccharides and resistant oligosaccharides (ROS)

Recent research suggests that fibre should be categorised by its physical characteristics; e.g. how well it dissolves (solubility), how thick it is (viscosity) and how well it breaks down (fermentability).

Soluble fibre including pectins and beta glucans is found in foods like fruit and oats.

Insoluble fibre including cellulose is found in wheat bran and nuts.

Resistant starch (RS) is a soluble fibre that gets broken down by good bacteria in the gut to produce short chain fatty acids (SCFAs). RS is naturally present in some foods such as bananas, potatoes, grains and pulses.

Prebiotics are types of carbohydrate that only our gut bacteria can feed upon. Some examples are onions, garlic, asparagus and banana

Did you know that eating a range of dietary fibre can:

Improve the diversity of your friendly gut bugs

Improve constipation and lactose intolerance

Reduce inflammation in your gut

Enhance immunity



How much should we eat and what are foods are high in fibre?

Fibre is found in a range of foods, including fruit, vegetables, pulses (beans, lentils and peas), nuts and seeds, starchy food (such as potatoes) and grains.

It is recommended that adults eat at least 30g of fibre per day.

Children from age two should aim for 15g per day. Primary school age children should try to eat 20g per day. Secondary school aged children should try to eat 25g per day.

The latest figures suggest that in the UK, we are not meeting our fibre intake . On average, adults are having 18g per day and only 14% of children aged 4-10 years and 4% of young people aged 11-18 years consume the recommended amount of dietary fibre.

Fibre continued

Top tips for increasing fibre intake:

Go for wholegrain options! Swap refined or 'white' carbohydrate sources (e.g. bread, cereals, pasta) for wholegrain varieties. For example, why not try wholemeal flour instead of white in recipes. Wholemeal flour provides more fibre than white flour.

Consume a variety of fruit and vegetables and **aim for at least 5 A DAY.**

Try to include more pulses, nuts and seeds in dishes by adding to stews, curries and salads.

Start your day with a higher fibre breakfast, including foods such as wholegrain cereals topped with dried or fresh fruit, wholemeal bread or whole fresh fruit.

For snacks, try fresh fruit, vegetable sticks, rye crackers, oatcakes and unsalted nuts or seeds.



Food a Fact of Life did a Fibre February challenge to try and increase fibre intake in schools!

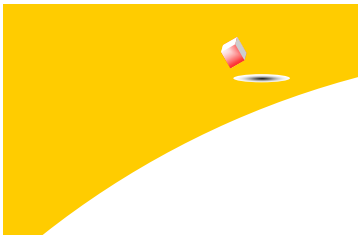
How teachers can get involved:

Food-based 'Challenges' for Early Years and primary

Each 'Challenge' begins with a stimulating, themed presentation of images, information, questions and tasks. Teachers then set their pupils suggested activities, based on the theme. Each Challenge culminates in a final outcome, such as a dish, poster, video or school growing area! Challenge activities for ages 3-5, 5-7 and 7-11 years are available now.



Useful resources and further information about the fibre challenge can be found online: <https://www.foodaffectoflife.org.uk/news/it-s-fibre-february/>



Warwickshire eating and drinking for health group.

Editor: Charlotte Cross
Community Dietitian
Warwick Hospital, Lakin Road,
Warwick,
CV34 5BW 5BW

Phone: 01926 495321 x4258
E-mail: dietitians@swft.nhs.uk

If you have an interest in food, hydration and health, and would like to join the Warwickshire Food Forum, please contact the editor.

If you would like more information about any of the articles in this newsletter, please contact the editor who will pass this on to the author of the article.

References, further reading and resources

Plant based meat alternatives study:

<https://www.mdpi.com/2072-6643/13/12/4225/htm>

BDA blue dot campaign, meal swaps:

<https://www.bda.uk.com/uploads/assets/89de0ac6-5141-4258-9c34ff71566821ef/One-Blue-Dot-Meal-swaps.pdf>

Eat Lancet:

<https://eatforum.org/eat-lancet-commission/the-planetary-health-diet-and-you/>

The space between self-esteem and self compassion: Kristin Neff at TEDx

[youtube.com/watch?v=IvtZBUSplr4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IvtZBUSplr4)

Self-Compassion with Dr Kristin Neff

[youtube.com/watch?v=rUMF5R7DoOA&t=1188s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rUMF5R7DoOA&t=1188s)