

Food News

Volume 8, issue 7

July 2022

Welcome to Food News. This month's edition of Food News looks to answer your queries around diet and the common seasonal allergy... hay fever! We will also look at how you can eat well for your bone health, what foods are in season and will take a glance at what's news in social media. We have also shared some valuable information on additional fantastic services available from Healthy Living Network.



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Warwickshire Food Forum

Food News

is produced by the education & choice sub-group of Warwickshire Food forum

The forum is a multi-agency partnership aiming to improve food choices for

people in Warwickshire.

The focus is on making food affordable, sustainable and providing information to help people make healthy

choices. The group will also ensure that there is Warwickshire wide help for people who have difficulty affording food.

Truth or Myth

Can diet help with symptoms of Hay fever?

Hay fever is a common allergic reaction to pollen causing itchy eyes and cold-like symptoms. It can interfere with everyday life and typically affects people from March-September. Medications can help to reduce symptoms, but there is no cure, leading people to ask “can dietary changes improve symptoms?”. Scientific evidence is lacking and as with many diets, advice found can be conflicting.

Anti-inflammatory diets are often encouraged, whilst low-histamine diets have also made an appearance. However, many foods with anti-inflammatory properties also have high histamine levels. In hay fever, the body produces more histamine, a chemical released to fight allergens, therefore the theory arose that eating foods with high levels of histamine can increase the inflammatory cascade. However, evidence is lacking and low-histamine diets can be very restrictive and pose the risk of developing nutrient deficiencies, therefore strict low histamine diets are not currently recommended.

So what can we do?

The Mediterranean diet is rich in anti-inflammatory properties and promotes a well-balanced, healthy diet that is low in processed foods. Processed foods tend to contain higher levels of histamine therefore eating more fresh foods *may* have a beneficial impact on hayfever, whilst also benefitting general health.



Replacing some meat with beans, lentils and plant-based alternatives will increase fibre intake, add a greater antioxidant and micronutrient profile, reduce saturated fat and possibly histamine intake.

Alcohol suppresses the immune system so avoiding alcohol is recommended, as is limiting caffeine and replacing some coffees with teas that have anti-inflammatory properties such as white, green or nettle.

Vitamin C acts as a natural antihistamine so eat foods rich in vitamin C such as pineapple, blackcurrants, peppers, broccoli, and strawberries. As well as containing vitamin C, garlic also contains quercetin, and turmeric contains curcumin, these are antioxidants that may have natural antiallergic properties. Pineapple, whilst rich in vitamin C, also contains bromelain, an anti-inflammatory agent that may also have antiallergic properties. Ginger is also anti-inflammatory and adds great flavour.

Fresh oily fish such as salmon, tuna, mackerel, pilchards and flaxseed, chia seeds and walnuts contain omega-3 fatty acids which are effective anti-inflammatories and should be included in the diet.

SUMMARY:

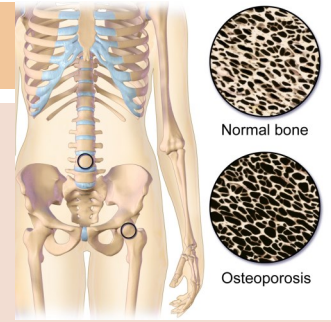
- ✓ Eat fresh! Less processed and packaged foods.
- ✗ Avoid alcohol.
- ✓ Eat less meat and more beans and lentils.
- ✓ Eat foods rich in vitamin C and omega-3.
- ✓ Reduce caffeine, replace with white, green and nettle tea.
- ✓ Garlic, turmeric, pineapple and ginger are healthy additions to your diet.

TRUTH

Diet for Healthy Bones

During early life until late twenties our bones grow in both size and density, which means new bone is created and deposited faster than it is reabsorbed and removed, forming our full sized skeleton.

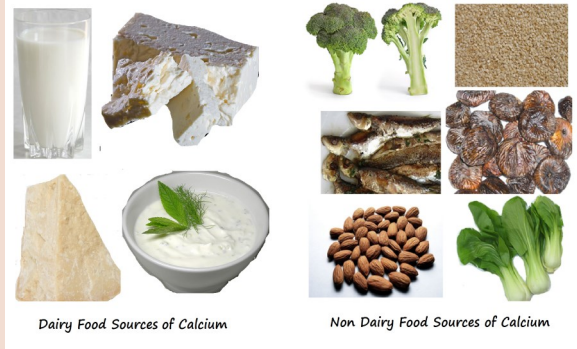
After this stage we start to lose bone as a natural part of aging. New bone is still deposited, fixing micro-fractures and responding to changes to physical load, but the rate of new bone being made vs. old bone being removed determines the health of our bones. If not enough new bone is deposited and the reabsorption of old bone continues, our bone health declines. This can lead to osteoporosis, a progressive condition that increases bone fragility.



So, can diet help? Bone contains minerals, calcium and phosphorous. These minerals bind to protein fibres and the combined structure provides flexibility (from the protein) and strength (from the minerals). Bones are stronger when bone mineral density is greater and both diet and physical activity play a major role in maintaining this.

Calcium, Vitamin D and Protein

Sufficient **calcium** intake in early life can help optimise peak bone mass, and sufficient intake throughout life reduces the loss of bone. Vitamin D reduces parathyroid hormone secretion, which stimulates calcium to be released from bone. Vitamin D is also required for the transport of calcium, therefore both calcium and Vitamin D are important together in reducing fracture risk.



Adults need **700mg of calcium per day** (or 1000-1500mg in some disease states). Dietary intake is preferred over supplementation, where possible, as whole food provides other nutrients too.

Sources of calcium: Milk, cheese, yoghurt and other dairy foods. Green leafy vegetables; such as curly kale, okra, spring greens. Calcium fortified plant-based dairy alternatives (always check the labels). Calcium set tofu. Bread and baked goods made with fortified flour. Fortified cereals. Fish where you eat the bones; such as tinned sardines, pilchards, salmon.



Vitamin D: From late March/early April to the end of September, most people should be able to make enough vitamin D from sunlight. All adults are advised to **supplement 10µg Vitamin D3 per day** during autumn-winter months, or year round if sun exposure is low, dark skinned people and >65 years old. **Sources of Vitamin D:** Oily fish; such as salmon, trout, sardines, mackerel and herring. Red meat and offal. Egg yolks. Cod liver oil. Fortified foods; such as some margarines, yoghurts and breakfast cereals.

Protein: Bone is also made up of protein, about 50% in fact, therefore eating enough protein is important for maintaining bone structure, but also contributes to muscle strength which in turn reduces our risk of falls and subsequent fractures. **Protein is found in meat, poultry, fish, dairy, eggs, beans/legumes, lentils, nuts and seeds and meat substitutes.**



What's in Season?

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

Fruit

Blackberries, Blackcurrants, Blueberries, Cherries, Gooseberries, Greengages, Loganberries, Raspberries, Redcurrants, Rhubarb, Strawberries.

Vegetables

Aubergine, Beetroot, Broad Beans, Broccoli, Carrots, Cauliflower, Chicory, Chillies, Courgettes, Cucumber, Fennel, French Beans, Garlic, Kohlrabi, New Potatoes, Onions, Peas, Potatoes, Radishes, Rocket, Runner Beans, Samphire, Sorrel, Spring Greens, Spring Onions, Summer Squash, Swiss Chard, Tomatoes, Turnips, Watercress

Cooking in season You'll notice these ingredients are more abundant in supermarkets and market stalls this month, so let's look at some tasty recipes including some of them to cook in season.

Roasted Aubergine and Tomato Curry

Ingredients:

- 600g aubergine, or baby aubergines sliced into rounds
- 3 tbsp olive oil
- 2 onions, finely sliced
- 2 garlic cloves, crushed
- 1 tsp garam masala
- 1 tsp turmeric
- 1 tsp ground coriander
- 400g can chopped tomatoes
- 400ml can coconut milk
- ½ small pack coriander, roughly chopped
- rice or chapattis, to serve

Heat oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6. Toss the aubergines in a roasting tin with 2 tbsp olive oil, season well and spread out. Roast for 20 mins or until golden and soft.

Heat the remaining oil in a pan and cook the onions over a medium heat for 5-6 mins until softening. Stir in the garlic and spices, for a few mins until the spices release their aromas.

Tip in the tomatoes, coconut milk and roasted aubergines, and bring to a gentle simmer. Simmer for 20-25 mins, removing the lid for the final 5 mins to thicken the sauce. Add seasoning, and a pinch of sugar if it needs it. Stir through most of the coriander. Serve over rice or with chapattis, scattering with the remaining coriander.

Gooseberry Crumble

- 500g gooseberry, topped and tailed
- 85g golden caster sugar
- 175g plain flour
- 75g demerara sugar
- 85g salted butter, chilled

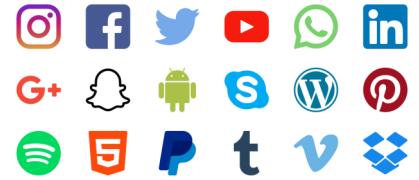
Preheat the oven to 180C/fan 160C/gas 4. Toss the gooseberries with the caster sugar, spread in the bottom of a medium ovenproof baking dish with 2 tbsp water. To make the crumble, put the flour, butter and a big pinch of salt in a bowl. Rub together with your fingertips until you have a rough breadcrumb texture. Mix in the demerara sugar.

Scatter the crumble topping evenly over the gooseberries. Bake in the oven for 45-50 minutes until top is pale golden and crunchy and the gooseberries are bubbling.

Give the crumble a quick flash under a hot grill to give the top an extra browning, if you like.

This recipe can also be used with blackberries, blackcurrants, raspberries, rhubarb, and strawberries in place of gooseberries, if you prefer. They're all in season too!





Halloumi Fries

Halloumi, that “squeaky” Cypriot cheese that is great cooked on a BBQ and goes perfectly with salads... a summer favourite! Traditionally, it was made from a blend of goat and sheep's milk with a hint of mint, but nowadays it often contains cow's milk too. The name is trademarked so only cheese made in Cyprus can be called halloumi, but cheese made in a similar way elsewhere also exists, such as Hellim, which is made in Turkey.

The popularity of halloumi has recently boomed, partly as it makes a tasty meat alternative for vegetarians and people trying to reduce their meat intake, especially during BBQ season, and it offers a good source of protein and calcium. **Does that mean it's healthy though?**

Protein is important for tissue repair, hormone production and immune function, and can also help you to gain muscle mass and strength alongside exercise. Meanwhile, calcium is an important nutrient in bone health, as discussed earlier, therefore **when eaten in moderation** and cooked in a method requiring minimal fat, such as BBQ or griddle, halloumi can be enjoyed as part of healthy, balanced diet.



However, halloumi also contains a lot of **salt**, which can have a negative impact on blood pressure, increasing the risk of heart disease and stroke and therefore should not be consumed regularly. In addition, as with most cheese, halloumi has a **high saturated fat** content which may contribute to increased levels of LDL (bad) cholesterol when consumed regularly.



Last month a well-known fast food restaurant chain announced the launch of halloumi fries to their summer menu. A Dietitian from Aston Medical School in Birmingham, Dr Duane Mellor, recently spoke to the Daily Mail and reported that analysis of these halloumi fries showed one portion (4 sticks) contained 1.28g of salt, making them saltier than 2 portions of the fast food chains own fries, and even saltier than 4 x packets of ready salted crisps!

Recommendations are to keep salt intake to **less than 6g per day**, which can add up very quickly. Keep fast food to a minimum, avoid adding salt at the table or in cooking; use herbs and spices to flavour food instead, limit processed foods and become aware of the traffic light system on food packaging to help you make informed decisions.

A slice (30g) provides...				
ENERGY	Fat	Saturates	Sugars	Salt
166kJ 39kcal	0.6g	0.2g	0.1g	0.6g
2%	1%	1%	<1%	10%
of an Adult's Reference Intake*				
Typical energy values per 100g: 554kJ/131kcal				

Community Services available through Ediblelinks Project



Ediblelinks is a project based in North Warwickshire run by the charity **Healthy Living Network**. The project uses food surplus to reduce poverty and diet related ill health by running a food bank and providing food to community groups and organisations. Here is some of the fantastic services they are currently offering:



Ediblelinks offers supplementary ambient bags of food for a £1 donation at various outreach locations across Nuneaton & Bedworth. These are available from:

Stockingford Early Years Centre and Library, St., Pauls Road, Stockingford, Nuneaton, CV10 8HW on the first Monday of the month.

HTC Community Hub, Donnithorne Avenue, Nuneaton, CV10 7AF on the second Monday of the month.

Saint Andrew's Church, 228 Smorrall Lane, Bedworth, CV12 0JW on the third Monday of the month (excluding bank holidays).

No appointment necessary, the team will be there from 11am to 12 noon (or as long as stocks last).

A Social Supermarket is available to residents of Nuneaton, Bedworth and North Warwickshire. Based in The Arcade, 71 Long Street, Atherstone, CV9 1AZ. Designed to help families through challenging times, shoppers can use the service 12 times in a 12 month period. Donations are £5 for a single person shop, £10 for a couple or parent and child, £15 for a small family and £20 for a large family. With ambient, chilled and frozen items on offer plus nappies, baby food and baby wipes using the social Supermarket can help

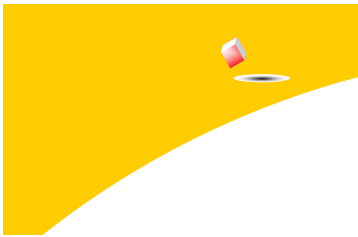


to stretch a budget further. To book an appointment please text your name together with the number of adults and children in your family to 07392 084485.



In addition, if you follow their Facebook page they have 'Fresh Food' surplus periodically. These packages often contain fruit, vegetables, meat and more for a £5 donation. They do similar with nappies, gluten free items, and milk alternatives as and when they have it. Collection is from the Warehouse Unit 3, Abeles Way, Holly Lane Industrial Estate, CV0 2QX.





Warwickshire eating and drinking for health group.

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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

Diet and Hay Fever

Chatzi et al (2007). Protective effect of fruits, vegetables and the Mediterranean diet on asthma and allergies among children in Crete. *Thorax*. 62: 677-683

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<https://www.bda.uk.com/resource/low-histamine-diets-and-long-covid.html>

<https://www.runnersworld.com/uk/nutrition/diet/a32812413/can-foods-help-ease-hayfever/>

<https://www.allergyuk.org/about-allergy/allergy-vs-intolerance/>

Diet and Bone Health

<https://www.bda.uk.com/resource/osteoporosis-diet.html>

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Sherrington E J (2021). Osteoporosis: Nutrition and the Bone – Part 2. *CN*; 21(7): 28-30

What's in season recipes

<https://www.bbcgoodfood.com/recipes/roasted-aubergine-tomato-curry>

<https://www.bbcgoodfood.com/recipes/gooseberry-crumble>

Social Media Know How

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/health/article-10915055/How-new-summer-halloumi-fries-McDonalds-REALLY-stack-up.html>