

Heading Upstream

Health Promotion News

Welcome to the January 2012 issue of our Health Promotion Newsletter. *Heading Upstream* is produced by Latrobe Community Health Service and provides an update on activities and projects which the Health Promotion team is currently involved in.

In this newsletter

Nutrition Claims	Page 1
Reading Foods Labels	Page 2
Creating a Mentally Healthy Workplace	Page 3
Creating a Mentally Healthy Workplace cont.	Page 4



Websites of interest

[Check UV levels daily on: http://www.sunsmart.com.au/ultraviolet_radiation/sunsmart_uv_alert](http://www.sunsmart.com.au/ultraviolet_radiation/sunsmart_uv_alert)

[Any questions about health in general? Check out: http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au](http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au)

[Food labelling go to: www.foodstandards.gov.au](http://www.foodstandards.gov.au)

NUTRITION CLAIMS: MAKING SENSE OF WHAT THEY REALLY MEAN

While nutrition claims are useful guides, you should still check the nutrition information panel. Don't be misled by labelling tricks and traps. The terms used are often misleading. Even if a food is 'low in fat', it could still be very high in sugar, or 93% Fat Free still means it contains 7% fat.

Other examples:

Health Claim	What This Means
Baked not fried	Does not mean lower in fat or energy, therefore check the label carefully
Cholesterol free	Only animal products contain cholesterol. It may still be high in fat or energy
Diet	Product has been artificially sweetened
Lite or Light	May refer to texture, colour or taste – not necessarily energy
Low fat	Must contain less than 3% fat
Natural	May have the same amount of sugars, fats or energy as regular varieties
No added sugar	May still be high in energy or glycaemic index (GI)
Reduced fat/ salt	Has less fat/salt than the "regular" variety, but may be above the healthy choice criteria
Wholegrain	There is no definition on standard for labelling % of wholegrains.



Reading Food Labels for Healthier Eating

The type and amount of nutrition information on food labels can sometimes be confusing and difficult to understand. However knowing what to look for on a food label helps people to make informed choices so that they can help select healthier foods and plan nutritious meals for themselves and their family.

The table below is based on approximate recommended dietary intakes for an average adult, this information may vary between individuals therefore please use this information as a guide only.

For more personalised advice and guidance please consult a dietitian www.lchs.com.au

To compare food products and to use healthy choice criteria for fat, sugar, fibre and sodium below, check the **Quantity per 100g** column (shaded in grey).

NUTRITION INFORMATION		
Serving Size Per Package: 9		
Serving Size: 83.5g (2 Slices)		
	Quantity per Serve	Quantity per 100g
Energy	91.8 kJ	1100 kJ
Protein	6.1 g	7.3 g
Fat, Total	2.8 g	3.3 g
- Saturated	0.3 g	0.4 g
- Trans	<0.1 g	<0.1 g
- Polyunsaturated	1.5 g	1.8 g
- Monounsaturated	0.9 g	1.1 g
Carbohydrate Total	39.8 g	47.7 g
- Sugars	16.3 g	19.6 g
Dietary Fibre	6.6 g	7.9 g
Sodium	230 mg	275 mg

1. Total Fat & Saturated Fat

Aim for: Total Fat: **10g/100g or less**
Saturated Fat: **2g/100g or less**



Exceptions Total Fat:

Milk & Yoghurt: 2g / 100g or less
Cottage & Ricotta Cheese: 5g / 100g or less
Other Cheese: 15g / 100g or less
Margarine: 55g / 100g or less
Nuts & Oil: Higher amounts accepted provided saturated fat is low

2. Sugar

Aim for: **15g / 100g or less**



Exception:

Products containing dried fruit: 25g / 100g or less

3. Fibre

Aim for: **5g / 100g or more**



Exception:

Products that do not contain fibre such as dairy foods

4. Sodium (Salt)

Aim for: moderate intake 120 – 450mg / 100g or **less**

Exception:

For cheese: 600mg / 100g or **less**

Ingredients List

Ingredients are found below the nutrition panel and are listed in order of most to least by weight, for example if a food ingredients list states that the first three ingredients are:

Sultanas (31%), Wholegrain cereals (18%), and Wholegrain oats (15%)

This means that the product contains mostly sultanas followed by wholegrain cereals followed by wholegrain oats and so on.

If a source of fat, sugar and salt is listed in the first 3 ingredients, there may be better choices available, it is important to look for these to ensure you are making the healthiest choice you can.

Resources were obtained from Baker IDI Heart and Diabetes Institute and Food Standards Australia and New Zealand.



Creating Mentally Healthy Workplace's

Mental health & the workplace

Most of us spend a large percentage of our waking hours at work; therefore the way we feel at work affects our overall health and wellbeing.

Work can be a protective factor to good mental health, providing employees with a sense of accomplishment and self-worth, a way to meet new people and form friendships and a place to learn new skills and create personal challenges.

Excessive pressure, stress and long hours at work can, however, lead to stress and anxiety¹. In the Australian National Survey of Workplace Issues 2002, 68 per cent of employees reported concern with pressure and work-related stress².




The level of control an employee feels over their work situation, the stress experienced and whether or not the employee feels valued in the workplace can affect work performance, absenteeism, workplace safety and staff turnover^{1,3}.

Workplaces should include a variety of strategies to promote the mental health and wellbeing of employees and prevent the onset of mental health problems.

How can a workplace create a mentally healthy working environment?

For individuals

The 'A-B-C' guidelines for positive mental health provide a three step way for individuals to become more mentally healthy in their work, community and family lives.

 <p>ACT</p>	<p>Being physically active relieves tension and stress and promotes overall wellbeing. Encouraging your employees to take time out of their busy schedules can actually increase their productivity on the job. Develop a workplace activity plan. Encourage employees to go for a walk during their lunch break or organise a weekly sporting match.</p>
 <p>BELONG</p>	<p>Having a sense of belonging and good social networks protect against mental health problems. Organise social functions within the workplace for employees and their families. It is also important to encourage your employees to join in community clubs and activities. Remember long hours and overtime can negatively affect an employee's ability to attend to their own personal hobbies.</p>
 <p>COMMIT</p>	<p>Having purpose and meaning in work and personal activities provides a sense of satisfaction and achievement. Encourage employees to make work related goals and assist them to achieve their work and personal aspirations.</p>

Creating Mentally Healthy Workplace's Cont...

Together, engaging in regular activity, having a good social network and having meaning and purpose in life help us cope better with problems and stress. And it makes us feel happier too.

For managers/supervisors

An individual's ability to cope with stressors not only depends on their individual behaviour but also on the practices of the people around them. It is therefore important that managers and supervisors understand that the way they treat people can impact on the wellbeing of their employees. Managers can minimise the impact of stress on their team and enhance the mental health and wellbeing of individual team members by following another 'A-B-C':

Actively involve employees in decisions that directly affect them, whether these are about their physical workplaces or their job goals and tasks. For example, employees could be involved in setting their tasks/goals and given the autonomy (and be accountable) for achieving them. Engaging employees in problem-solving and decision making will foster a culture of cooperation and trust between management and employees.

Build skills essentially means that all individuals be given an opportunity to at least express, but preferably develop and build, their talents and skills. All workers should be provided with challenging but achievable tasks that expand their knowledge and skills base. This results in a greater sense of self, contributing to a person's positive self-image and a greater sense of self-efficacy and confidence in dealing with stressors.

Celebrate achievements refers to acknowledging employees when they perform well. It is important not only for employees to have their achievements recognised by their superiors, but also for other employees of the organisation to be aware of such recognition. When an employee invests effort at work that does not seem to be adequately rewarded, strain results³. Activities that are rewarded reinforce desired work behaviour, are more likely to be repeated and result in increased performance. Rewards also contribute to a positive self-image and greater efficacy. It is important to celebrate not just individual achievements but also work team and organisational successes.

These three dimensions provide the basis for positive interactions to replace coercive practices. Together they will contribute to an overall positive mood in the workplace leading to greater effort, cooperation and trust between subordinates and their leaders. These three dimensions also provide the basis for employees 'bonding' to their organisations and to the values of the organisations.

"Keeping mentally healthy is as important as staying physically healthy"

References

1. St John T. Mental health at work: the hard facts. Training Journal. 2005:5.
2. Unions ACoT. Workplace Survey 2002.
3. Dollard M, Knott, V. Incorporating psychosocial issues into our conceptual models of OHS. Occupational Health and Safety – Australia and New Zealand 2004; 4(20):13.
4. www.actbelongcommit.org.au