

YOU ASK US I'M GOING AGAINST THE GRAIN

15 SLIMMING SLIP-UPS

Q I SUFFER from water retention and have been told that cutting out wheat and other grains will help. Will I lose weight too?

A WHEAT products like bread and pasta tend to help the body retain more fluid, so you might find it helpful to cut them out or at least reduce them. However, if you simply swap the wheat with other starches like potatoes and rice you'll probably eat the same amount of calories.

Also, wholemeal wheat and grains like oat and rye are a good source of fibre, complex carbohydrates, vitamins and minerals, including B vitamins, vitamin E, zinc and magnesium – so if you suddenly stop your consumption, it's important to ensure you obtain these nutrients from other sources. To ensure you don't miss out, increase your intake of vegetables, fish, dairy products, yeast and seeds and take a multi-vitamin and mineral complex.

Q MY husband and I are on a diet and stick to low-fat foods. Is it safe to feed our two children the same meals?

A CHILDREN under three should not be given low-fat foods and you should ensure your kids have a range of foods with a good balance of nutrients, especially protein and calcium (found in meat, fish, dairy products and leafy green veg) to nourish their growing bodies.

That said, it's good for children to adopt healthy eating habits young and a lot of your lower-fat foods will be suitable for all the family.

NEWS bites

● **PREGNANT** women with a craving for chocolate can munch away with a clear conscience. Scientists at the University of Helsinki have discovered (after conducting a survey of 300 women) that babies born to mothers who eat chocolate throughout their pregnancy. The phrase "fat and happy" springs to mind!

● **ENSURING** kids get enough calcium, essential for the development of strong teeth and bones, can be a problem if they don't like milk. If your kids turn their nose up at a regular glass, then new Robinsons for Milk, £1.59, is worth a try. Available in two fruity flavours – Strawberry & Raspberry and Peachy Banana – the flavouring can be added to all types of milk, including soya and goats milk, to make it more palatable.

BODYWORKS

by Tricia Welch

1 NOT EATING ENOUGH Strange but true... if you eat too few calories your body will think you're starving it and conserve energy from the calories you eat to lay down as fat. To slim safely, the World Health Organisation says the lowest recommended dieting level is 1,200 calories a day (unless under medical supervision) but suggests around 1,400 to 1,500 as a general guide.

2 SKIPPING MEALS People who miss breakfast tend to over-eat later because the metabolic rate slows and blood sugar levels drop, leading to cravings for fatty, sugary foods. The best way to keep hunger at bay is with small, regular, well-balanced meals.

3 STICKING TO THREE MEALS A DAY Eat little and often and you're likely to consume fewer calories because sensible snacking (fresh fruit, rice cakes etc) actually curbs the appetite, reducing the urge to wolf down huge helpings at main mealtimes.

4 SHOPPING WHEN YOU'RE HUNGRY Even the most disciplined dieter finds it impossible to resist the choc and cake aisles when ravenous – so have a full stomach before you hit the supermarket. Also, go with a list to avoid the temptation of filling your trolley with fattening impulse-buys.

5 LEAVING TEMPTATION IN THE FRIDGE Clear out everything which threatens to wreck your diet from the fridge and freezer. That includes that tub of Haagen Daz, left-over apple pie and pizza. If it's there you'll be tempted to eat it – so bin it or hide it in a container.

6 SETTING UNREALISTIC GOALS Whether you need to lose 6lb or 6st, set yourself a manageable time-frame in which to achieve it. If you're too ambitious you won't be able to sustain the diet and it will fail. A weight-loss target of five or six pounds a month is steady and sensible. If this seems slow, remember that your weight didn't appear overnight and this rate of loss will total four stone a year.

7 NOT DRINKING ENOUGH WATER Those hunger pangs may actually be your body telling you you need to quench your thirst. Ideally, we should all drink around two litres of water a day. In addition to filling you up and topping up your water supplies, water stimulates the body's waste disposal system, flushing out toxins, which gives your body more of a chance to metabolise food.

8 NOT EATING ENOUGH WATERY FOODS Most fruit and veg contains about 90 per cent of its weight as water which means they fill you up without piling on the calories. High-water-content meals include all water-based soups, salad sandwiches, rice, noodles, pasta with vegetables or beans, couscous with vegetables, vegetable risotto and lasagne.

9 SERVING YOURSELF TOO BIG A PORTION Most of us are trained from childhood to eat everything on our plates, so if we are faced with a big serving we'll polish it off. As a guide to portion size, rice, pasta and vegetables should amount to roughly one to one-and-a-half handfuls, meat around a half to three-quarters of a handful and fish a handful. Also, try serving your meals on smaller plates – this will reduce the amount of food

CAN'T lose weight despite eating sensibly and watching your calories? We list the most common slip-ups that sabotage even the best-intentioned dieter.

by up to 30 per cent without you realising it. If you are still hungry, pile a side plate with salad and vegetables.

10 EATING THE KIDS' LEFTOVERS

Half a sausage here, a handful of chips there can easily add up to an extra meal a day. So as soon as the kids have left the table, make sure you empty their plates into the bin.

11 HAVING TOO MUCH ALCOHOL

Just two units of alcohol can reduce the body's ability to burn fat by as much as 80 per cent. This is because alcohol is converted in to a substance called acetate in the liver and then released into the bloodstream where it prevents the release of fat from fat cells.

12 DEPRIVING YOURSELF OF TREATS If your weakness is chocolate cake, crisps or cheese and substitutes won't do, allow yourself a little each day or a treat once a week. It means you're more likely to avoid the urge to pig-out on high-fat foods. Deprivation weakens your resolve because it makes you miserable.

13 BEING TOO HARD ON YOURSELF

Even the most disciplined dieter has a blow-out from time to time. Don't give up – simply get back on track. If you know you are going to have a big night out, reduce your calories for a few days before. This will allow you to have more than your normal food and drink allowance without any consequences.

14 NOT PLANNING AHEAD

If you organise mealtimes in advance you're less likely to grab a takeaway or ready meal. And by taking a packed lunch to work you'll consume around 300 calories fewer than those who buy their lunch out.

15 EATING TOO MUCH AFTER A WORKOUT

It's easy to overestimate how many calories you've burned off in a fitness session and eat more than you should to compensate. Half an hour of brisk walking or swimming is going to burn up only around 200 calories – about 50 calories less than a standard bar of chocolate!



LOTTA BOTTLE: Drinking plenty of water is essential when slimming



HEARTY SNACK?

MORE than a fifth of shop-bought sandwiches contain over 3g of salt – half the recommended daily intake – a new survey warned last week. Safeway's "Best" smoked salmon and crème fraiche contained a massive 6.4g and its chicken caesar 5.9g – weight for weight, that's more than the salt in sea water!

To help you keep your intake down, we're listing some of the best, and worst offenders. Remember, there's around 1g of salt in two slices of bread – so it's virtually impossible to go lower than that.

LOWEST SALT CONTENT

- TESCO Healthy Living tuna and sweetcorn 1.0g
- SAINSBURY'S Be Good To Yourself roast chicken salad/mayo 1.0g
- TESCO Healthy Living chicken salad 1.1g
- SOMERFIELD Good Intentions chicken salad sandwich 1.1g
- SAFWAY Eat Smart ham and cheese 1.2g
- ASDA Extra Special Wensleydale & cranberry 1.2g
- SAFWAY Eat Smart tuna and sweetcorn 1.3g
- SOMERFIELD Good Intentions ham salad sandwich 1.3g
- CO-OP Healthy Living prawn mayonnaise 1.3g
- SAFWAY Eat Smart chicken tikka 1.4g

HIGHEST SALT CONTENT

- SAFWAY Smoked salmon and crème fraiche 6.4g
- SOMERFIELD Classic brunch triple 6.1g
- SAFWAY Chicken caesar 5.9g
- M&S Triple pack bacon, lettuce, tomato; prawn, mayo; ham, cheese and pickle 4.3g
- SAFWAY Sausage, egg and bacon 4.17g
- WAITROSE Egg mayo/bacon 4.15g
- M&S Triple pack bacon, lettuce, tomato; prawn, mayo; ham, cheese and pickle 4.1g
- WAITROSE Ham and mustard 4.0g
- BOOTS Sausage, egg & bacon 4.0g
- TESCO Finest All day breakfast 4.0g
- SOMERFIELD Big Fill egg & bacon 3.9g

5/5 Tried & tasted: Healthy eating fish pies

5/5

SAINSBURY'S BE GOOD TO YOURSELF OCEAN PIE
£1.49, 350g
Food values per 100g: 91 cals; 1.5g fat; 0.5g salt.
Big chunks of fish (20 per cent hoki), a very tasty leek sauce and nice, crunchy breadcrumbs. The potato is very light and fluffy. This is absolutely delicious and tastes closest to home-made of the four on test.

4/5

WAITROSE PERFECTLY BALANCED FISHERMAN'S PIE
£2.49, 400g
Food values per 100g: 109 cals; 2.8g fat; 0.3g salt.
Generous amount of cod pieces (20 per cent) and broccoli florets in a creamy cheese sauce. The mash topping is nice and fluffy.

3/5

ASDA GOOD FOR YOU! FISH PIE
93p, 400g Food values per 100g: 101 cals; 2.3g fat; 0.5g salt. Big box reveals a thin-looking pie. Contains fish fillets with sweetcorn and carrots in a buttery sauce, but it's gloopy and potato tastes like instant.

2/5

SOMERFIELD GOOD INTENTIONS FISH PIE
£1.99, 450g
Food values per 100g: 75cal; Fat 1.3g; 0.5g salt.
Play hunt the smoked haddock and poached coley with this one...there's a lot more potato. And the white wine sauce with broccoli is an acquired taste.