

THE POD-UCTIVITY REPORT

APRIL 2016



Produced in London
PRODUCED BY POD,
IN ASSOCIATION WITH HELEN MONEY



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A HEALTHY START

More than a decade ago, pod was launched to provide busy Londoners with easy access to healthy food-to-go. Much has happened since then and today, pod is a thriving business. Inspired by the made-to-order delis of Manhattan, pod now has 22 shops across London and continues to grow.

Every day, pod's nutritious, innovative and freshly prepared food fuels Londoners from all 'working walks' of life. People are savvier than ever before about the food they eat and we are proud to be innovative, creative and part of a healthier way of life.

We have thoroughly enjoyed writing this report, as it fully supports what we've said from day dot: eating good food increases productivity.

Pod's menu appeals to those looking for something a little different at breakfast, lunch or for a snack. Pod's food is rich in benefits and big on taste – a winning combination. We don't want to stop spreading the word and serving up creations that prove healthy food can also be delicious.

This report looks at what to eat and when to eat it. But while the science is all very interesting, how should it be implemented? Different jobs have different demands, so when is it best to eat?

Here, we look at different jobs types, matching them with the foods that will support productivity, focusing on specific areas: Creatives, Office Angels, High Flyers and Key Workers.

We hope you enjoy reading this report as much as we have in writing it.

Healthy, happy eating.

THE POD TEAM



IN SIMPLE TERMS...

There's more than a hint of truth in the old saying 'we are what we eat', because our body is made up of cells that are created from extracts of the foods that we consume. Makes sense? So the question is, what is the body really made of and how does it function? **Well, the way we look, the way we function and our productivity is dependent on the food we eat, so getting it right is the key.** You could chug away like a diesel engine on a frosty morning or you could soar above the clouds on jet fuel – the choice is yours and with the right information, it will be the latter rather than the former.

While it's true some people, for whatever reason, switch off to super foods and their undoubted benefits, it's worth noting that **an official report in 2005 claimed that inadequate nourishment can cut productivity by up to 20%¹.** That's one fifth down the drain because the wrong foods are being consumed – or maybe some of the right foods are being eaten but not necessarily at the right time.

CHEMISTRY SET?

The functioning of our body is dependent on the chemical reactions that occur between the substances in our food. Without the right chemicals (nutrient deficiency), some reactions will happen at a slower speed, preventing us from performing to the best of our ability – or they may not happen at all. Worse still, an adjusted reaction may occur, leading to illness.

Your body is a machine and by keeping it well-oiled and maintained you'll be able to work, rest and play to the max.

Vital nutrients and foods are needed to sustain busy lifestyles, so we'll look at the whole shebang and take into account job, gender, age, social life and explain how certain situations can be vastly improved simply by eating the right things and at the right time. That can't be a bad thing, right?



LESS REALLY IS MORE

It's undeniable that what we eat makes a difference to almost everything we do. But how much of this is attributed to when we eat? Dietary pattern can impact performance and structured eating is key. Spreading calories and nutrients through the day, matching supply with demand keeps blood sugar levels even and provides energy when it is needed. **Calorie distribution will be dependent on an individual's day but a good base to work off is 20% of calories with breakfast, 10% mid-morning snack, 30% lunch, 10% mid afternoon snack and 30% dinner. Or there or thereabouts!**

Eating little and often provides the body with energy and nutrients, avoiding bottlenecks of foods waiting to be digested. However there is a correlation between snacking and obesity. Snacks are commonly high in fat, sugar and are regularly made as an impulse purchase. Healthy planned snacks can contribute to wellbeing and add to vitamin and mineral intake.

Unhealthy snacking, which does little to improve performance, can occur due to underestimating the need to eat - this is particularly common when on weight loss diets. Failure to snack may cause a higher consumption of calories. Being realistic about calorie requirements is important, as is planning meal and snacks in advance. **Planning is good, but implementation is actually what makes a difference. It is important to know where the planned food is coming from.**

SNACKING TIPS:

Keep long shelf-life snacks such as nuts and oatcakes in desk drawers, bags or glove compartments. If there is access to a fridge, bring in snacks such as yogurt, hummus and vegetable sticks. Also, have food available for those unexpected late nights or a short notice meetings scheduled before there has been time to pop out of the office to pick up lunch.





WORKING WELL

There is no doubt that good cognitive function is important for performing well at work. Nutrients particularly important for a healthy brain include vitamin B complex, vitamin C, calcium, zinc, magnesium, iron, omega 3. Nutrient deficiency can cause impairment in brain function.

The brain uses more energy than any other organ in the body, utilising 20% of resting metabolic rate and glucose is the primary energy source for the brain. Whilst carbohydrate is not an essential nutrient, the brain is dependent on glucose. However, in an emergency situation with no available glucose or glycogen, the brain can convert protein and fat to glucose, though at a slower rate. Consuming dietary carbohydrate will support good cognitive function.

Timing may also be important. But how about when that career defining-meeting is approaching? **Will carbohydrates help clinch the deal? Quite possibly. Carbohydrate intake has been proved to improve verbal memory, so a light snack before the meeting might help.**

Untested in an office environment is carb mouth washing, a technique used in sports nutrition – it may not sound that

appetising, but it has been proven that when carbohydrate is put in the mouth it is sensed by carbohydrate receptors and sends a message to the brain which leads to a spike in performance. So if there is no time to eat, even just swirling some carbohydrate around in the mouth before walking into a meeting or making an important call may be beneficial. Just make sure it's gone before you make your speech.

Whilst it is proven that hypoglycaemia impairs cognitive performance, the brain's energy storage capacity is limited so timing and type of carbohydrate may be important. Research is inconclusive, but findings point to the best type of carbohydrates for cognitive function being those that release sugars slowly. To convert glucose to energy in the brain vitamins thiamine, pantothenic acid, B6 and B12 are essential.

(FE)MALE ORDER

Gender should also be considered when choosing foods. Both iron and zinc are essential nutrients for both sexes, but women need more iron and men more zinc.

Deficiencies in either cause fatigue and nobody is going to be at their best if feeling fatigued with a weakened immune system to boot. **Iron is essential for haemoglobin, which transports oxygen around the body. Oxygen is essential for many of the chemical reactions that take place.**

Iron deficiency also effects looks creating pale skin, thin hair and weak nails. Foods high in iron include red meat, green leafy vegetables, whole grains (especially quinoa), nuts, seeds, beans and pulses.

100g of quinoa provides virtually a full day's recommended iron intake for a man and over 50% for women. Switching white polished rice for quinoa is a simple change that can make a big difference.

Zinc is instrumental in every new cell that the body produces. The best food source of zinc is oyster, but for most oysters are not eaten regularly. Red meat is high in zinc, as are pumpkin seeds but large amounts would be needed to meet RDA – that said, every little counts so sprinkle on salads, add to smoothies, muesli or porridge.



CARB TROUBLE?

Work and play, whether that means being out with friends, becoming the next Iron Man champion or at home with the family, requires a certain skill set. To keep all the plates spinning and performing well, it is paramount that one has sustained energy, stress management and good cognitive function.

To get scientific for a moment, energy in the human body is made differently depending on activity. When we are sedentary, we use less glucose and glycogen (deriving from carbohydrate) than when we are active. **Carbohydrates should be viewed as petrol, the more active you are, the more fuel needed.**

The human body can create energy without carbohydrate; carbohydrate is not an essential nutrient. However, energy is produced at a faster rate with it. Timing, the amount and the type of carbohydrate are important.

So if carbs are your body's petrol, think about things simplistically. **Would you plan to drive from London to Scotland with no petrol and then fill up when you got there? Presumably not, unless you don't mind breaking down at some point.** It's all about supply and demand. Put the carbohydrate in before and during, tapering down through the day. Simple advice that will ensure you don't end up on the hard shoulder, so to speak.

The amount of carbohydrate is important. A 59 year-old, 5ft tall lady who wakes up, drives to work, sits at her desk all day, drives home, watches TV and then goes to bed does not need much carbohydrate. But compare her to a 22 year-old, 6ft tall

man with a physically demanding job, who also runs ultra-marathons in his spare time (like you do), and we're talking a whole other game. **The Government recommend that around 50% of calories are derived from carbohydrate, but this is just a guideline and needs to be adjusted to lifestyle. A 30% carbohydrate diet may be more suitable for our lady in this example and 80% for the man.**

A carbohydrate intake that's too high can be detrimental to health and energy levels. When carbohydrates are consumed, the pancreas releases insulin to transport the carbohydrates (now glucose) that is not going to be utilised immediately into storage as glycogen. A high demand for insulin and the work load put on insulin receptors can over time lead to insulin insensitivity or Type 2 Diabetes, so this is important stuff to know. A high intake of carbohydrate over a short period will increase fat storage once the capacity for glycogen is full and the remaining glucose is stored as fat. High circulating blood sugar levels will increase the amount stored as fat. That means your clothes will feel tighter and you may need an extra notch on your belt.

Carbohydrates should be viewed as petrol, the more active you are, the more fuel needed.

Think supply and demand when choosing a meal or snack.

Let's look at the humble sarnie - two thick slices of bread (carbohydrate), a little meat/fish/egg/cheese (protein), maybe a lettuce leaf or a few slices of tomato and you've already got a carb-heavy lunch. But wait! Those thoughtful supermarket owners have a deal on, adding a packet of crisps (more carb), a sugary drink and a chocolate bar. What started out well has ended badly and you've now got yourself a near 85% carbohydrate meal. You've got excess food that won't all be needed to power you through the day, so the rest will be stored as fat. And unless you're planning to hibernate for the Winter, that's not a good thing.

The type of carbohydrate and the speed at which the sugars release into the blood is also an important factor. This is predominantly determined by whether the sugars are intrinsic or added plus the amount of fibre. Also, when added to a recipe, the fat and protein content will impact blood sugar levels. Complex carbohydrates that release sugars slowly gently raise blood sugar levels over a period of a few hours, the level and time dependant on portion size. A steady supply of fuel will boost activity over a few hours. Simple sugars release sugars fast causing blood sugar levels to rise sharply then drop off, with a mirrored effect in energy levels. In short, your energy levels will be on something of a rollercoaster ride and not a particularly enjoyable one.

But for energy, the story does not stop there. Energy creation in the human body requires many chemical reactions to take place before food is transformed into ATP. Instrumental in this are a variety of vitamins and minerals, in particular B vitamins, magnesium, chromium, iron and zinc. Again, these include whole grains, nuts, seed, green leafy vegetables and an animal source protein such as eggs will help provide these energy creating nutrients. We'll call them the good guys...read on.



STRESS -BUSTING

Food is not just for energy; nutrients play a vital role in the functioning of the nervous system affecting behaviour-related to cognitive function and response to stress. Stress can be defined as a mental or physical reaction to a challenge, or something that causes raised levels of anxiety. Stress can be acute or chronic. Work can create either one of these, or in some cases, both.

Acute stress could be an event of some sort, though not something prolonged. In work-life, this is likely to be experienced by an emergency worker. Chronic stress is of a lower level and ongoing, likely to be experienced by creative types and high-flyers. **Stress has a significant impact on our wellbeing and while optimally stress levels are reduced, diet can help us to cope with stress by supporting the nervous system and reducing anxiety. Eating well = less stress.**

Vitamins and minerals important for supporting the nervous system include vitamins Thiamine (B1), Riboflavin (B2), pantothenic acid (B5), B12, E, magnesium and potassium. **Foods high in these nutrients include whole grains, nuts, seeds and green leafy vegetables (again!).** Pantothenic acid is of particular importance for the adrenal glands which release hormones in response to stress such as cortisol and catecholamines, epinephrine (adrenaline) and norepinephrine. Food high in pantothenic acid include eggs, chicken, avocado, broccoli, mushrooms, whole grains, seeds and nuts. All good stuff. Really good stuff!



Anxiety can be a symptom of stress. Serotonin is a hormone that creates a relaxing, feel-good sensation which can help overcome the feeling of anxiety. **Tryptophan is a precursor of serotonin. Higher levels of tryptophan are found in foods such as turkey, chicken, soya beans, cereals, tuna, nuts and bananas.** These are best consumed in the evening or after a stressful event and some can be carried around easily all the time – in case of emergency, break packet!

Stress has been apportioned in part for the increase in obesity rates. Dietary behaviour in both quantity and quality alters with stress, with an observed relationship of increased consumption of 'comfort foods' with chronic stress². Easily done and understandable - but detrimental to health over a sustained period. Appetite is increased by hormonal changes that occur in response to stress. The release of ghrelin, a hormone that sends messages to eat is increased whilst cortisol a hormone released in response to stress increases and promotes the store of fat, the result being a high calorie intake and a higher rate of fat storage. **Observational research has linked overconsumption of sugar with stress, which is thought to be due to a negative feedback pathway making sugar more addictive. Whichever way you look at it, sugar is not good for you.**



A growing area of interest in nutritional research is gut bacteria. Preclinical trials suggest that there is a gut-brain axis through which gut micro bacteria influence emotional behaviour including stress. Therefore the gut environment which is strongly influenced by diet may also impact stress reaction. A gut reaction in its most literal sense.

BRAIN FOOD

Fats are important to brain function. Omega 3 has been proven to improve cognitive function, while saturated fat reduces the substrates that support cognitive function which increase the risk of dysfunction. In rodent models, a decline in cognitive function was observed when rats were fed a junk food diet high in saturated fat and sugar. Omega 3 is an important structural part of the brain cells and essential for normal function.

Flavonoids are antioxidants found in plant based foods. Research into blueberries and dementia is quite widely known about, but intake of flavonoids also cause an acute improvement in cognitive function.

As previously mentioned, serotonin is released in response to stress and it is thought that during periods of chronic stress serotonin release may be exhausted. Serotonin secretion below functional requirements is thought to cause poor cognitive performance. A study at Utrecht University took 22 stress prone adults and 21 low stress prone adults and split each group giving some a high carbohydrate low protein diet and some a

To get all scientific, a study published in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition took a group of 176 participants and gave some a Docosahexaenoic acid (DHA) supplement (omega 3 derived predominantly from fish oil) and some a placebo for six months. The study concluded that DHA supplementation improved memory and reaction time ³.



low carbohydrate high protein diet. All the groups were then exposed to controllable and uncontrollable stress. The stress prone group fed a high carbohydrate diet showed significantly higher cognitive performance after controllable stress compared to the group given a low carbohydrate diet. The study concluded that the difference was due to the high carbohydrate diet increasing serotonin levels⁵.

In a study just recently published in the Journal of Nutrition, memorably entitled 'Iron Status Is Associated with Performance on Executive Functioning Tasks in Nonanemic Young Women', researchers Scott, Murray-Kolb (2016) looked at the impact of iron deficiency on cognitive performance and found that better iron status was associated with better attention measured by reaction time and better planning ability. The researchers concluded that mild iron deficiency had cognitive ramifications⁴.





BEAT THE DIP

Food mentioned frequently in this report have been whole grains, fruit and vegetables. However, does science translate into real life? **A study published in Population Health Management showed that employees that ate an unhealthy diet were 66% more likely to lose productivity compared to those who regularly ate whole grains, fruits and vegetables. It has also been found that employees consuming a healthy diet show a 25% higher productivity.** Those are big numbers and will catch the attention of any worthwhile employer.

Food consumed can also have lag effect. Breakfast consumption improves memory and cognitive function later in the morning. A study published in The British Journal of Nutrition compared a breakfast high in whey protein with one high in carbohydrate. Participants were given a high whey protein, high carbohydrate or a placebo breakfast drink then were asked to perform demanding work like tasks. The high whey protein breakfast and high carbohydrate breakfast both improved performance in mental tasks three hours after consumption and the high carbohydrate breakfast reduced sleepiness⁷.

In contrast, lunch has been shown to cause an impairment in cognitive performance – also known as the infamous ‘two o’clock dip’! We’ve all been there! Experimental and observational research has shown a lull in energy and alertness early afternoon. Add to this a large, high-refined carbohydrate lunch which as discussed causes blood sugars levels and energy to rise then plummet and 2pm can then become very unproductive and increase the likelihood of error. Instead, consume a lunch containing a fist-size of slow release carbohydrates, low fat protein and lots of vegetables or salads. **Think about portion size and try and stay consistent, eating a larger lunch than normal increases the 2pm dip and a smaller than normal lunch lessens the effect.** So if there is a big 2pm meeting looming, eat lunch but keep it small. Or have an early lunch as the dip commonly starts an hour after lunch and lasts an hour. Eating late afternoon improves concentration, so consuming an afternoon snack will help if working into the evening.

MIND GAMES

Now we know what to eat and when to eat, behaviour should also come into the equation. The mind-set has to be changed. When making a food decision, stop and think what this food is doing for you and act accordingly. Food is an investment. If investing money, would you consider the return as well as the deposit? There are essential nutrients that our body needs to sustain wellness and enable us to perform to the best of our ability. Invest calories in foods that give a high return. Also consider value for money - when comparing the cost of food, consider the nutritional return.



THE RIGHT EATING HABITS FOR THE RIGHT JOB



Different jobs have different demands. So, how is it best to eat based on one's job? Here, we look at different jobs and foods that will support productivity in those roles, which we've called: Creatives, Office Angels, High Flyers and Key Workers.

CREATIVES

For the Creatives think innovative, idea-driven, high-energy and quick-thinking. Jobs such as marketing, advertising, PR, journalist, artists, DJs and also in this category would be city traders. Creatives should make sure that they pack in the fruit and veg.

The Creatives tend to be a carb-phobic group, but the right type, amount and timing of carbohydrate will help sustain the pace. Breakfast is a must, containing some slow- release carbohydrate to provide energy to fuel the brain and lift the energy when needed. A mix of oats, nuts and seeds is a great start to the working day.

High sugar, high fat diets should be avoided as this will cause sluggishness. These types of foods may 'accidentally' creep in if eating is not planned, especially after a brainstorming session when brain activity and stress levels have been high. Instead have a slow release carbohydrate snack before and a handful of antioxidant rich blueberries after. It might not sound as appetising as a quick fix chocolate bar, but it will work wonders.

Carbohydrates should be reduced through the day and eating late at night avoided, include foods high in tryptophan with dinner to calm the brain and aid sleep. Ensure pantothenic acid intake is adequate to help deal with stress; chicken salad with avocado, a sprinkle of seeds and a heaped tablespoon of whole grains is a perfect stress-busting lunch.

OFFICE ANGELS

Office Angels have different fuel requirements - these are the people that keep everything working. The admin, support and assistant staff. These jobs tend to be desk based and pay a medium salary, making value for money a strong consideration. This group generally have lower carbohydrate requirements. Not carb-free, just lower. **The calorie saving from carbs should be invested in protein to increase satiety. This will help avoid the office biscuit tin or the allure of the vending machine.** This group should also be thinking 'iron'. Iron status is associated with planning ability.

A great start to the day would be a green smoothie or scrambled eggs and avocado. A healthy snack plan is essential to prevent grazing through the day. Desk drawers should be packed with go-to snacks should the boss ask for something just when it's time to eat. Value for money is important, but value should be perceived in nutritional return. A pile of white, fluffy carbs offers no value. They're not needed and will be stored as fat

HIGH FLYERS

High Flyers is the term we've coined for investment bankers, lawyers, accountants, IT and analysts. This group tend to be desk based, work long hours, have high brain output, chronic stress and will eat out frequently for work. This group needs low levels of sustained energy and good cognitive function.



A study by Conner et al, published in the British Journal of Health Psychology last year, found that the more fruit and vegetables that people consumed (up to seven portions), the happier, more engaged and creative they tended to be. Some 405 participants kept food and mood diaries for 13 days, those with higher fruit and vegetable intake reported greater feeling of creativity compared to participants with lower fruit and vegetable intake. The findings were attributed to the production of dopamine, a neurotransmitter involved in creating curiosity, motivation and engagement ⁸.

This is a fine balance, and one that is often got wrong, reflected in the stereotypical high flying city Square Miler's physics. The job is mainly desk based, so carbohydrate requirements for physical movement are low, but brain fuel requirements are high. **Timing is everything! These individuals should eat little and often.** The day should start with a well-balanced breakfast - a little slow release carb to fuel the brain with some protein. Eggs, salmon, spinach and a slice of wholegrain toast would provide energy, omega 3 and antioxidants for cognitive function and pantothenic acid for stress.

Meetings can be long and gruelling. **Brain energy is paramount. A slow release carb snack before the meeting starts could make the difference between clinching the deal or not.** Optimally do not schedule meetings for 2pm. If there is no choice, have a light lunch - enough to get through the meeting but not too much that will leave you snoring on the boardroom table. Meetings over lunch or dinner are commonplace. Again, not optimal, as the excitement of the sympathetic side of the nervous system will impact the release of digestive hormones and enzymes, but that is how business is done. There is a tendency when walking into a restaurant to think celebration, anything goes - but it doesn't. Remember, this is work, so save the celebrations for friends and family. Lunch needs to be light and easy to digest. A meeting at this time of day is when the brain is less alert, so minimising diversion of energy away from the brain to the gut for digestion will be beneficial. Also, if eating out regularly, meals should be chosen that create an overall healthy balanced diet, not just on flavour.

Having readily available healthy snacks is important if working into the night. An afternoon snack will improve concentration and help get that report finished.



KEY WORKERS

Key Workers are the people that keep the nation ticking, including emergency workers, nurses, doctors, teachers and even taxi drivers. Work rate and stress levels can be unpredictable - quiet periods can be interspaced with acute stress. This group work long hours, often at night. And value for money is important.

These jobs are stressful, both mentally and physiologically, increasing the risk of a diet high in comfort food including sugar and saturated fat. The human's natural circadian rhythm influences diet, with high correlations between amount of sleep, timing of sleep and food consumption. **Epidemiological research shows that both lack of sleep and working through the night increases calorie and comfort food intake.** Added to this are the hormone changes caused by stress that increase appetite and cravings for carbohydrate, in particular sugar.

Salaries in this category are low, value for money is important. Perceived value for money in meal deals and low quality foods, twinned with the body's cravings can lead to a nutritionally poor diet. This category needs good nutrition!

A Key Worker's diet should be packed with stress-busting foods such as nuts, seeds, green leafy vegetables and whole grains to support the nervous system; turkey, eggs and mushrooms to help lower anxiety; and live yogurt to maintain a healthy gut bacteria balance. Fast-release carbohydrates should be avoided as high cortisol levels will increase fat storage. **Rather than white bread sandwiches that return little nutritionally, a whole grain based salad with eggs or chicken, seeds and vegetables would support the nervous system and provide sustained energy rather than peaks and troughs.** A pot of live yogurt, berries and seeds or a smoothie make great snacks, too.

Turn over for a recommended eating plan to suit your job >



THE OFFICE ANGEL

This plan is ideal for ladies with demanding desk based jobs. High in protein plus slow release carbohydrates through the day for energy. Packed with iron rich foods to help avoid fatigue.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Breakfast	Superfood Scrambled Egg with wholegrain toast	Energiser Scrambled Egg with wholegrain toast	Scrambled Egg with Smoked Salmon + super seeds with wholegrain toast	Energiser Scrambled Egg with wholegrain toast	Turkish Scrambled egg with wholegrain toast
Snack	4 tbsp low fat plain live yogurt + small banana + tsp linseed	4 tbsp low fat plain live yogurt + 3 tbsp blueberries + tsp pumpkin seeds	4 tbsp low fat plain live yogurt + 3 tbsp raspberries + tsp chia seeds	4 tbsp low fat plain live yogurt + 3 tbsp blueberries + tsp pumpkin seeds	4 tbsp low fat plain live yogurt + small banana + tsp linseed seeds
Lunch	Salmon Detox Box (Salmon and avocado box)	Slow burner salad with chicken	Pod slaw and avocado + Falafel Picking Pot	Pod Tabbouleh with chicken	Shredded Pork with Slaw
Snack	14 almonds + 4 dried apricots	4 Brazil nuts + small handful of raisins	10 cashew nuts + 4 dried apricots	4 walnuts + small handful of raisins	14 almonds + 4 dried apricots
Dinner	Chicken, lentil and spinach curry served with quinoa	Crab, cherry tomato and chilli whole grain spaghetti	Prawn and kale stir fry served with quinoa	Chili con carne with cauliflower rice	Tuna steak, Sweet Potato Wedges, Spinach and Broccoli

THE CREATIVES

One for the creative ladies, this plan is packed with fruit and vegetables found to increase creativity. Porridge, fruit and seeds makes a great breakfast to fuel the brain through the morning, whilst carbs are reduced in the evening to aid a good night's sleep.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Breakfast	Berry Boost porridge (regular)	Porridge with banana and pumpkin seed topping (regular)	Berry Boost porridge (regular)	Porridge with sultana and pumpkin seed topping (regular)	Berry Boost porridge (regular)
Snack	1/3 pod nutty nibble pot	Edamame beans picking pot	Free-range egg picking pot	1/3 pod nutty nibble pot	1/3 pod nutty nibble pot
Lunch	Go Green with salmon topping	Regular Hot and Skinny Sri Lankan Chicken	Gym Box	Salmon Detox Box	Regular Hot and Skinny Kerala chicken
Snack	Supergreen blitz	Berry boost yogurt	Mango Superfood pot	Berry boost yogurt	Immune boost blitz
Dinner	Mung bean, spinach and lime casserole	Chicken and vegetable stir fry	White fish with roasted Mediterranean vegetables and spinach	Cheese omelette with stir fried kale, garlic, chilli and a squeeze of lemon	Venison Steak and large mixed salad

THE HIGH FLYERS

This plan is packed with brain fuelling, stress busting foods for men. Omega 3 rich fish, antioxidants and B vitamins plus protein for satiety and slow release carbohydrates little and often through the day to sustain energy.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Breakfast	Energiser Scrambled Eggs with wholegrain toast (large)	Porridge with banana topping (large)	Superfood Scrambled Eggs (large)	Berry Boost porridge (large)	Bagel and Smoked Salmon
Snack	½ pot of pod nutty nibble pot	Free-range egg picking pot	Berry boost yogurt pot	½ pot of pod nutty nibble pot	Edamame bean picking pot
Lunch	Gym Box + chicken pot	Chicken Slow burner + salmon nori roll	Vietnamese Pork (large)	Protein Box + tabbouleh side salad	New Chicken Chorizo Hot Pot (large)
Snack	Fruit salad pot	½ pot of pod nutty nibble pot	9 bar	Falafel pot	½ pot of pod nutty nibble pot
Dinner	Salmon, roasted Mediterranean vegetables with quinoa	Beef stir fry with whole grain rice	Turkey Fajita	Venison steak, sweet potato and mixed green veg	Tuna steak with quinoa salad



PLAY HARD

Whilst needing to perform well in employment to pay for lifestyle, work isn't everything. Spare time also influences dietary requirements. Young Londoners work hard and play hard. That takes energy. Play may be out socialising with friends through to being part of the growing weekend warrior set, participating in endurance and even ultra-events.

If going out straight from work with no plans for dinner, pick something extra up at lunchtime and eat it before heading out. Fats and protein such as avocado and chicken or salmon will slow the absorption of alcohol into the blood, causing less damage to the liver and kidneys. Also, get organised for the next day. After a big night out one's appetite soars, as do cravings for carbohydrate. The sugar in alcohol causes blood sugar levels to soar and then plummet. Hypoglycaemia contributes to the sick, shaky feeling the next day and the cravings for carbohydrate. Lack of sleep also increases cravings for junk food. Optimally, do not get to that state - but just in case, have healthy slow release carbohydrate foods high in antioxidants available or a

Everyone has heard the saying 'burning the candle at both ends will make you ill' - add alcohol into that mix and it is certainly likely to. To work hard and play hard, you need a diet high in immune system boosting nutrients. These are vitamins A, C, D, E, iron, selenium and zinc. Healthy gut bacteria is also important. Try an immune system boosting smoothie of live yogurt, some green leaf veg, fruit and seeds. Just one large Brazil nut provides a full day's requirement for selenium - that's an excellent return on calorie.

go-to breakfast smoothie. This will be better than giving into cravings for high fat fast release carbohydrates, which create a cycle of blood sugar highs and lows throughout the day.

Looking good is also important. Beta carotene is a precursor of vitamin A found in orange/yellow foods such as carrots, sweet potatoes, red peppers, apricots and also green leafy vegetables. Beta carotene is a gold colour so when eaten in sufficient quantities produces a golden glow to the skin. **One large carrot provides 100% of vitamin A requirements, again an excellent return on calories. Certainly cheaper than a fast-tanning salon.**

If play is more sport-specific, getting food right is essential to performing both on and off the field. Ensure your diet is packed with energy creating vitamins and minerals to work with macronutrients when added. A recovery snack or meal after training is essential to enable good performance once back at work.

It is common when at work to not eat enough, perhaps skipping lunch to get work done and not have to work so late. But returning home hungry to see the family and put the children to bed is hard! Often resulting in the children that have been missed all day being shouted at and rushed to bed so dinner can be eaten. A small snack just before leaving work will gently raise blood sugar levels reducing grumpiness. The kids will appreciate it too!

MIDDLE AGE

As middle age approaches, so do the risks of heart disease and diabetes. Whilst genetics play a role, diet is important. It's not new news that traditional Mediterranean style diets high in fish, fruit, vegetables, whole grains, beans and pulses lower blood pressure or that oats, soya and nuts reduce cholesterol, **but what is relatively new is these foods being readily available as easy lunch options.** It is common to get into a lunchtime routine, going to the nearest place, choosing the same lunch, day in, day out. But look around, it may be just a few more steps away or take two more minutes walking time, but just this one small change of choosing a heart healthy lunch could make a significantly difference in the longer term. This is investing for the future and well worth the effort.





IN A NUTSHELL

Nutritional research has exploded over the past few decades, constantly providing a better understanding of the link between food, health and performance. Relatively new areas of research that are receiving a lot of interest at the moment are the importance of gut bacteria, the cause and health implications of inflammation in the body and nutrigenetics.

Gut bacteria is not just instrumental in digestion - scientists have found that gut bacteria also affects the immune system, weight and mental health. Diets high in protein, saturated fat, sugar and alcohol alter the gut environment, promoting the growth of 'bad' bacteria whilst foods that are high in fibre, are fermented such as sauerkraut, or contain bacteria such as live yoghurt support colonies of 'good' bacteria.

Inflammation is one of the root causes of diseases such as metabolic syndrome, heart disease, diabetes and some cancers. Anti-inflammatory diets high in antioxidants and omega 3 are a

key area of research and partly the reason for so much attention on sugar right now. Sugar is a concern not just because of a link to obesity and Type 2 Diabetes, but also because it is inflammatory.

Nutrigenetics is the study of food on gene expression and involves identifying people genetically susceptible to certain diseases and creating diets that may delay or stop the onset of disease. Also, eating patterns and foods that activate genes to create disease. Nutrigenetics is certainly a hot topic of future research, understanding in this area has grown immensely but the surface has barely been scratched.

However much is known about nutrition, it is the implementation that makes the difference. Investing calories well is paramount to well-being and performing to the best of your ability.

HELEN MONEY, NUTRITIONIST

Formerly a fund manager, I worked in the City for 16 years and I know the stresses that work can put on health. A good diet is essential to sustaining energy levels, stamina and to performing well. I understand that meals are often eaten away from home and I will work with you to create a plan that is achievable and sustainable in your working environment.

Now a mother of two young children, I appreciate the importance of eating well during pregnancy, the pressures of family life and the responsibilities of teaching children to eat well.

I provide advice and diet plans to support clients in a range of areas including weight loss, stress, fatigue, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, health maintenance and sports nutrition. I have experience of working with athletes competing at world championship level in a range of sports through to enthusiastic amateurs.

I hold a BSc (Hons) in Human Nutrition from the University of Westminster and a PG cert in Applied Sports Nutrition from St Mary's University, Twickenham. I have previously worked for the Nutrition Society and am a consultant to Cambridge University Press working on The British Journal of Nutrition, Public Health Nutrition and the Journal of Nutritional Science.

I am passionate about sharing my knowledge of nutrition, working closely with clients to provide advice that is tailored to their individual needs. Eating should be fun and enjoyable. Let me guide you to a healthy diet that works for you.

“ I am passionate about sharing my knowledge of nutrition. ”



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