

health: wellbeing



TEACHING BY EXAMPLE

Mandi O'Sullivan-Jones is an exercise psychologist, based in Sydney. She is also the director of

Pramfit and is expecting her first baby.

Studies show a child's physical activity, and subsequently their health and fitness, is linked to their parents' participation. If your children see you taking part in physical activity, whether it is social sport or formal exercise, they will think of it as a natural occurrence and not a chore.

There are so many ways that we can easily incorporate exercise into our everyday lives. For example, we spend hours driving around car parks trying to park when it may take the same amount of time to walk. Rather than sitting and having coffee with your mothers' group, you could go for a 30-minute walk together around the park and then indulge

in a coffee. For those returning to work early maybe the whole family can take the baby for a walk in the pram. Plan a time of the day or week when this can become part of the family routine, maybe after dinner? You could walk to the shop on Sunday mornings to get the paper and try not to use the car for neighbourhood trips. On weekends plan a picnic and take a football – it's a great way to get some fresh air and vitamin D.

Get involved in your children's activities, whether it be soccer or netball. Instead of just dropping them off at training you could go for a jog or power walk in the area.

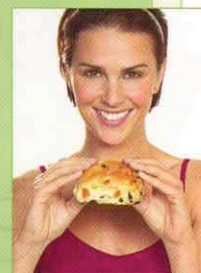
You don't have to be an ironman or compete in marathons – some form of physical activity on most, if not all days of the week, is essential for cardiovascular (heart and lung) health. Don't you want to watch your children grow up into healthy and happy parents themselves one day?

BODY IMAGE

A study from the *International Journal of Eating Disorders* has found people unhappy with their body image are more likely to see celebrities as thinner than they actually are. Those with a healthier body image were more accurate when choosing the correct size from several scaled pictures.

HEALTHY MEALS

Food & Nutrition Australia and Bakers Delight have created a free and easy-to-use online program to help you create a weekly meal plan from a healthy range of recipe ideas. You'll also find health and exercise tips. For more info visit www.bread4health.com.au.



ENHANCE YOUR BREAST MILK

Accredited practicing dietitian and mum Vanessa Schuldt has many years experience in nutrition and health.

As I breastfed my baby in the first weeks of her arrival, I pondered... breast milk is nutritionally complete, but is there something I can do to make it even more superior for my growing bub? Is it possible to add diamonds to the stream of liquid gold? Research shows we can.

Many of the nutrients in human milk are present in constant proportions, while some vary according to what you eat. One nutrient that is affected by your diet is the omega-3 fat called DHA (docosahexaenoic acid), which accumulates in the brain and plays a vital role in mental development. Sufficient DHA is particularly important in the last trimester of pregnancy and the first few months of life, when there is a growth spurt in the infant's brain.

A recent study revealed a strong correlation between the IQ of children at four years of age and their mother's intake of DHA during pregnancy and lactation. In essence, children born to mothers with

a DHA-rich diet were found to be more intelligent than those born to mums with a DHA-poor diet.

Research suggests lactating women should aim for 300mg DHA per day. To boost your intake, try eating three or more 150g serves of fish each week. Fish with the highest DHA content include salmon, ocean trout, tuna, mackerel, herring and sardines. If you don't like fish you could try omega-3 eggs, DHA bread or consider a DHA-enriched vitamin supplement tailored for lactating women.

Another beneficial food component to pass into breast milk is lycopene, a cancer-fighting substance found in tomatoes and its products like tomato sauce, paste, puree, soup and juice.

The moral to the breast milk story is all things that pass the lips matter. Just as there are things you need to limit, such as caffeine and alcohol, it's equally important to eat a variety of fresh, wholesome foods to produce milk that's 24 carat gold.

