

An eat-good feel-good book

Fast-paced living has the potential to get us into strife. Caitlin Reid, a former Geelong dietitian and now the team dietitian for the Rabbits, has written *Health & the City* to help get our health back on track. She talks to YASMIN PATON

HANGOVER cures, salad traps and caffeine-fuelled work-outs are some of the secrets stashed in *Health & the City*.

Written by Geelong dietitian and exercise physiologist Caitlin Reid, the pocket size book is a guide to living well in the big smoke.

Caitlin, team dietitian for NRL club South Sydney Rabbits, has worked as the nutrition and fitness expert for ninemsn's *Shape Mate* website, and runs a private practice.

After living and working in the city, Caitlin became aware of urban fitness trends - or the lack there of.

She discovered many workers felt they didn't have time to eat well and exercise. Deadlines, meetings, social lives, families, hobbies and the constant rush of the city intervened.

"Thanks to urban sprawl, not all of us have access to parks, sports fields, gyms, healthy food outlets, or have decent footpaths to walk on," Caitlin says. "This can lead to poor diet, lack of exercise - especially if we don't feel safe in our neighbourhood - and a dependency on cars."



Word to the wise: Caitlin Reid has put her thoughts on healthy living into a new book.

Caitlin says *Health & the City* encourages readers to become familiar with their local area and make use of nearby health food outlets, supermarkets, parks, and leisure centres.

On each page, Caitlin covers a common complaint and offers a solution.

"It might be, 'I eat when I'm depressed,'" she explains. "Then I have a little information about why you might be eating while you're depressed

and suggestions on how you overcome that."

Caitlin also addresses the topics of stress, sleep, exercise and diet.

"I also offer suggestions for business travel - what to do when you're at the airport and how you can do exercises when you're in your hotel room."

Caitlin says her top health tips are to eat whole foods and include interval training in your exercise regime.

Health & the City is available in book shops

nation-wide for \$22.95. www.healthandthecity.com.au

Caitlin's stress busters

Stress can turn us to food for comfort and this leads to weight gain. Rarely do we crave salads or fruit: we usually go for quick and convenient potato crisps, chocolates or lollies. These foods cause fluctuations in blood glucose levels, which cause mood swings and lead to fatigue, escalating our stress further. The key to managing stress-based

eating is to identify and manage what is causing us stress. Manage blood sugar levels by eating low-GI foods such as whole grain bread or reduced-fat yoghurt. Maintain a healthy diet and eat plenty of fruit and vegetables.

Smile: It releases feel-good hormones.

Get a water feature: Watching fish swim or listening to the sound of water can reduce your blood pressure.

Call a friend: Think about something else. Take the focus off you and chat about them.

Take a mental break: Play a game such as solitaire or do a crossword. Take the focus off your work, relationship or your exam and concentrate on other mentally stimulating activities.

Meditation: Sit on the ground, close your eyes and spend a few minutes meditating. Try not to think about work or any of your stresses. Simply let your mind clear.

Enjoy a cup of tea: Tea contains L-theanine, which has been shown to relax you, while keeping you alert.

Do yoga: Do some yoga in your office, at home or in a local park. You could even go to the local gym at lunchtime for a session.

Real fine dining without whining

YOU needn't spend hours slaving over a stove to impress dinner party guests.

Super Food Ideas food editor Kim Coverdale helps find the balance between fine dining and fine fun!

Q I love entertaining and having friends over for meals, but I admit I'm not the best cook and don't have hours to spend in the kitchen. Do you have any shortcuts that can save me time in the kitchen while still impressing guests?

A There are many steps in preparing a feast that can be undertaken ahead of time, or cooking shortcuts that can let you relax and enjoy more time with your guests.

Here are some of them.

■ Dishes such as roast meats with roast vegetables are a great solution, as there is limited preparation and you can essentially let the oven do all the work. All-in-one oven bakes and one-pot stove meals such as pasta bakes, lasagne, tagines, curries and stews are great for the less confi-

dent cook, and also save time washing up.

■ Use packet gravies and sauces to save time and potential mistakes. You can jazz them up by adding fresh herbs or spices.

■ Soups and casseroles are great meals that can be prepared a day ahead. Simply reheat and serve.

■ Cakes and desserts are perfect to prepare ahead and wow your guests. Think of frozen desserts, which can be as simple as chopped fruit or chocolate bars folded through ice-cream. Add a personal touch to packet cakes by folding fresh berries or grated chocolate through the batter. Decorate icing with toasted coconut, grated chocolate or specialty chocolates.

■ For quick cocktails, mix chilled sparkling wine with cordial or juice and fruit.

■ For easy garlic and herb bread, rub a little garlic, herbs and olive oil on day-old bread and pop in the oven until golden.

For more great ideas and recipes, pick up a copy of September's *Super Food Ideas*, on sale now.



RECIPE:

Tray-roasted chicken with potatoes and garlic gravy

- 6 fresh thyme sprigs
- 4 (220g each) chicken marylands
- 12 small chat potatoes, halved
- 6 pickling onions, peeled, halved
- 2 fresh rosemary sprigs

- 3 garlic cloves
- 1/3 cup white wine
- 1 1/2 tablespoons olive oil
- 35g sachet onion and mushroom gravy mix

Preheat oven to 220C or 200C fan-forced. Remove leaves from three thyme sprigs. Place chicken, potato, onion, remaining thyme sprigs, rosemary sprigs and garlic (unpeeled) in a large baking tray. Drizzle with wine and oil. Sprinkle chicken with thyme leaves. Roast for 30 minutes. Remove garlic. Roast for 15 to 20 minutes or until chicken is cooked through. Carefully squeeze garlic flesh from skins. Discard skins.

Make gravy following packet directions. Add garlic. Whisk to combine. Remove baking tray from oven. Remove and discard thyme and rosemary sprigs.

Serve chicken with potato, onion and garlic gravy. Serves four.

— Photo: ROB PALMER



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