

infuse

STEEP YOURSELF IN INSPIRATION, INNOVATION & DEBATE

COVER STORY:

***What makes us
happy? We ask
Hugh van
Cuylenburg of
'The Resilience
Project'***

FEATURE
ARTICLES INSIDE:

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looking after
yourself in times
of adversity***
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+ ***Work from home
like a pro*** - Seven
easy strategies to boost
productivity
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'new' foods from collagen
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MAY 2020

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STEEP YOURSELF IN INSPIRATION,
INNOVATION & DEBATE

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From the Desk

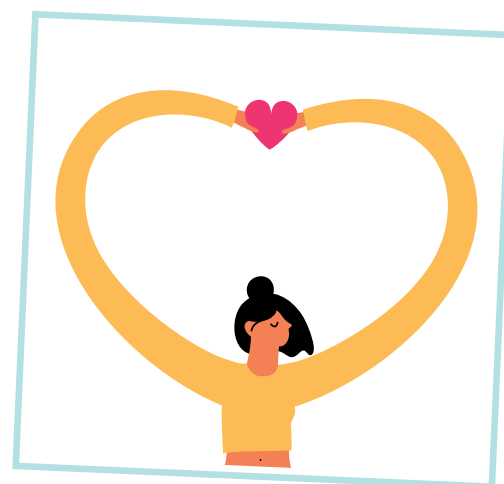
of Maree Ferguson

Founder & Director, Dietitian Connection



Sitting down to write my letter for this issue of Infuse, never in my wildest dreams would I have imagined the unprecedented situation we all find ourselves in with COVID-19. It is having a devastating impact on everyone around the globe. Many of you have been personally affected, and we want you to know that we are thinking of you.

Kate and I recently recorded a podcast issue about how we are navigating the environment we now find ourselves in (it is available for **download now** from Stitcher or iTunes). One of the topics we covered was what we are doing at Dietitian Connection (DC) to maintain a positive outlook. I will share some of my personal strategies here and encourage you to have a think about what might work for you. Self-care has never been more important.



Sleep

I love my sleep! Getting my eight hours of sleep is non-negotiable. I love nothing more than to sleep in on the weekends, and more often than not indulge in a cheeky nap in the afternoon. Kate and I recently heard Todd Sampson from Gruen and BodyHack speak about sleep being even more important than nutrition and exercise for brain health, so it's one strategy I'm happy to prioritise!

Movement

I have never been a huge fan of exercise but I know how important it is, so now more than ever, I make sure I schedule it in. I have moved my personal training sessions online via Zoom and purchased some equipment to use at home. There are lots of online exercise programs available, many of them free and doable in your own space. The only time I'm leaving the house is to go on my daily walk with my dog, and I find myself strangely looking forward to that at the end of the work day. The DC team is now conducting walking meetings, which have been a great way to stay connected.

Nutrition

Stating the obvious for dietitians, but I'm being very conscious of my diet, especially my vegetable serves and fluid intake.

Mindfulness

Each morning I start the day by reading some affirmation cards from Kikki-K and doing some mindfulness and breathing activities with the Headspace app. This sets up my day with positive intentions.

Gratitude

We start each day as a DC team with a Zoom call where we check in with each other and mention three things we are grateful for. You could try this with a colleague, mentor or family member. Each night I complete **The Resilience Project Gratitude Journal**, which allows me to think about who and what I am thankful for that day.

Psychologist and business coach

I have a predisposition to anxiety, so I am indebted to my psychologist and business coach who keep me sane. I am meeting with them virtually (fortnightly with my coach and monthly with my psychologist). I highly recommend having a professional in your corner to maintain your mental health. Psychology has recently been added to the telehealth funding arrangements by the Government, so it is more accessible than ever.

Learn more about how the DC team is navigating these uncertain times by listening to **our podcast** (available on Stitcher or iTunes) or checking out our **YouTube channel**. Keep the conversation going – tell us how you are managing or what else you would like to hear from us via our Facebook group or Instagram.



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What makes us happy? We ask Hugh van Cuylenburg of 'The Resilience Project'

We were so excited to sit down with Hugh van Cuylenburg recently, after being fans for years. Mental health is such an important issue, affecting almost all of us in some way. Hugh is the founder of 'The Resilience Project', an education program that has now reached over 300,000 Australians.

In a world of uncertainty, meet Hugh van Cuylenburg, founder of The Resilience Project and beacon for improved mental health. We sat down with Hugh for a one-on-one discussion about all things happiness.

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*"Our key pillars
for wellbeing are
gratitude, empathy
and mindfulness."*



Images courtesy of The Resilience Project

What inspired you to start The Resilience Project?

Hugh: When my sister was 14 years old, she was diagnosed with an eating disorder and ever since that diagnosis, I have been fascinated by the question, “what makes us happy?” For me, on a basic level, I just wanted to make my mum and dad happy, and make sure my little brother was able to enjoy the happy childhood that I had experienced. It wasn’t, however, until 12 years later that I felt like I had a more complete answer to this question, after spending a few months living in a remote underprivileged community in the far north of India. I returned to Australia and commenced work on my own programs for schools which incorporated all that I had learnt in India. The Resilience Project was born.





"Social media is screaming at us that we must be perfect to be happy..."

One in five adults will experience mental ill-health throughout the year, which is a staggering statistic. Your mission is to help people become happier by teaching positive mental health strategies – what are some strategies you would recommend?

Our key pillars for wellbeing are gratitude, empathy and mindfulness. The research says that by practicing these things, you improve your mental health and feel happier. Your mental health is like any other skill, if you want to be good at it, you have to practise. The good news is it's not a huge time investment. The simple practice of writing down three things that went well for you, completing a daily breathing exercise and looking out for opportunities to be kind to other people is all it really takes to start to feel changes.

We're huge fans of the Imperfects podcast (our favourite was the interview with Ryan) where you talk about topics which are often considered taboo and really need to be talked about. By discussing them openly you provide comfort as we are able to connect and realise we are all the same struggling in some way with our imperfect lives. Which interview has provided you with the biggest lessons?

article continues overleaf...



Tune in to the Imperfects podcast

<https://theresilienceproject.com.au/about-us/podcast/>

Thank you, that is very kind. It's been a wonderful journey, working on The Imperfects podcast. We all struggle from time to time, we are all insecure... basically, no one is perfect. This modern world we live in however, is experiencing a perfectionist epidemic. Social media is screaming at us that we must be perfect to be happy. Our podcast is trying very hard to break that down. Anyway, I haven't answered your question, I've just plugged the podcast! It's a tough one to answer. I really love every person we have had on. Missy Higgins was a difficult one for me as I've had an enormous crush on her for a long time. If I had to choose one though, I think I would also choose Ryan's episode. As well as being a very helpful interview for those struggling with issues around jealousy, lack of purpose, and battling insecurities, it was a really nice exploration of our friendship. From me unashamedly bailing him up in a cafe to take a selfie with him to where we are now, where I quite genuinely see him as one of my nearest and dearest friends.



Images courtesy of The Resilience Project

"The food we put in our body has a massive impact on not only our physical wellbeing but also our mental wellbeing."

Why stop there. I love the man. He is a beauty.

You mention your sister's diagnosis of anorexia nervosa as a teenager in your book, would you have any take-aways for dietitians when they are working with those individuals and families impacted by eating disorders?

Wow, what a beautiful question. I am so happy you asked this. I do actually have some advice for those of you who are working with people with eating disorders such as my sister's. It's pretty simple.... don't take it personally if they don't listen to you. They might smile and nod and say all the right things, but then completely disregard everything that you say. There is very little you can do when someone is truly in the grips of a horrific eating disorder such as anorexia nervosa. Not to say you don't do all that you can to help them, but don't get down on yourself if they are not listening.

WHY WE DO WHAT WE DO



primary school
kids experience
mental ill-health



adults will experience
mental health problems
this year



adolescents
experience mental
ill-health



of adolescents
will not seek help
for mental illness

There still seems to be some stigma about seeing a psychologist and we love that you are normalising this. How do you think we can encourage Australians to see qualified health professionals including psychologists and dietitians?

Again, great question. Modelling behaviours is the most powerful way to impact on the people around us. Talk openly about the help that you are seeking to improve your life. We should all see a psychologist.

Ryan Shelton (from the podcast, the man that I love) sees a psychologist. He's not experiencing a mental illness, but wants to be a better version of himself. He views the consultations as a one-on-one lecture on psychology where he is the subject. We should all be seeing a nutritionist. The food we put in our body has a massive impact on not only our physical wellbeing but also our mental wellbeing. I spent

four days on the Port Adelaide Football Club pre-season camp and I didn't leave the poor nutritionist alone. I learnt so much from her that has helped to make my life so much better. You do great work guys! Keep it up.

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Leadership and looking after yourself in times of adversity

with Tara Diversi, President, Dietitians Association of Australia



Known for her many talents, from open-ocean swimming to mentoring young people starting out in business, Tara Diversi is one busy lady! The current President of the Dietitians Association of Australia, Tara is also a sports dietitian, holder of an MBA and qualifications in psychology. She shares her personal lessons from nearly 20 years of nutrition and business leadership.

As I write this, we are in the midst of the COVID-19 crisis, and I will not profess to give you any business strategies to get you and your business through this difficult time. I am hoping that as I read this article in the May issue of Infuse, that we are on the other side of this crisis and my advice below is in preparation for the next crisis (there will be more).

To be honest, my business was thriving in 2008/2009 when the Global Financial Crisis hit, and many health businesses and households including mine were not as affected as other businesses. I absolutely do not have experience in thriving after an event such as COVID-19, where all work evaporates seemingly overnight. What I do know a lot about, is dealing with tough times and adopting a sense of resilience with the knowledge that you will come out on the other side. From the outside, when you look at my life and what I have achieved, you could easily mistake that life is easy for me. It is not and I won't take you down some of the more personal difficulties I have faced in my life, but living with a disability – Ehlers Danlos Syndrome – has prepared me to deal with continual hard times. Each day I deal with pain, dislocations and fatigue... but I have embraced these as my normal. Most years (except the last 2 – fingers crossed), my life stops as my doctor tells me I need another surgery and all of my plans will be swept to the side for 8 – 12 weeks. This sucks, like our situation today sucks, and hopefully the below strategies that I use to get me through these periods help you in this situation.

"If you are not healthy (including financially healthy) you cannot help others."

Foster generosity if you can.

If you are not financially affected by the crisis, or the Government incentives allow you to keep staff and re-purpose their work to build for the future, please do this. We need those people who are still getting a pay packet to help small businesses and their employees if they can.

You must feed yourself first.

If you are not healthy (including financially healthy) you cannot help others. As noble as it is to answer the call of campaigns (putting others first, shopping local and supporting small businesses etc) you need to reasonably look after yourself first now. Do a personal cashflow analysis ([moneysmart.gov.au budget template here](https://moneysmart.gov.au/budget-template)) and a business cashflow analysis ([template here from ANZ Bank](#)). Get personal advice from your accountant and/or financial planner. Overall, do not spend money you do not have, unless you have a strategy to be able to pay back the loans that you obtain during this time. Finally, if you have employees that you do not need and you cannot sustain, you may need to let them

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"How can you make the most of your time working from home, or off?"

go or put them on leave without pay until your work picks up again. At the moment, Government incentives may help cushion this blow for many people.

Understand what Government incentives you are eligible

for by taking a good look at your business numbers, and speaking to your accountant or business advisor. australia.gov.au details all of the Australian and State Government incentives. Speaking to your local Entrepreneurship Facilitator can also help ensure you're not missing out on something. You may need to redo your financial forecasts based on these incentives and downturn in revenue.

Maximise available income.

Take a step back to see what income is available to you at the moment – this may be looking for those clients who you can do work for from home, or if you are in private practice that are willing to pay for telehealth. If you have veterans who need to be seen, apply for prior approval for telehealth consultations. At the time of writing there was word that telehealth for Medicare rebates will be approved. Some private health insurers also cover tele-dietetics and information can be found on this [google sheet](#). If you are going to do telehealth in the long-term, please look into some.

Work when you can.

When it comes to business strategy, I admit to being a bit of a nerd, and have spent the last week devouring business journals, trade magazines, books and audiobooks that describe great organisations and businesses that are born or thrive through a crisis (for my work with DAA). Besides the obvious winners who directly solve new problems created by the crisis, the one common thread with successful companies is that they work when everyone else isn't. What do they do? That seems to vary and can include product development, pivoting business models, exploring new markets or perfecting their offerings. When I was out with swine flu after bringing it home from FNCE 2009, I wrote my communication for change book series. When I was stuck in Dover waiting for the weather to clear for my English Channel swim, I wrote my psychology thesis. When I had my knee and ankle surgeries, I developed content for Sophus Nutrition. For all of these projects, I was able to rest when I needed, and work when I could, without any pressure... Getting the projects done were a bonus but not essential. How can you make the most of your time working from home, or off?



Reflecting – Tara Ice Training and swimming the English Channel. Images courtesy of Tara Diversi

Get back to business basics.

Many advisers are suggesting you ramp up your digital media presence now. I agree, but in many of my business coaching clients I see more benefit from getting back to basics and traditional marketing strategies. Operationalise with diverse income streams – it is always a danger to rely on one source of revenue. Many practitioners who rely on Medicare are seeing this now. What types of products or services can you add that can help you have a more sustainable business in times of crisis? Set up systems so businesses can run themselves. I have seen businesses this week affected because key employees have needed to self-isolate. What happens if this is you, or something happens to you or a key staff member? Get systems and processes in place and sort out that filing you have been waiting to do. Finally, get your database of potential customers ready so that when it is appropriate to do so, you can market your services. There are a number of free basic courses I have developed for YEP Entrepreneurship Facilitators and you can access these free of charge at **www.yepcairns.com**

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Feel the feels.

Allow yourself to have negative feelings. Of course, people have it worse than you... but this doesn't take away from the fact that you are allowed to be disappointed, sad, stressed, anxious and angry. Since I have allowed myself to be annoyed at the world because of my pain and dislocations, it bothers me less. I let myself have a cry, take it easy and woe for a while and even make time for it. I love Brene Brown's saying "if you numb pain, you numb joy", so I let myself feel and accept the pain and work through it rather than believing I have to put on a brave face for my family and the outside world.

"Allow yourself to have negative feelings. Of course, people have it worse than you..."



Reflect.

Every 90 days, I take the time to reflect on my previous 90 days. I look at aspects of my life that align with my core values (external – contribution, empowerment; internal – flexibility, freedom, growth) [yours will likely be different] and I see how I've gone. I look at data (business and personal) to objectively measure and track, then get some feedback from someone (can vary depending on when I do it) and then reflect on how I have felt at different times over the quarter. After doing this I journal, talk to myself to process and make a plan for the next 90 days. When I started this, I used to be way off what I could achieve, and now I know what to expect from myself and my goals are more realistic. Sometimes my goals are focussed on achievements, and sometimes they are focussed on doing less. Often I achieve nothing on my list because something will come up unexpectedly that increases my commitments, travel or one of my work channels. These can be my best quarters, and they allow me to know that even when I am uncertain, life can be great.

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Work from home like a pro

Has social distancing left you working remotely? Here's seven easy strategies to boost productivity.

by Melissa Meier, Marketing and Communications Assistant, Dietitian Connection



The global pandemic that is Covid-19 means home is the new workplace for many. But if you're a newbie to WFH (working from home), the lack of structure and loneliness can be pretty tricky to navigate – and leave you feeling demotivated and unproductive if you're not careful. To help get you through it, here's seven strategies that make WFH a breeze.



1 Keep to office hours

Going to work isn't just about your physical presence in the office – the routine that comes along with it is of utmost importance. Of course, WFH gives you the flexibility and freedom to do things you couldn't do if you were physically in the office (think: put on a load of washing) – but sticking to office hours as much as possible will really help to shift your mindset and set you up for WFH success.

Get into 'work mode'

It can be nice to skip the morning makeup routine, but when you're WFH, you should still brush your hair and get out of your pyjamas as you would when you're going into work. A corporate dress or suit isn't necessary, but clothing that will make you feel on-task is a wise idea. Goodbye slippers!

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"...boost productivity with a short stretching break or a trip to your kitchen to brew a homemade cuppa every hour."

3. Have a dedicated working space

Create a work-only zone away from the lounge, bedroom and kitchen bench. Having a dedicated workspace will help you to associate that specific location with work – you won't be tempted to flick on the television to catch up on last night's episode of your favourite program or open the fridge just because you can! Another bonus is that once you shut down your computer and leave your workstation at the end of the day, it'll be easier to get back into 'home mode'.

4. Take regular breaks

When you're in the office, it's easy to strike up a conversation with a colleague at the water cooler or head outside for five minutes to grab a coffee – but when you're WFH, these opportunities are few and far between. Instead, boost productivity with a short stretching break or a trip to your kitchen to brew a homemade cuppa every hour.

Stay connected

When you're working remotely, communication is key. A quick phone call with your manager to start and end the day is a great strategy, as is regular team catchups via Zoom or Skype. To create a new sense of belonging, you could even organise lunch or a coffee break via video conference to cover the usual office chit-chat, or a virtual Friday afternoon pizza party to keep up the camaraderie.

Get some fresh air...

Cabin fever is real when WFH. To make it a little easier, set yourself up in a space with natural light and a window that you can open for fresh air. Make sure you get outside at some point during the day, too, even if it's just to sit on your balcony or walk the dog around the block.





"...help to shift your mindset and set you up for WFH success."

7. Exercise regularly

WFH might shake up your usual routine, but you should still schedule in a little 'me time' to get your heart and muscles pumping each day. Not only is regular exercise good for your physical health, but your mental health, too – so at a time when stress and anxiety is at all all-time high, exercise could be the key to keeping your sanity in check.

Nutrition support for people living with cancer

– an oncology dietitian's
perspective

by Jacqueline Baker, Senior Oncology Dietitian at Chris O'Brien Lifehouse



Whether personally or professionally, cancer has likely touched us all. It is no secret that people with cancer can face significant difficulties eating and drinking enough to maintain weight, hydration and overall nutritional status.

The challenges come from multiple fronts. Sometimes it's mechanical, with the location of a cancer itself preventing adequate intake. Sometimes treatment-related side effects can impact upon a person's ability to eat and drink; despite advancements in oncology treatments, with new chemotherapy agents, targeted therapies, surgical innovations and immunotherapy, side effects can be highly distressing.

Some that impact oral intake include dysgeusia (taste alterations), mucositis, dysphagia, nausea, vomiting, xerostomia (dry mouth), pain, fatigue, anorexia, diarrhoea and constipation. Additionally, some of the treatments themselves can increase nutrition requirements, particularly for protein and energy.

Medical nutrition therapy (MNT) is an evidence-based approach to managing chronic medical conditions using an individually-tailored nutrition intervention. The goal of MNT in the oncology patient is to reduce the impact of side effects and provide strategies to meet individual nutrition requirements, to minimise weight loss and the risk of malnutrition. A range of strategies are utilised, including food fortification, tailored dietary education, symptom management, oral nutrition supplement prescription, enteral nutrition and parenteral nutrition.



Image courtesy of Jacqueline Baker

When people are unable to meet their nutrition requirements with food alone, oral nutrition supplements (ONS) can be prescribed. These supplements are nutritionally dense, low volume drinks, and can provide up to 100% of nutrition requirements if required. Choosing the right product involves consideration of clinical requirement, taste, volume, viscosity, tolerance, palatability, patient preferences and nutritional density of the product.

Sometimes diet and ONS are still not adequate. In these cases, enteral and parenteral nutrition can be used. In some treatment modalities, provision of enteral or parental nutrition is standard practice and can be prescribed prior, during or post-surgery, chemotherapy or radiotherapy.

As you can see, nutrition is a major concern for those living with cancer. With such pressure on nutritional status, nutrition support is crucial in the management of people living with cancer. A Dietitian within the multidisciplinary team is paramount to optimise nutrition.



Image courtesy of Catherine Saxelby

Something new to chew on

Nutrition perspectives on 'new' foods
from collagen to pea protein

by Catherine Saxelby, Award-winning author and Freelance writer

Catherine Saxelby is an Australian dietitian and nutritionist known for her no-nonsense approach to food, eating and diets. With a diverse background, she is prolific in the media, having written thousands of articles and contributed to many publications.

Kombucha

Kombucha (pronounced kom-boo-chah) is a slightly sweet, slightly acidic, fermented beverage made from a base of tea. It is made from water, tea and sugar (the substrate for the fermentation). So you start with sugar but it largely disappears during the making of kombucha.

The tea infusion mixed with a SCOBY (which stands for a 'symbiotic culture of bacteria and yeast'). The fermentation by this tea fungus or 'mother' is the process that ferments the sugar and yields acetic acid (which gives it that characteristic sharp taste), carbonic acid and carbon dioxide gas (which adds the bubbles).

Does kombucha really stack up as that 'something special'? The short answer is 'not really'. The long answer? Well, you MAY ingest some friendly bacteria to help your digestion, but no-one knows for sure. It's been drunk to assist gut function for centuries in Japan, Russia and Germany but there's not a huge amount of research into its health benefits.

To my way of thinking, its greatest advantage is its lower sugar content to that of regular soft drinks, combined with its refreshment value as a tart yet effervescent drink.

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Hemp

Hemp has been approved for consumption in Australia, although it has been used as food for centuries in other cultures. The hemp food products are derived from low-THC hemp seeds, which don't contain the psychoactive substances associated with cannabis. Industrial hemp is a distinct variety of *Cannabis sativa* L, meaning it won't make you high. Low-THC hemp products available in Australia include whole hemp seeds, hemp flakes, hemp oil, hemp protein (the part leftover after the oil is extracted) and hemp flour (ground hemp seeds).

Hemp seeds don't need soaking, crushing or cooking. Typically around half their content is fat. Their contribution to plant omega-3s such as alpha-linolenic acid (ALA) is outstanding. Hemp provides important vitamins including vitamin E and B group vitamins (such as folate and thiamin), along with minerals like phosphorous, potassium, magnesium and iron, and yes has less than 2 per cent carbohydrates.



Pea protein

Pea protein powder or isolate is proving useful for vegans and for people with dairy intolerances or allergies, who can't eat whey protein from milk.

Pea protein is a complete protein. This means that it has all nine of the essential amino acids which your body can't make and which you have to get from your diet. But while pea protein has around 9 per cent leucine, which is good for building muscle, it is low in methionine, which you would need to get from other sources in your diet.

Due to the way it is made, pea protein isolate doesn't contain the anti-nutrients that peas themselves contain and that prevent absorption of nutrients in the gut.

Collagen

Collagen is found in the connective tissues – ligaments, cartilage, muscles, tendons and skin – as well as in the bones of all animals. It is a protein and thus a source of amino acids. Collagen supplements are usually collagen that has been hydrolyzed so that it has been broken down into its constituent peptides. This makes it easier to absorb and use. Collagen can be bought in the form of supplements sold as collagen hydrolysates or peptides but good quality bone broths are excellent home-made sources of collagen.



There are three types of Collagen. Type I is the most abundant in your body, followed by Type III and then Type II. Types I and III are most beneficial for skin health and elasticity, and reducing the signs of ageing. Type II collagen is found in the cartilage of your joints and is the type taken by people with degenerative joint problems such as osteoarthritis. If you take Type II collagen then it is recommended that you take it separately from the other types to aid with its absorption.

There are other claims made about collagen such as benefitting hair, nails and gut health, but the research is not clear. Better quality trials are needed.

Monk fruit (or Luo han guo)

Monk fruit extract is derived from the fruit of *Siraitia grosvenorii*, a perennial vine native to southern China where it is used in Traditional Chinese Medicine. Monk fruit is known for its characteristic intensely-sweet taste. The fruit derives its sweetness from its naturally occurring glucose and fructose, as well as its high-intensity triterpene compounds known as mogrosides.

Because of these sweet mogrosides, monk fruit extract is approximately 20 times sweeter than other fruit juices. It has a very clean flavour profile with no lingering bitterness. This makes the extract an obvious solution for replacing sugar in beverages.

Currently monk fruit can only be used as a food and drink flavouring. But you could soon see it on supermarket shelves as a table sweetener.

Excerpt from Nutrition for Life 2020 by Catherine Saxelby (Hardie Grant) available for \$34.99.



Images courtesy of Catherine Saxelby

We're huge fans of Catherine here at Dietitian Connection, and we are excited to have three copies of her book 'Nutrition for Life', newly updated for 2020, to give away.

To win, simply tell us which 'new' food you're excited to try, and why and email us at info@dietitianconnection.com

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