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STEEP YOURSELF IN INSPIRATION, INNOVATION & DEBATE

COVER STORY:

Dietitian trailblazer: Karen Inge

FEATURE
ARTICLES INSIDE:

- + **Embracing our
native bounty
with super bush
foods**
– meet Hayley Blieden
- + **Rebuilding
relationships with
food:** Talia Cecchele,
eating disorders dietitian
- + **Intermittent
fasting insights**
with Jaime Rose Chambers

MAY 2021

06



Step *inside*

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From the desk

of Maree Ferguson

Founder & Director, Dietitian Connection

It's hard to believe we're almost half-way through 2021! Team DC have spent much of the first half of the year beavering away to bring you our first-ever virtual Dietitians Unite experience – and boy, has it felt like a rollercoaster! Although we're disappointed that we won't be able to dance with you in happiness in person, we know we'll still have a magical day together via cyberspace.

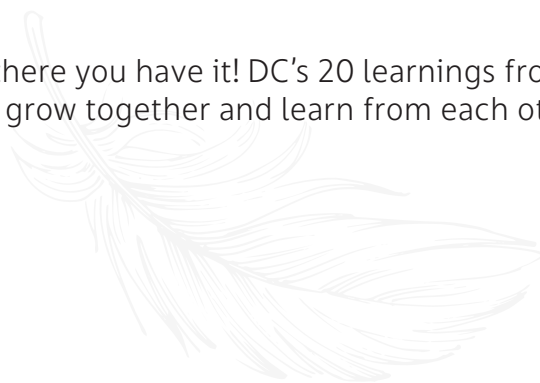
Dietitians Unite is an opportunity for us to reflect on what's important. Each year, we're reminded of young dietitian Holly Butcher's inspiring words. Holly heartbreakingly passed away from Ewing's Sarcoma in 2018. She penned an **open letter** with some incredibly meaningful messages that have now been seen by millions of people worldwide. In particular, we're inspired by Holly's advice to reach out to others, focus on meaningful experiences, disconnect from materialism, show kindness and love to others, and ultimately, seize the day – "*carpe diem*".

In the theme of reflection, team DC have put together **20 things the past twelve months have taught us** – a mixture of light-hearted musings and more thoughtful life lessons after the year that was 2020, a year I'm sure we'll all look back on like no other! So, without further ado, here's team DC's 20 things 2020 taught us. We hope some of our learnings will resonate with you as much as they did team DC.



20 things the past twelve months have taught us...

1. Everything *WILL* be okay in the end.
2. We're all a part of something much bigger.
3. Challenges should be embraced as new opportunities.
4. Say no to things that don't bring you joy.
5. We can be more flexible and resilient than we once thought.
6. Always have enough toilet paper on hand!
7. The world will keep spinning, no matter what.
8. There are silver linings in scary and unfamiliar situations.
9. It's ok to enjoy the little things in life, like an afternoon nap or reading a good book.
10. People and communities are good.
11. Change can happen fast when we need it to.
12. There is a limit to how much TV one can watch!
13. Morning routine is everything. Win the morning, win the day.
14. We're so lucky to call Australia home.
15. There are many issues in our world but also so much to be grateful for.
16. Even if you're physically apart, you can have close friendships and professional relationships.
17. You don't always have to be somewhere in person. You can achieve **a lot** online.
18. Mental health is incredibly important. We hope the deeper discussion around mental health ignited by the COVID era continues.
19. Being lonely every day is hard. It doesn't hurt to say hello or give a friendly smile to strangers at the supermarket or your local coffee shop.
20. There's not much a bit of time in the sunshine with your dog can't fix.



And there you have it! DC's 20 learnings from 2020. We're looking forward to continuing to grow together and learn from each other, throughout the rest of 2021 and beyond.

Now, let's seize the day at Dietitians Unite!

Dietitian trailblazer: Karen Inge

The incredible Karen Inge has had many firsts in her remarkable career: she was the first dietitian appointed to an AFL club, the founding Head of Nutrition at the Victorian Institute of Sport, the inaugural Vice President of Sports Dietitians Australia and the first dietitian to be made a Fellow of Sports Medicine Australia. Karen's inspiring story is one of serendipitous sliding door moments, lots of hard work and a few disappointments that ended up being her biggest opportunities.



Karen Inge's childhood was filled with many happy memories where food played a central role in family celebrations, so it's no surprise she gravitated towards dietetics in her professional life. Her first role in the field was at the prestigious Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre, and although she loved it, she didn't stay for very long – she had made a promise to a girlfriend to go travelling through Europe together. Upon her return, Karen worked in a community setting, but it was what happened next that really changed the course of her career.



Images courtesy of Karen Inge



"It was really hard, to be honest. Dietitians were not considered essential... I had to push in a bit"

"I needed to upgrade my qualification... but unfortunately I wasn't given permission to take a day off each week to do this... so one of my mentors told me to leave my job." For obvious reasons, that was a big decision for Karen, but a sliding door moment – and a friendly colleague who helped Karen get her foot in the door on a research project for her studies – meant it came together like clockwork.

After completing her research on cardiovascular risk factors in VFL (now known

as AFL) players, Karen landed another clinical position and opened up her private practice, but her interests were leaning more and more into sport, so that's what she focused her attention on.

As Karen says, it wasn't all smooth sailing – she felt she really had to prove her worth. "It was really hard, to be honest. Dietitians were not considered essential... I had to push in a bit." And how did she do that, exactly? "I really focused on the practical aspects of sports nutrition... it was about translating



the science into practical terms because the benefit to the athlete was the food they put into their mouth had a major impact on performance... and that was the missing link."

Sports dietitians of today have a lot to be thankful to Karen Inge for. When she began as a sports dietitian, there were no full memberships for dietitians for the Australian Sports Medicine Federation. "What I had to do was lobby and write position letters... try and build a case for why a dietitian needs to get full membership." And she knew she wasn't only doing it for herself. "I had to do it for the rest of the dietitians that came after me." And that she did – often without payment. "A lot of my work in the early days was in an honorary capacity to try and show the value of a dietitian."



Soon after this not-so-small feat, Karen played an integral role in setting up Sports Dietitians Australia. "It really was born out of necessity... We had to form our own association for our survival within the sports medicine world. We had no choice." Again, however, Karen knew it was for the greater good of the dietetic profession. "We knew that we were laying the foundations for something that was going to be bigger than us."

These opportunities within the field of sports nutrition opened up doors for Karen within the food industry. "I was very, very particular about the food companies I worked with... I knew that my credibility had to be preserved... I worked with many primary industries... it was very satisfying for me." As a controversial topic in the field of dietetics, Karen's stance on working with the food industry is loud and clear: "When people say, 'Should dietitians be working with food industry?' my answer is 'Yes, absolutely!' because it doesn't mean endorsing junk food or ultra-processed foods. It means working within the food industry to ensure the best nutrition outcomes for consumers."

One unexpected phone call led to Karen's 23-year stint with Jenny Craig. Initially, she wasn't particularly interested in the position, but the encouraging words of a mentor helped Karen shift her perspective. After a year or so, Karen's position changed to an advisory capacity – she was appointed to the JC International Medical Advisory Board and that was something she was very grateful for. "I sat on that board for over 20 years and that was quite incredible... I was sitting alongside highly esteemed obesity researchers and

"I've worked with many wonderful dietitians throughout my career who have inspired me and helped my dreams become a reality"



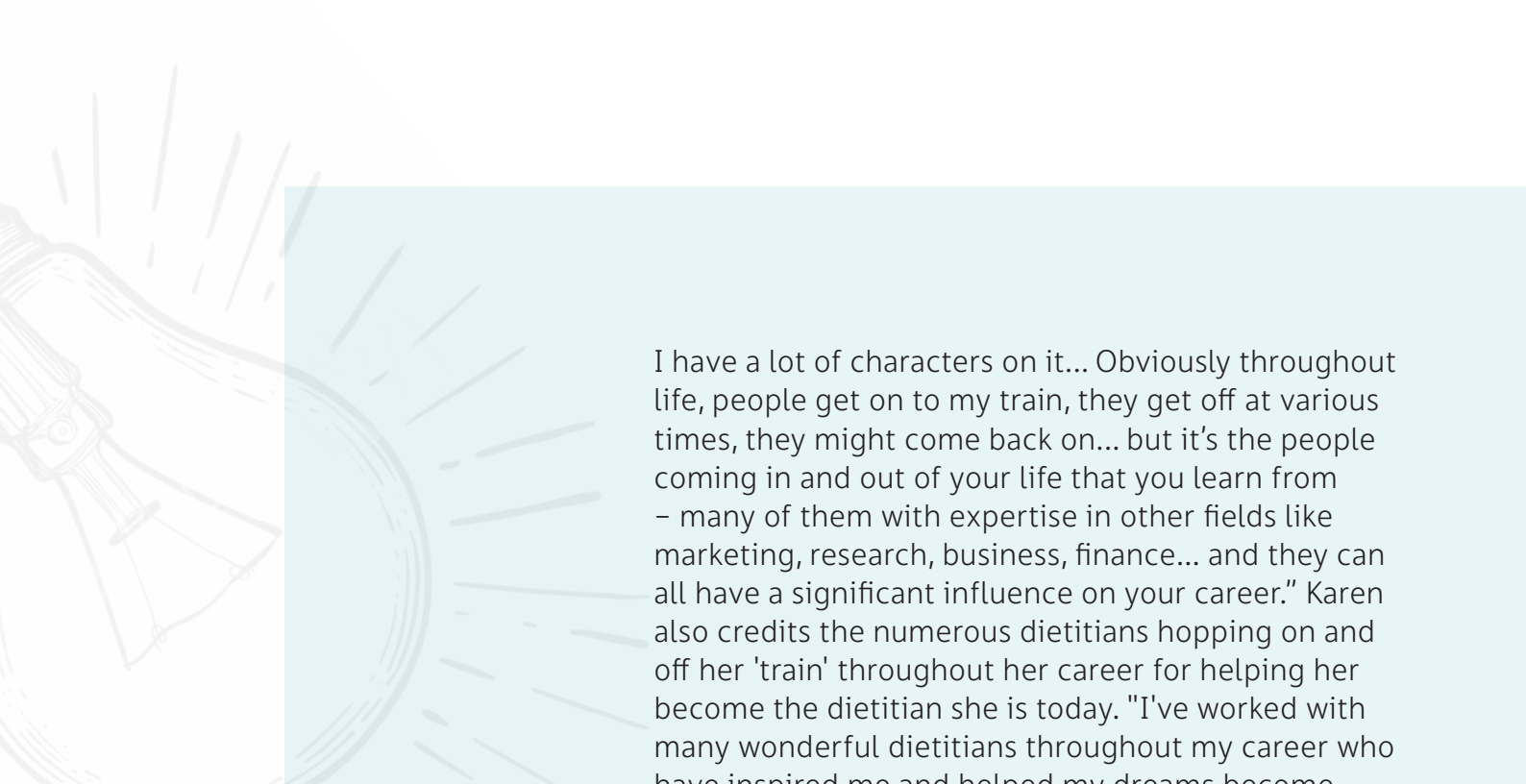
Images courtesy of Karen Inge

sometimes at these meetings thinking, how did I get here for God's sake?!" From this experience, came one of Karen's greatest learnings: Take the advice of your mentors.

Not only has Karen been prolific in sports nutrition and the food industry, but the media as well. With weekly radio segments, four books, regular television segments and a 17-year role as a nutrition writer for the Australian Women's Weekly under her belt, her best advice for others wanting to get into the media is this: show initiative. "I was fed up because the information I was hearing on one of the programmes was nutrition information given by a fitness person who had no understanding of nutrition... So, I rang up the [radio station] and I explained my position... They said they couldn't pay me... I said it's not about the money. It's about giving the right information to the community. And they said give them a proposal. So, I wrote a proposal, got it through to them on Friday, and on Monday, I was on air. That was in 2002 and I've been on weekly since that time."

Another of Karen's important life lessons is the value she puts on building relationships. "I talk about the train of life... I have my train,





I have a lot of characters on it... Obviously throughout life, people get on to my train, they get off at various times, they might come back on... but it's the people coming in and out of your life that you learn from – many of them with expertise in other fields like marketing, research, business, finance... and they can all have a significant influence on your career." Karen also credits the numerous dietitians hopping on and off her 'train' throughout her career for helping her become the dietitian she is today. "I've worked with many wonderful dietitians throughout my career who have inspired me and helped my dreams become a reality."



Karen's latest project is Dineamic – a ready-made meal company that initially focused on providing elite athletes with delicious, tasty food to improve their performance. "It started in concept form, preparing the athletes for the Sydney 2000 Olympics... now it's really grown enormously, and I find it quite exciting." A collaboration between herself, a chef and an elite footballer, Dineamic now offers main meals for one and two people, sides, soups, salads and even a fruit and veggie box – suitable not only for sportspeople, but the everyday Australian, too.



Looking back on Karen's stellar career, it's easy to understand why she can't pinpoint just one career highlight – as a whole, waking up each day and being excited by what she was doing is what really lit the fire in her belly. Along the way, Karen has picked up a lot of important learnings, but perhaps one of her most profound messages is this: "I always say to young dietitians, don't be in a rush... just take your time and build a strong foundation... be flexible, not too rigid in your planning... don't be scared, be courageous... you have chosen the right profession... This is the most exciting time for dietitians."

Top: Image courtesy of Karen Inge
Above: Image courtesy of @dineamicfood

LEARN MORE:



Tune in to the DC podcast [here](#)



<http://www.kareninge.com/>



Image courtesy of Karen Inge

"I always say to young dietitians, don't be in a rush... just take your time and build a strong foundation... Don't be scared, be courageous... you have chosen the right profession."

Now a dietitian specialising in eating disorders, Talia Cecchele openly admits at the start of her career, she had no interest in working in the field. Being in the right place at the right time, however, led to her discovering her passion of helping people to heal their relationship with food – and she's never looked back.



“To be able to help someone get their life back and live a full and thriving life... sometimes I’m speechless... It’s a really special area to work in.”

Rebuilding relationships with food: Talia Cecchele, eating disorders dietitian

Talia Cecchele wanted to become a dietitian from a very young age after being inspired by a sports dietitian that visited her local netball club. Fast forward a few years, Talia completed her studies at the University of Wollongong and landed one of a handful of coveted new graduate roles in Sydney. From there, she moved into a role at The Children's Hospital at Westmead – and that's where the stars aligned. "On my first day, I was told I was working on the adolescent eating disorders unit. I had no interest working in eating disorders and as a new grad, I felt it was a really challenging area... but I absolutely loved it."



Images courtesy of Talia Cecchele

Six years on, Talia made her way to London – and, luckily, was able to get a bit of travelling in before the COVID-19 pandemic hit. "When I first moved here, I had three or four different locum positions. I did one and a half years of changing hospitals and travelling in between," explained Talia. Now, Talia has a permanent part-time position in one of London's psychiatric hospitals where she's the sole dietitian on the adult eating disorders unit, most commonly seeing people for anorexia nervosa and bulimia nervosa.



The other half of Talia's working week is spent in private practice. Initially working for someone else, Talia has recently taken a leap of faith and gone out on her own, after seeing the demand for eating disorder services grow throughout the pandemic. In terms of her client load in private practice, Talia says it's a bit of a mixed bag. "I see people that are struggling with all types of eating disorders... they might've experienced years of dieting or obsessive eating... Their physical health is stable, but they want to improve their relationship with food."

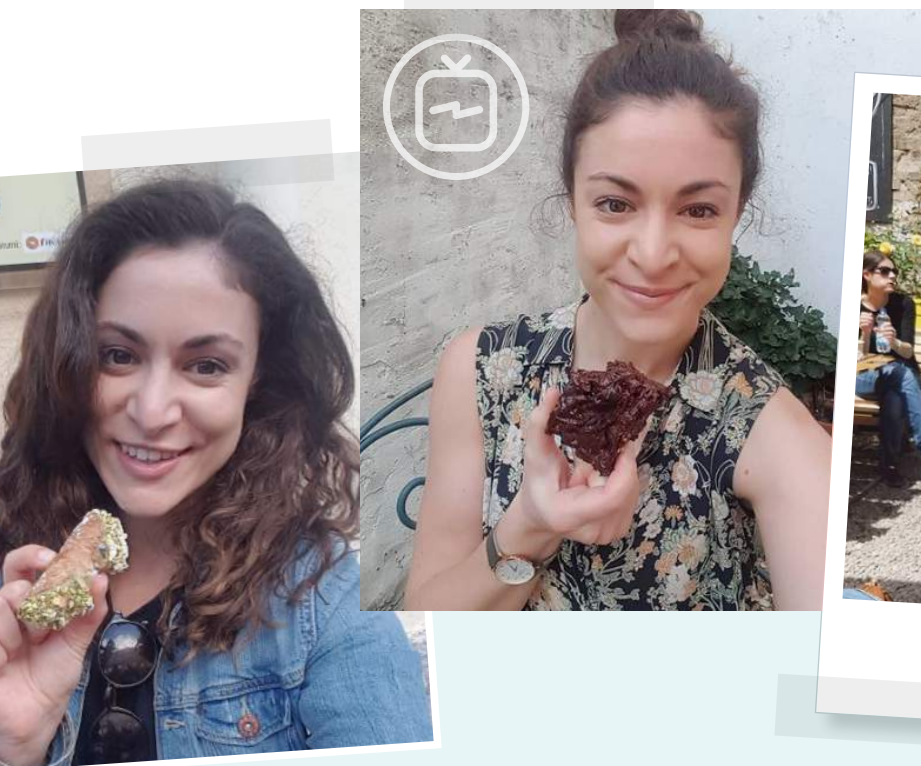
"I love working in eating disorders because I'm such a foodie. I have a really healthy relationship with food – and I'm passionate about helping people rediscover theirs."



Images courtesy of @tcnutrition/

Talia is active on social media, with a growing audience of almost 10,000 followers on Instagram. "Showing up for the community is what fuels my fire. It keeps me going," said Talia. Recently, Talia created an innovative 30-Day Food Rule Challenge, the impetus for which was the never-ending conversation around diets at the turn of the New Year. "We know on January 1, everyone is thinking about going on another diet. I thought it was ridiculous – why do people have to see all of this diet talk?!"

To combat the nutrition nonsense, Talia ran an Instagram Live every day in January, during which she sat down with her community and ate something she knows is a challenge for a lot of people (think:



bananas, cake, pasta). "The feedback was really positive... Members who joined the challenge said it was just so reassuring to see someone who had a normal relationship with food eat... I've had so many people tell me their life has changed... and that's why I love working in this area, because of the impact you can make on someone's life," said Talia.

Eating disorders can affect anyone of any shape, size, age, gender or race, so it's important to never make assumptions. In Talia's eyes, "everyone has a relationship with food, so it is important for all dietitians to become more aware of disordered eating, regardless of what clinical area you work in... I think normal eating is becoming harder to find."

"There's limited role models out there online showing what a normal relationship with food is."

The good news is it's entirely possible to recover from an eating disorder. "If we can treat an eating disorder within two to three years, there is higher chance of recovery... About 50 per cent will fully recover, 30 per cent will improve and 20 per cent remain chronically ill... it's a lot better than what people think," explained Talia.



To help her patients and clients recover, Talia has spent years building her dietitian toolkit, developing her counselling and psychology skills – and if you're looking to get into the area, she'd recommend you do the same. "It is about food but it's more so about someone's relationship with food. I need to change how people eat, change their belief systems around food." To do so, Talia recommends psychological-based leanings like motivational interviewing, the Health at Every Size course and Cognitive Behavioural Therapy. Talia commented that "eating disorders are on the rise, so having those skills available will be so helpful in any area of dietetics."

Getting work in eating disorders can be tricky – but being persistent and showing initiative is key. Talia's tips include getting any experience you can working in mental health, asking to shadow other dietitians or volunteering so you have an edge when it comes to the interview process. "If you can show that you're passionate in the area, that you've engaged in some professional development, that's going to be really helpful for you."

RULE BREAKER!

On the back of the success of her 30-Day Food Rule Challenge, Talia has launched the Rule Breaker Challenge, a program that helps people regain control of their food choices. At the time of publication, the program is in the midst of its inaugural 6-week round – keep your eyes peeled for new start dates being announced soon! [Click here to learn more.](#)

As for what the future holds, Talia predicts online services are going to become more and more popular. "The pandemic has proved that online services can be really beneficial to people with eating disorders" – and that's especially true when you consider the reach of online services. Talia also expects a shift towards residential treatment, moving support and care back into the patient's home. "On a personal level, I hope we'll be able to offer more practical skills – cooking and meal support".

For more on Talia's career so far, tune in to our Dietitian Connection podcast, *Rebuilding relationships with food: Talia Cecchele, eating disorders dietitian*. You'll learn more about how Talia established herself in London, how she works to bring about sustainable behaviour change and the misinformation around Refeeding Syndrome, as well as the key things all dietitians need to remember when it comes to eating disorders.

LEARN MORE:



Tune in to the DC podcast [here](#)



<https://www.taliacecchele.com/>



facebook.com/taliacecchelenutrition/



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***“As confronting
as working in
this space might
appear, it can be
one of the most
rewarding areas to
work in.”***

Image courtesy of Talia Cecchele

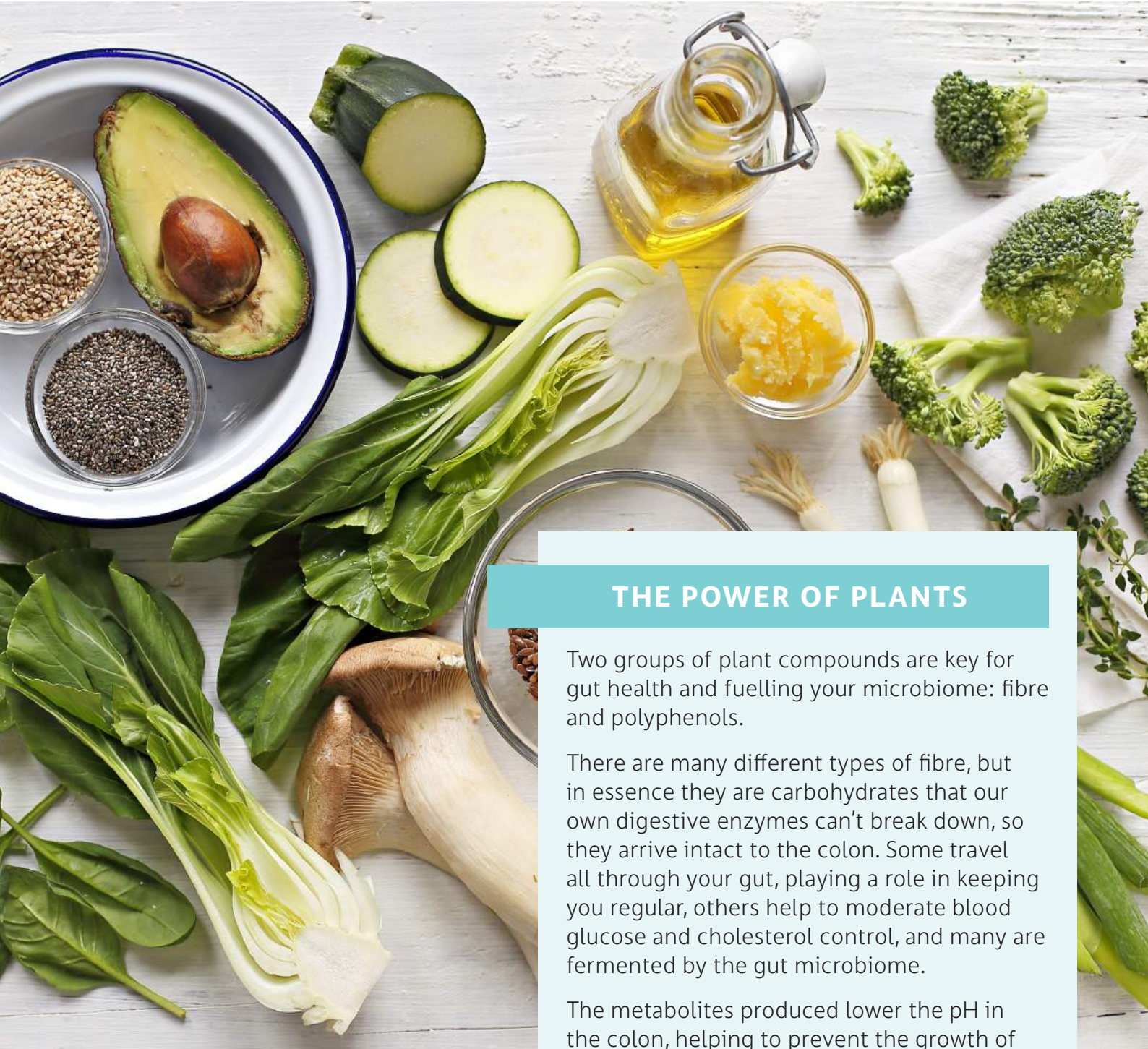
Eating for Gut Health

by Dr Joanna McMillan



Gut health remains a hot topic in both nutrition science research and in the media... and for good reason. The gut is the main interface between the outside world and the inside of our bodies and what happens there influences the health of the whole body.

The gut microbiome – the vast collection of micro-organisms, mostly bacteria, that live within us – plays an essential role. They are not just hitching a ride with the human body; they are our partners in digestion and we benefit as much from them as they do from us. That's why for optimal health you have to not only fuel yourself well, but your gut microbiome too.



How do you do that? Eat a plant-rich, whole food diet, while strictly limiting or avoiding ultra-processed foods (these are foods made from ingredients that have themselves already been heavily processed, such that the resulting food product is far removed from any original plant or animal food). Your goal is to eat at least 30 different plant foods a week.

THE POWER OF PLANTS

Two groups of plant compounds are key for gut health and fuelling your microbiome: fibre and polyphenols.

There are many different types of fibre, but in essence they are carbohydrates that our own digestive enzymes can't break down, so they arrive intact to the colon. Some travel all through your gut, playing a role in keeping you regular, others help to moderate blood glucose and cholesterol control, and many are fermented by the gut microbiome.

The metabolites produced lower the pH in the colon, helping to prevent the growth of pathogenic bacteria, reduce inflammation both in the gut and the rest of the body, fuel the cells lining the gut keeping them healthy and the gut barrier strong, they modulate the immune system and even act as signalling molecules to the brain and other organs.

Polyphenols are found widely in plant foods and they also promote a healthy, diverse microbiome. Your friendly gut bugs convert these polyphenols into more bioactive compounds with diverse health benefits throughout the body.



TOP FOODS FOR GUT HEALTH

1. Fruit

Fruit is fantastically rich in a diversity of polyphenols and most are also a good source of fibre, particularly fermentable fibres like pectin. Polyphenols are colourful, so the more different coloured fruits you include the better e.g. berries, cherries, apples, plums, pomegranate, red grapes, citrus fruit, apricots, tomatoes and avocados.

2. Wholegrains & legumes

These foods are exceptionally fibre-rich and stand out for promoting good gut health. Legumes are especially rich in fermentable fibres. When it comes to grains, choosing wholegrain varieties is crucial to ensure you get the fibre as well as the array of polyphenols, some unique to the grain.

3. Extra virgin olive oil

This very special oil, literally just the juice of fresh olives, has more than 30 polyphenols. Recent research has shown these have prebiotic effects, promoting the growth of beneficial bacteria in the gut, while being anti-inflammatory and preventing the growth of potentially harmful bacteria. You need 3-4 tablespoons a day to get the full health benefits.

4. Vegies

The greater variety of vegies you include the better and very few Aussies are eating enough. Cruciferous vegies like broccoli, Brussels sprouts and cabbage are known to have special gut health benefits, so try to include these 3 or more times a week. Dark leafy greens should be included every day.

5. Nuts & seeds

Hazelnuts, walnuts, pecans, sesame seeds and flaxseed are especially polyphenol rich.



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Our website is intended to be the go to source of credible information relating to olives and olive products, such as Extra Virgin Olive Oil (EVOO) and products derived from the olive tree. Some of our offerings include:

01.



Olive Wellness Podcast increases awareness of the health benefits of Extra Virgin Olive Oil and

other products derived from nature's own ancient source of goodness - the olive tree.

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02.



Interactive oil comparison tool

Compares common cooking oils in terms of nutrition composition, production method and cooking suitability.

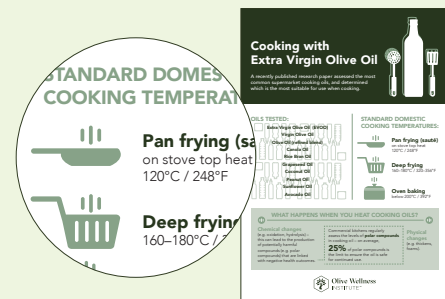
03.



Systematic literature review

on Olive Oil and the Mediterranean diet.

04.



Cooking with EVOO Provides an easily digestible summary of evidence behind why you can, and should cook with EVOO and why smoke point isn't a suitable indicator of an oil's performance when heated.

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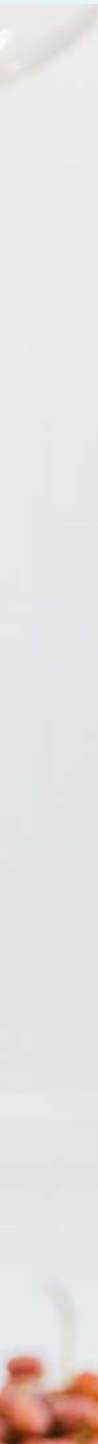
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Image courtesy of Jaime Rose Chambers



Intermittent fasting insights with Jaime Rose Chambers



When it came to choosing her career path, Jaime was tossing up between becoming a chef or a doctor. By chance, she stumbled upon the dietetic occupation while she was trawling through university courses – and that was her defining ‘aha’ moment. Fast forward a decade or so, Jaime is an established clinical dietitian who has dedicated a significant amount of time to investigating the science behind intermittent fasting... so much so, she’s written two books on it! For one of our recent podcasts, we were lucky enough to sit down with Jaime to learn more about the fascinating world of intermittent fasting.



Can you give us a rundown on the different types of intermittent fasting?

The 5:2 was pioneered by Dr. Michael Mosley. It involves five days of ‘normal eating’ and two non-consecutive days of fasting a week. On fasting days, you eat about a quarter of your usual daily calories. Most people find they’re quite uncomfortable on those days... it can be tough!

The other method, the one I’ve written my books on, is the 16:8. It’s more of a daily fasting regime. The idea is that for 16 hours of the day you fast, leaving you with an eight-hour eating window. It’s just about being in an overnight fast for a longer period of time.

Can you tell us about the benefits of intermittent fasting?

The main research on intermittent fasting has been for weight management. Studies are showing that 16:8 intermittent fasting is likely to be just as effective as a traditional low-calorie diet for weight loss, however it is superior in that it may be a more sustainable weight management strategy long term.



There's some other really fantastic research on other health issues, too.

The two types of fasting have very similar outcomes in terms of the evidence, so I often use them interchangeably, depending on my patient's lifestyle. In saying that, intermittent fasting is still a very new concept. There are some good quality studies, but we don't have any long-term data yet.

The main research that's coming through is that intermittent fasting may be helpful for controlling almost every risk factor for chronic disease. For example, with heart disease, there's some research suggesting



“I just love 16:8 because you don't have to count your calories, you don't have to cut out or restrict anything. If used in the right way, it can be such a valuable tool for long-term health and weight management.”



Images courtesy of Jaime Rose Chambers

intermittent fasting might be good for reducing systolic blood pressure and LDL cholesterol.

In terms of type two diabetes, some research shows intermittent fasting might help lower fasting blood sugar levels, particularly for the groups of people that have their eating window earlier in the day.

In terms of cancer, there's a few interesting studies in women with breast cancer and men with prostate cancer that are generally positive, but more research needs to be done in that area.



For reducing the risk of neurodegenerative diseases like Parkinson's and Alzheimer's, intermittent fasting might make the brain more resilient and resistant to disease. There's also some research to show that intermittent fasting might be good for improved cognitive performance, particularly memory, and interestingly may help some people with the symptoms of depression and anxiety as well.

In what situations would you discuss intermittent fasting as a tool for your patients and clients?

For generally healthy people who have a fairly good relationship with food and have a bit of stubborn weight to lose, or for people who have quite a long weight loss journey ahead of them and just want something that won't make them feel hungry all the time.

In any situation, it's really important to be flexible. I call it sliding up and down the scale. Sliding up the scale might be for someone who wants to click into gear for a period of time while they lose a few kilos. They might be a little bit more focused and controlled with timing of eating, making sure that meals and snacks are really nourishing and getting some regular physical activity, too.

Sliding down the scale for someone who has a big work deadline coming up, for example, might mean instead of fasting for 16 hours and eating within eight hours, they eat within a 10 to 12-hour window. That's still beneficial. Being able to slide up and down the scale can really help to maintain this type of regime long term – it's a lifestyle plan to maintain the health benefits of fasting and perhaps manage weight as well.

And who is intermittent fasting inappropriate for?

- X Anyone who's been a chronic dieter because it often turns into some sort of diet despite your best efforts
- X Anyone with a history of an eating disorder or disordered eating
- X Anyone with a complex medical history
- X Anyone on medications that might affect their blood sugar levels
- X Anyone that's under the age of 18 because they're still growing and developing
- X Anyone who is pregnant or breastfeeding because they've got very high nutrient requirements
- X Anyone over the age of 70–75



“Consider intermittent fasting as one of the clinical tools in your toolbox. It isn't for everyone, of course, but there are some patients that will really benefit from it.”



Does energy restriction from intermittent fasting affect resting metabolic rates (RMR)?

There's no good research on this yet, but there are some studies to show that when you lose weight with intermittent fasting, lean muscle mass is retained. By retaining lean muscle mass, you can keep RMR high, so I suppose you don't get that drop in RMR that happens very commonly with continuous calorie restriction.

And can patients still follow an intermittent fasting regime while they're exercising?

It's completely personal and dependent on intensity. If you do a high intensity training session, it's important to replenish your energy stores pretty quickly, so fasting mightn't be ideal. If it's a walk or a yoga or pilates session, a lot of my patients don't find it affects their stamina so much. Some people don't fast every day either, so I suggest not fasting on higher intensity training days.

What we do know, however, is that while intermittent fasting will help to retain muscle, it won't help to build lean muscle tissue, so for someone who wants to lose fat and gain muscle, it's probably not the best strategy to use, particularly for men.



Image courtesy of @jaimerose_nutrition

How does intermittent fasting affect gut health?

There are some strains of bacteria that might thrive in a fasting state. One study found that some of the anti-inflammatory microbes in the bowel increased during fasting and there was a slight increase in the production of short chain fatty acids as well.

Digestion and gut function are the main things I've observed with people who do intermittent fasting. People will either report their bowel habits are more regulated and they feel less bloated, or on the flip side, that they used to be really regular and now they're not. The latter could be because eating first thing in the morning is a trigger for opening your bowels, but if all of a sudden you're not eating and not having an early morning coffee, bowel motions can be thrown off a little bit.



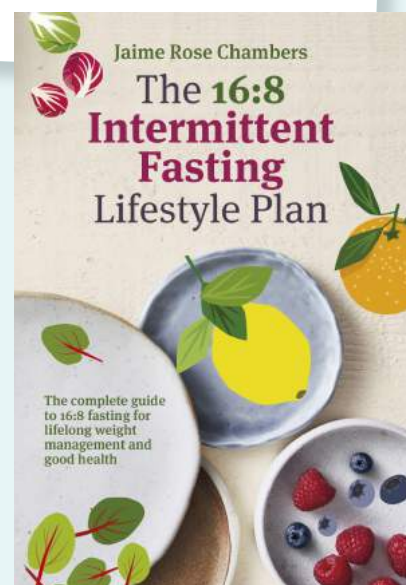
You need to be really mindful about meeting nutritional requirements. When someone goes onto an intermittent fasting regime, they might miss a big chunk of their daily fibre intake and get constipated. That's an important consideration in practice for dietitians when suggesting an intermittent fasting regime.

Congratulations on your latest book, *The 16:8 Intermittent Fasting Lifestyle Plan*. What was the inspiration for writing this edition and the previous one?

The previous one I thought was such a valuable health tool that had some really good evidence behind it. In the time between the first book and writing the second book, there was some more really good research that came out – but I also observed many people throwing in the towel, so I started thinking about what I can do to make this not a diet and make it work for people long-term. That's where this whole concept of the lifestyle plan came in... showing people how they could use it, flexibly, so they're always doing some form of intermittent fasting and getting the health benefits from it, but not being so rigid that it really impacts their life.



Above: Jaime promoting her latest book on the Today show. Image courtesy of @jaimerose_nutrition



Supplied courtesy of Pan Macmillan

“You need to be really mindful about meeting nutritional requirements... That's an important consideration in practice for dietitians when suggesting an intermittent fasting regime.”

So, Jaime, who do you think would get the most out of reading this book?

Anyone who's interested in intermittent fasting and looking for a long-term health strategy, and anyone who is interested in using intermittent fasting for specific health concerns. I go into much more detail with the use of intermittent fasting and specific health concerns in the book and there's a huge reference list at the end for anyone who wants to read further on the research.

The other thing is I love cooking, but I've got two little boys – I don't want to spend too much time in the kitchen. In the book, I've got more than 60 recipes based on foods we can all get from our local supermarket that are really quick, easy to make, nourishing, yummy and satisfying.

To wrap up, what's one thing that you would like dietitians to remember about intermittent fasting?

Consider intermittent fasting as one of the clinical tools you can use in your toolbox. It isn't for everyone, of course, but there are some patients that will really benefit from it. Be open to trial and error and encourage flexibility. Be really mindful about meeting nutritional quality within that eating window as well. Obviously, nutritional quality is incredibly important.

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<https://www.jaimerosenutrition.com.au/>



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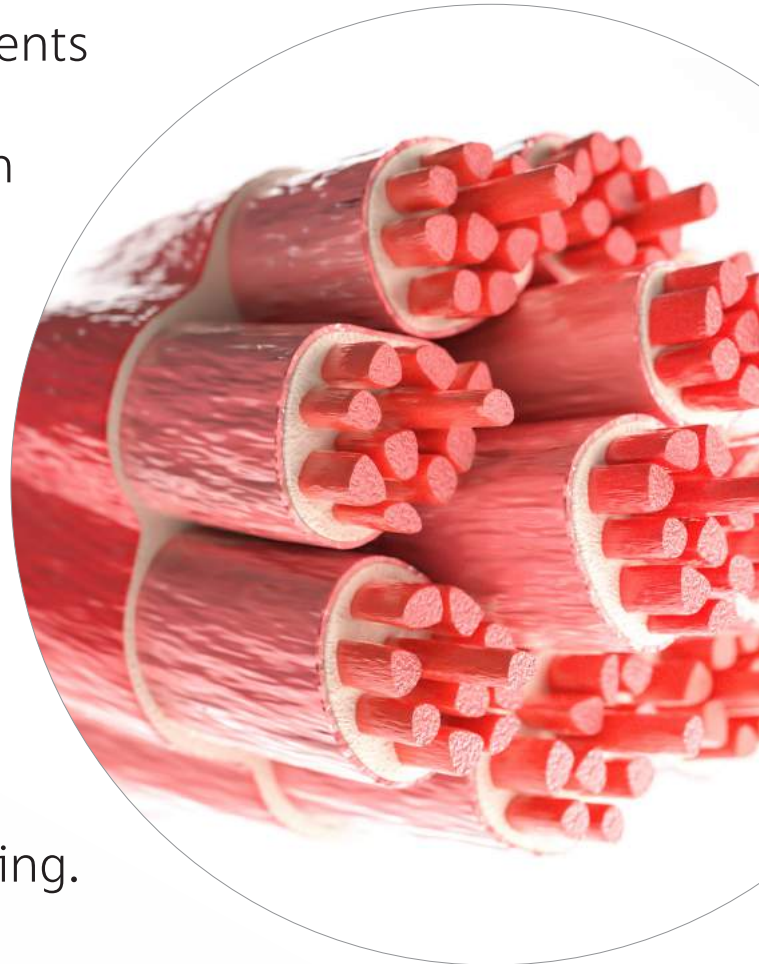
Nutrition and post-ICU recovery

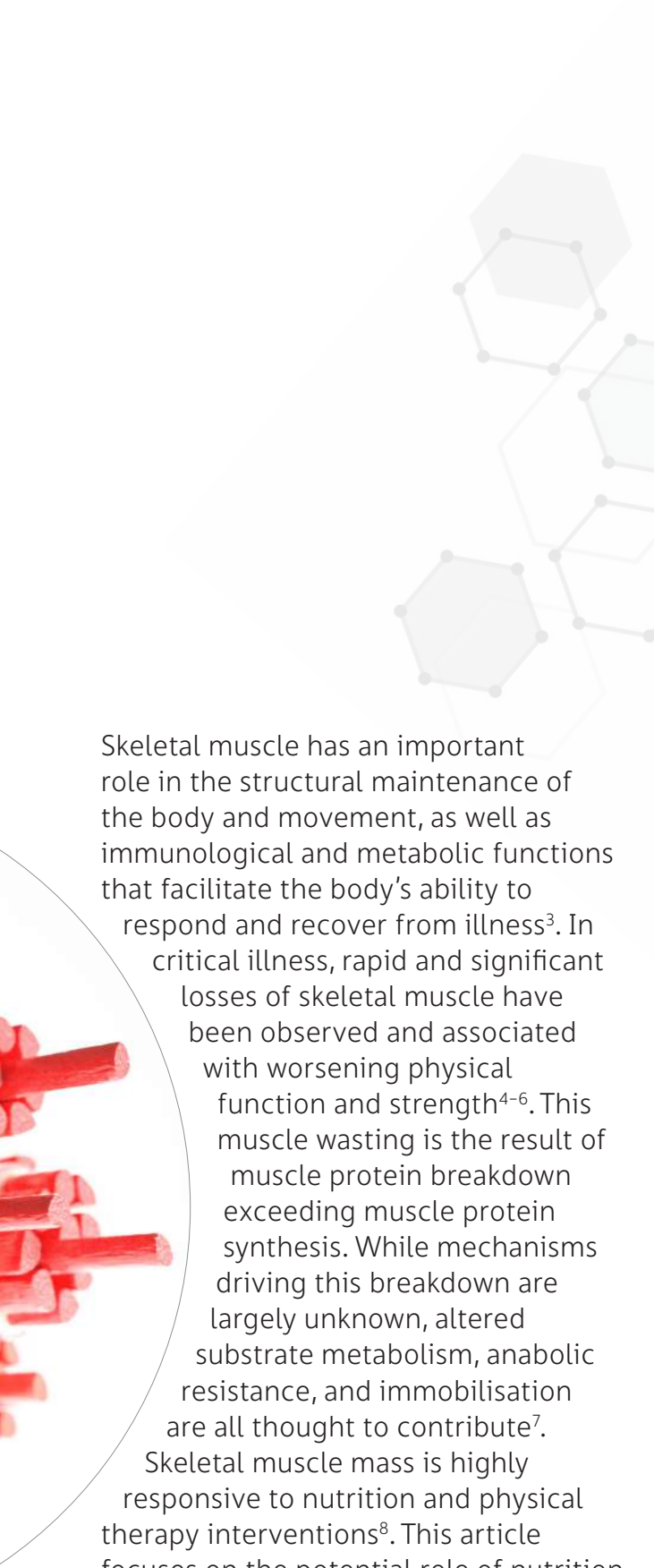
By Kate Lambell, Dr Lee-anne Chapple and Dr Emma Ridley



Advances in medical treatment mean that more critically ill patients now survive. However, increased survival rates are associated with greater proportions of people experiencing long-term morbidity following critical illness, with data suggesting disability in physical function, cognition, and quality of life up to five years after an intensive care unit (ICU) admission^{1,2}.

One of the major factors contributing to this long-term disability is skeletal muscle wasting.





Skeletal muscle has an important role in the structural maintenance of the body and movement, as well as immunological and metabolic functions that facilitate the body's ability to respond and recover from illness³. In

critical illness, rapid and significant losses of skeletal muscle have been observed and associated with worsening physical function and strength⁴⁻⁶. This muscle wasting is the result of muscle protein breakdown exceeding muscle protein synthesis. While mechanisms driving this breakdown are largely unknown, altered substrate metabolism, anabolic resistance, and immobilisation are all thought to contribute⁷.

Skeletal muscle mass is highly responsive to nutrition and physical therapy interventions⁸. This article focuses on the potential role of nutrition in attenuating muscle loss in critical illness.



Nutrition delivery during the continuum of critical illness

While in the ICU, patients receive less nutrition than prescribed and recommended in international clinical guidelines primarily due to delayed initiation, gastrointestinal intolerance, and fasting for procedures⁹. There is a growing body of evidence demonstrating that nutrition delivery remains compromised when patients are discharged to the ward, compounded by the early removal of nasogastric tubes, poor appetite, taste changes, and swallowing difficulties¹⁰. As a result, critically ill patients are at high risk of significant cumulative deficits in energy and protein delivery throughout the whole hospital admission, which may negatively impact muscle mass.



Role of nutrition in attenuating muscle loss

Several nutritional strategies have been proposed to counteract muscle loss in critical illness. Two small randomised trials from Australia indicate greater protein doses reduce ultrasound-derived muscle loss^{11,12}. Further, a study by McNelly et al found bolus, when compared to continuous, feeding achieved protein adequacy more often; however, no significant effect on muscle loss was evident¹³.

Other potential strategies include branched-chain amino acids, such as leucine, which has great potential to stimulate muscle protein synthesis^{14,15}; however, long-term leucine supplementation has failed to show benefit on muscle mass in other populations^{16,17}. Recently, beta-hydroxy-beta-methylbutyrate (HMB) – a leucine derivative – has gained attention as a potential therapy to prevent muscle loss. A systematic review by Bear et al reported modest benefits of HMB on muscle mass and strength in populations experiencing muscle loss or weakness¹⁸.

Further evaluation of nutritional strategies with potential to attenuate muscle loss in ICU or stimulate muscle gain post-ICU are required.



IN SUMMARY:

- **Rates of muscle protein breakdown exceed those of muscle protein synthesis in critical illness, leading to muscle loss.**
- **Nutrition delivery in ICU and on the hospital ward is often inadequate.**
- **Greater protein dose, bolus versus continuous enteral feeding, branched chain amino acids (leucine) and their derivatives (HMB) have been posed as potential nutritional strategies to attenuate muscle loss in ICU, but further data is required.**

[Click here](#) for a full reference list.

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CaHMB: calcium β-hydroxy-β-methylbutyrate. **ONS:** oral nutritional supplement.

References: 1. Baier S et al. *JPEN J Parenter Enteral Nutr* 2009;33(1):71-82. 2. Ensure® Plus Strength Product Label. 3. Deutz N E et al. *Clin Nutr* 2016;35(1):18-26. 4. Ekin O et al. *Nutr Clin Pract* 2016; 31(6): 829-835. 5. Malafarina V et al. *Maturitas* 2017;101:42-50.

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Embracing our native bounty with super bush foods

Image courtesy of
Hayley Blieden



Hayley Blieden is the brains behind The Australian Superfood Co, a company on a mission to shift the focus of Australian food culture to the native ingredients that sustained Indigenous Australians for over 70,000 years. Hayley works with communities and growers to make native Australian ingredients more accessible and has been integral in introducing these foods to high-end restaurants and mainstream food and beverage manufacturers.

Recently, DC's Kate Agnew was lucky enough to steal an hour of Hayley's time to talk about her unique dietetic career path.

Tell us about your story as a dietitian and how The Australian Superfood Co was born?

I completed my dietetics degree at Monash Uni in Melbourne in 2009 and I loved the course... I loved my placements... but it didn't quite sit right with me that we were only treating sick people. The public health, sports and food angles were where I wanted to move. I completed the sport dietetics course and was offered a job as a part time dietitian at North Melbourne Football Club. From there I worked as the general manager at Sholtz Sports Nutrition and then I went on and started researching Australian native ingredients. I was interested in what's sustained Indigenous Australians for over 70,000 years and was shocked that Australians (myself included) didn't know about these foods.



"Why do we think that our food culture revolves around lamingtons and Vegemite? We have Kakadu Plum that has the highest vitamin C content of any food on Earth and Lemon Myrtle, which is an excellent vegan source of calcium. These are all foods that nature gave to us and they're so super nutritious and delicious."

Can you tell us about the work you do with Indigenous communities?

We work with Indigenous communities and local farmers throughout Australia. Our sourcing policy stipulates that all produce is first and foremost sourced from Indigenous suppliers. We source Kakadu Plum from Northern Territory and Western Australia; Wattleseed, Quandong and Muntries from South Australia; Mountain Pepper Leaf and Strawberry Gum from Victoria and Tasmania; Davidson Plum, Finger Lime and Lemon Myrtle from New South Wales and Queensland. There's really a great spread.

When we launched, we wanted to source as many of these ingredients from Indigenous communities... but we found that most of these ingredients weren't linked to community anymore. Now we're working with more and more Indigenous farmers that are purposely planting native crops.

Kakadu Plum, for example, is wild harvested by Indigenous communities. The women come to work to pick and they're paid per kilo of fruit that they bring in – but for them to come to work, their kids have to be in school. There's this whole follow-on effect within the community. Because they're paid for the amount of fruit that they bring in, on the weekends the whole family goes out on country and it's an educational piece between the elders and the youth of the community... I think more and more of the communities are trying to up-skill the community members so that they have a purpose.

"The women come to work to pick and they're paid per kilo of fruit that they bring in – but for them to come to work, their kids have to be in school. There's this whole follow-on effect within the community. Because they're paid for the amount of fruit that they bring in, on the weekends the whole family goes out on country and it's an educational piece between the elders and the youth of the community... I think more and more of the communities are trying to up-skill the community members so that they have a purpose."

Can you tell us the about the products you have at The Australian Superfood Co?

When we launched five years ago, we launched with a range of snack bars that incorporated Australian native ingredients. We thought we were on to something, as the interest from retailers and distributors was high. Unfortunately the sell through rate was really poor. We realised that the interest lay in the ingredients themselves.

We went back to the drawing board, spoke to our customers and gained an understanding of where the demand lay and what challenges our customers were facing. There was a demand for native produce from chefs, bartenders and food and beverage manufacturers. They had experimented with these ingredients in the past but had been unable to secure the produce due to lack of consistent supply and quality. We identified that in order to address this, we could perform minimal processing techniques, like freeze drying or liquid extraction, to preserve the produce when it is in season and guarantee our customers a premium, highly nutritious and delicious product all year round.

It sounds like there's more research happening around these foods. Is that right?

People are identifying the health benefits of native produce and can see there are unique and exceptional nutrient and antioxidant profiles. After all, these foods have had to adapt to extreme weather conditions over tens of thousands of years. The government, universities and independent labs are performing ongoing research into the



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within the community."



NATIVE NUTRITION¹



Aniseed Myrtle

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Mountain Pepperberry

- ✓ Rich in vitamin E, folate, zinc, calcium, magnesium, iron and lutein

Sandalwood Nuts

- ✓ Twice the protein and three-times the fibre of macadamias, rich in omega-9s

Desert Limes

- ✓ Rich in vitamin C, vitamin E, calcium and lutein

Quandongs

- ✓ Provide an abundance of polyphenolic compounds and contain iron, zinc, and Vitamin A

Above and beside images courtesy of @austsuperfoods
Reference: 1. Australian Native Food and Botanicals





nutritional and medicinal properties of these foods. The potential impact on health and the utilisation of these ingredients as a natural preservative is astounding. Watch this space!

You have to tell us about your favourite bush foods, the ones you like to cook with or eat.

Native ingredients have so many wonderful benefits from flavour to nutrition. In terms of flavour, I love Mountain Pepperberry. For a cooking novice (like myself), it is the easiest way to include native ingredients into your daily cooking. Simply substitute traditional pepper for Mountain Pepperberry in your pepper grinder and you will experience a peppery, sweet flavour unlike anything you have ever tasted. My other favourite from a flavour perspective is Davidson Plum. If you have ever bitten into a fresh davo, you will never forget it. It looks like an ordinary blood plum, but is extremely sour. It balances out a delicious dessert or rich meat with its cut through acidity. Think chocolate brownie with Davidson Plum or duck with a Davidson Plum sauce.

From a nutritional perspective, it's hard to go past Kakadu Plum. This fruit is almost exclusively wild harvested by Indigenous Australians and contains the highest known natural source of Vitamin C of any food. There is also evidence that Kakadu Plum extract can be used as a natural preservative, to extend the shelf-life of fresh prawns by up to 7 days!



Images courtesy of Hayley Blieden

In the early days, where you ever met with any resistance or challenges?

Our biggest challenge to date has been the educational piece. We are a small company, with limited resources, trying to educate a market on products they have never heard of. Since launching six years ago, the tide has definitely changed. Schools are educating students on native produce, products are appearing on supermarket shelves and chefs are increasingly incorporating native produce. Native produce ticks so many boxes. It is sourced locally using sustainable farming practices. It is nutritious and delicious. With these factors in mind and the link to Indigenous Australia, it is becoming easier to convince Australians to switch to native produce.

How do you think the industry will change over coming years?

We're seeing native produce begin to scatter through the Majors. I think that more and more this is just going to become common food, which is fantastic. The limitation is going to be supply. We're addressing that with a new business we started earlier this year called the Native Harvest Initiative which is focussed on increasing the supply chain. There are three arms to the business:

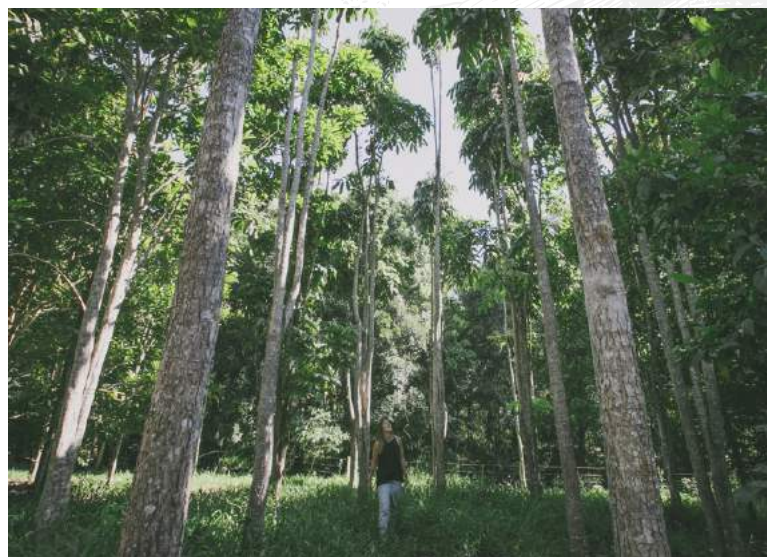
1. Indigenous communities wild harvesting produce;
2. Working with farmers that are currently producing native produce to plant more produce, and;
3. Working with farmers that are currently harvesting non-native produce to diversify or repurpose their crops to harvesting native produce.

We guarantee the farmers that we will purchase the produce at the end, so it mitigates their risk.

It sounds like The Australian Superfood Co is creating social impact. Is that right?

We definitely have a social impact focus! Since its launch in 2015, The Australian Superfood Co has had a policy of prioritising the sourcing of native produce from Indigenous Australians. We work with Indigenous communities to wild harvest produce, as well as with Indigenous farmers cultivating native fruits, herbs and seeds.

Our procurement programs have generated seasonal employment for over 1000 Indigenous Australians. The opportunity to earn income is highly valued, and a number of communities use its popularity to leverage better educational outcomes for children, such as only allowing adults to collect fruit if their school-age children are attending school.





An increase in demand for fruits, seeds and herbs creates opportunities in other ways too, such as packing, drying and freezing produce for southern markets. We're hoping to add more employment opportunities as the demand for these ingredients grows.

The Australian Superfood Co is a proud partner of Red Dust Role Models. Red Dust Role Models is an Australian health and wellbeing organisation with a 20-year track record of partnerships in remote Australia. Their 'community-as-family' model of health programming is inspiring change by walking side-by-side with community leaders and Elders to create a stronger future for Indigenous youth and their families.

Red Dust Role Models' Healthy Living Programs see the lives of Indigenous youth enriched through a series of community visits aimed at building relationships, while conveying vital health messages.

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We recently saw that The Australian Superfood Co was on MasterChef. How was that experience for the business and for you?

It's been amazing. MasterChef is incredible. I think that it's changed the way Australians eat. If you think about the influence that TV and these chefs have over people and the fact that they're embracing Australian native produce and saying that these ingredients should be used in all dishes, it's exciting and I think it's shown how the industry – and Australians – have evolved.

How can dietitians support The Australian Superfood Co?

I think that it's really important for Australian dietitians to learn more about Australian native ingredients so that it becomes natural to them to recommend Australian native ingredients to meet nutritional requirements of their patients. We talk about superfoods from around the world, but let's talk about what grows locally in Australia. For instance, if you're looking for a natural vitamin C source for adults or for children, you could sprinkle Kakadu Plum on cereal or put it in your smoothie. If you're looking for an alternative protein source, you can look to Wattleseed, which is low GI, high protein, high fibre and a good source of iron and zinc. Lemon Myrtle, a vegan source of calcium that people can start to incorporate into their dishes to boost their products nutritionally, instead of looking for nutritionally dense foods from overseas.



Image courtesy of
Hayley Blieden

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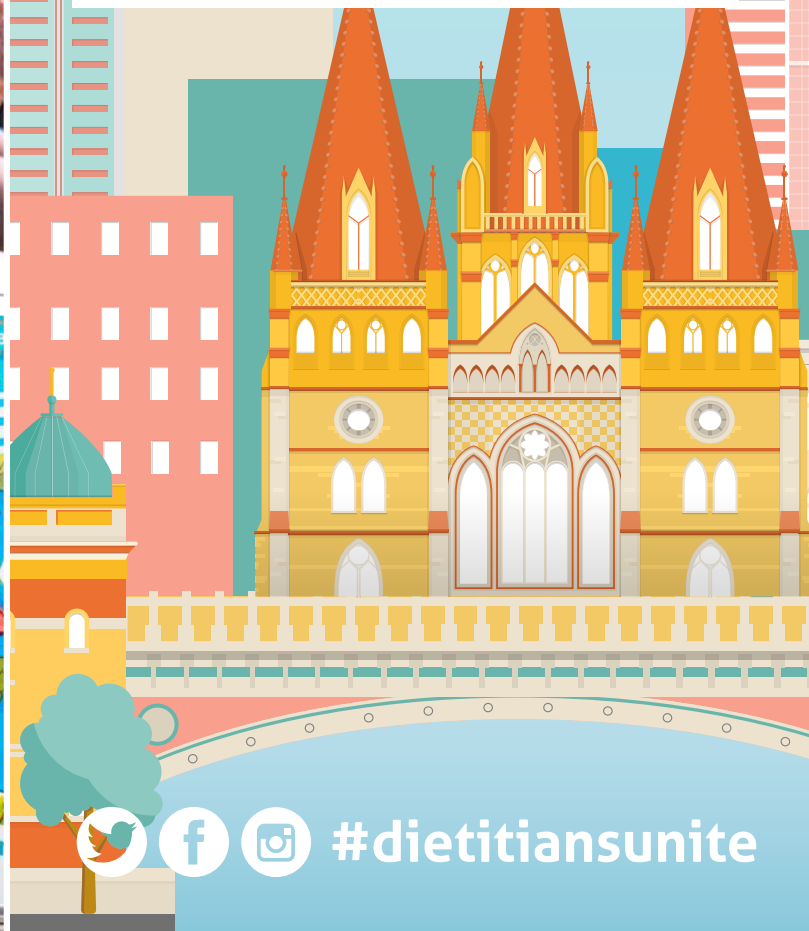
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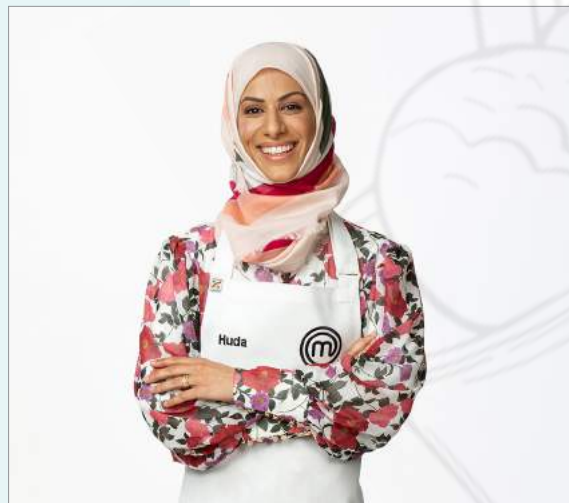


A dietitian with a whole lot of sass

You might know Huda from a little television show called MasterChef... but what you mightn't know is that Huda is actually a dietitian – and one who has walked an incredible path, at that. DC team member Kate Agnew was lucky enough to chat with the entrepreneur, foodie, cook and mindful eating coach about her impressive story.

Tell us about your journey and your story so far.

I was born and raised in Saudi Arabia and studied nutrition and health science over there. While studying, I also got married and had my first child. It was challenging... but I had lots of help and support. I wanted to apply to work in a hospital but found out I had to speak English, so I thought I should continue studying overseas to learn the



Above & beside: Images courtesy of Huda Al Sultan
Below: Image courtesy of @huda_alsultan/



language. I packed myself, my husband, my little girl and everything else up and came to Australia to study my Master of Nutrition and Dietetics at Flinders University. I did a bridging course and had my second child at the same time, which was really challenging, but I passed with distinction and I was so proud.



"If someone's advice makes you feel smaller, don't take it. If that advice makes you feel open, like you can shine, then go with it."



image courtesy of @sassiicecream/



Above images courtesy of @huda_alsultan/

When I started the Masters degree, my newborn had health issues and my advisors from the university actually suggested I leave the course. I understand they were thinking about my wellbeing, but I was so determined to learn and do my best. After seeing my determination, the same person who suggested leaving the course actually supported me with my decision – and I'm so grateful and appreciative of that.

Why did you want to become a dietitian?

When I was growing up, I was really interested in medicine and wanted to be a doctor. I loved chemistry... I was always collecting books about science and human physiology. When I finished high school, the nutrition and dietetics majors really clicked with me. I thought to myself, 'It's about the human body... It's about food... It's like chemistry... It's science... It's magical... It's experimental. I want to be that!'

How have you settled into the Australian way of life?

To be honest, food was the key. It was great to build a new life from scratch with new friends and people around me who made me feel like family. I used food as a tool to connect me with people here.

We're keen to hear a bit more about your experience on MasterChef and what that taught you.

It was amazing and eye opening. I learnt a lot of new skills from fellow and past contestants about different cuisines, styles of cooking and traditions. You just keep learning and that's amazing. I was so grateful to be able to connect with all of those people and learn about their food experiences.

Tell us what inspired you to start Sassi Ice Cream and why it's important to you.

I love to connect with people and food is really powerful in doing that. I love ice cream and my kids always ask for ice cream, so I thought, why not share my love with people and create something I would love to eat? I wanted to add the flavours and stories of my background and share it with the world. It's kind of like creating a bridge between our life here in Australia and our memories and lovely moments with extended family back in Saudi. I have seven flavours, they are all Middle Eastern inspired, and each flavour has a story behind it that we connect to. At this stage, we do markets and private catering, but one of my goals is to set up a shopfront for Sassi.

We love to ask cooks and chefs about their favourite pantry staples and kitchen gadgets, what are yours?

My favourite pantry staple has to be olive oil. Olive oil is my best friend in the kitchen! Part of my tradition is that we use olive oil for our skin, hair and beauty... and obviously food. For a kitchen gadget, it has to be a really good chef knife. It makes your cooking life totally different – more fun, easier and really enjoyable. It's something you look forward to using. Otherwise, if you struggle with a bad knife, then even chopping a tomato is a headache.

What's next for you?

I'm a dreamer. My short-term goals are to create Sassi Ice Cream packages and for Sassi Ice Cream to hit the supermarket shelves. Hopefully I will also find a way to run mindful eating sessions or programmes with kids and adults. My long term goal is to create my own cook book.

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“
Creativity is
INTELLIGENCE
having
fun”

Albert Einstein

