



APRIL 2013

The Consumer's Perspective on Metabolic Health

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH PRESENTATION

Dr Rebecca Huntley

The Mind and Mood Report





Research insights discussed today are based on:

- **three focus groups** (2 women, 1 men) in Sydney

Plus

- The cumulative insights from **Mind & Mood research** over the **last three years**
- A **number of projects for MLA** over the **last three years**, The Main Meal, Main Meal Repertoires and Young Women and Weight Loss

Research Objectives

We were asked to recommend ways in which to improve the usability and accessibility (in terms of meaning and relevance) of the brochure for the key target audience

Consequently, the **research objectives** of the project were to:

- Identify a meaningful **'hook'** for the title, front cover and introduction for the brochure
- Determine whether the eating plan is **easy to understand** and follow
- Determine **to what extent** the meal plan, portion sizes, eating out guide and exercise tips are **useful**
- Determine how to **improve presentation of tips on meal preparation**, including shopping list and recipes to make them as user-friendly as possible



Methodology and Design

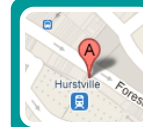
To meet the research objectives and provide a time- and cost-effective solution, the research design comprised a series of 3 group discussions

- All participants:
 - were aged between 40 and 55 years
 - were overweight and self-identified as being at risk of either high blood pressure, Type 2 diabetes or high cholesterol
 - ate meat as part of their normal diet
 - received a cash incentive of \$100
- Each group:
 - contained 6 participants
 - contained half who were on medication and half who were not
 - was observed by representatives from MLA



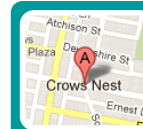
Women 40-55 years

- Monday 10 December



Males 40-55 years

- Tuesday 11 December



Women 40-55 years

- Wednesday 12 December

Participant Profiles

- Details of each participant in terms of risk factors and medications is as follows:

Participant No.		Group 1 – Women Parramatta						Group 2 – Men Hurstville						Group 1 – Women Crows Nest						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	
At Risk of ...	High Cholesterol	■		■	■			■		■	■	■	■							■
	High Blood Pressure			■	■	■	■		■	■	■			■	■	■				■
	Type 2 Diabetes	■	■	■													■	■		
Taking Med'n	Yes		■			■	■	■			■	■	■		■				■	
	No	■		■	■				■	■			■		■		■	■		



The findings in detail

Is this about health issues?

- Broad recognition that in mid-life you need to **watch your health** more carefully
- Some participants had **metabolic diseases in their family history** and had reached the age those diseases emerged in relatives
- **Quitting smoking or menopause had brought weight gain** and therefore increased desire to be healthier all around
- Some participants across groups were on **medication** or had had **serious health issues** i.e. heart attack or car accident
- **Weight** was a more **front-and-center concern** for the **two women's groups**; a desire for more energy, better quality of life, the ability to keep up with kids or sports were the drivers for more focus on weight control across groups
- **Men's groups** particularly discussed **work stress as a barrier** to better health

"Things that run in the family like heart disease and high blood pressure and high cholesterol. It's got to the point now where if I don't do something about it my kids are going to nag me until I do."

Parramatta

"It is scary as you get older. Like with all these things popping up and this is the last thing I expected to happen."

Parramatta

Is this about barriers?

- **General perception** across **Parramatta and Hurstville** groups that it was **easier to eat badly than to eat well**
- Those with **heavy work commitments** and **single people** also saw barriers to cooking healthy meals at home and saw **take-away as an easy option**
- The **women's groups** were far more **health literate** and serious about health issues **than the men's group**
- For example **women understood** the **role of diet versus exercise with weight loss**, shared health information, were more realistic about what needed to be done to maintain good health and understood terms such as 'low GI'

"It's real cheap to eat badly."

Parramatta

"The junk food [is] easy to grab because of time because we have never got enough time."

Hurstville

Health and Weight Management: triggers

- **Family illness** i.e. younger brother had a heart attack
- **Children** i.e. older parents wanting to remain healthy for young children, playing with nieces and nephews and experiencing chest pain, wanting to be a healthy role model for teen kids
- Inspired by a **friend's weight loss**
- Effective **health marketing** e.g. BUPA advertisement
- Wanting to continue to **play golf**
- Seeing yourself in a **photo!**

"Second marriage, couple of little kids and now my little boy wants to kick the soccer ball and chasing him around and I'm bugged so I thought I want to do that for my family."

Hurstville

"I saw myself in some photos and I remember thinking that I looked rather nice that particular night and when I saw the photos I thought, 'Oh gosh is that what I looked like?'"

Cammeray

Health and Weight Management: strategies

- **High protein diets** (including shakes and bars) and **low GI diets**
- **Cutting out junk** and processed foods
- **Counting calories**, watching portion size and food at evening/night
- **Formal diets** such as CSIRO, Weight Watchers, The Dukan Diet, dietician programs or diet cookbooks (*Too Good to Be True*)
- **Increasing exercise** including walking, gym, personal trainers
- **Using technology** such as Wii Fit, My Fitness Pal, online diaries
- **Women recognized the crucial role of diet**, whereas **men had the view that increased exercise** would solve their weight problems
- All recognized **consistency** whether in diet or exercise was the key

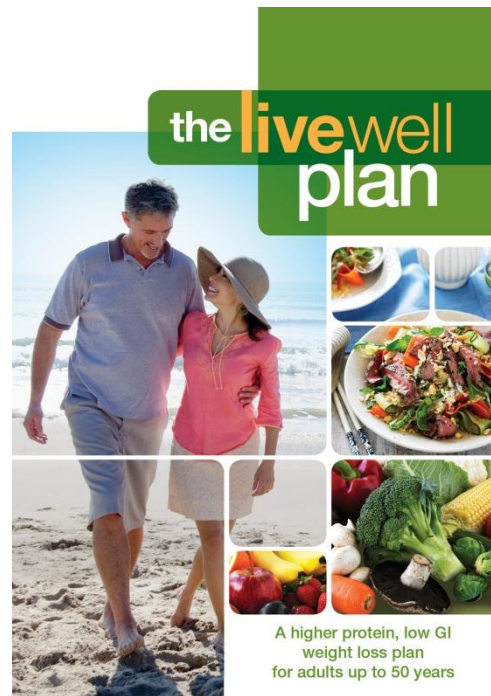
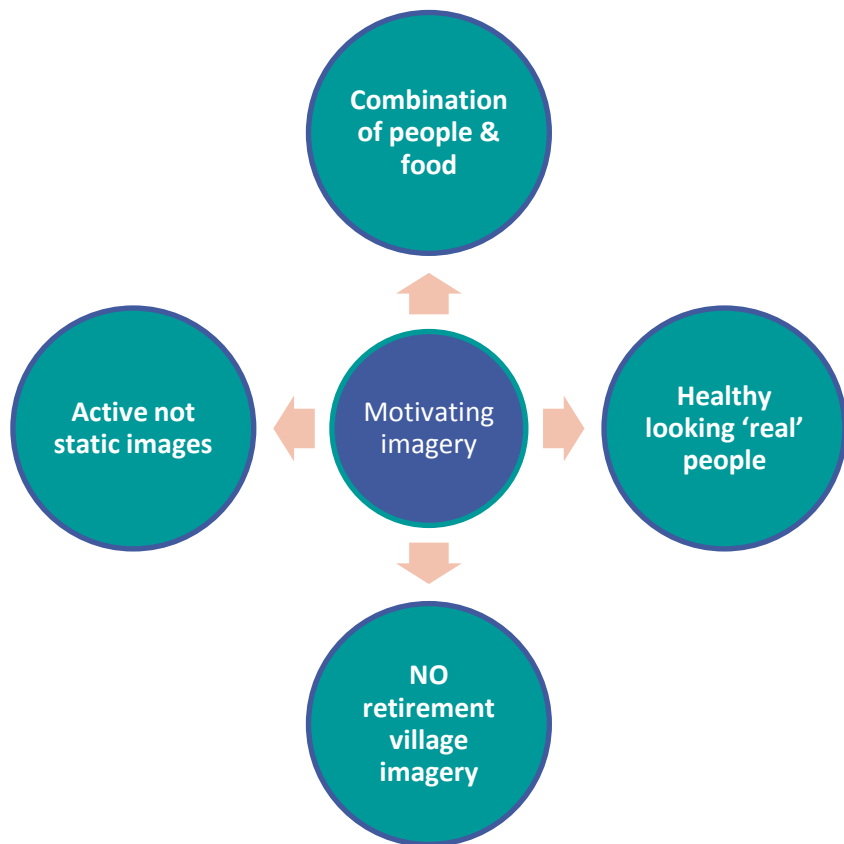
“Instead of having a cupboard full of sweet, crunchy, beautiful salty stuff, we’ve got a bowl of fruit.”

Parramatta

“Doing something that I really like that I’m going to keep doing. I’ve just gone back to yoga and pilates. So you have got to find something in life that you are going to stick at.”

Cammeray

Use motivating imagery



Comments from the groups ...

"It looks like a recipe book full of really yummy food."
Parramatta

"These two are the picture of health for their age. I mean they are probably the end result that you want to achieve but they may not be as accessible because they look so great."
Cammeray

"[It's a] retirement village sort of picture. Health insurance."
Parramatta

"That one, I like that, they are out and about at the beach, healthy couple and takes the emphasis off the cook books."
Hurstville



Avoid technical language

"Don't know what [metabolic] is. So as soon as you don't know, it sort of throws you off straight away."

Hurstville

Waist measurements too rigid for different body types (H & P Groups)

"I associate metabolic with metabolic steroids."

Hurstville

Don't respond well

Avoid technical language

Cammeray Group did not like < and > symbols – spell it out

"High triglycerides. That to me is just sugar but then I don't know jack. ... A little simpler sometimes."

Parramatta

Explain all terms (even common use e.g. low GI)

"I don't like waist measurements at all being in there because everybody is different. I don't think you can make generalisations with measurements."

Parramatta

Use clear and meaningful explanations

"I like where the explanation is, high in protein diet benefits are like that. That's a good explanation."

Hurstville

"I think it's really important that you are less likely to feel hungry. People always [think] when they go on a diet they are going to be absolutely starving, so that is a point to read."

Parramatta



"I like it explaining why protein diets make you more filled up. Because I think a lot of women do eat salad all the time and wonder why they are still hungry."

Cammeray

What they are looking for in a plan

- **Keep it simple** – quick recipes that don't require unfamiliar or hard-to-get ingredients
- **Has to work for the whole family**, flexible and affordable
- **Provides variety and is sustainable** i.e. doesn't overly restrict or exclude fruit and carbohydrates
- **Treats** so you don't feel deprived
- **Goals for weight gain** – how much can I expect to lose?
- **Handy tips**
- **Glossary of terms**
- **Connection of exercise with food**, particularly treats i.e. how much exercise do you have to do for more treats?

"It's realistic. You don't need a book to follow [or] special meals [or] special ingredients. It's basically educating you about your nutrition and how much you have to do to get rid of what goes in."

Cammeray

"Since the heart attack there has been healthier choices made in eating. Every so often you have got to have your treat haven't you? Everything in moderation. But as for a structured diet it's just another thing to rebel against isn't it?"

Hurstville

Portion Size is key

- **Portion size is a big problem** – for most, their diet is generally ok but they eat too much
- **Appreciated clear direction with portion sizes** - very positive; clear and useful
- Plus there was no weighing but rather using **'real life' measurements**; not having to get the scales out is a big plus – they don't want to be measuring because of intuitive cooking – hence need innovative, intuitive ways of measuring – use 'real life' measurements
- In this context **didn't mind the infographics**; preferred it more to the bland plate of real food, which looked too institutional
- Wanted **real but inspiring images**
- **Real meat on the real hand looks strange**

"Combine it a bit more rather than have it separated into sections like army food."

Parramatta

"If that was all mixed up it would look like a stir fry. It would be a lot more appetising than it looks there. That is 75% vegetables."

Hurstville

*"W1: It's just so clear. It's so simple.
W2: It's using things you are familiar with, your own body, can of tuna."*

Cammeray

Provide snacks

- Issue with the ‘treats’, in particular alcohol and chocolate – not enough!
- Snacks need to be their own category

Link treats to exercise to either inspire restraint or encourage exercise

Women, particularly low SES, use alcohol and chocolate as a coping mechanism that they can afford; saying they can't have treats creates a mental barrier which will prevent them following the eating plan.

“The other 50 gms of chocolate is missing!”
Parramatta

Eating plan

The recommended units per day for each food group are based on a higher protein weight loss plan. Use the eating plan as a guide to control your weight!

Meat & alternatives	Grains & cereal foods	Dairy foods	Fruit	Vegetables	Oils and spreads
<p>1 chicken breast (150g) or 1 beef steak (100g) or 1 pork chop (100g) or 1 lamb chop (100g) or 1 fish fillet (100g) or 1 egg (100g) or 100g of tofu or 100g of tempeh or 100g of miso or 100g of soybeans or 100g of chickpeas or 100g of lentils or 100g of kidney beans or 100g of black beans or 100g of chickpeas or 100g of lentils or 100g of kidney beans or 100g of black beans</p>	<p>1 slice of bread (30g) or 1 slice of toast (30g) or 1 slice of pizza (30g) or 1 slice of pasta (30g) or 1 slice of rice (30g) or 1 slice of quinoa (30g) or 1 slice of barley (30g) or 1 slice of rye (30g) or 1 slice of millet (30g) or 1 slice of buckwheat (30g) or 1 slice of amaranth (30g) or 1 slice of speltz (30g) or 1 slice of farro (30g) or 1 slice of einkorn (30g) or 1 slice of emmer (30g) or 1 slice of durum (30g) or 1 slice of soft wheat (30g) or 1 slice of hard wheat (30g) or 1 slice of whole wheat (30g) or 1 slice of whole grain (30g) or 1 slice of whole meal (30g) or 1 slice of whole grain (30g) or 1 slice of whole meal (30g)</p>	<p>1 cup of milk (250ml) or 1 cup of yogurt (250g) or 1 cup of cheese (25g) or 1 cup of butter (25g) or 1 cup of margarine (25g) or 1 cup of cream (25g) or 1 cup of sour cream (25g) or 1 cup of cottage cheese (25g) or 1 cup of ricotta cheese (25g) or 1 cup of mascarpone (25g) or 1 cup of cream cheese (25g) or 1 cup of cream (25g) or 1 cup of sour cream (25g) or 1 cup of cottage cheese (25g) or 1 cup of ricotta cheese (25g) or 1 cup of mascarpone (25g) or 1 cup of cream cheese (25g)</p>	<p>1 apple or 1 orange or 1 banana or 1 pear or 1 kiwi or 1 guava or 1 nashi pear or 1 passion fruit or 1 dragon fruit or 1 rambutan or 1 lychee or 1 mango or 1 pineapple or 1 watermelon or 1 cantaloupe or 1 honeydew or 1 muskmelon or 1 seedless grapes or 1 seedless raisins or 1 seedless currants or 1 seedless blueberries or 1 seedless raspberries or 1 seedless strawberries or 1 seedless blackberries or 1 seedless pomegranates or 1 seedless figs or 1 seedless dates or 1 seedless figs or 1 seedless dates</p>	<p>1 cup of spinach or 1 cup of kale or 1 cup of lettuce or 1 cup of cabbage or 1 cup of cauliflower or 1 cup of broccoli or 1 cup of asparagus or 1 cup of green beans or 1 cup of peas or 1 cup of chickpeas or 1 cup of lentils or 1 cup of kidney beans or 1 cup of black beans or 1 cup of chickpeas or 1 cup of lentils or 1 cup of kidney beans or 1 cup of black beans</p>	<p>1 tsp of oil or 1 tsp of butter or 1 tsp of margarine or 1 tsp of cream or 1 tsp of sour cream or 1 tsp of cottage cheese or 1 tsp of ricotta cheese or 1 tsp of mascarpone or 1 tsp of cream cheese</p>

Free foods - Low in fat/salt/sugar, low in energy

- Vegetables and salad: all vegetables and salad, including mushrooms, capsicum, tomatoes, avocados, nuts, seeds, olives, herbs, spices, vinegar, lemon juice, soy sauce, tamari, miso, seaweed, nori, kombu, wakame, hijiki, shiitake, shimeji, enoki, maitake, oshi, shitake, shimeji, enoki, maitake, oshi, shitake, shimeji, enoki, maitake, oshi, shitake
- Herbs and spices: all herbs and spices, including basil, parsley, coriander, dill, fennel, ginger, garlic, onion, shallots, leeks, mushrooms, capsicum, tomatoes, avocados, nuts, seeds, olives, herbs, spices, vinegar, lemon juice, soy sauce, tamari, miso, seaweed, nori, kombu, wakame, hijiki, shiitake, shimeji, enoki, maitake, oshi, shitake, shimeji, enoki, maitake, oshi, shitake
- Drinks: water, unsweetened tea, coffee, herbal tea, sparkling water, alcohol-free wine, alcohol-free beer, alcohol-free cider, alcohol-free liqueur, alcohol-free spirits, alcohol-free vinegar, alcohol-free soy sauce, alcohol-free tamari, alcohol-free miso, alcohol-free seaweed, alcohol-free nori, alcohol-free kombu, alcohol-free wakame, alcohol-free hijiki, alcohol-free oshi, alcohol-free shitake, alcohol-free shimeji, alcohol-free enoki, alcohol-free maitake

Treats - 1 serving PER WEEK maximum

- 1 slice of cake or 1 slice of pie or 1 slice of tart or 1 slice of biscuit or 1 slice of cookie or 1 slice of cracker or 1 slice of wafer or 1 slice of candy or 1 slice of chocolate or 1 slice of ice cream or 1 slice of sorbet or 1 slice of sherbet or 1 slice of lolly or 1 slice of sweet or 1 slice of confectionery or 1 slice of snack or 1 slice of cereal or 1 slice of pasta or 1 slice of rice or 1 slice of quinoa or 1 slice of barley or 1 slice of rye or 1 slice of millet or 1 slice of buckwheat or 1 slice of amaranth or 1 slice of speltz or 1 slice of farro or 1 slice of einkorn or 1 slice of emmer or 1 slice of durum or 1 slice of soft wheat or 1 slice of hard wheat or 1 slice of whole wheat or 1 slice of whole grain or 1 slice of whole meal or 1 slice of whole grain or 1 slice of whole meal

Planning meals

These weekday and weekend examples show you how you can plan your meals to meet your daily units.

WEEDAY EXAMPLE	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
<p>Breakfast Egg on high fibre, low GI cereal (200g) and low fat milk (200ml) topped with sliced fresh fruit (100g)</p>	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
<p>Morning tea 1 low fat yogurt (200g)</p>	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
<p>Lunch Wholegrain bread sandwich (2 slices) with lean meat (100g), salad (50g) reduced fat cheese, 1 cup salad and 1 tsp. vegetable spread</p>	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
<p>Afternoon tea 1 piece fresh fruit 30g almonds & walnuts</p>	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
<p>Dinner Beef mince (100g) mince-tye strips, low energy, 1 cup cooked brown rice, 1 cup cooked vegetable (e.g. bok choy, capsicum, mushrooms, chickpeas) and 1 tsp. olive oil</p>	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
<p>Total daily units</p>	3	4	2	2	5	3	3

TIP: combine units to make a portion

- ✓ 100g lean beef mince + 1 cup brown rice + 2 cups of vegetables = 1 portion
- ✓ 1 cup pasta

WEEKEND EXAMPLE	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
<p>Breakfast 2 eggs scrambled with 20g reduced fat cheese, banana and mushrooms, 2 slices egg & bread toast and 1 tsp. margarine spread</p>	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
<p>Lunch 100g mince (100g) mince-tye strips, low energy, 1 cup cooked brown rice, 1 cup cooked vegetable (e.g. bok choy, capsicum, mushrooms, chickpeas) and 1 tsp. olive oil</p>	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
<p>Dinner Chicken mince (100g) sliced chicken mince, low energy, 1 cup cooked brown rice, 1 cup cooked vegetable (e.g. bok choy, capsicum, mushrooms, chickpeas) and 1 tsp. olive oil</p>	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
<p>Treats 1 glass wine (150ml)</p>	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
<p>Total daily units</p>	1	3	4	2	2	2	3

Free food vegetable swap
Combine a swap with any combination of vegetables and low reduced alcohol e.g. banana, pumpkin, peas, carrot, zucchini, cauliflower, brussels, bella, celery, mushrooms etc.

Free food salad
Combine a salad using any combination of vegetables e.g. lettuce, rocket, baby spinach, asparagus, tomatoes, cucumber, carrot, capsicum, spring onions, lemon etc.

Explaining how to use the eating plan

- **Participants expect** diets to have rigid meal plans and set recipes or they won't work; seems inflexible and can create boredom / lack of engagement
- **So better approach** is to teach them the **philosophy and show them how it will work in practice**, including weekday and weekend examples; tap into intuitive cooking skills and allow for flexibility
- One respondent in the Cammeray group summarised it nicely: *"one gives you the mindset, the other shows you how to eat"*
- **Practical tips welcome**

"It is giving a couple of examples of a balanced diet. You could have this one, you could combine, you could use the whole lot."

Cammeray

"You see I could go on them quite easily. I could handle that. That's like in the morning for breakfast you have a sandwich for lunch and steak at night time, I don't see an issue with that."

Hurstville

Provide a flexible shopping guide

- Generally positive about shopping guide
- Useful and straightforward
- Familiar ingredients a plus
- Provide tips on how to make fresh food last longer and make more expensive proteins stretch further

"To me it's commonsense and I do have everything there all the time."

Cammeray

"I think it's great because if you have a more concrete idea of what you should be getting when you go out and buy the shopping you will end up with more GST free type stuff and less crap."

Hurstville

"It just tells you everything you need to have in the home to be able to create these meals."

Cammeray



Provide meal ideas rather than 'recipes'

- Explain that initially surprised but when you explained they liked this new way of presenting meal ideas that was intuitive and just told you what things you needed building on what is familiar
- Main meal preparers (largely women) were very interested in recipes
- Looks achievable and what we normally would prepare
- Loved the tips
- Loved that you didn't need to cook special meals / one meal for the plan, the other for the family
- All dishes looked appetizing



"This is good but I'd rather actual recipes. Some things you can't do a recipe, like a steak is a steak but with bolognese sauce ..."

Parramatta

"That's better [than] a recipe book. The one thing that did put me off my diet because I felt like I did have to cook the recipe."

Cammeray

Guide people about eating out

- Explain understanding of terms – take out vs eating out which is about fine dining and not when they think they should be following their diet
- Also how the men didn't think of buying their lunch as eating out.
- While there was a degree of confidence about how to order 'healthy' food when eating out, general view was that you were out therefore the diet was on hold; tried to order meals they wouldn't or couldn't eat at home; portion size an issue
- Wanted to know dishes to avoid as well as those to order
- The men wanted KFC, the women wanted Italian! – different perceptions of what is healthy and different tastes?
- Different cuisines listed were relevant to their tastes

Suggestion: Include 'avoid foods'

Note: Rename as take-away guide and make it clear these are lunch-time options

"I always like to order something that I don't have at home. So if there is a nice big creamy sauce or something."

Parramatta

"It's a good prompt. A good reminder they don't have to have chicken or something rich and creamy, there are healthy take-away or meals out."

Cammeray

Take a simple approach to design

- Preferred images of real food to infographics
- Black and white images were seen as boring and bland, like *"Bart Simpson meals"*
- Make it easy to read
- Avoid busy layouts
- Create something that can be pulled apart and put on fridge or put in their wallet to use when shopping



"W1: That is also something you stick on the fridge or a notice board.

W2: I think it's easier to read."

Cammeray

"It's very busy that is the only thing. Like you really do need to study quite carefully to get all the information. ... There is a lot on that page to absorb."

Cammeray

"M1: Initially it does feel a bit overwhelming.

M2: It does feel a bit congested."

Hurstville

"W1: That is also something you stick on your fridge or a notice board.

W2: I think it's easier to read."

Cammeray

Show this is about how to live not just what to eat

- **Very positive response** – could be expanded especially in relation to exercise and more tips to keep focused
- **Liked the flexible and pragmatic tone to the content**

Lifestyle

Enjoy an active lifestyle to help you lose weight and improve your health and wellbeing.

Start exercising - NO excuses!

Set yourself an exercise goal and make a commitment:

- Find a motivated friend to exercise with.
- Organise regular walks with your partner or take the dog out for a walk.
- Set aside time for exercise in your calendar or diary each week.
- Make a financial commitment: get a personal trainer or join a gym.
- Make exercise social e.g. golf, tennis, cycling, dancing.



How much exercise?

1. Aim to exercise for at least 60 minutes every day.
2. Move throughout the day. Sitting for long periods of time is bad for your health. Use the stairs, stand up, stretch and use any opportunity to walk rather than drive.

Mindful eating

- Enlist the help of your partner, friend or healthcare professional to support you.
- Eat slowly and enjoy your food. Think before you eat. Only eat when you are hungry, not stressed, upset or bored!
- Don't feel guilty if you eat outside your plan occasionally (i.e. once a fortnight), get straight back to healthy eating the next day and fit in some extra exercise sessions.
- Set aside one day a week to enjoy a treat food and keep the portion size small.
- Set short and long term goals that you can work towards. Reward yourself when you reach key milestones.

It takes 20-25 minutes of brisk walking to burn off the kilojoules in one treat:

- 1 glass wine or 1 chocolate biscuit = 20-25 minutes brisk walking

"It is a good summary to finish it off."

Hurstville

"Like a reference point. You get to the end of the booklet and have a look. Sums up things to go with our eating plan."

Cammeray



A plan is better than diet



- **Avoid the term 'diet'**; use plan instead as it suggests a lifestyle change rather than a phase; reflects that the fact the plan is sustainable and realistic
- **A plan is positive**, a diet is about deprivation
- **Many are in denial** about how much weight they need to lose they **compare themselves with their peers and 'the general public'** and **resist the BMI recommendations**
- Need to show that **weight loss is a slow process**; hence the need for a plan rather than a diet

Address preconceptions about diets

Consider this preconceptions about diets in general and high-protein diets in particular when communicating the plan

Women are more knowledgeable about food and weight loss trends whereas **men are less literate**

Women surprised they could eat carbs; men surprised they could eat red meat

*“W1: I think it’s looking at the food hierarchy in a different way and not quite as crazy as the low carb diets that we hear about which is just so low carb that they are completely cutting out carbs just about. It just doesn’t sound sensible.
W2: You could say food to save your life if you want to be really melodramatic.”*

Cammeray



Defy expectations

People, particularly women, are jaded; by their late 20s they will have tried many diets and expect them to be difficult and hard to maintain

They will question how this plan is different

To be successful, you need to defy expectation and avoid that 'been there done that' reaction

Show that it is **balanced and not difficult; familiar yet not boring**

Women's groups expected to see the typical food pyramid but were pleasantly surprised; **"isn't it good it isn't the usual?"**

The plan seemed more balanced than they were expecting from a high-protein diet



Overall Appeal of the Eating Plan



"Good thing it is in plain English. There is not too much jargon in your face. It is set out sensibly or appears to have been thought out sensibly and it's something that everyone can follow with ease."

Hurstville

"What I found interesting [is] I can have my eggs in the morning, if I've got time I can have my steak at night. As I said before I thought of that as being unhealthy. I thought to be healthy you need your fish, chicken and all that stuff. I think it's okay."

Hurstville

*"W1: I liked the portions, the servings.
W2: Probably stick them on my fridge some of those pages."*

Cammeray

*"W1: I think they should have more on lifestyle. Just general things, general health things.
W2: And tips, little tips."*

Parramatta