

# The Jean Hailes *Foundation* for women's health

## Fact Sheet

### Dr Rick's 10 Top Tips to be a Healthy Weight

Dr Rick Kausman is the author of the award-winning book *If Not Dieting, Then What?* And creator of the healthy eating, healthy weight management web site [www.ifnotdieting.com](http://www.ifnotdieting.com)

#### 1. Don't be fooled by the fad

Weight-loss diets can trick many of us with their 'quick fix' solutions. However, in the long term, most people end up regaining the weight they lost on the diet...and then some! Furthermore, the harmful effects of weight-loss diets increase the risk of developing an eating disorder.

#### 2. Don't get weighed down by the scales

If we are above our most comfortable weight and we want to change this situation, it is vital to focus on our thinking, our eating and/or our physical activity, rather than concentrating primarily on what is happening with changes to our weight. By looking after ourselves and our bodies in the best way we can, our weight/size will be the healthiest level that is possible for our own body type.

#### 3. Practice a positive attitude towards food

Labelling food as 'bad' or 'junk' often causes us to feel bad about ourselves and guilty about what we have eaten. Ironically, this guilty feeling can even make us eat more of that type of food, even when we no longer feel like it. So, do your best to think about food as 'everyday' food (fruit, vegetables, cereals) rather than 'good' food and 'sometimes food' (chocolate, chips) rather than 'bad' food.

#### 4. Eat slowly and enjoy

While this can take some practice, slowing down the speed of our eating makes it much easier to recognise when we are full, allowing us to stop before we have eaten more than we really feel like. It also allows us to pay better attention to the foods we are eating; the real flavours, textures, smells etc. In this way, we enjoy our food more, it tastes better, the sensations last longer, and we recognise more easily when we have had enough.

#### 5. Your body knows best

We can all eat food when we are not really feeling physically hungry – for example because we are bored, or even just because it's there! It's quite normal to do some non-hungry eating, but when we do too much, it can tip our eating out of balance. Do your best to check in with your body before you eat; ask yourself, 'Am I really hungry?' (Important note: If we are under our most healthy weight or currently have an eating disorder, our body might not be able to give us accurate information about the right amount and/or type of food our body needs. In these situations it is important to get some help from a health professional such as a dietitian to work out the best type and amount of food for you.)

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## 6. Do your best to not get too hungry

It's easy to get so busy that we ignore our body's signals that are telling us to eat! If this happens, it is very hard to eat slowly, we can easily eat more food than we really want, and we can end up becoming overfull or completely stuffed full. It can be helpful to have some snacks with us just in case we start to get too hungry.

## 7. Healthy bodies come in all shapes and sizes

Health and vitality come in all types of body shapes and sizes. Remember that nobody is perfect, and no body is perfect!

## 8. Nurture yourself

As well as dedicating time to our families, our friends, our study etc., we need to make sure we are doing things for ourselves. Taking care of ourselves is essential. Make a list of healthy things that help you feel good, and try to do these things as often as possible.

## 9. Move your body

Some people think you have to pound the pavement or work out at a gym to get any benefit from physical activity. This is not true. There are many ways of putting more physical activity into your daily life, such as walking to school, walking to the shops, or taking the stairs when you can. Taking up a fun activity that involves moving your body such as dance, social tennis or yoga can be enjoyable ways of working your muscles.

## 10. Focus on feeling good

Focus on FEELING not LOOKING good. When you feel good you are naturally attractive and fun to be around and you are much more likely to cope well with any situations that might otherwise get you down.

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### Where can I get more information?

[www.ifnotdieting.com](http://www.ifnotdieting.com)

[www.jeanhailes.org.au](http://www.jeanhailes.org.au)

[www.healthforwomen.org.au](http://www.healthforwomen.org.au)

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This fact sheet is designed to be informative and educational.  
It is not intended to provide specific medical advice or replace advice from your health practitioner.

### *health tips*

Enjoy a wide variety of nutritious foods, by eating plenty of vegetables, legumes, fruit and wholegrain cereals. Include lean meat, fish, poultry and/or alternatives.

Try to include fish 3–5 times a week (this can include canned fish, such as salmon, sardines and tuna).

Take time out just for you.

Make pelvic floor exercises a life-long habit — even if you have no symptoms.

Be active on most, or all, days of the week: you don't have to do a 30 minute walk, 3x10 minutes is just as good!

3 serves of dairy each day for good bone health.