

The naturopathic advisor

***Naturally Good Health** has teamed up with the experts at the College of Naturopathic Medicine (CNM) to offer you health tips. This issue, Lorraine Whelan, Nutritional Therapist and Lecturer at CNM, speaks about the real energy and vitality in food.*

You may be familiar with the saying 'you are what you eat', but this concept has now been altered by many nutritionists and health experts to



'you are what you absorb'. Even with a healthy diet, many of us are missing out on some or all of those vital nutrients Mother Nature gifted us through food. With over 70 billion people worldwide suffering with some form of digestive problem or irritability, it is no wonder why our life force, chi or energy is on the decline.

The concept of energetics of food is often confused with the concept of calories, but a calorie is not a measure of fuel, with fuel being the foods that are in their natural, nutrient dense state. They are the whole, plant-based, nutrient rich foods that are in fact all around you!

Here are my six tips for increasing your awareness of what

you eat so you can enjoy being what you absorb, while forgetting about the calories:

● **Chew, chew, chew:** Eating should be thought of as an opportunity to slow down and mindfully receive the nourishment that is intended from food.

● **Choose your food wisely:** Choose foods with five ingredients or less, making sure you can pronounce each ingredient. Most importantly, choose fresh and seasonal and support your local farmer.

● **Aim to eat as many plant-based foods as possible:** And in as many different colours as possible.

● **Use herbs and spices:** Delve your hands into Mother Nature's own medicine cabinet; try adding

these tasty, anti-inflammatory and disease fighting herbs and spices to your daily routine; ginger, turmeric, garlic, basil, cumin and cinnamon.

● **Where possible choose organic.**

● **Establish regular eating times:** Many dietary regimes, such as macrobiotics, believe that health can only be achieved once we have established a daily routine.



CNM trains natural medicine practitioners in Dublin, Cork and Galway. Lorraine Whelan, NT and Nutritional Chef, is a guest speaker at the CNM open days in Cork (June 7) and Galway (June 14). To book, order a prospectus or receive more information email dublininfo@naturopathy.ie or ring 01-2353094.

Herbal helper

Don't sweat it...

The menopause is a time of life full of changes and challenges, and one of the most common is the issue of hot flushes and night sweats. Even the chilliest of women may find themselves gripped by feverish flushes that flood over them regardless of the weather outside, whilst nights may be rendered hideous by waves of heat that leave them dripping wet and driven from their bed in search of dry night clothes.

In many cases, the cause is a sudden dip in hormone levels. This is a natural part of the menopausal process, but it can be more extreme for some women than others. Other factors that worsen symptoms for many women are caffeine (found in coffee, tea, chocolate and many fizzy drinks), refined sugar, spicy foods, and highly processed foods.

Try to keep the evening meal light, so that heat generated by metabolising a heavy meal doesn't stoke the fire. Keep the bedroom cool, open a window, and use several thin sheets rather than a heavy duvet. If possible, reduce

stress levels to minimise the negative effect of adrenalin surges, which in themselves tend to raise the temperature.

An extract of the herb sage is often used to good effect, as it reduces sweating without affecting hormone levels. This means it can be used by any woman, whether or not HRT is suitable for her, and whether or not she has other menopausal symptoms.

Often, sorting out the sweating will lessen other symptoms as well, especially if night time sweats disappear. A few good nights' sleep and you may start to notice a difference in yourself.

There are, of course, a whole host of other symptoms that come with the menopause which may include low energy, low mood, mood swings, low libido, vaginal dryness, skin dryness, aches and pains, decreased hair/nail condition, fatigue and poor memory.

These symptoms mainly occur due to low oestrogen levels and in this situation fermented soya remedies can provide a helping hand. Fermented soya is a source of isoflavones,



which are phytoestrogenic, and has none of the negative associations that come with HRT. Because the isoflavones are not steroidal they are not classified as hormones – in fact, no plant contains hormones.

Soya and sage remedies can be taken simultaneously to combat the aforementioned symptoms. However, just remember to get checked out by your doctor to confirm it is the menopause you are experiencing. Menopausal symptoms could mask other ailments.