



Ricardo Riskalla is one of Australia's leading Fitness and Health experts. Contacting Ricardo is the first step to living a healthy lifestyle.

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Build your

BEST BODY



It's easy to let your fitness slide in winter. The biting cold and early sunsets can leave many of us skipping gym time, overindulging on comfort foods and hibernating indoors. And the three-month window of lax eating can lead to unwelcomed weight gain. Showing just how complacent we become during this period, a NSW Health survey found almost half of us expect to gain up to 1-2kg during winter. And 59 per cent admit it's from eating more take away, snacking on comfort foods and exercising less.

With spring approaching no doubt many of us are looking to turn things around. From the latest diet trends, to easy workouts and ways to get motivated, BW Magazine breaks down how you can use the last of the cool weather to get summer ready.

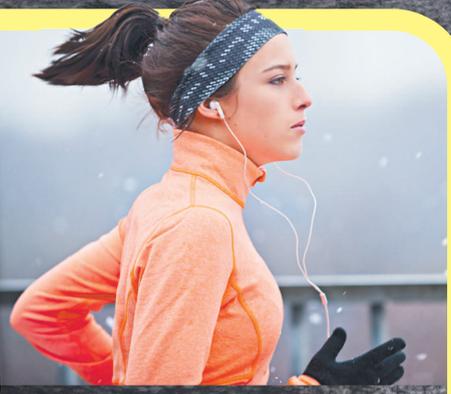
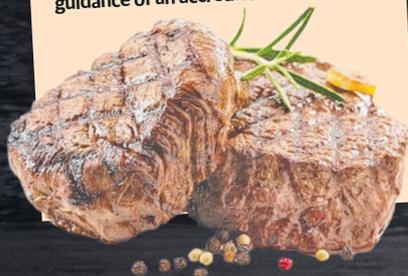
— NAOMI WHITE

NO EXCUSES

NO time for the gym? No excuse! Personal trainer Ricardo Riskalla says you can do a very effective workout at home. "At home you can do body weight exercises that are super safe and at the end of day provide long-lasting results that are very harmonious to the body. To start your journey, on top of daily outside walks, do some push-ups. Try to do the maximum that you can until failure, then next day add another five repetitions on top of that and keep going! Another great exercise is sit-ups," he says.

KETOGENIC DIET

A SIMILAR, but stricter, regimen to the famed Atkins Diet, this calls for a very low carb intake and high intake of protein or good fats. And while not a long-term solution, this diet can be a good way to quickly drop weight. But accredited practising dietitian and spokeswoman for the Dietitians Association of Australia Melanie McGrice cautions there are multiple versions of this diet and advises high protein over high fat versions. "It's quite popular at the moment," she says. "There is some advantage in terms of a lower carb diet for some people, but it cuts out some key nutrients, so I'd recommend doing it under the guidance of an accredited dietitian."



USE THE COLD

EXERCISING in the cold can help to burn body fat faster. A study led by Dr Paul Lee from the Garvan Institute found exposure to the cold while exercising for 10-15 minutes produced similar levels of a hormone that converts white fat, which stores energy, to brown fat, which burns it, as seen in an hour of exercise in moderate temperatures.

PORTION SIZES

MANY of us tend to overeat in winter. And dietitian Melanie McGrice says reducing portion sizes can be an easy and effective way to reduce your weight as many of us are unintentionally overeating. "For example, one serve of meat, chicken or fish is 100 grams and the average woman needs 2.5 serves per day. But restaurants often serve 300-400gm steaks and some of the chicken breasts today are 450gm so people are often eating double what they actually require," she says.





EXERCISE

CHANCES are the cold mornings and earlier sunsets have seen your fitness slide. Personal trainer Blake Worrall-Thompson says there's no right time to start. "There's absolutely no doubt that if you've had four months off the thought of starting again is overwhelming — but just get started with something," he says. "Motivation may get you started but at some point it wavers for everyone. What keeps me afloat is consistency. If you want to burn two-three kilograms, I think four-six exercise sessions a week is realistic," he says. "And studies have shown that four or more times a week is easier because it becomes more ingrained as a habit. It's easier to keep that up with 20 minute blocks than twice a week for 45 minutes."

Cut the treats

THE National Nutrition and Physical Activity Survey found Australians get a whopping 35 per cent of their total energy intake from discretionary foods — think cakes, biscuits and alcohol; which dietitian Melanie McGrice says can have a big overall impact. "Just by reducing the intake of those and focusing more on core foods, vegetables, lean red meat, fish, fruit and wholegrains goes a long way to improving your diet and weight," she says.

MAKE IT COUNT

HOW you work out can also impact how much you lose, trainer Blake Worrall-Thompson says. "Yes, you want to build a foundation of strength but when you build it, it's been about intensity instead of duration," he says. "The perfect blend is weights and cardio and thinking along the lines of more high intensity. If you're looking to burn fat quickly, it's more along the lines of intensity than duration."



TRY ON YOUR SUMMER CLOTHES

IT'S easy to overlook winter weight gain when you can hide it under layers and big coats. But trying on your swimmers through the colder months can help you face some truths now and give you some added motivation to stay on track. It's an easy way to avoid having to buy a new wardrobe if things don't fit come summer, too.



INTERMITTENT FASTING

THE CSIRO recently released its Flexi diet, which includes intermittent fasting three days a week with some meal replacement shakes and one day of eating without restriction. The CSIRO cited an average of 11kg lost by those who followed the diet over a six week trial. Dietitian and exercise physiologist Gabrielle Maston says it's a positive diet approach. "It can be effective, people often last two months on restrictive diets but three months on this will lead to good weight loss results. And research has found fasting days can psychologically work to train people to eat lower calorie foods even on non-fasting days, so the idea of restriction carries on. It's proven to be successful and lowers the risk of type two diabetes and cardiovascular disease."

SET GOALS

SET weight loss or toning goals now, so you're feeling your best when it's time to bring out the shorts and summer dresses. Dietitian Gabrielle Maston advises setting "doing goals" which are realistically achievable. "Don't say I'll lose X amount of weight in X amount of time. Say I'll go for a walk every day for 30 minutes, make smart goals which are time specific and achievable which you can put in place right now. Make short-term goals which leave you feeling accomplished and feelings of success and then build on those," she says.

