

Winter Nutrition



Kia ora koutou,

Winter on the West Coast can mean beautiful, clear and crisp days, but also cold and wet weather. As the sun rises later and disappears earlier, it can leave us feeling like there's little time to enjoy being outside. Curling up on the couch with a hot drink seems so much cosier!

With the falling temperature and sunshine hours, it's important that we fuel our bodies to stay healthy and energized over the winter months. Here are some nutrition tips to support your brain and body function well over the winter.

1. **Eating well** supports us to be physically active, which improve our **sleep quality**. Include variety of food that offer nutrients for your brain and body such as:

- fruits and vegetables (fresh in season, canned, or frozen),
- wholegrains (bread, oats, brown rice, couscous, wholegrain pasta),
- protein foods (beans, lentils, seafood, lean meat and chicken, milk, yoghurt, and cheese)
- healthy oils from fish, nuts and seeds like sunflower or pumpkin seeds

2. Soups, stews, roast chicken and vegetables, vegetarian or mince chili con carne, lagsane, or shepahrd's pie are some good options. Cooking can be done in **bulk, frozen and reheated** later for a quick dinner or lunch.

3. Keep up your **vitamin D** intake. This important because vitamin D helps to transport **calcium** to our bones and supports **bone growth and strengths**. Try to incorporate plenty of food sources of vitamin D such as:

- Oily fish such as canned tuna or salmon, eggs, lean meat, and dairy products.
- Some margarine, plant-based milks, and yoghurts are fortified with vitamin D in NZ.
- It is also great to get some **sun exposure** when it's sunny and warm outside, for about **10 minutes** a day with your arms and face exposed to the sun.

4. If you are starting to come down with a cold, try increasing your fruit and vegetable intake and keep drinking lots of water to support your immune system. Citrus fruit (orange, mandarins, lemons, limes) are high in vitamin C and their juices are delicious when mixed with hot water.

Lentil Shepherd's Pie

- 2 onions, diced
- 2 carrots, diced
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 bay leaf
- 185g red split lentils
- 1 can chopped tomatoes
- 2 tablespoon tomato sauce
- 2 ½ cups stock
- 2 medium sized kūmara, peeled and chopped

1. Heat splash of oil in a large saucepan, fry the onion, garlic, and carrots until softened, then stir in the lentils.
2. Add tomatoes, tomato sauce, bay leaf, and stock.
3. Reduce the heat and simmer for approx. 30 mins (until the lentils are soft and the sauce has thickened).
4. Meanwhile, preheat oven to 220°C, and cook the kūmara in boiling water until soft.
5. Thoroughly drain and mash the kūmara.
6. Transfer the lentil mixture to an oven proof dish and top with the mashed kūmara.
7. Sprinkle with cheese (optional) and cook in oven for about 15 minutes until the top is lightly browned.

Ngā mihi nui,
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