

# Get in shape with the diet DOCTORS LOVE

A slimmer waist, healthier heart and stronger bones. Why DASH will change the way you eat

**H**ead the saying "eat like your grandmother would have and you won't get fat"? That mindset is the basis of US nutritionist Marla Heller's new DASH diet, which stamps a big "no" on processed foods while giving the thumbs-up to wholefoods and fresh produce. It doesn't leave you feeling deprived and it's so simple you'll kick yourself when you realise you should've been eating like Nanna all along...

## DASH TAG

DASH (Dietary Approaches To Stop Hypertension) is designed as a sensible, balanced approach to healthy eating, it's been proven to help you slim down, combat high blood pressure (hypertension), improve brain function and live for years longer.

So it's goodbye to fasting and food-group bans, and hello to a healthy, balanced diet.

"From a nutritional point of view, the DASH diet is a breath of fresh air," says nutritionist Zoe Wilson.

"This is backed by credible science, unlike the majority of diets out

there. It's sensible, includes all the major food groups and is easy to stick to because you're not sitting there starving."

## HOW IT WORKS

Unlike fad diets, the DASH diet is approved by a host of health bodies – including Nutrition Australia – and is about eating high-fibre foods combined with plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables, and cutting down on salt, fat and fatty cuts of meat.

## SNACK SMART

Curb your daily sugar cravings with these healthy snacks...

- ½ cup raw unsalted almonds
- ½ cup reduced-fat natural yoghurt
- ¼ cup sultanas

Unlike Atkins, slow-release carbs are permitted with the DASH diet, such as wholegrain pasta, bread and nutty brown rice.

"For most people, changing to a diet full of

fresh produce rather than processed food means they eat fewer kilojoules and feel more satisfied – a double whammy for weight loss," says Zoe.

The DASH program was first created by a team of US researchers looking for a natural way to tackle high blood pressure, which affects one in three Australians.

DASH dieters reported superb medical results, with some reducing their blood

pressure in just a matter of weeks.

DASH works by addressing the balance of salt and potassium in your diet. Eating more potassium (yoghurt, wheat bran and baked beans are rich sources) and less salt helps bring blood pressure down, says Zoe. Plus, the weight loss adds to your overall health.

## KICK CRAVINGS

DASH is designed to be a plan for life, promoting steady, sustained weight loss.

The diet emphasises "high-volume, low-kilojoule" foods, including wholegrains and fibre-filled fruit and vegetables such as apples and lentils, which keep you feeling full for longer.

As for alcohol, it's a DASH no-no as it raises blood pressure, undoing all your good work. Limit yourself to a small glass of red wine, with at least 2-3 alcohol-free days each week.

Grains, fruits and vegetables should make up the bulk of your DASH diet, as well as moderate amounts of low-fat dairy and proteins, and a sprinkling of nuts, fats and sugar.

How many serves you have of each depends on your weight and how much you exercise.

To join the global community see [dashforhealth.com](http://dashforhealth.com)

## THE MEAL PLAN

### BREAKFAST

Combine ¾ cup bran flakes with 1 medium banana, ½ cup berries and 1 cup low-fat milk. Serve with 1 slice wholegrain toast spread with 1 tablespoon natural peanut butter.



### LUNCH

Combine a wholegrain wrap with ¾ cup chopped cooked chicken, 1 tablespoon avocado and 1-2 cups fresh salad. Serve with 1 piece fresh fruit and 1 tablespoon mixed seeds.



## VEGIE SWITCH-UP

If you're a vegetarian, try replacing meat with legumes such as adding lentils and kidney beans to pasta sauce, or swapping chicken for a homemade chickpea pattie

### DINNER

Mix together 1 cup spaghetti and 1 cup pasta sauce made from vegetables. Top with 3 tablespoons grated parmesan. Serve with 2 cups mixed salad and 1 tablespoon vinaigrette dressing. For dessert, have ½ cup fresh or stewed fruit.



## GWEN STEFANI

DASH is good for carb lovers such as Gwen, as slow-release carbs are allowed. Experts have voted it the best overall diet four years in a row

## HOW TO DO YOUR DASH

### Do

Pile your plate with non-starchy vegetables such as broccoli, carrots and baby corn.

Stock up on assorted seeds and nuts for healthy, slow-energy-release snacks.

Eat protein at breakfast to help fire up your metabolism. A hard-boiled egg is ideal.

Add a low-fat dairy item, such as a tub of yoghurt, to make meals or snacks more satisfying.



### Don't

Binge on sugar. Rather, eat fibre-rich fruit with every meal.

Avoid all bread. Instead, opt for wholegrain, which is packed with magnesium and vitamin B and will fill you up.

Hit the sausage sizzle. Swap fatty meats for lean red meat, fish or poultry instead.

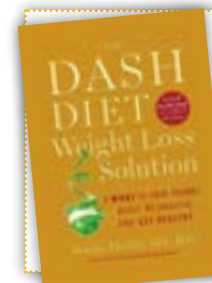
Drink more than a small glass of wine. Alcohol is a no-no.

Words: Top Sante Pictures: Getty Images.



## SCARLETT JOHANSSON

A pregnant Scarlett might find DASH perfect for her, as it's rich in nutrients essential for a healthy baby



Find out if the DASH diet can work for you by checking out US nutritionist Marla Heller's bestseller The DASH Diet Weight Loss Solution, out now (\$32.99, Hachette)

