

NUTRITION

With Natalia Kerkham

About Natalia Kerkham

- Medical herbalist and nutritional therapist
- Gained BsC in Herbal Medicine in 2003
- Completed MSc in Nutritional Therapy in 2015
- Has special interests in Migraine and Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS)
- An experienced public speaker and regularly gives talks to groups on herbal medicine and healthy eating
- Member of the National Institute of Medical Herbalists and the British Association for Applied Nutrition and Nutritional Therapy (BANT)

Nutritionists and dietitians

- Nutritionist or nutritionalist is a person who is knowledgeable on matters of food and nutrition impacts on health and gives pertinent advice. Not subject to professional regulation in some countries.
- Dietitians are regulated healthcare professionals, licensed to make assessments, diagnoses, and treatment recommendation for nutritional problems. A registered dietitian meets all academic and professional requirements including an internship at an approved health-care facility, among others. Dietitians are also nutritionists. But not all nutritionists are dietitians.
- A BANT nutritional therapist has extensive training in not just diet and nutrition, but also in human physiology, biochemistry, and how to approach a patient.

Migraines and Nutrition

- Migraine manifests differently among sufferers. Symptoms include, but not limited to head pain, vomiting, sensitivity to light or sound, and nausea. Others may have all the typical migraine symptoms except pain.

- Migraine is difficult to ascertain from other non-migranous headaches including epilepsy. The latter may be triggered by migraine. The relationship between migraine, epilepsy, and behavioural problems (among children sufferers) remain inconclusive.
- One factor affecting a prolonged attack is the sterile inflammatory response to migraine.
- There is scant evidence that shows manipulative therapy is effective on migraines.

Helpful recommendations for migraine sufferers	Foods that may trigger migraine
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take Doloven multi-vitamin and mineral (designed specifically for migraine sufferers) and fish oils (i.e. Viridian, Solgar) which have anti-inflammatory properties. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Molecular distillation of fish oil purifies the oil from contaminants/pollutants. • Avoid getting hungry. Eat moderately-sized meals that are protein-rich 3 times a day and 3 decent snacks in between. Snacks may include nuts (handful only), seeds, and appropriate types of fruit. • Indulge in bedtime snack (reduces the odds of a migraine attack the following day by 40%) • Remove gluten from diet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Histamine-rich foods such as aged cheeses (for histamine sensitive sufferers only). • Chocolates, coffee, red wine/alcohol

- No single food affects migraine sufferers. Two-thirds say that hunger, skipping meals, or fasting trigger their migraine. Migrainers are very often more prone to getting very hungry than average.
- Known trigger-food does not always trigger migraine. The key is eating more good food and getting the nutrients.

Fat

- Fat is calorie-dense. One gram of pure fat yields 9 calories, whereas one gram of carbohydrate or protein yields only 4 calories. One gram of alcohol yields 7 calories.
- Nuts are very rich in fat but they also contain a lot of vitamins and minerals. Recommended portion is a handful only.
- Fat comprises 60% of the brain's dry weight. A no-fat diet means that a person's liver will create fat out of whatever raw materials present in the body.

- Cholesterol is a type of fat in the body tissue and blood
 - Eating cholesterol-rich food does not raise a person's cholesterol level
 - Dietary cholesterol counts for about 25%, while the liver manufactures the other 75% out of sugar.
- It is false to believe that reducing fat alone from diet helps people lose weight.
 - Coconut oil is a highly saturated fat. Its chemical structure is very stable and does not easily break down in high temperatures. Its benefits remain debatable as studies into saturated fats being unhealthy have been widely debunked.
 - Polyunsaturated fats become toxic under high temperature.

Carbohydrates

- The government recommends that 40% of calories should come from carbohydrates, 30% from fats, and 20% from protein. From these ratios, migrainers who get hungry very easily will have improved symptoms by increasing their protein and fat intake, and reduce their carbohydrates.
- Atkin's diet is not recommended for people who thrive on a high carbohydrate diet.
- Below 60 grams of carbohydrate intake per day is too restrictive which may lead to major problems with carbohydrate metabolism. But restricting carbohydrate intake this much is beneficial for pre-diabetic and diabetic persons.

Useful dietary advice

- People who do not eat substantial breakfast are less healthy than those who do. Prepare a smoothie for breakfast. Use a nutrient extractor for converting fruits, vegetables, nuts or seeds into liquid fuel for the body.

Sample options for breakfast smoothie

Concoction 1: Kale, pineapple, banana, raspberries, apple. Add plain yogurt (optional).

- Banana is a good source of fibre and potassium which helps control blood pressure
- Kale is a good anti-oxidant that helps protect against heart disease and cancer
- Berries provide sugar and sweetness.
- Pineapples provide fibre and enzymes that help in digestion.
- Egg or few cheese cubes (source of protein) may be eaten alongside the smoothie

Concoction 2: Banana, 1 scoop whey protein powder, 1 tablespoon almond butter, 2 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder, 1 teaspoon maple syrup, 2 teaspoons ground linseeds, vanilla essence or extract, a pinch of sea salt, milk.

- Almond butter and linseeds help regulate cholesterol. Significantly reduced cholesterol levels below 3.5 millimoles per litre are associated with suicide and violent deaths in people.
- Ginger and turmeric are also healthy ingredients for breakfast smoothies. Ginger improves symptoms of arthritis. Turmeric helps protect against cancer and heart disease.
- Blending ingredients breaks down the fibre and concentrates the sugars, but it also obviates the need to chew, which is an important process in releasing chemicals that aid digestion. Whether or not blending is detrimental to health entirely depends on the person's digestive condition.
- Protein drinks without the weight training and body building exercises do not build muscles. While whey protein powder is processed, it is a good source of concentrated protein and is beneficial in regulated amounts. Soy, pea, raw egg, and organic/plain yogurt are healthy protein sources.
- Sugar can be obtained from fruits but should not be taken in large quantities. Refined sugars pass into the bloodstream very quickly and do not contain essential nutrients. Sugar imbalance causes health problems.
- The daily requirement for water intake depends on how much a person loses in sweat, urine, faeces, and breath among others. Physically larger and active people tend to lose more water because they excrete more sweat than average. Other sources for water include fruits and vegetables (80% water), smoothie/shake, tea, and coffee.
- Soy contains high levels of phytoestrogens and is found to be beneficial to adults. Tofu and tempeh are fermented soy found to be healthy, including the traditionally eaten forms of soy.
- Soy and soy milk are not particularly recommended for small children.

Diet types

Paleo diet

- Paleo diet is a modern fad diet that recommends the consumption of foods supposedly eaten by stone-age people. The benefits from this diet remain variable. The book 'The Angry Chef' discusses unhealthy foods, dietary habits, and fads about food and health.

- We have no means of knowing exactly what the cavemen ate. But we do know precisely what the latter did NOT have in their diets – pizza, ice cream, refined sugars, processed foods, bread, etc.

FODMAP diet

- FODMAP elimination diet is primarily recommended to relieve digestion-related symptoms and is helpful for people with Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS) and frequent migraines that are triggered after certain meals.
- IBS affects the large intestine and symptoms include bloating, abdominal pain, diarrhea and/or constipation.
- FODMAP is not a particularly healthy diet because it excludes too many fruits and vegetables. But as a therapeutic diet for a short period, it is very useful.

FODMAP

Fermentable

Oligosaccharides

Disaccharides

Monosaccharides

And Polyols

Alkaline diet

- The Alkaline diet claims that certain foods can affect the acidity (pH) of the body and can therefore prevent or treat certain diseases. The type of foods that a person eats has no impact on the body's acidity or alkalinity - the body has the ability to regulate its acid levels

Remedy for 'leaky gut' syndrome

- Turmeric, licorice, Vitamin A, and Zinc help heal a leaky gut. Quercetin, an antioxidant found in apples and onions, is also helpful. It can be bought in pill form.
- Gluten is a trigger for leaky gut syndrome. Taking out wheat from diet is recommended.