

A Guide to Health Newsletter

Providing an understanding, caring and safe environment to explore and access ways for balance and healing



Issue No 3 - June, 2006 - Winter Warmers!

Welcome to the third edition of A Guide to Health's Seasonal Newsletters.

Our commitments to you through these newsletters are:

- ⊗ to keep you in touch with the latest research and news on diet and lifestyle
- ⊗ to bust myths and media sensationalism
- ⊗ to offer seasonal recipes and best fresh products
- ⊗ to keep you meditating
- ⊗ to inform you about various conditions and what you can do to help balance and heal

In this Issue

Latest health research on **fish oils – are capsules safe?** Myth busters takes on Sugar – does it cause hyperactivity? **Does the media tell you the whole story?** Health Issue Focus is on **Hypoglycaemia** – includes definition, preventive treatment, **when to see your doctor**, what to eat, what to do. Winter fruits and vegetables are abundant and beautiful. Lots of winter variety - **healthy comfort foods** that really satisfy. **A little bit of Loving Kindness** in the Meditation Script and the latest What's Happening.

Happy reading! We welcome questions and comments from you regularly – remember question everything until you find the answer that rings true to you.

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Please note that information in this newsletter is intended for general health information only and not to be used for diagnosis and/or treatment. If you have and health concerns, always speak to your GP and other professional health care practitioners.

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ATMS Member (Nutrition)

Latest health research

What is in the papers or on the radio?

Fatty acids are under the microscope in the battle against heart disease and hyperactivity. SMH. By Steve Dow

May 11, 2006

<http://www.smh.com.au/news/heart-disease/the-omega3-factor/2006/05/10/1146940610985.html>



Summary: Omega 3 fatty acids found in fish oils are beneficial in treating depression and helping with learning difficulties as well as preventing or lowering incidences of dementia. There is increasing evidence suggesting the oils are cardio protective.

Nutritionists recommend consumption of oily fish (salmon, tuna, sardines, trout, mackerel, etc) at least twice weekly.

The British Medical Journal has shown concerns about depleted world fish stocks.

A study on rodents deprived of the omega 3 have an increase in a zinc transport in the brain – which has been linked to Alzheimer’s disease. They do know that the omega 3 influence neurotransmitters in the brain and improve blood flow to the brain helping the brain to work better.

Another study with paediatrics where children with developmental co-ordination disorders were given fish oil capsules. Improvements were found in reading, spelling and behaviour but no change in motor skills. They could not identify the cause for the improvements. DHA increases flexibility in brain cell membranes and EPA is important to regulate brain function. *[GTH: DHA & EPA are the acids found in Omega 3 oils].*

They found an issue with EPA and omega 6 fatty acid Arachidonic Acid. An imbalance can lead to problems in the immune system, hormones and blood flow. The western diet is high in omega 6 oils. *[GTH: Omega 6 oils are found in meat and dairy products as well as green leafy vegetables – note the imbalance comes from the meat and dairy products NOT the green leafy vegetable sources (Erasmus, 1986)].*

They suggest the EPA may be more important than DHA for brain problems because of the immune system link. Allergies, auto-immune disease and food intolerances are common in children diagnosed with ADHD and dyslexia.

When asked if children with learning difficulties should take fish oil capsules if they lack fish in the diet – they believe there is not yet enough evidence on the benefits to the brain. Although it is quoted “there is nothing wrong with children taking fish oils”. Added to that comment, it is recommended that you check with the doctor before dietary intervention. It was noted omega 3 is safe in doses much higher than used in the study.

Another research paper concluded that omega 3 oils “do not have a clear effect on total mortality, combined cardiovascular events [incidence and deaths from heart attacks, strokes etc], or cancer”. On the other side of that comment, the authors do encourage the public to eat more oily fish.

One trial published in 2003 called DART-2 found that men with stable angina “in which excess cardiac deaths were associated with participants taking fish oil capsules.” This was criticised and argued that the study was unclear because of a 12 month interruption to the testing.

Types of Omega 3: **ALA** (alpha alpha-linolenic acid, found in plant sources such as flaxseed and canola); **EPA** (eicosapentaenoic acid, found in oily fish) and **DHA** (docosahexaenoic acid, found in oily fish).

GTH Comment: I am pleased to see articles like this are making mainstream media. If you have an interest in reading about Omega 3, 6 & 9 oils, I recommend the book referenced below this article. Essential Fatty Acids and omega 3 oils in particular are very fragile molecules – easily damaged through heat and light.

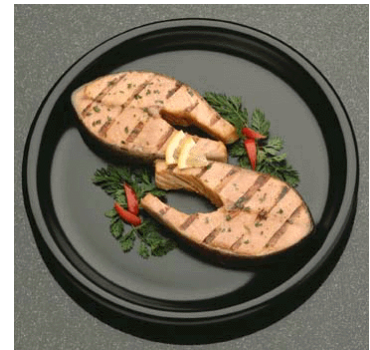
Briefly, some benefits of Essential Fatty Acids in the diet are as follows: they form the membrane potential around nervous system cells – for both brain and nervous system function; they contribute to shiny hair, strong nails and teeth; the liver relies on EFAs for fat metabolism – digestion, absorption and elimination; cholesterol levels depend on EFAs for the correct balance (increased HDLs).

An important function of EFAs that should be highlighted is that they contribute to the balance and regulation of the inflammatory/anti-inflammatory pathways.

Arachidonic acid (as mentioned above) is a bi-product of consuming meat and dairy foods – too much of this can cause inflammation which is why it is important to balance the diet with more fruit and vegetables (contain antioxidants which are anti-inflammatory). The balance of EFAs regulate AA.

It is important to source your oils though whole foods first and foremost. When it comes to supplementation, it is really important that you speak to a nutrition health care professional and your GP. Supplementation works like medication and there are side effects to be considered.

GTH Tip: Be aware of omega 3 sources. Best is fresh small oily fish. Flaxseeds and flaxseed oil is a great alternative (make sure it is cold pressed) but you may find it is not as potent as the fish source. If you are sourcing capsules, make sure the mercury content is clearly identified and at minim levels. If you are considering omega 3 margarines – please research more into the manufacturing process of these margarines before making the decision. You may contact A Guide to Health for more information, alternately, the book referenced explains this clearly.



References

1. Fats that Heal and Fats the Kill 10th Edition. Author: Udo Erasmus. Alive Books. 1986.

Myth busters

Where to get complete information for informed decisions

We look forward to hearing from you if you come across health-related article, news story, advertising claim that seems “too good to be true” or unbelievable or if the story seems one sided. Perhaps you have heard an “old wives tale” and want to know the origin of facts behind it. Here is where we will research the facts and offer you the truth through more than one side of the story.

"Sugar does not contribute to Hyperactivity"

You may have seen on TV recently studies shown to prove sugar does not contribute to hyperactivity. There are so many studies on sugar and hyperactivity and unfortunately, the outcome is still inconclusive. HOWEVER, an understanding of how sugar is broken down, absorbed and used in the body might help you to understand more about this substance believed to be linked to so many problems and illnesses.

Sucrose Digestion

Sucrose is the sugar from cane or beet sugars – commonly termed table sugar. The body breaks Sucrose down to Glucose and Fructose. The brain and nervous system rely mainly on glucose as an energy source. The nervous system cannot store or create glucose and relies completely on blood glucose (sugar) levels.

Storage and Release

When separated and absorbed through the small intestine, glucose is transported directly to the liver. The liver regulates the release of glucose into the blood. When blood glucose levels are high, the liver can remove glucose from the blood for storage and later use. The liver also releases glucose into the blood when levels are low.

Glucose is transformed to cellular energy in the presence of Oxygen – it becomes water and carbon dioxide – this is used as energy in cell function/repair.

Storage of glucose is done mainly in 2 ways – more than 90% is converted to fatty acids in fat cells, less amounts are stored in liver and muscle cells, minute amounts are stored in skin and glands. Fat cells are important in the body, not only are they used as storage but also work to insulate and protect vital organs. It is when the glucose intake outweighs energy expenditure that leads to imbalanced weight issues and health problems.

Sugar Imbalances/Issues

Sucrose intake is also linked to dental caries and those with fructose intolerance. That is, where there is no intake of fructose/sucrose there is no presentation of dental caries (Merck, 2005)

Regardless of the outcomes of the studies linking sugar and hyperactivity, parents and carers around the world still identify problems after high sugar intake.

Refined sugars and carbohydrates in general are metabolised (enter the bloodstream) quickly. This produces changes to blood glucose levels which triggers adrenaline (you know the feeling of an “adrenaline rush”) which quickens heart rate, sends more energy to the peripherals (arms & legs) and the best way to relieve this is to (a) breathe deeply (b) drink plenty of water and the most important (c) exercise.

GTH Comment/Recommendation

So now, we are moving into issues such as the stress response, insulin and hyperglycaemia from high sugar intake – I can write a book on this! (*Please see Health Issue Focus section for more on Hypoglycaemia & Diabetes*).

The important thing is that you take your own issues as individual and receive proper diagnosis accordingly. As mentioned, there are many studies on the topic and still not a common and conclusive outcome to this debate. Be wary of definitive “Yes” and “No” responses in general as each case should be taken on their individual basis – there are so many factors to consider in issues of hyperactivity, ADD & ADHD, hypo & hyperglycaemia and generally energetic children.

The important things are a varied and wholesome diet; plenty of exercise; qualified diagnosis of problems along with trusting your own instincts as parent/carer.

References

2. The Merck Manual of Diagnosis and Therapy 18th Edition. Editors: Mark H. Beers, M.D., and Robert Berkow, M.D. Merck Books. 2005.
3. Pathophysiology: Concepts of Altered Health States 6th Edition. Edited by Carol Mattson Porth Lippincott Williams & Wilkins. 2002..
4. Hyperactivity and Sugar article: <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/002426.htm> 21/4/2006. The US National Library of Medicine is a reliable online source for research. This article is a sensible and practical article that highlights the importance of a balanced diet and awareness of sugar intake.

What's happening/What happened

The **Introduction to Meditation** 8 week courses commenced for the St George & Sutherland Community College, the teachers of Blaxcell Street Public School and the Year 5 students at Grays Point Public School.

It is a real privilege for me to witness such transformations in the participants as they learn some new skills and remember others. I still learn from the participants especially the school kids – they never cease to surprise me.

A **Meditation 2** – More Meditating, Less Talking 8 week course will be offered through the [St George & Sutherland Community College](#), next term on Tuesday nights at the Jannali campus. An opportunity to expand your practise, there are some techniques to challenge you.

Plans for a **Healthy Mind Healthy Body Lecture and Food Tasting** are underway. This is aimed at parents/carers and adolescents (approx **age 8 to 16**). It is a talk about hormones, communication, common issues, the benefits and practical uses of meditation and nutrition (of course!) including food recommendations and tasting. It promises to be an informative and interesting session for all. More details will be passed on as they are confirmed.

Meditation in Schools plan is continuing. I am gathering educational resources and training those who have an interest in taking it to the schools in their area. I am always looking for help in areas of facilitation, promotion and support – so if this interests you, please call.

A few requests for the **Menopause Lecture and Food Tasting** have recently been received, I am planning for this either late July/early August. This lecture was delivered last year at Hazelhurst Galleries. Everyone walked out with a smile and a satisfied belly. The feedback received were positive and reassuring

Health Issue Focus

A common condition will be highlighted in each issue. If you would like to know more about a condition or disease, contact us and we can send you more information.

It is important to note that this section is for general health information and not as a basis for diagnosis and/or treatment. If you have any concerns, contact a professional health care practitioner.

Hypoglycaemia

Definition	Blood glucose level below 3.5mmol/L
Categories	Reactive hypoglycaemia 3-5 hours after a meal and Fasting hypoglycaemia (rare) appears in diseased state - pancreatic tumour, liver damage, prolonged starvation
Symptoms	low levels affects brain first. Headaches, depression, anxiety, irritability, blurred vision, excessive sweating, mental confusion, incoherent speech, bizarre behaviour, convulsions
Treatment (Preventive)	diet – high complex carbs, high fibre, low sugars and simple carbs (natural sugars have advantage over refined sugars due to slower absorption); lifestyle – alcohol is contributing factor as it imbalances blood sugar levels, regular exercise prevents diabetes type II as it improves insulin sensitivity and increases tissue chromium concentrations

Beneficial Nutrients	Food Sources
Magnesium: Magnesium can reduce insulin resistance. Clinical researchers have uncovered a link between insulin resistance and magnesium deficiency ¹ .	Magnesium: Dark green vegetables, seafood, whole grains, molasses, nuts
Chromium: key component of GTF which facilitates uptake of glucose to cells	Chromium: honey, grapes, whole grain cereals & brewers yeast
Zinc: hormone synthesis, maintenance of vision & immunity (preventative)	Zinc: pumpkin seeds (pepitas), sunflower seeds, seafoods esp Oysters (highest source), mushrooms, brewer's yeast soybeans, eggs, wheat germ, meats
Vitamin C: collagen cross links – forms hydroxyproline, hormone synthesis, immunity enhancer, antioxidant	Vitamin C: citrus fruits, alfalfa sprouts, currants, guava, paw paw/papaya, tomatoes, capsicum, berries, kiwi fruit, broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, kale, peas
Vitamin E: improves glucose tolerance and insulin sensitivity, immune enhancement, oxidation damage control	Vitamin E: cold pressed oils, eggs, wheat germ, molasses, sweet potatoes, leafy vegetables, sunflower seeds, walnuts, brazil nuts, cashews, pecans, almonds, hazelnuts, wheat germ, soybeans

Low GI Foods

"Recent studies from Harvard School of Public Health indicate that the risks of diseases such as type 2 diabetes and coronary heart disease are strongly related to the GI of the overall diet. In 1999, the World Health Organisation (WHO) and Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) recommended that people in industrialised countries base their diets on low-GI foods in order to prevent the most common diseases of affluence, such as coronary heart disease, diabetes and obesity."²

General Guidelines to Low GI eating³:

Eating protein and fat with a meal delays stomach emptying which slows absorption of the carbohydrate.

Animal products, nuts and avocados (proteins and fats) have too little or no GI therefore do not have much affect on your blood glucose. However, be aware that proteins and fats should still be eaten in moderation as too much protein and or fat can cause insulin resistance.

Eat lots of fresh vegetables.

Eat breakfast – if you miss breakfast you are more likely to make it up by snacking more through the day.

¹ http://www.mja.com.au/public/issues/183_04_150805/letters_150805_fm-4.html A potential link between magnesium intake and diabetes in Indigenous Australians. MJA 2005; 183 (4): 219-220. Diane A Longstreet, Deanne L Heath, Robert Vink. Accessed June, 2006

² <http://www.glycemicindex.com/> Accessed June, 2006

³ Prof Jennie Brand-Miller, et al. 2001. The GI Factor. Griffin Press

The National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases recommends the following⁴

Diet

- Follow your meal plan.
- Don't skip meals, especially if you've already taken your insulin, because your blood glucose may go too low.
- Exercise
- See your doctor before starting an exercise program.
- Check your blood glucose before, during, and after exercising. Don't exercise when your blood glucose is over 240 or if you have ketones in your urine.
- Don't exercise right before you go to sleep, because it could cause hypoglycaemia (low blood sugar) during the night.

Lifestyle

- Keep a daily record of blood glucose numbers, times of the day you took your insulin, amount and type of insulin you took and whether you had ketones in your urine.

Tell your doctor if

- you have hypoglycaemia often, especially at the same time of the day or night several times in a row.
- you've passed out from hypoglycaemia.
- Ask your doctor about glucagon. Glucagon is a medicine that raises blood glucose. If you pass out from hypoglycaemia, someone should call 000 and, if qualified, give you a glucagon shot.
- Take your insulin, even if you've been throwing up. Ask your doctor about how to adjust your insulin dose, based on your blood glucose test results.

Seasonal recipes and best fresh products

Winter foods

Winter eating requires, bulky, warming and comforting foods. Soups, stews and casseroles are wonderful winter warmers as this is the season for baking, steaming and boiling.

Always, lots and lots of water – generally 1 – 2 litres a day. The cold weather can make it difficult to drink water. Your daily winter water intake can include green or herbal teas. Ginger and lemon are a wonderfully warming addition to boiled or room temperature water.

Seasonal fruits

Remember fruits are important all year round. Some of these can be lightly stewed or baked and mixed with cream, yoghurt or Tofutti for warmth and flavour.

From June: Apple, Avocado, Banana, Coconut, Custard Apple, Grape, Grapefruit, Guava, Kiwifruit (Chinese gooseberry), Lemon, Lime, Mandarin, Melon, Nectarine, Olive, Orange, Passionfruit, Paw Paw (Papaw, Papaya), Pear, Pineapple, Plum, Rhubarb, Star Fruit, Strawberry, Tangelo. **From August:** we will see Blueberries appearing

Seasonal vegetables

From June: Artichoke, Asparagus, Bamboo Shoot, Bean, Beetroot (Beet), Bok Choy, Broccoli, Brussel Sprout, Cabbage (Bok choy, Chinese Chard, Chinese Mustard Cabbage, Pak choi, Wong Bok), Capsicum (Chilli, Paprika, Peppers), Carrot, Cauliflower, Celeriac (Celery root), Celery, Choi Sum, Cucumber, Eggplant (Aubergine), Fennel, Kale (Borecole, Collard, German Cabbage, Scotch Cabbage), Leek, Lettuce, Mushroom, Onion, Parsnip, Peas – Shelling, Snow & Sugar snap, Potato, Pumpkin, Radish, Shallot (Green onion or Spring onion (Eschallots)), Silverbeet (Swiss Chard), Spinach (English Spinach, True Spinach), Sprouts (Alfalfa, Bean Sprouts, Mung Bean Sprouts, Snow pea shoots), Squash (Button Squash, Scallopini), Sugar Cane, Swede, Sweet Corn (Corn), Sweet Potato, Tomato, Turnip, Vegetable Spaghetti (Spaghetti Marrow, Spaghetti Squash), Watercress, Witlof (Belgian Endive, Chicory, Witloof), Zucchini (Courgette)

⁴ National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases. http://diabetes.niddk.nih.gov/dm/pubs/type1and2/print_do.htm . USA. Accessed June, 2006.

Winter offers a wide variety of vegetables to create cozy winter dinners and leftovers for lunch!

Inquire now about [A Guide to Health's 30 Day Winter Warming Eating Plan](#) – Special Introductory Offer. 30 days of breakfast, lunch and dinner winter recipes + pantry shopping lists.

No longer dreading the question “What’s for Dinner?”

Recipes

Always include lots of greens and other colours for optimum nutrition. Steaming is a useful cooking method that minimises loss of nutrients. Keep the water afterwards for soups and stocks.

Proteins to include in your meals can be meats, fish, egg, cheese, legumes such as chickpeas or lentils. Remember salads can be warm or cold.

Remember the good fats – they don’t make you fat! (keeping in line with a balanced diet) Avocados are in season and it is perfect weather for steamed oily fish* such as Atlantic salmon, bream, sardines, mackerel, small tunas, kingfish and mullet (remember to keep the skins on and do not over-crisp them). Olive oil is another nutrient-rich beneficial source of essential fatty acids.

Fish fillets*, Pineapple Salsa and Coconut Rice

<p>1 ½ cups brown rice 1 small tin Coconut cream ½ pineapple mint leaves (preferably fresh) coriander (preferably fresh) 1 small chilli (½ teaspoon of dried flakes will do) juice of 1 lime pinch of raw or brown sugar ½ teaspoon Sesame oil Olive oil 4 fish fillets* (see examples above) 2 tablespoons Millet flour Salt & Pepper</p>	<p>Rice: Cook the rice in the coconut cream and ½ cup of water (watch and add water as needed) heating until rice is soft.</p> <p>Salsa: Cube pineapple pieces (aprox 1cm). Mix pineapple, mint leaves, coriander, chilli, lime, sugar and sesame oil and put aside. (Can be warmed slightly in a pot)</p> <p>Fish: Mix millet flour, salt & pepper and coat fish fillets. Lightly shallow fry both sides until flakes separate with a fork (careful not to overheat)</p>
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Marinated Seasonal fish fillets*

<p>4 fish fillets* 250mls (1 cup) plain yoghurt (with live cultures) ½ kg Fresh tomatoes 1 clove Fresh garlic 2 teaspoons Mustard (any kind will do) Pinch of: tumeric, paprika, ground coriander, salt Fresh coriander and parsley 1 tablespoon Olive Oil</p> <p>Steamed seasonal vegetables in lemon and butter</p>	<p>Marinade: Blend together tomatoes, garlic, mustard, salt and spices Mix in yoghurt Place marinade in an oven dish (with a lid)</p> <p>Fish: Coat the fish in the mixture Slice fresh herbs and sprinkle on top Bake in oven and check after 10minutes – testing the flakiness with a fork)</p> <p>Serve with steamed vegetables.</p>
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Guided Meditation script

Two 15 minute mp3 audio files and one 5 minute mp3 audio file can be downloaded from www.guidetohealth.com.au – just follow the links to Meditation and save them to your iPod/mp3 player or CD. Keep an eye on the website www.guidetohealth.com.au for release dates of the meditation CDs – for kids and adults.

Remember the golden rules of Meditation:

Centring is the intention to relax and meditate, you centre by creating a quiet environment ensuring no disruptions, sit or lie comfortably, close your eyes, breathe deeply and gently and focus throughout your body until you feel relaxed.

Focus is your tool to become and stay calm and present in the meditation. A focus can be a candle, music or your imagination – be creative and be present.

Grounding is the most important part of the meditation. Remember that meditation is a different state of consciousness than every-day awareness. Therefore, grounding is important to make sure your state has returned to the state of awareness and alertness required for day-to-day functioning. You can ground yourself by intention, breathing, moving, thinking of and doing daily tasks such as washing, drinking or eating. Always be aware of your state of awareness after a meditation as when you are not grounded, you will most likely cause or have accidents.

Loving Kindness

Here is a technique to help you understand the way you look at the world. Trying to change others is a draining and disappointing exercise, changing your own outlook and perception of others is far more beneficial to you and something you have control over.

Remembering “Happy People Do No Harm”, wishing well towards others helps bring out your own compassion and positive qualities giving you a happier disposition – an remember emotions and attitudes are catching so the side effects of this exercise are inspiring to others.

Repeat the phrases below right 9 times and dedicate them each to the following:

- | | | |
|----|--|-----------------------------------|
| 1. | Yourself | |
| 2. | Someone close to you | |
| 3. | A neutral person
(someone you do not
know to well and neither
like nor dislike) | May I/you/we have Loving Kindness |
| 4. | Someone difficult | May /you/we be Well |
| 5. | A plant or animal (non-
human creature) | May /you/we be Peaceful |
| 6. | Your suburb | May /you/we be Happy |
| 7. | Your country | |
| 8. | Your world | |
| 9. | Yourself | |

Services and Schedule of Fees

Working with A Guide to Health – you have support all the way.

When you are ready to make a change for the better, a personal eating and lifestyle plan is produced with easy to follow steps including recipes and other resources.

Compliance is boosted by realistic and gradual changes to reach your goals.

Imagine, the decision of what to shop for, prepare and eat for a whole month has already been made and agreed by you – this can include feeding the family as well.

A month's diary drawn up and appointments booked for lifestyle changes already done. Making your life goals accessible and easy to achieve.

Nutrition consultations

Together we look at your current diet and lifestyle choices through a questionnaire and establish the potential impact on your health. We then create a plan and realistic goals to help you towards a better quality of life through diet and lifestyle.

After the session, you receive a report on the session, your eating plan, recipes/resources and any other recommendations offered.

First consultation 1 ½ - 2 hours	\$75.00	Note (as at Dec '05): Health funds that cover Nutrition are Aust. Country Health, Aust. Health Management, Aust. Union Health, Aust. Unity Health Ltd, Cessnock District Health, CBHS Friendly Society, Grand United Friendly, Illawarra Health Fund, Manchester Unity, NIB Health Fund. Call first to confirm eligibility.
Follow up consultation up to 1 hour	\$50.00	

Meditation

8 week Introduction to Meditation – \$126.00 (through St George and Sutherland Community College)

8 week Meditation – less talking, more meditation – \$126.00 (through St George and Sutherland Community College)

Weekly Meditation groups: We are hibernating for winter. Groups will start up again in Spring

Stress management and support sessions

This session offers one-to-one meditation and guidance to help you understand your physical and emotional patterns, how best to work with your strengths and weaknesses and to teach you how to relax, rest and rejuvenate.

You will come out of this session relaxed and with a sense of wellbeing, with techniques to access and achieve this relaxed state and achieve health and balance.

Duration is 1 – 1 ½ hour(s). Cost is \$50.00

Consultations

Tania Smith is at the Clinic on Thursdays and Saturdays (by appointment) for Nutrition and Stress Management consultations as well as Meditation groups. The clinic is at Caringbah Women's Health Information Centre, 346a Kingsway, Caringbah. Bookings and general inquiries: 9525 4874 / 0412 725 895.