



What is driving us to eat the way we do?



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We are constantly bombarded with information about food, nutrition, and health, whether it is through television shows such as *MKR* and *Masterchef*, news reports of the latest scientific research, or magazines and social media promoting the most recent fad diet or wonder food. There is so much material to decipher that sometimes it seems even the so-called experts cannot agree on what we should eat.

Statistics from the New Zealand Ministry of Health show that 31 percent of adults are obese and a further 35 percent are overweight. This shows that even if we are aware of healthy eating, it is not simple to follow it. The environment we live, work, and socialise in can affect the way we eat and ultimately that affects our health. Drivers in the transport industry find themselves in a unique and challenging working environment.

Results from focus groups conducted with drivers by Nourish in 2015 showed that constraints in a workplace could make it difficult to maintain a nutritious diet and be active. Comments included:

- Long hours made drivers less likely to prepare food for the next journey
- Restriction to certain routes eliminated some healthy options
- A feeling of fatigue made energy drinks and other sugary drinks tempting
- It was easy to forget to stay hydrated

- An early start meant you sometimes didn't feel like eating breakfast
- Food outlets with parking available may have few healthy options
- There was no time for regular exercise

A 2015 survey of members of the Road Transport Association, New Zealand (RTANZ) found that 75 percent were concerned about the health of their staff, which included lack of exercise and concentration, fatigue, and being overweight. Participants indicated that they considered healthier staff to be more productive and to have fewer sick days and accidents.



Many of us endeavour to lead a healthy lifestyle, but due to different factors, we can slip up at times. All it takes is being so tired from a long day that you do not prepare food for the day ahead, and then mid-morning, you find yourself starving and standing in line at a takeaway outlet. However, the important thing is not to give up. Make sure the food that you eat the

most is right for you. The key is to achieve a balance—plenty of nutritious foods and regular activity, ensuring you include nourishing foods that you enjoy. After all, food is a part of life that brings us so much enjoyment.

With this in mind, Nourish suggests the following to get you started:

1. Be organised and plan ahead to pack nutritious meals, snacks, and drinks to last the duration of your journey
2. Have breakfast every day. If you are not hungry, it helps keep your mind on the road instead of your stomach.
3. Stay hydrated. Avoid high sugar drinks and energy drinks and replace it with water.
4. If you fall short on your food supply, choose your takeaway wisely. Some purchased meals can contain more energy than you require in a whole day. A good rule of thumb is to try to avoid deep fried and pastry options, as it is has higher fat content.
5. Be active whenever you get the chance. Doing some physical activity is better than doing none.

So, how did you score with our top tips? If you would like to work with Nourish to promote nutrition in your business, then e-mail us through the contact page on our website nourish.org.nz. ■



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