

HOW THE MODERN HUSTLE DIET IS SLOWLY
KILLING US & THE **6**
THINGS YOU NEED TO DO ABOUT IT **NOW!**



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Having grown up as a part of a farming family in country Western Australia, I developed a deep connection with the country, the bush and its native wholefoods. My passion for health, wellness and physical activity led me to the city where I pursued my passion through university. Now some 17 years later I'm still working in the health field and recently founding Australia's latest health food company called Forager Superfoods. Our mission here at Forager is to make affordable premium nutrition available to all Australians.

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INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER 1

THE ELEPHANT IN THE ROOM

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It's no secret that our diets aren't great. With the world's population set to hit 9 billion by 2050, and unhealthy food environments becoming the norm, it's no wonder unhealthy diets are the main preventable risk factor for disease both globally and here in Australia. But how did we get here?

According to data from the Australian National Health and Medical Research Council, less than 7% of Aussies are eating in line with the recommended Australian Dietary Guidelines. It's no surprise then that we're seeing rates of obesity on the rise, with 63% of adults and 25% of kids now overweight or obese.

The "hustle" culture has had a significant impact on our diets. With longer working hours and constant connectivity, convenience foods have become a go-to for many of us. But this eat-and-run diet, filled with unhealthy options, can have a major impact on our physical activity levels, body

composition, life expectancy, and risk of diseases such as heart attacks, strokes, and cancer. But it's not all bad news, we can take control of our health and our future by making better food choices.

In recent years, there's been a growing awareness and push towards healthier, more sustainable options, like the "green movement" that's drawing people back to nature and traditional, organic foods. There's growing education on the health benefits of nutritionally dense foods called "superfoods". These foods, often high in antioxidants, vitamins, and minerals are mostly plant-based and are found across the planet. We're finally starting to realise that if we want to be healthy, we've got to start with what we're putting in our mouths.

If you're ready to take control of your health and your future, keep reading and discover the 6 things you need to do right now to turn things around.

CHAPTER 2

THE RISE OF THE MODERN 'HUSTLE' DIET

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Is it just me, or does it feel like unhealthy food is being thrown at us from all directions these days. From the ads on our morning news shows, to billboards on the way to work, and even on government buses and our social media feeds. The constant bombardment of marketing and temptation is overwhelming.

With our busy lives, it's getting even harder to take the time to think about whether the food we're eating is good for us. Globalization has opened up more options at lower costs, like "junk foods" which are high in calories but low in nutrition. Studies have shown that eating junk food can lead to many health problems.

So if we know this, why don't we simply change our eating habits? A valid question, but only if it was so easy.. or is it?

Unfortunately, current legislation and regulations isn't as effective as it should be. In many countries, health issues like heart disease, obesity and diabetes, are on the rise which can be directly linked to the emergence of the modern 'hustle' diet and our increasing reliance on unhealthy foods such as junk foods to feed us. Even though public health programs in the 80s and 90s helped reduce deaths from heart disease, they have also led to people eating too many carbohydrates and have inadvertently helped contribute to the obesity crisis. However, we are ultimately responsible for taking charge of your own health so lets get to work!



EMPTY CALORIES

"Empty calories" refers to foods that provide energy in the form of calories, but don't offer much in the way of nutrition. According to clinical dietitian, Leslie Ramirez, all foods contain calories that your body either uses for energy, stores as glycogen or turns into fat depending on how many you consume. Even healthy foods like vegetables and fruits contain calories (only a small amount), therefore nothing we eat is completely calorie-free. The foods 'empty calories' that are most consumed in Australia include:

- energy drinks, soft drinks
- alcohol
- fast foods
- pastries
- white bread
- pizza
- Sausages
- chips
- processed cereals.

These foods will be sure to give you a quick energy boost, but they don't provide any other functional or metabolic benefits like building muscle, providing vitamins, making you feel full, or anything else.

One of the big problems with empty calories is that they can be easy to consume in excess without even realising it. They're not just found in obvious foods like desserts, they're also hidden in things like drinks, snacks, breakfast foods marketed as healthy options. Because of this, they're often referred to as "stealth calories." That said, it's important to remember that overeating any type of food can be unhealthy, but overeating foods that have zero health benefits can have lasting consequences including weight gain. What makes it even worse is that these empty calories are very easy to digest in the body, so they won't keep you feeling full for very long and will keep you craving more and more. This can lead to a vicious cycle for the everyday consumer.



SUGAR ADDICTION

It's no secret that too much sugar can be bad for our health. But did you know that according to recent data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), more than half of Australians are consuming more sugar than is recommended by the World Health Organisation? Not only can consuming too much sugar lead to weight gain, but it can also cause cognitive problems and even addiction. In fact, a recent peer study on rats demonstrated that sugar can be as addictive as illicit drugs (Avena, Rada & Hoebel et al., 2007).

Not only is sugar harmful to your brain, but it can have serious lasting impacts on your whole body. If your parents were anything like mine, you would have received the speech around limiting lollies to protect your teeth. Little do we know at this age that excess sugar can also contribute to weight gain and diabetes. When we consume too much sugar, it can mess with a hormone called insulin, which is responsible



for regulating our blood sugar levels. When insulin is overworked, it can lead to insulin resistance, which can eventually lead to Type 2 Diabetes, a growing epidemic across western nations including Australia. So a tip from me to you, keep an eye on your sugar intake and make sure you're not overdoing it.

MASS CONSUMERS

Around the world, the way we eat is changing quickly. Even the most common foods are being replaced with 'on trend' diets. This evolution can be driven by many factors including income, knowledge and influence. In countries like Australia, the cost of food is particularly affected by things like our geography, urbanisation and marketing. It is a sad reality that processed junk foods are still far cheaper than healthy, organic whole foods, which is a key barrier for many Australians making the change.

In developing countries, modern retailers like supermarkets and fast-food restaurants are becoming increasingly popular and accessible, often at the expense of traditional food markets and stores. This increase in access, eventually leads to an increase in consumption and calorie intake. Research around trends in these developing countries has shown that our young people are the main consumers of these 'hustle' junk foods.

With the population expected to reach 9 billion by 2050, unhealthy diets are now clearly the main preventable risk factor to increasing disease and illness globally and in Australia. The Australian National Health and Medical Research Council defines unhealthy "discretionary" choices as foods and beverages high in saturated fat, added sugar, and salt. According to data from the Australian Health Survey, less than 7% of Australians consume diets that are in line with the recommendations of the Australian Dietary Guidelines (ADGs) 2013. Equally as alarming, at least 35% of the energy intake of Australian adults and at least 39% of the energy intake of children, now come from these unhealthy "discretionary" choices. This concerning trend is a key contributor to 63% of Australian adults and 25% of Australian children being overweight or obese.

As someone who is passionate about healthy living and outcomes for all

Australians, this does NOT sit well with me. Whilst the government has a serious role to play, it is ultimately up to us to increase our awareness on the damage

that we are doing to our bodies. As the ancient Greek physician Hippocrates once said so well, "Let food be thy medicine and medicine be thy food".



3

CHAPTER

THE REAL IMPACTS OF THE 'HUSTLE' LIFESTYLE

THE REAL IMPACTS OF THE 'HUSTLE' LIFESTYLE.

We are living in a new age, where we no longer simply compare ourselves to family, friends and neighbours, but the whole world. Keeping up with the Jones's just became keeping up with the Kardashians in the blink of an eye. Wanting 'more' has become the new obsession for those living life in the fast lane. Whilst these dopamine hits may feel like therapy, the reality is that we don't truly appreciate what it is costing us to fund it. Maybe it's working more overtime during the week, maybe picking up a day over the weekend, maybe starting a side hustle, whatever it is, it is costing us two things that are very important to us, our time and sleep.

Science shows that not getting enough sleep, leads to sleep debt which quickly accumulates, taking a toll on our body and our organs. If you're anything like me when you're sleep deprived, you're not going to be much fun to be around and you're definitely not going to be present with your friends or family. In fact research says that there is a very good chance your going to be irritable, sad, drowsy, stressed out, and even sick. Sounds like fun right?

Here's how the hustle lifestyle and not getting enough shut-eye is harming your body:



STRESS

Ever wondered why stress can literally make us feel sick? It's because our emotions can affect our body. Stress isn't just an emotion, it's a natural physical response to danger. According to Jay Winner, MD, author of *Take the Stress Out of Your Life* and director of the Stress Management Program for Sansum Clinic, when you're constantly stressed, those physical changes can lead to health problems over time. Stress can make just about any health condition worse. Studies have linked stress to a lot of chronic health issues, like obesity, gut problems, heart disease, diabetes, depression, Alzheimer's disease, asthma and the list goes on. All of these conditions can become riskier and more prevalent when we're under stress.



OBESITY

Stating the obvious but carrying too much weight leads to health problems. Obesity increases our risk of many chronic illnesses, like certain types of cancer, heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and type 2 diabetes. Being overweight can also cause joint pain and diseases like osteoarthritis which isn't fun for anyone. Obesity is a costly condition whose association with illness, unfortunately peels years away from our life, leading to many premature deaths. In Australia, the scary truth is 67% of the adult population is overweight or obese, and that number has been rising. The Collective for Action on Obesity, an organisation made up of over 100 groups like Bupa, has recently released a report on updated data and is calling for an immediate action to combat the obesity epidemic.

DEPRESSION & ANXIETY

Firstly, it's okay, not to be okay. There has been a lot of education around depression and anxiety over the last decade which was very much needed and slowly but surely, we are breaking down the stigma to talk about this important subject. When we're dealing with a chronic illness, it's not uncommon to feel down. The hard truth is that depression is common among people with chronic illnesses. Just take a look at these stats: If you've got coronary artery disease, but haven't had a heart attack, you've got an 18-20% chance of also experiencing depression. If you've had a heart attack, that jumps up to 40-65%. Even if you've had a stroke, it's still a 10-27% chance. And it's the same story for other chronic illnesses like Parkinson's (40%), diabetes (25%), cancer (25%), and multiple sclerosis (40%).



THE TRUTH ABOUT THE MODERN PROCESSED FOOD INDUSTRY? HAVE WE GONE TOO FAR?

It's no secret that processed foods aren't as good as the real deal. Even the everyday apples we grab from the produce section have likely been through a few processes before they hit the shelves. There is nothing worse than grabbing an apple that looks like it's from the garden of eden, taking a big bite only to find it rotting from the core. But if they were using processed foods over a million years ago, why are they worse these days? To answer this question we need to dive a little deeper and look at the difference between different types of processed foods.

Ultra-processed food is made using different techniques and ingredients. These foods are usually ready-to-eat and don't require much preparation.

They're designed to make us eat more, so we'll buy more of them (what a business model right). Examples include sugary drinks, sweets, frozen dinners, crackers, chips, cereal, and lunch meats. These types of processed foods are also low in fiber and essential nutrients. Did you know, in Australia, we are eating increasingly more of these nutrient-poor, high-energy meals. In fact, we've got one of the highest rates of sales of ultra-processed foods in the world. Another statistic that I drop my head to. According to forecasts, Australians are tipped to drop up to \$7.4 billion on fast foods in 2023. Now you can start to see the power of the fast food machine.



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