

# Eat Well, Be Well

Eating healthily on the run is possible even for busy working mums. All it takes is a bit of planning and preparation, says **SASHA GONZALES.**

## 1 START THE DAY RIGHT

If you know it's going to be a long day, make sure to have a wholesome and filling breakfast, says Jaclyn Reutens, clinical dietitian at Aptima Nutrition & Sports Consultants. A bowl of high-fibre cereal with low-fat milk and some fruit is an excellent way to kick-start your metabolism while getting in a dose of fibre and essential nutrients, including calcium and protein.

Phoebe Tay, a senior dietitian at Gleneagles Hospital suggests wholegrain toast with a veggie omelette or poached eggs, or instant oatmeal made with low-fat milk and topped with fresh fruit and a sprinkling of nuts.

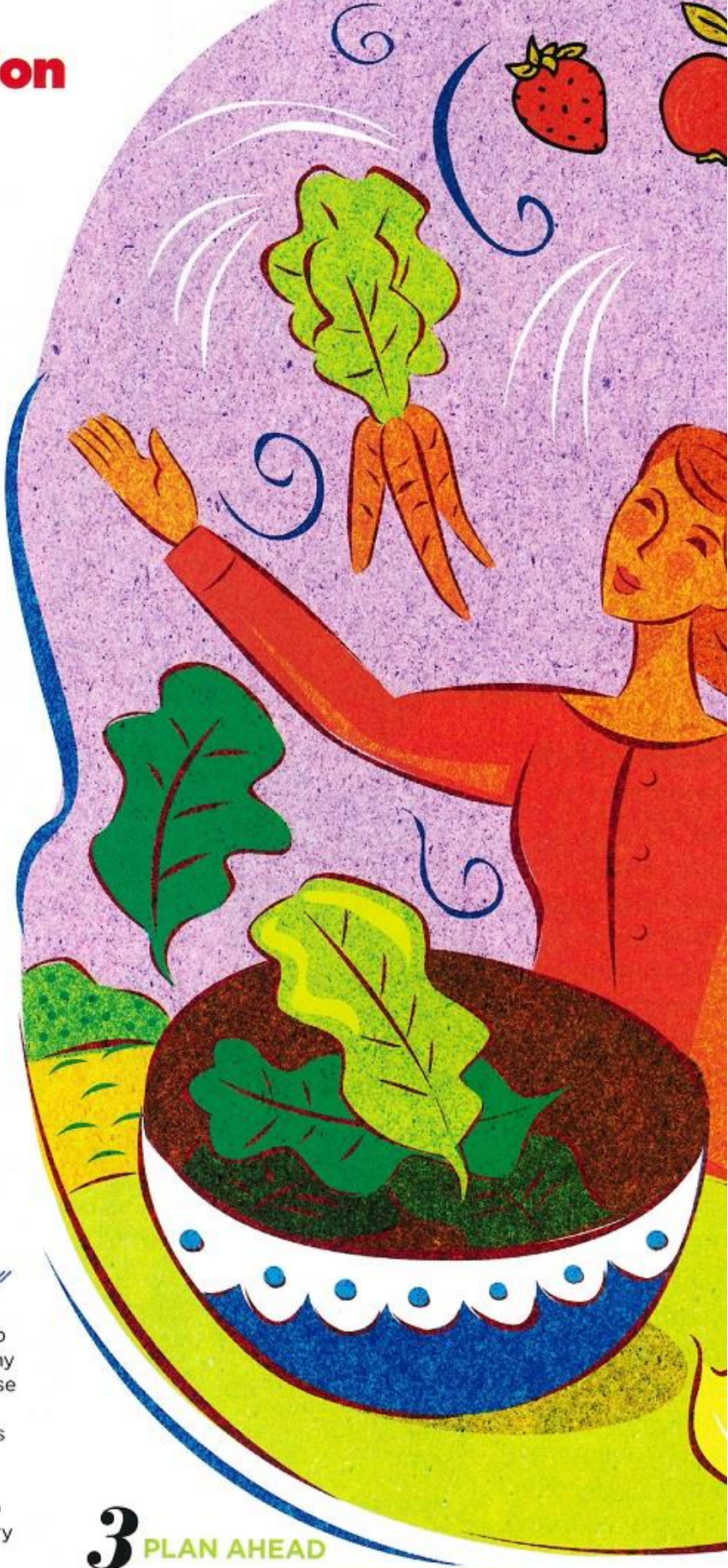
## 2 SNACK RIGHT TO STAY ENERGISED

When you feel your energy levels dipping, have a piece of fruit, a cup of low-fat yogurt or a mug of skinny cafe latte or Milo, says Jaclyn. These foods provide a slow release of energy even as they offer nutrients like fibre or calcium. The coffee also gives a hit of caffeine, which is a good pick-me-up, and the Milo contains iron to deliver a temporary energy boost.

Always keep an apple or energy bar in your bag and snack on these when you're hungry. Choose an energy bar that has less than 300 calories and isn't coated with chocolate or honey, which can cause blood sugar levels to spike and crash, leaving you even more tired.

## 3 PLAN AHEAD

Do you have a hectic week ahead? You'll eat better if you organise your meals in advance, advises Jackie Green, nutritionist and dietitian at The Family Dietitian. "Sit down for an hour, plan your meals for the week ahead and write up a shopping list. Yes, it's an extra thing on your to-do list but you will reap the benefits nutritionally. Keep your menu plans so you can repeat or rotate them in the following weeks if you don't have time to create a new plan."



## 4 FILL UP ON GOOD FATS

Eggs, fatty fish like salmon, mackerel and sardines, grass-fed meat, coconut oil, nuts, olive oil and avocados are all wonderful sources of healthy fat, which has been shown to boost brain power, focus and alertness, says Pooja Vig, nutritionist and co-founder of The Nutrition Clinic. Just make sure to keep your consumption of these unsaturated fats to about 30 per cent of your diet. If you need an added boost to counter mental fatigue, try a good-quality fish oil supplement.



## 5 EAT NUTRITIONALLY-DENSE MEALS

Processed or refined foods are nutritionally empty and never leave you satisfied, which may explain why we often overindulge when it comes to junk food. Nutritionally-dense foods, however, leave you satiated. Nutrition experts advise keeping to a ratio of 50 per cent vegetables, 25 per cent protein, 25 per cent whole grains, and a small amount of healthy fat. "Keep it simple and sustainable," says Pooja. "If you find it hard to get your veggies in during the day, try a glass of vegetable juice, a vegetable-based green smoothie, or water mixed with green powder for a nutritional boost."

## 6 GO NUTS

Omega-3 fatty acids are essential for healthy cell membranes, good vision, neurological development and protecting against cardiovascular disease and stroke, says Bibi Chia, a senior dietitian at Raffles Diabetes & Endocrine Centre. An easy way to get your daily dose of these fatty acids is to bring a bagful of mixed nuts and seeds with you to snack on in-between meals. Try a mix of walnuts, flaxseeds, pecans and pine nuts for a tasty treat.



## 7 STAY HYDRATED

When you're busy or have to keep going without a break, it's easy to forget to drink the recommended eight glasses of water a day. Bibi suggests keeping a large tumbler of water on your desk and making sure to sip from it throughout the day. You should aim to finish all the water by the time you leave the office.



## 8 MAKE A MEAL OF LEFTOVERS

If you cook on weekends, make more than you need so you can have the leftovers for lunch or dinner during the week, says Pooja. Besides it being a massive time-saver, you will feel good knowing that your meal is wholesome and nutritious.



## 9 OPT FOR HEALTHY FAST FOOD

Reaching for a burger and cup noodles whenever you have to rush through lunch? There are healthier and equally convenient food options out there. Phoebe suggests freshly made wraps or sandwiches with a good mix of protein and greens, takeaway sushi or salad bowls with lean meat or beans and minimal dressing. If you're eating on the go, have a small carton of low-fat milk or a glass of unsweetened or reduced sugar soya bean milk for a protein-packed tummy-filler.

## 10 SIP ON BONE BROTH

Packed with minerals and collagen, bone broth boosts joint health, supports the immune system, improves digestion and keeps skin looking healthy. Pooja suggests preparing a big batch of bone broth on weekends and taking a flask to work to sip on whenever you feel hungry. Use beef, lamb, poultry or fish, and add vegetables and spices to enhance the flavour.

