



Pull in, open your tank and fill up on some premium fuel for all conditions

THE *MEN'S HEALTH* SOUP KITCHEN

BY DOMINIC CADDEN AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY ANDRE MARTIN

ANY MUG CAN make soup that's more than just a mouth-warmer for a cold day. All you need is the wherewithal to hit a stationary vegetable with a knife and you'll soon appreciate the first rule of soup: it's healthy eating made simple.

It's not just the fact that it's a cinch to whip up eight serves at a time, it's easy to carry on the go and quick to wolf down. Soup can pack a serious punch. While most of us appreciate the nutrients in a bowl of lentils, a big plate of boiled peas or a few fat parsnips, none of these options get us salivating. Mush it all up into a soup with some herbs and spices and it gets a bit more interesting – we'll suck up more plant-based nutrients and fibre in a spoon than we'll ever attempt to plough through with a fork. Tweak it with different varieties of carbs, proteins vitamins and minerals, and it's more than a meal – your soup becomes a specialist fuel.





The Muscle Builder

Soup is perfect either one to two hours before a gym session to maximise the benefits for building muscle tissue. "To build muscle tissue you're looking for around 12 grams of essential amino acids, the building blocks of protein," says Greg Shaw, sports dietitian with the Department of Sports Nutrition at the AIS. "Your body can't make them, so it must get them from foods."

Shaw says that it's best to get in 20g of complete protein before gym. "You also need to have enough good carbs in the system to get through an intense session of pushing tin. Good carbs are those that are low GI (glycemic index) and have plenty of other nutrients in them. Around 50-100g should be enough, depending on your size."

Shaw says that processed soup is often high in carbohydrate and low in protein, but it's a problem that can be fixed in a flash.

"With something like pumpkin

- 1 large onion, chopped
spray oil
- 2 tsp minced garlic
- 1 tsp minced chilli
- 2 tsp ground coriander
- 1kg sweet potato, cut into small cubes
- 4 cups Maggi All Natural Chicken or Vegetable Liquid Stock
- 150ml can Carnation Light and Creamy Evaporated Milk
- 1/2 cup chopped fresh coriander leaves
- extra chopped coriander leaves, to serve
- 4 mini cob loaves or carbone rolls

Sweet Potato Soup

Spray non-stick pan with oil and cook onion, garlic and chilli until softened. Add ground coriander, sweet potato and chicken or vegetable stock. Simmer partially covered for 20 minutes. Blend in food processor, add evaporated milk and reheat gently. Top with fresh coriander.

Take cob loaf and slice off top. Scoop out fleshy bread from inside to make a well, but leave a small amount of

soft bread attached to the crust. Place hollowed out cobs in oven (180-200°C) for 5-7 minutes until outside shell starts to crisp. Pour a cup of soup into the middle of the cob, so that it acts like a bowl. Sprinkle soup with chopped coriander leaves and cracked pepper. Arrange

Nutritional information per serve: 2109kJ; 22g protein; 91g carbohydrates; 6g fat
*From *Survival from the Fittest* (By Burke & Cox, Murdoch Books,

CHEAT OPTION

Heinz Very Special Mushroom, Lamb & Lentil Soup

It's difficult to find processed soups with enough protein to build muscle, but this one gets over the 20g mark, with 37.6g of slow-release carbs, thanks to the lentils. Have it with a wholegrain bread roll and you'll boost the carbs up over the 50g mark. It's also light on fat and the mushrooms provide B vitamins you need for heavy



The Stress Buster

Stress can have a negative effect on your immune system, digestive tract, concentration and energy levels, but when you boil it all down, soup has the answers.

"Most men don't eat enough vegetables to keep their immune system high, so soup can be a great way to inject some afternoon vegetables without feeling like a rabbit," says Michael Lawler, dietitian and sports physiologist with the Tree of Life chain of clinics in Brisbane. "Minestrone soup, pumpkin and carrot soup or potato and leek soup are prime examples."

The nutrients that will guard your immunity from the ravages of stress are zinc (from beef, lamb, beans, chicken, lentils, milk), Vitamin C (broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, tomato, peas and carrots) and selenium (asparagus, garlic, mushrooms).

"If you have a soup with enough

vegies in it, the vegies can have an alkalising effect on the hydrochloric acid in the stomach," explains Lawler. It's this acid, often fired up by stress, which can aggravate stomach ulcers.

"Low blood sugar levels and dehydration are two very powerful contributors to poor productivity and tiredness in the afternoon, but a soup with a good source of protein (chicken, beef, legumes) and low GI carbs (pumpkin, sweet potato, legumes, corn) can be a great way to boost energy quickly," Lawler says. "Try to avoid soups high in salt (sodium), as they can elevate blood pressure, which can lead to feelings of anxiety and stress."

Some of the stress-busting powers of soup, though, might be all in your head. "Soup is a comfort food because it's warming, filling and was often experienced in a pleasurable way as a child, so the very act of taking a mid-afternoon break for soup can be

- 2 cups water
- 1.5 litres chicken stock
- 1 medium carrot, diced
- 2 trimmed, sliced celery stalks
- 1/2 small cauliflower cut into florets (500g)
- 350g chicken breast, sliced thinly
- 2 large zucchini, diced
- 150g snow peas trimmed and sliced
- 3 green onions, thinly sliced
- 4 button mushrooms, sliced

CHEAT OPTION

Pitango Organic Minestrone Soup

All Pitango soups are certified organic and the minestrone is very low in salt and packs in the vegies for nutrients,

Chicken and Vegetable Soup

Combine water and stock in a large saucepan and bring to boil. Add carrot, celery and cauliflower and return to boil. Reduce heat and simmer covered for 10 minutes, or until vegies are tender. Add chicken, mushrooms and zucchini, cover and simmer 5 minutes or until chicken is cooked through. Stir in snow peas and onion. Add 1 large sweet potato to stock mixture with the first batch of vegetables to up the carbs if desired. Serves 4

Nutritional information per serve: 797kJ; 28.2g protein; 10.2g carbohydrates; 4g fat (1.3g



The Fat Blaster

Soups for weight loss aren't all about the kilojoules. "If you want a soup as a meal, then it should have all the things a normal healthy meal would have," says Alan McCubbin, a sports dietitian with Recover Sports Medicine in Melbourne (recoversportsmed.com.au). Consequently, his soup recipe packs in quality lean protein, carbs from sweet potato and carrot to add bulk and fibre, then a variety of different vegies for a range of vitamins and minerals.

The advantage of a soup for fat loss is that it can help satiate your appetite on low kilojoules for longer.

"If you eat a normal meal, then drink half a litre of fluid, you'll obviously feel full for longer," confirms McCubbin. "You could also cook down leafy vegies more in soups, so you can potentially get more fibre as well."

Another idea is to have a simple soup (i.e. a vegetable or tomato-based soup) before a meal. "It not only gives you

Dashi (a Japanese cooking stock) to make up 1 litre of liquid

300g sweet potato, cut into small cubes

1 carrot, diced

2 tbsp white miso paste

300g lean beef fillet

1/2 spring onion, sliced

Handful of baby spinach leaves

CHEAT OPTION

Campbell's Country Ladle Wholegrain Chicken & Vegetable

As a light meal, this soup keeps the protein content high at 11.2g and the carbs relatively low at 24.4g.

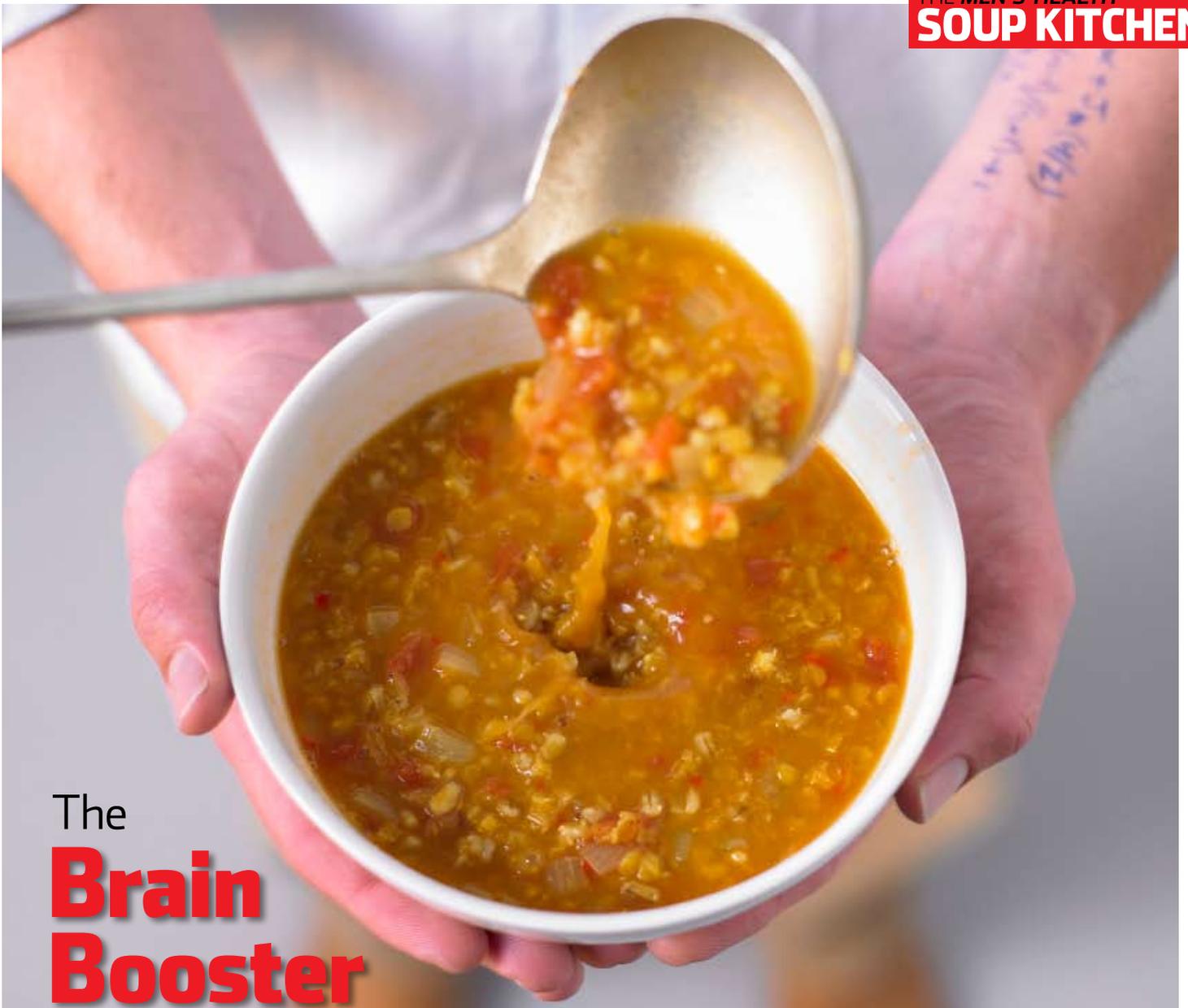
With only 4g of fat and two serves of vegies in every bowl, there's only 720kJ. The soup's wholegrain pasta helps each mouthful go a long way thanks to the slow-release energy it

Miso Soup with Meat & Potatoes

Make up the dashi according to instructions on packet. Bring to the boil in a large saucepan. Add sweet potato and carrot, reduce heat and simmer for 15 minutes. Cut beef into very thin strips. When carrots and sweet potato are tender, take two ladles of the stock from the saucepan and place in a bowl with the miso paste. Whisk the paste into the stock with a fork to remove lumps. Add the miso paste mix back into the saucepan, along with the spinach leaves, and turn heat to high. Remove from the heat just as the liquid starts to boil. Add the spring

Nutritional information per serve: 1715kJ; 42g protein; 28g carbohydrates; 13g fat; (5.4g saturated); 6.3g fibre

**Recipe from Alan McCubbin, Recover*



The Brain Booster

When it comes to carbs, your brain knows what's best. "The improved mental ability following a carbohydrate meal has been well-documented, but several recent studies suggest that low GI carbohydrates may enhance learning and memory better than high GI carbohydrates," says Professor Jennie Brand-Miller, Director of the Sydney University Glycemic Index Research Service and author of books such as *New Glucose Revolution* (Hodder, \$34.95). "In other words, the type of carbohydrate eaten may be just as important as the quantity."

Brand-Miller also cites work by Dr Clemens Kirschbaum at the Technical University of Dresden that has shown that high GI carbohydrates increase the production of cortisol, a 'fight or flight' hormone that magnifies the brain-draining stress response. Another study she mentions is one published in the journal *Diabetologica* in 2006, which

1 tbsp oil
1 large onion, finely chopped
2 cloves garlic, crushed (or 2 tsp minced garlic)
1/2 tsp turmeric
2 tsp curry powder
1/2 tsp ground cumin
1 tsp minced chilli
6 cups water
1 1/2 cups vegetable or chicken stock
1 cup red lentils
1/2 cup pearl barley
400g can chopped tomatoes, undrained
salt and freshly ground black pepper
chopped fresh parsley or coriander

Nutritional information per serve: 1548kJ; 20g protein; 61g carbohydrates; 6g fat (1g saturated); 13g fibre
 From *The Low GI Handbook* (by Prof. Jennie Brand-Miller, Kaye Foster-Powell)

Lentil and Barley Soup

Heat oil in a large saucepan. Add onion, cover, and cook gently for 10 minutes or until beginning to brown, stirring frequently. Add garlic, turmeric, curry powder, cumin and chilli and cook, stirring, for one minute. Stir in the water, stock, lentils, barley and tomatoes, with salt and pepper to taste. Bring to the boil, cover and simmer for 45 minutes or until the lentils and barley are tender. Serve sprinkled with parsley or coriander. *Serves 4*

CHEAT OPTION

La Zuppa Tuscan Bean Soup

This is a tasty, low fat (one per cent) soup packed with beans for low GI carbs and a good 12g of protein. There's 37.8g of carbs and almost no fat – less than a gram. It also comes in a pot that's ready to bung in the microwave, so that's handy, too.



The Recharger

A post-workout meal has to have a double-barrelled blast. “You need carbs to refuel energy stores, protein for muscle repair, and the right combination to stimulate the release of insulin,” says Dr Naras Lapsys, accredited sports dietitian with The Body Doctor (thebodydoctor.com.au). Insulin is the match-winner, since it speeds up the replenishment of muscle glycogen and increases net muscle protein synthesis.

“In general, a minimum amount of 10g of protein and 35g of carbs is considered to be effective to stimulate an insulin response,” explains Lapsys.

According to Lapsys, we recharge energy stores at a rate of about five per cent per hour (i.e. 20 hours to fully top up). “You could argue for altering the GI of the carb in your soup depending on what outcome you want. For example, you could use low GI carbs for a slower recovery and higher GI if you need

- 440g tin of creamed corn*
- 1 medium sweet potato (any type)*
- 375ml box of Campbell's low-salt chicken stock*
- 300g chicken breast*
- Half-bunch of garlic shoots (about 20)*
- Handful of green beans*
- Parsley*
- 3 egg whites*
- 1 tsp white pepper*
- 1 tbsp turmeric*
- Olive oil*

Chicken and Corn Soup

Peel and slice the sweet potato, place in a pot with the chicken stock and simmer until potato is very soft. Meanwhile, chop chicken into very small pieces and slice garlic shoots and beans in 1cm lengths. Fry chicken in a pan with a dessert-spoon of olive oil. Stir in turmeric. After a minute, stir in garlic shoots and green beans. Stir until chicken cooked through. When potato is soft, mash it up in the stock with a potato masher. Add stock, potato and creamed corn to chicken mix on low heat. Add white pepper and parsley. Whisk egg whites for 10 seconds in a bowl then add to soup, stirring quickly with the whisk or a fork for 10 seconds.

Nutritional information per serve: 1528kJ; 31g protein; 42g carbohydrates; 7.8g fat (1.7g saturated), 6.3g fibre
*Recipe by Dominic Cadden

CHEAT OPTION

Fit Kitchen 100% Organic North African Split Pea Soup

This zesty soup reaches the magic 10:35 protein-to-carbs ratio almost to the gram. The low GI carbs of the lentils and chickpeas are balanced out by the higher GI of the organic potato and long grain rice for a combination of fast and sustained replenishing of muscle glycogen. The plastic pouch packaging