



Hi all

Well we have certainly had some nice cold weather but it has been lovely to see the sun too. It is easy during the winter months to snuggle up and not exercise. There are plenty of excuses we can come up with on why we shouldn't exercise; it's too cold, it's too dark, it's raining, I'm too tired. Remember it is just as important to exercise over winter to ensure we support our immune function, to keep our mood up and to stop us from increasing our weight. Think of exercise like you do cleaning your teeth or going to work. Do you get a choice not to go to work if it's too cold? No. So don't ask yourself if you should exercise today just set your goal for the week; exercising every day or 5 times a week, set your alarm and get up and do it! You will feel so much better afterwards. Go for a walk first thing in the morning so if you get home from your walk and you are cold or wet you can warm up in the shower. Alternatively if you prefer to exercise indoors join a gym or go to a pilates or yoga class.

In this newsletter learn how your gut bacteria can affect your weight, about the dangers of the artificial sweetener Aspartame and whip up a quick dinner dish, honey glazed chicken.

Be kind to yourself, keep warm, eat healthy and EXERCISE, Jenny

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## Could the bacteria in your gut be making you fat?

Our gut microbiome is made up of many types of microorganisms including bacteria, viruses and fungi that live in our intestines. In our gut we have approximately 100 trillion microorganisms yet we only have 10 trillion of our own body cells so we are more bacteria than we are our own cells! These microbes are responsible for many functions in our body including producing certain vitamins such as B and K, they help digest certain foods including breaking down carbohydrates, they support detoxification and they assist with our immune function.

Research is showing that there are certain types of bacteria in the gut which can cause weight gain. So if you have a large amount of these bacteria then you may have trouble losing weight. The makeup of the bacteria in our gut is influenced by

a number of factors including what we eat, as when we are eating we are feeding our bacteria. Other factors which can be detrimental to our microbiome include high stress levels, physical inactivity, the use of antibiotics and other medications. These microbes in your gut also influence the chemical pathways that help regulate your blood sugar and insulin balance which also affect our weight.

As many of you know the weight loss puzzle is not an easy one; rebalancing your microbiome is not as simple as taking some probiotics. If you would like further help to reduce your weight please call the clinic to make an appointment for a free half hour consultation to discuss your health concerns on 022 017 6033



## **Aspartame - Is it safe to eat foods containing this artificial sweetener?**

Aspartame is an artificial sweetener that is added to some of our foods that are labelled sugar free, including chewing gum, diet drinks, in the sachets of Equal you get at the café and in other diet foods. Coke and Pepsi's diet drinks use it as does Wrigley's sugarless chewing gum. Aspartame is a synthetic substance made from a chemical combination of methanol, aspartic acid and phenylalanine. You may see aspartame under the names of Nutrasweet or Equal; under the ingredients on the

product it may be called aspartame or it may just have the code E951.

Aspartame is much sweeter than sugar and has very few calories however studies are showing that this additive, aspartame, may be toxic to your body. Research has shown that it can make you gain weight by stimulating your appetite, it can increase carbohydrate cravings and promote fat storage. There are over 900 published studies showing the detrimental effects of Aspartame. These side effects include migraines, headaches, joint pain, muscles spasms, mood swings, heart palpitations, fatigue, depression, asthma, irritable bowel syndrome and many more.

I recommended that you avoid aspartame as the full effects of consuming this synthetic artificial sweetener are still unknown and the known side-effects can be severe.

To find out more about the dangers of Aspartame read:

[Aspartame: By Far the Most Dangerous Substance Added to Most Foods Today](#)

[Why you shouldn't have it or anything containing aspartame by Chris Wheeler](#)

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This is a very interesting video on how our gut bacteria can affect our body weight. Dr Perlmutter interviews Dr Gerald Mullin, a gastroenterologist at Johns Hopkins Hospital in America. During the interview they also discuss the detrimental effects on gut bacteria as a result of taking some medication, such as those that reduce reflux symptoms, anti-inflammatory medications and antibiotics. Being on these medications can change the bacteria in your gut and contribute to your weight gain.



# Honey glazed chicken

## INGREDIENTS

4 chicken breasts, thighs or legs skin on or off  
2 tsp butter or ghee  
2 Tbsp honey or maple syrup  
1 tsp curry powder  
2 tsp dijon mustard  
½ tsp salt

## INSTRUCTIONS

Place the chicken in the crockpot, my crockpot is quite large so I place a large Pyrex jug inside the crock pot and put the chicken into the jug (this stops the liquid mix from drying out).

1. Melt butter or ghee and honey on a low heat. Take off the heat and mix in the remaining ingredients.
2. Pour the mixture over the chicken pieces ensuring all of the chicken is coated.
3. Place the lid on the crockpot and cook for approximately 5 hours on High
4. Serve with a plate full of seasonal green vegetables.

Adapted from Simon and Alison Holst recipe

To contact The Naturopathic Clinic please call on 022 017 6033



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