



THREE  
STEPS TO A  
SLIMMER,  
FITTER  
YOU

THE  
3-2-1  
DIET

ROSEMARY CONLEY

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## About the Book

**It's new, it's different and it works! Whether you are a Grazer, a Feaster or a Comfort Eater, Rosemary Conley will help you lose weight with an eating plan designed especially to suit the way you eat!**

**The 3-2-1 Diet** combines 'light' eating days (800 kcals) with 'normal' eating days when you can eat and drink what you like, including alcohol and high-fat treats.

Week One - 3 light days and 4 normal days of eating

Week Two onwards - 2 light days and 5 normal days

Staying Slim - 1 light day and 6 normal eating days

Losing weight has never been so easy!

## About the Author

### **ROSEMARY CONLEY CBE**

Rosemary has lived in Leicestershire all her life and left school at just 15. After training as a secretary and working as a Tupperware dealer she started her own Slimming and Good Grooming business in 1971 with an investment of just £8, and ran classes across the city and county. Ten years later she sold the classes to IPC Magazines for £52,000, but continued to run them until 1985, when she went freelance again.

In 1988 she wrote her internationally bestselling book *The Hip & Thigh Diet*, which took her all over the world. Since then she has written 37 diet and fitness books, presented 31 fitness videos/DVDs with combined sales of 9 million, has had her own TV shows on BBC and ITV, published her own magazine for 16 years and run franchised diet and fitness clubs for 21 years.

With advancements in technology and the market itself, Rosemary now chairs one of the UK's leading online weight-loss clubs, **[rosemaryconley.com](http://rosemaryconley.com)**.

In 2004 Rosemary was awarded a CBE in the Queen's New Year Honours list for 'services to the fitness and diet industries'. In 2012, at age 65, Rosemary took part in ITV1's *Dancing on Ice* and holds the title for being the oldest contestant in the history of the show to progress the furthest in the competition!

Rosemary is married to Mike Rimmington and has a daughter, Dawn, by her first marriage. They are all committed Christians.

*Also by Rosemary Conley*

The FAB Diet  
The Secrets of Staying Young  
Rosemary Conley's Amazing Inch Loss Plan  
Slim to Win Diet and Cookbook  
Rosemary Conley's Ultimate GI Jeans Diet  
Rosemary Conley's GI Jeans Diet  
Rosemary Conley's Step by Step Low Fat Cookbook  
Rosemary Conley's Eat Yourself Slim  
Rosemary Conley's Low Fat Cookbook Two  
Rosemary Conley's Red Wine Diet  
Rosemary Conley's Low Fat Cookbook  
Rosemary Conley's New Inch Loss Plan  
Rosemary Conley's New Body Plan  
Rosemary Conley's Complete Flat Stomach Plan  
Be Slim! Be Fit!  
Rosemary Conley's Flat Stomach Plan  
Rosemary Conley's Beach Body Plan  
Shape Up for Summer  
Rosemary Conley's New Hip and Thigh Diet Cookbook (with Patricia Bourne)  
Rosemary Conley's Whole Body Programme  
Rosemary Conley's Metabolism Booster Diet  
Rosemary Conley's Hip and Thigh Diet Cookbook (with Patricia Bourne)  
Rosemary Conley's GI Hip and Thigh Diet  
Rosemary Conley's Inch Loss Plan  
Rosemary Conley's Complete Hip and Thigh Diet  
Rosemary Conley's Hip and Thigh Diet

THE  
3-2-1  
DIET

JUST 3 STEPS TO A  
SLIMMER, FITTER YOU

ROSEMARY CONLEY



CENTURY

# Acknowledgements

This book has been a joy to write as it is so different from any diet book I have written before. I loved the challenge of creating menu plans based on only 800 calories for the 'light' days and I felt liberated in creating ideas for the 'normal' days with no calorie restrictions at all!

I couldn't have written the book in time had I not had some wonderful help. So a massive thank you to my intern, John Bolton, from Loughborough University, who has been my help and support over the last couple of months. What a pleasure it has been to work with such a delightful, bright, hard-working and inspirational young man. Thank you, John. You are amazing.

Huge thanks must also go to my friend and colleague Sarah Skelton. Sarah has many skills that I have learned to appreciate since we started working together for our online weight-loss club, [rosemaryconley.com](http://rosemaryconley.com), but another talent at which Sarah excels is cooking. Thank you, Sarah, for the amazing recipes you have created for this book. You have worked so hard in supporting me, by calculating the nutritional values of recipes and supervising the diet trial. You are a very special friend. And a big thank you to all the members of Rosemary Conley Online, and to the members of both my classes and Sarah's who tried and tested this eating plan. You proved that this diet really worked.

I'm very fortunate to have a wonderful daughter, Dawn, who is such an inspiration and a great sounding board for my ideas when I'm writing a new diet book. Thank you,

Dawn, for your help with the gluten-free diet plan and for your other valuable ideas.

Special thanks also to my wonderful PA, Peter Legg, for looking after everything in the office while I was engrossed in writing this book. What would I do without you, Peter!?

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I would also like to thank my book editor, Jan Bowmer, with whom I have had the pleasure of working for over 20 years. Jan, you are an absolute star and your skill and expertise is just outstanding. Thank you also to Roger Walker for again designing my books so that they are easy to use. I must also thank my agent, Luigi Bonomi, for his enthusiasm and encouragement, and for believing in me. Lastly, thank you to my publishers, Arrow Books at Random House, particularly to Susan Sandon and Gillian Holmes, for their ongoing support and continued faith in me! I enjoy working with you guys.

THANK YOU.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Rosemary". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the "THANK YOU." text.

# 1 How does the 3-2-1 Diet work?

Have you dreamed of finding a diet that allows you to eat as much as you want and still lose weight? Well, my 3-2-1 Diet does just that. It's different, it's liberating - and it works. To prove it, I've had it tried and tested.

I will show you how to lose weight fast and easily, though you won't feel that you are dieting, *and* you will be able to keep the weight off forever. With three separate plans designed to suit different personality types and lifestyles, this revolutionary way of eating *will* change your life, and I honestly believe you will enjoy the journey to achieving a fitter, healthier and happier you.

This book is totally different from any diet book I have written before and - as this is my 37th book - that is *very* exciting. I still believe that eating low-fat foods and incorporating more physical activity into our daily lives is the most effective way to lose weight, but I have changed my strategy with regard to everyday calorie counting. There is no doubt that calorie counting works, it's just that it can be tedious and some people simply can't be doing with it. So here is a new formula.

I recommend that you eat 'normally' on most days each week, but within that freedom, you aim to eat healthily. That means eating nutritious, low-fat foods for breakfast, lunch and dinner, as well as enjoying some alcohol and the occasional high-fat treat.

There are lots of menu ideas for you to consider. Just pick the ones you fancy, or make up your own. You don't need to calculate or weigh out portion sizes, just eat as much as you need.

## **How do I lose weight on this plan?**

This new way of eating means that you can dine out and not worry about 'sticking to your diet', because on either two or three days each week (or just one day for weight maintenance) I ask you to have a 'light' eating day where you consume only 800 calories. The good news is that the menu choices for these 'light' days have been carefully selected to include foods that will keep you feeling fuller for longer. I have further divided these menu suggestions into categories to suit each personality type - Grazers, Feasters, and Comfort Eaters. I have even included eating plans for those who want to follow a gluten-free or lactose-free diet.

## **What to do**

**Week One:** Select **3** × '*light*' days and **4** × '*normal*' days for just one week to kick-start your weight loss. You will be greatly encouraged when you see a significant weight loss in this first week.

**Week Two onwards:** Select **2** × '*light*' days and **5** × '*normal*' days per week. Continue with this pattern until you reach your goal weight.

**Weight Maintenance:** Select **1** × '*light*' day and **6** × '*normal*' days per week to help keep your new weight in

check.

Hopefully, by following this plan and being more active, by the time you reach your goal weight, you will have re-educated the way you select your food, so that you will be able to maintain your new weight easily in the long term.

**Exercise:** To maximise your weight loss, please ensure that you do some physical activity every day. For the greatest results, it is really important to do 20–30 minutes of exercise – such as walking – on your ‘*light*’ days, because working out while you are hungry will help you to burn even more fat. If you are very overweight, start with just 5–10 minutes a day and build up the duration as you become fitter.

## **Tried and tested**

This diet has been tried and tested by members of Rosemary Conley Online (<http://www.rosemaryconley.com>), my online weight-loss club, as well as by members of both my personally run diet and fitness classes and those of my colleague Sarah Skelton. The results have been astonishing. Members who previously found it really difficult to stick to a structured, calorie-counted diet, because their lifestyles made it almost impossible, found that this diet worked brilliantly for them. They could relax for five days a week – while still eating healthily – and then they found it really easy to muster sufficient willpower to be strict and focused on just two ‘*light*’ days a week. While I understand that no one diet will suit everyone, I am really excited by the formula that this plan offers.

## **Week One**

The reason for having three 'light' days in Week One of the 3-2-1 Diet is to give your weight loss a real boost at the start of your campaign. It has been clinically proven that, on any diet programme, a fast initial weight loss is extremely motivating for the dieter. To see 4lbs or 5lbs disappearing from your body in just one week is obviously very encouraging when you are trying to slim down. Waistbands become looser, clothes feel more comfortable and you feel better in yourself. Most importantly, if you can *see* and *feel* that a diet is working, you will want to continue. That is key.

## **Week Two onwards**

After the initial weight-loss boost from Week One you can now settle into a routine of eating healthily but 'normally' for five days a week. Try to eat healthy low-fat foods and stick to regular mealtimes. You don't have to measure your food portions and you will soon relax into gauging the right portion sizes to keep you going until the next meal. Avoid between-meal snacks except for a piece of fruit. Of course, you will lose weight faster if you don't overindulge on the 'normal' eating days, but you will find that you quickly fall into a routine that works for you.

The great thing about this diet is that you can dine out without feeling anxious – a wonderful bonus. Yes, you can have a drink or two of alcohol – sometimes more – on your five 'normal' days, if you wish, and occasionally have a treat you really love – such as chocolate, crisps, and so on. Just don't go mad or make them a regular habit or this will cause you to gain weight. And, after all, you have bought this book to help you shed your unwanted weight.

On two non-consecutive days each week I have allowed you 800 calories a day, which is more generous than other

diets that use the 5:2 principle. As my 3-2-1 formula is tried and tested, I know it works. What I like best is that 800 calories can still give you three meals a day, so you don't feel you are fasting and you shouldn't go hungry if you follow the suggested menu plans.

I found it fascinating that my trialists really enjoyed their 'light' days and felt better, both physically and mentally, the following day. This meant that they actually looked forward to their 'light' days rather than dreading them!

The thing I love about this way of dieting is the likelihood that you will be able to change your eating habits for good and maintain your new, lower weight into the future.

Personally, I no longer diet as such, I just eat healthily. I eat low-fat 99% of the time, and I don't snack between meals.

My shopping trolley is filled with healthy foods: pasta, basmati rice, wholegrain bread and sweet potatoes for my carbs; chicken, beef, lamb, pork, fish, cheese, milk and yogurt for protein; plus lots of vegetables, fruit, some low-fat sauces, and white wine. Normal, healthy foods.

Sometimes I eat chips, crisps or a high-fat dessert - but only occasionally.

I don't drink alcohol at the weekends and this, together with my favourite chicken stir-fry on Saturday and a roast on Sunday, means my weekends have become my 'lighter' part of the week, almost by accident. My weight stays at an ideal level for me and I don't have to worry about the scales. It is incredibly liberating, and I really hope you can reach this point too.

## **Maintenance**

Once you have lost all your excess weight, if you continue to eat healthily on six days of the week, with just one 'light'

day, and stay active, you will keep your weight at a healthy level. It really is that simple.

## **Exercise**

If you want to enjoy immediate – and ultimately long-term – weight-loss success, it's essential to increase your current activity levels. Even if you are severely overweight or obese, moving more than you do now will help you to lose your excess weight faster and be significantly healthier.

In Chapter 18 I explain the benefits of exercise, so please have a read and try to understand why becoming more active really is a win-win situation. Don't panic or think, 'That's it. I'm not reading any more. I hate exercise'. I am not asking you to train for a marathon. Going for a gentle stroll is better than nothing. Gradually, and amazingly, you will find yourself able to do more. And I still won't be asking you to run a marathon.

Ideally I would like you to do something active for 20–30 minutes each day. Going for a walk, pedalling on an exercise bike, rowing on a machine, or taking three 10-minute walks would be great. Choose something you enjoy – swimming, an aerobics class or fitness DVD, dancing – anything that gets you moving. Start slowly. If you are very overweight and new to exercise, then 5–10 minutes a day would be a good way to start.

## **What personality type are you?**

I will discuss the different personality types and their eating habits in more detail in Chapter 4, but here is a quick description of the three main categories of overeaters as described in BBC Two's excellent *Horizon* series 'What's

the Right Diet for You?', which was broadcast in early 2015. In fact, it was watching those programmes that inspired me to write this book and create this new diet plan.

The programme enrolled 75 volunteers and, after being analysed by expert psychologists and nutrition scientists, they were divided into three distinct groups - Constant Cravers, Feasters, and Emotional Eaters. I have renamed a couple of these personality types as Grazers and Comfort Eaters. The Feasters stay unchanged. The type of diet I am suggesting for each category is slightly different too. I wonder which one you might be?

## **Grazers**

Grazers are so called because they tend to want to eat all the time and often have little structure to their eating habits. For many, breakfast, lunch and dinner all seem to merge into one. Part of this is down to lifestyle habits, but it could also be that Grazers have the 'hungry gene' and so they have to find ways of managing this tendency to want to eat constantly. It's essential to eat breakfast and, with this diet plan, Grazers can eat a good breakfast on their 'normal' days and hopefully learn that if they eat more protein and fewer refined carbs, they will feel satisfied for longer and be able to resist grazing their way to the next meal. However, I have included some 'power snacks' for Grazers to eat mid-morning and mid-afternoon on their 'normal' days.

I have included lots of high-protein and low-Gi (glycaemic index) menu suggestions for Grazers to have both on their 'normal' and 'light' days. Carbs with a low-Gi rating help us to feel fuller for longer and also help to stabilise blood sugar levels, thus avoiding the need to grab something sweet for a sugar fix. Keeping our insulin levels more

constant by eating low-Gi foods makes it easy to resist such temptation.

By introducing some regular physical activity, hopefully Grazers will be able to change their eating habits and their lifestyles for good.

## **Feasters**

Feasters typically manage to wait until mealtimes to eat, but once they start eating they find it difficult to stop, particularly if what they are eating is utterly delicious! The problem is that Feasters tend to eat rather fast and then still feel hungry afterwards. For most of us, when food arrives in our intestines, hormones are released that transmit chemical signals which travel through the blood and to the brain, telling us to stop eating once we have had enough food. It would seem that Feasters produce fewer of these gut hormones.

Research has shown that it takes time for the 'feeling-satisfied' hormone to be released, but because many Feasters are fast eaters, they tend to still feel hungry after they have finished their meal, and then eat more.

My answer for Feasters is to give them several courses of food to allow time for the gut hormones to be released and activate the 'I'm beginning to feel I've had enough' message from the brain to the stomach. To help Feasters deal with this, I have created menu suggestions that offer (mostly) two courses for breakfast and lunch and usually two or three courses for dinner. Meals should be eaten slowly to allow time for the hormones to kick in. All these meals are based on high-protein foods and low-Gi carbs.

For the 'normal' days, I have suggested multi-courses too. These, coupled with some regular exercise, should produce a significant weight loss without too much hardship.

# Comfort Eaters

I think there will be few folk who have bought this book who have not been emotional eaters at some stage in their lives. I know I have. Somebody only has to say something unkind, or perhaps an event we are looking forward to doesn't happen, or we are just fed up with life - and we turn to food. Any food. And lots of it.

We all have stuff to deal with in our lives. Life isn't perfect, but we have to learn to live with it, get over it, and move on - easier said than done, I know, if the person we love doesn't love us any more, or we discover some horror story happening in our lives. Stupidly, we believe that if we turn to food and overindulge, it will make us feel better. We all know that it does the opposite. We feel worse and hate ourselves even more, and yet we keep on doing it! It's a cycle of self-destruction that's hard to stop.

For those who react to stress with emotional eating, then having a chat with someone and sharing your problem can really help you stay on track with your dieting efforts. Having run diet and exercise classes for more than 40 years, and witnessed the enormous benefits enjoyed by our online members who chat with each other in our online coffee shop, there is no doubt that personal support is extremely valuable. When I asked my own class members which category they felt they fell into, the vast majority described themselves as emotional eaters. Joining a 'club' where you can chat to like-minded members can really help. The good news is that over time you can change your habits so that you don't turn to high-fat, high-sugar foods when you've had a bad day.

Losing weight and learning some new coping mechanisms can make a massive difference to your self-confidence, so it is worth making the effort.

To help Comfort Eaters lose weight I have designed a diet based largely on high-carb comfort foods. Even on the 'light' days carbs can play a big role and I have chosen low-Gi carbs to help to keep you feeling satisfied for longer.

## **Gluten-free**

As more and more people are suffering from food allergies and intolerances or being diagnosed with coeliac disease, the demand for gluten-free products and recipes has never been greater. With an increasing number of gluten-free products available in our supermarkets, it isn't difficult to put together an appropriate and healthy eating plan.

In Chapter 15 you will find suggestions for breakfasts, lunches and dinners that are all gluten-free and fit within your 800-calorie daily allowance. On your 'normal' days, you can select your own food menus, though of course the gluten-free recipes in this book may be eaten any time, and on 'normal' days they can be enjoyed with some extra accompaniments.

For more information, go to <https://www.coeliac.org.uk> and click on the link to the 'Gluten-free Diet and Lifestyle' page.

## **Lactose-free**

With more people being advised to cut out lactose from their diet to help deal with health issues or because they are allergic, the demand for lactose-free products and recipes has also grown.

For those who need to follow a lactose-free diet, in Chapter 16 I have included menu suggestions for breakfasts, lunches and dinners, all of which can be

incorporated into the 'light' day 800-calorie allowance, and on 'normal' days you can add extra accompaniments.

For more information, go to <http://www.lactofree.co.uk/> and click on the link to the 'Discovery' page.

## Getting started

You will understand more about which personality type you are after reading Chapter 4, and you may feel you fall into more than one category. That's perfectly normal. These days I would describe myself as a Feaster, but I used to be a Comfort Eater. At least now I can recognise my eating behaviour and take appropriate action. For instance, when eating out, there's no point in telling myself I won't be having a dessert, when in reality, I know I will always have one. So I simply take a little more care when selecting my main course, so that I can enjoy a dessert. And it works.

All the 'light' day meal suggestions in this book are labelled with this apple symbol and are designed to suit an 800-calorie daily allowance, so whatever your personality type, feel free to select any meal that takes your fancy. And if you require a gluten-free or lactose-free diet, there is nothing magical about one type of eating plan, whether it be for Grazers, Feasters or Comfort Eaters. Just substitute gluten- or lactose-free alternatives and the eating plans will work for you.

Any references to 'writing in this book' refer to the original printed version. Readers should write on a separate piece of paper in these instances.

*'This diet has really worked for me. I love the cleansing feeling after the two "light" days. With long-term diets it can sometimes feel like there is no end in sight. With five days of normal eating and just*

*two days of restricted eating, it is so much easier -  
and I have lost the final 7lbs that I have been trying  
to lose for years!'*

Marion Vaughan

# 2 10 ways to help you lose weight

## 1. Learn the secret of successful weight loss

If you want to lose weight, you have to eat fewer calories (*fuel*) than your body uses up in energy, so that it can draw on its fuel stores (*fat*) to make up the difference. Think of it in the same way as using up all your available cash and having to draw out some savings to make up the difference to pay for your daily expenses.

Most food products list the calorie content on the nutrition information panel on the packaging. Under the 'Energy' heading, just look at the 'kcal' figure, otherwise known as 'calories'.

Calories are the currency for calculating the energy value of food. In this context, 'energy' doesn't describe the physical energy that makes you feel lively and gives you your get-up-and-go. Rather, it is a scientific description that, in effect, calculates the 'fattening power' of food.

The average woman spends around 1400 calories a day, and the average man around 1900 calories, just by being alive and lying in bed all day.

As soon as they get out of bed and go about their everyday work, they will burn more calories depending on their physical activity. A woman will probably spend around 2000-2200 kcals a day, whilst a man could spend between 2500-3500 kcals.

If you consume *more* calories than you spend, the residue is stored around your body as fat. If you eat *fewer* calories than you use up, then the shortfall has to be made up, and so those extra calories come from your body's fat stores. The result is that you lose weight. Although weight loss is a simple matter of physics, it's important to find the most effective way of motivating yourself to make some changes to the eating habits that have caused you to become overweight in the first place.

## **2. Exercise to lose weight faster**

You can lose weight faster if you do some regular exercise. Just as going on a shopping spree makes us spend lots of money, similarly when we exercise we *spend* lots of extra calories, which results in our burning more *fat*.

Any activity counts. Being on your feet more and sitting down less can make a real difference. Going for a daily walk for 20 minutes, using the stairs, playing physical games, cleaning, gardening - in fact anything that gets you moving around more helps us to burn fat and become fitter. Please read Chapter 18 to learn more about which type of exercise does what. Exercise will definitely help you to lose weight faster and tone you up as you shed your unwanted lbs, as well as helping you keep the weight off in the long term.

## **3. Enjoy some treats**

Some foods only fill us up for a short period of time and then we feel really hungry again, and the temptation is to grab the first thing that comes to mind - a biscuit, cake, chocolate bar or packet of crisps. Unfortunately, this type

of food doesn't give us very much good nutrition, fails to keep us feeling full and, because it is very calorie-dense, it can make us gain weight very easily.

Now it isn't all doom and gloom. I am an advocate of having treats occasionally, but I am against grazing on these foods regularly, or having them as an everyday snack, because it's easy to become addicted to them. The good news is that you can incorporate your favourite treats into your eating pattern within this 3-2-1 Diet on the four, five or six days when you can be fairly relaxed, and you can still lose weight and stay trim.

Please see [Chapter 13](#) for ideas.

## **4. Eat less fat and lose more weight**

The golden rule in all my diets is to eat less fat and select foods with 5% or less fat content with the exception of oily fish, oats and some lean meats. You can easily check the fat content of most food products by looking at the nutritional information panel on the packaging.

Cutting back on fat is easier than you think. By selecting low-fat alternatives when buying minced meat, yogurts, desserts, sauces and a zillion other products, you can eat really well and healthily without feeling deprived.

Fat in food doesn't make food 'bigger' or more filling, so it doesn't affect the amount you want to eat. Each gram of fat has twice as many calories as a gram of carbohydrate or protein, and so reducing your fat intake is an obvious target when trying to cut calories.

## **5. Eat healthily**

Healthy food gives us energy and provides vital nutrients for the body to renew and repair muscles, organs and tissues, so that it can function efficiently and ward off illnesses. Let's face it, your body is the only body you are ever going to have and it deserves to be looked after. But, at times, you may find yourself filling up on foods that have virtually no nutritional value and yet contain loads and loads of calories.

If you were to buy an Aston Martin, you would keep it spotlessly clean and make sure that the oil, water, and lubricants and parts were kept in perfect working order. You'd put only the finest fuel in the tank - because you really love and appreciate that car - and would take great pains to look after it. You'd want it to be perfect forever. So ask yourself, 'How much more valuable is my own body?'

We eat foods that are not good for us, we carry weight around that we don't need, and we abuse our bodies in a variety of ways, such as being very inactive, drinking too much alcohol, working too hard and not getting enough sleep. Our bodies deserve so much better than that.

If you want to lose weight, you have to cut down on the calories, so obviously the food (and the calories) that you do eat need to be of high nutritional value so that you can stay fit and healthy and not go hungry.

To eat healthily, you need a variety of nutrients - proteins, carbs, fats, minerals and vitamins - so that your fabulous personal energy machine (your body) can perform at its maximum capacity. Living a healthy lifestyle, which includes eating well and being active, will give you lots of energy, make you look and feel healthy and improve your general wellbeing. If you exercise regularly, your heart will be strong and if you can keep your weight at a healthy level, you will be able to move around with ease. Life will be so much better.

Here's a quick overview of nutrition:

**Carbs:** Found in bread, potatoes, cereal, rice, pasta. Provide energy, and carbs with a low-Gi rating keep us satisfied for longer as they release energy more slowly and keep blood sugar levels more constant.

**Protein:** Found in meat, fish, beans, eggs, cheese, milk and other dairy products. Helps the body grow and repair muscles, tissue, organs and so on. Protein foods also keep us feeling satisfied for longer.

**Fats:** Found in oil, butter, margarine, spreads, cream, mayonnaise, dressings. Provide more than twice the calories per gram as carbs or proteins. While fats are important for health, many foods - including protein foods and carbs - already contain fat, so it's not necessary to add fat to your diet if you are trying to lose weight.

**Minerals:** These are essential for maintaining good health. For instance, iron is necessary for the production of oxygen-carrying red blood cells, which are important for health. Calcium is vital for strong bones and teeth. Many breakfast cereals and some other foods are fortified with vitamins and minerals, but you can also boost your intake by eating a variety of foods. Occasionally, some people may require additional supplements, depending on their health needs.

**Vitamins:** There are lots of different vitamins that are crucial for maintaining good health. Some vitamins, such as Vitamin C, are water-soluble and so should be eaten every day. Citrus fruits such as oranges are an excellent source of Vitamin C. That's why we are encouraged to eat our 5-a-day of fruit and vegetables. Fat-soluble vitamins, such as Vitamin D, can be stored by

the body so are not needed on a daily basis. Vitamin D is found in some fats, but most of our Vitamin D comes from exposure to natural sunlight. I am a big believer in having a daily multivitamin supplement as a sort of insurance policy. I take one every day and have done so for years.

### **What happens to the food we eat?**

**Carbohydrates** give us energy (like fuel in a car) and are burned as fuel very easily. Protein is utilised by the body for growth and repair of muscles, organs, tissues, and so on, and is not easily laid down as fat. But the fat we eat is very easily stored as body fat and is processed by the body quite differently from protein and carbohydrate. Nature designed us to be fat-storers because food has not always been available 24/7. There were, and still are in some countries, times of famine, so our bodies are designed to protect us in case we are unable to get food.

Let me explain this further. Carbohydrates are digested in the stomach and then transported to the bloodstream via the small intestine for cellular use as energy.

Carbohydrate is stored in the muscles for use when we need it, and to provide energy when we exercise, but if we eat too much carbohydrate, it will be stored as body fat.

**Protein** is digested in a similar way and when it reaches the bloodstream, it gets used for repair of cells around the body. Again, though, if we eat too much protein, it will be stored as fat.

**Fat** is digested differently. It goes to the stomach, where it forms clusters of fat. Because fat is lumpy, unlike carbohydrate or protein, it cannot enter the bloodstream and instead goes into the lymphatic system. It is then transported around the body, after which the clusters are broken down, causing the levels of fat in our blood to rise. Fat can stick to our blood vessels, which can result in raised cholesterol and increase our risk of heart problems.