

## Introduction

"It is health that is real wealth and not pieces of gold and silver" - **Mahatma Gandhi**

I decided to write the book in response to my sister's chronic ill-health as a result of gastric bypass surgery and her associated health complications, including the inability to properly digest and absorb nutrients and my inspiration to find a solution also came from my past, when I worked as a limousine driver while living in California in the late 90's.

I can remember driving some of Hollywood's finest (including "Arnie the Terminator") to Jamba Juice (arguably America's most famous juice bar) and being hit with the scents of fresh fruits and vegetables and proceeding to order a large Garden Medley green juice or Razzmatazz smoothie, two of the most popular among celebrity clients.

This gave me the idea to come up with smoothies and juice recipes, which are easier to digest and extract nutrients from, compared to whole, unblended foods.

When I returned to the UK in 1999, Innocent were the new packaged smoothie brand hitting the supermarket shelves.

Unfortunately what was not realised by many at the time, is that these fruit laden smoothies can actually be counterproductive to stable blood sugar due to the high amounts of sugars, especially in the absence of other ingredients like fibrous vegetables, fats and proteins; this combination helps slow down sugar absorption, in turn preventing potential fat storage.

How strange! I was just starting to write the intro and the next topic came up on BBC radio 5 live; specifically they were discussing the widespread (1 in 3 children) use of energy drinks by school children and particularly worrying was the fact that they substitute a breakfast for a caffeine fuelled energy drink.

To compound the problem, Kelloggs sponsor 2 million breakfasts a day to children in the UK alone, which all seems very laudable; unfortunately it is priming them for sugar and wheat dependency, two of the most addictive and damaging foods for mental and physical health including obesity and diabetes.

When consuming energy drinks, excess caffeine and sugar cause the energy dip during the day (also known as the "3pm Slump" or "The Big Slump") because the effects of these two substances in excess are short lived and only lead to the afternoon energy crash, in turn stifling concentration, learning and performance at work. This is mainly caused by raising hormone levels including insulin, leptin and cortisol (stress hormone); cortisol causes higher blood sugar and insulin resulting in weight gain and diabetes.

So you see there is no free lunch with these energy drinks; there is a price to pay for picking the convenient way out.

Look no further than smoothies for the ultimate energy drink for more sustained or longer lasting energy and nutrition throughout the day with NO negative health effects. Why? Because they are packed with vitamins, minerals, phytonutrients, healthy fats and proteins, which give a slow, steady and longer lasting energy release throughout the day without the caffeine and sugar rollercoaster that comes from empty calories and stimulants.

Even if you have them for breakfast, the nutrition they contain will prevent you overeating or eating the wrong things at lunch time or through the day.

Smoothielicious represents a healthy style of eating that fits with the challenges of modern day living; that is lack of time and an over-reliance on nutrient deficient, convenience or junk foods.

Smoothies form the backbone of the book, but there are also juice recipes as well as complementary recipes and some other recipes, which are important for optimal health, with little to no cooking skills required.

Although diet is the most important lifestyle factor for health and weight control, we also discuss the other lifestyle factors key to health; for example exercise, sleep and stress management. You will learn about the future of exercise, which may surprise you as well as give you the impetus to incorporate specific types into your life.

The book also discusses other topics key to health and weight management; for example "The calorie myth", "Supplementation", "A healthy gut", "Thyroid –the master gland", "Learning to love the foods you hate".

### Importance of Nutrition for Children

The best investment you can make in your children or yourself is healthy dietary habits, which leads not only to physical health, but brain health, including the ability to concentrate and perform in school and at work. Why? With the obsession on low fat, high carbohydrate diets and the breakfast cereal culture, the importance of fats (and proteins) for brain development and overall health has been overlooked.

Cereals include wheat products such as breads, bagels, muffins, breakfast cereals etc, which offer little nutrition, cause energy crashes during the day, contain anti-nutrients including the highly damaging gluten protein, pack plenty of empty calories and the wrong types of calories, that is too many starchy carbohydrates (carbs) and deplete and disrupt hormones and neurotransmitters (brain chemicals), both of which are cornerstones of health.

Cereals including the "healthy" wholegrain types is a myth perpetrated by the big grain growers and food companies who make fortunes by selling junk "foods" at high prices.

We discuss the best and worst carbs to eat later in the book.

Fats are crucial for brain development and learning in children and that includes saturated fats (Yes you read that correctly!). You will learn later about the fats to avoid; the real culprits in obesity and poor health.

Cholesterol, which is mainly found in saturated fat products from meats and dairy is vitally important for brain function. While your brain represents about 2% to 3% of your total body weight, 25% of the cholesterol in your body is found in your brain, where it plays important roles in such things as membrane function, acting as an antioxidant and serving as the raw material from which we are able to make things like progesterone, oestrogen, cortisol, testosterone and even vitamin D.

Even on a tight budget, giving you and your kids at least a few of these health boosting, nutrient packed smoothies a week will not only improve their health, but their development and learning.

This book will put you and your kids in the TOP 1% of knowledge in diet, nutrition, health and weight control and give you and your kids a leg up in life, learning and career.