

# 10 Tips for Genetic Health

Our genes have a significant influence over our health and in recent years our understanding of this impact has grown immensely. Our genes influence our detoxification capacity, nutritional status, potential risk, and the protection and inheritance of disease. Our genes may have variations which affect the way we process nutrients or affect our dietary requirements. Our diet and lifestyle choices can help to optimise genetic health – here are the top 10 tips for gene health.

## 1. Eat more...

- Vegetables - Green leafy vegetables, broccoli, Brussels' sprouts, tomato, beetroot, red capsicum, sweet potato, squash and zucchini.
- Fruit - Blueberries, raspberries, strawberries, plums, apricots, papaya, mango, apples and pears.
- Herbs and spices – Turmeric, ginger, garlic, paprika, cardamom, coriander, mint and basil.
- Protein - Dietarily, adequate protein and reduced sugar intake ensures proper liver clearance of xenobiotics from the blood.<sup>1</sup>
- Essential fats – Avocado, coconut, olive and seafood.

## 2. Eat organic wherever possible

Use the 'Dirty Dozen' and 'Clean Fifteen' fruit and vegetable guide and wash produce thoroughly.

- Minimise pesticide-herbicide exposure.
- Chemical herbicides and pesticides interfere with methylation and adversely affect genetic expression.<sup>2</sup>

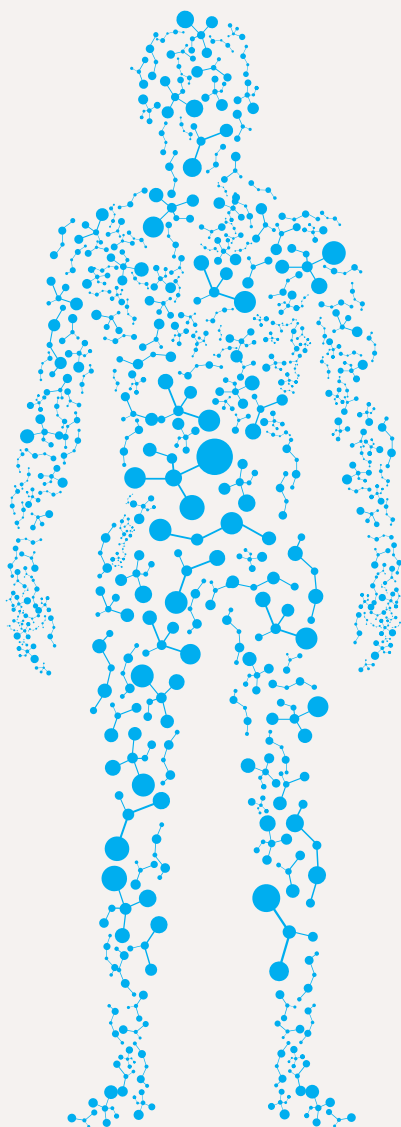
## 3. Minimise intake of processed foods

- Calorie rich, nutrient poor foods cause systemic inflammation and interfere with gene health, as they:
  - Increase blood sugar and insulin resistance
  - Increase demand for nutrients and antioxidants
  - Do not contain beneficial plant polyphenols
- Minimise intake of nitrates, sulphites and charred foods (especially for those with detoxification polymorphisms).

## 4. Avoid food containing trans-fats and high-fructose corn syrup

Animal study found trans-fat and high fructose corn syrup consumption promoted genes involved in:

- Fat metabolism and breakdown
- Glucose metabolism and breakdown
- Liver damage and regeneration
- Fibrosis, or liver scarring
- All of which are implicated in the development of non-alcoholic fatty liver disease and irreversible liver damage



## 5. Have 'meat-free Mondays'

Incorporate vegetarian proteins such as nuts, seeds, legumes, pulses and consider fermented whole bean soy products such as organic tempeh.

## 6. Avoid canned foods - Bisphenol - A (BPA)

It is well established that BPA disrupts the endocrine system, altering hormone production and can adversely affect fertility. Research now suggests it is through interaction between BPA and our genes.<sup>3,4</sup>

## 7. Avoid or minimise gluten

- Coeliac and gluten intolerant individuals must avoid completely, however may be best to minimise exposure even for healthy individuals.
- Gluten contains high levels of proline, which is difficult to digest completely. This can result in localised production of free radicals, inflammation and cause immune reactions.<sup>5</sup>

## 8. Dairy - Good and bad

- There is some research suggesting those with MTHFR polymorphisms should avoid dairy consumption as it interferes with the transport of folate into cells.<sup>6</sup>
- Conversely, some research has demonstrated whey protein (dairy) may assist in controlling obesity via upregulating the key pathways involved in glucose and fatty acid metabolism.<sup>7</sup>
- Talk to your practitioner about determining whether dairy products are appropriate for you. A diet diary monitoring intake and symptoms may be appropriate.

## 9. Drink clean water

- Install filters on your household taps.
- Absolute 1 micron filtration removes particles larger than 1 micron in size, leaving minerals in water.
- Ozonation eliminates bacteria.
- Store chilled drinking water in glass bottles.
- Avoid plastic bottled water.

## 10. 'Clean' up your kitchen!

- Throw out the microwave! Heating food on the stove top or in the oven retains nutritional value.
- Use non-toxic cookware.
- Store leftovers in glass storage containers or BPA-free plastics.
- Use a phosphate-free, non-toxic dishwashing powder or liquid.

“Certain genetic variations have been linked to a variety of potential health issues, making preventative action even more important.”

References available on request



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