



Experts caution against post-festive season detox dieting

With the festive season coming to a close, many Australians have been left to assess the damage inflicted by several weeks of voracious eating, drinking and merriment.

Of concern to health experts is the number of Australians turning to quick-fix diets and detox fads, with little regard to the health of one of their own 'natural detox centres' – the liver.

"Don't think that there is a magic bullet that will fix the damage you are doing to your liver through excess," said Melbourne GP, Dr Sally Cockburn (aka Dr Feelgood).

"Protecting your liver through sensible alcohol consumption, good nutrition and exercise enables the liver to continue to remove the alcohol, fats and toxins from the blood, while storing vitamins and producing essential proteins necessary for good health," she said.

Dr Sally Cockburn is concerned that many people do a detox diet and then go back to their previous habits.

"People need to change their attitude to food and work on their relationship with their liver," she said.

The warning comes as a recent poll by Hepatitis Australia found that only 16 per cent of Australians consider diet a factor in maintaining a healthy liver.

"This is a real concern. Alongside viral hepatitis, fatty liver disease is a common cause of liver disease in Australia. Fatty liver disease can be caused by various factors. However, one-in-five Australians who are obese will have fatty liver disease even though they may not realise it," said Helen Tyrrell, CEO of Hepatitis Australia.

"While there is no magic bullet to protect against liver damage, crash diets and liver detox products aren't the answer. Instead, making small but sustained changes which incorporate a healthy eating plan, increased physical activity and reduced alcohol intake is a much better approach," Ms Tyrrell added.

As part of its Love Your Liver campaign, Hepatitis Australia has compiled liver-loving tips on its website, including twelve healthy foods that Australians can incorporate into their diet as part of a long-term balanced diet.

"Now is the perfect time to start showing your liver some love by incorporating healthy and delicious foods as part of a balanced diet, alongside exercise," concluded Ms Tyrrell.

Visit www.loveyourliver.com.au to discover how you can love your liver in the post festive period and get involved in the campaign by hosting a Love Your Liver lunch and uploading your liver loving ideas and recipes to the website.

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Distributed on behalf of Hepatitis Australia.

For further information or to arrange an interview please contact Fiona Beveridge (0405 902 826) at Ethical Strategies on 02 8904 7335.