How to Eat Organic on a Budget

Demand for organic produce in the United Kingdom is at the highest it has been for more than a decade and is even outselling non-organic produce, according to the Guardian. Yet, purchasing only organic produce can be expensive. In fact, over the course of a year, you could spend £870 more on organic produce, according to a 2016 survey from discount code provider, Voucherbox.

If you are on a budget, but would still like to eat organic, consider the following tips:

- Purchase produce that is in season. You can check to see what produce is in season by clicking here.
- Purchase organic fruits, vegetables and herbs from growers or at farmers’ markets, as they are normally cheaper than supermarkets.
- Opt for organic eggs at a wholefood store or market rather than at a local, small-format supermarket, where they are normally cheaper.
- Choose non-organic British beef and lamb over organic, as there is little difference between how the animals were reared and cared for.
- Choose organic British poultry and pork, as the animals are treated more humanely and generally taste better.
- Choose organic dairy products, as they contain significantly higher levels of healthy fatty acids and the cows are treated more humanely.

Why a Tent Could be the Key to Your Sleep Problems

According to a recent study conducted by scientists from the sleep and chronology lab at the University of Colorado in the United States, camping can help people sleep better and reset the body’s natural clock. The study had five people, aged between 21 and 39, travel up to the Colorado Rocky Mountains for a six-day camping trip without their gadgets—even their torches. On average, each camper got nearly 10 hours of sleep each night, which was generally three more hours than they got at home.

Upon returning, the scientists measured the rise and fall of the sleep hormone melatonin in the participants’ bodies. The more melatonin that is in the body, the more prone a person is to become tired and go to sleep. When they measured the melatonin levels, the scientists found that the hormone began rising more than 2½ hours earlier than it did before the trip.

The response that the scientists observed is related to the body’s natural clock or circadian rhythm. If this natural clock is disrupted—such as by not getting enough sleep—it can contribute to a number of mental and physical health issues, including the following:

- Increased risk of developing heart disease and Type 2 diabetes
- Increased risk of developing an anxiety disorder, depression or other mental health disorder

If you feel that your body’s natural clock is out of order or you’d like to get more sleep, don’t feel that you have to follow the study’s example and go camping. Instead, one simple solution is keep all your gadgets away from you for at least an hour before bed, as the blue light that electronic devices emit causes a delay in the natural release of melatonin.
Beware of These Dubious Health ‘Quick Fixes’

With easy access to fitness trackers and apps along with herbal and protein supplements, it may seem that getting into shape and staying healthy has never been simpler. In fact, nearly 4.5 million people in the United Kingdom own a fitness tracker, according to a recent study. However, despite the convenience and potential benefits, these health trends may actually do more harm than good if used without a necessary measure of diligence.

Review these trends to ensure that they are beneficial rather than ineffective or even detrimental to your health:

- **Fitness trackers and apps:** Often fitness trackers and apps are developed without any sound medical research, which could make them ineffective or even harmful to users, according to research conducted by Johns Hopkins University in the United States. The study cited that fitness trackers and apps are dangerous when they start recommending how a person should adjust their medication, such as insulin.

  Part of the problem is that fitness gadgets and apps are designed to appeal to as many people as possible and they do that by providing a standard, one-size-fits-all fitness routine. For example, a common wellness goal is to achieve 10,000 steps each day, which if followed, should help a person also meet the minimum recommended amount of 150 minutes of exercise each week. The researchers pointed out that it would be unhealthy and possibly even dangerous for some users—such as those with diabetes—to attempt that daily goal.

- **Herbal supplements:** According to research conducted by Queen’s University Belfast, Kingston University in London and the life sciences testing company LGC, herbal supplements often make unverified claims about potential results and some even contain illegal ingredients. These supplements can even contain undeclared ingredients that can cause serious health problems when taken with other medicines.

- **Protein supplements:** Nearly 25 per cent of UK consumers have purchased some kind of protein supplement within the past three months, according to research conducted by market research firm, Mintel. On average, a person should consume around 0.75 grams of protein for every kilogram of body weight. Yet, most people consume much more than that, and if that extra protein is not worked off, it can lead to weight gain. What’s more, is that protein supplements generally do not contain any other beneficial vitamins and nutrients, and instead may contain hidden additives, sugars, sweeteners, flavourings and colours that could cause imbalances in diet.