

**W**ONDER Woman does exist, but she does not wear a bustier, red boots, a tiara or indestructible bracelets.

Instead, she looks just like you and me.

We all have a bit of Wonder Woman inside each of us — a strong, powerful woman who uses her abilities to do good things and save the world.

Every woman is capable of doing great things — as mothers, wives, sisters, aunts, friends, colleagues and employers.

Whether we are out there climbing the corporate ladder, helping others through community work or taking care of our families at home, we are often pushing our bodies and minds to the limit.

At the end of the day, you may find extreme satisfaction in your professional, personal and domestic achievements, but it won't do you, or anyone else, any good if you are worn out and unhealthy.

When you have a busy lifestyle, you may not be eating a healthy, balanced diet.

You need a variety of foods that provide essential nutrients to help you stay energetic and alert, and prevent illnesses.

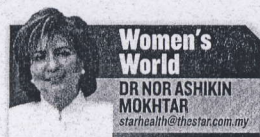
Women go through different phases in their lives: infancy and childhood (pre-adolescence), followed by adolescence, young adulthood, adulthood and mature adulthood (elderly).

At every phase of our life, depending on our social and professional roles, our bodies change and our day-to-day activities may be different.

For instance, in the adolescent phase, our bodies are still develop-

# Foods for gals

There are certain types of foods that are a must in a lady's diet.



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ing, and we are doing activities that require a lot of energy.

Meanwhile in adulthood, our bodies may be preparing for motherhood.

Naturally, we have special nutritional needs, unique from that of men, because of our biological differences.

## Packed with nutrients

Of course, there are no such things as super foods, as all foods contain important nutrients and play a part in our daily diet.

So-called health foods or miracle foods that you see in advertisements or stores are merely gimmicks. There is no single food or product that can guarantee weight loss or a cancer-free life.

However, you will find that certain foods are power-packed with essential nutrients, and are a must in your daily life.

### 1. Fatty fish

Fatty fish like salmon, sardines and mackerel are rich in omega-3 fatty acids, particularly DHA

(docosahexaenoic acid) and EPA (eicosapentaenoic acid), which are easily absorbed by the body.

These fatty acids are used by the body in important physiological processes, and help protect us from heart disease, stroke, hypertension and some illnesses linked to inflammation, such as lupus and rheumatoid arthritis.

•Fatty fish are also good sources of protein, and are low in saturated fat and calories.

### 2. Yoghurt

Who would have thought that fermented milk would be so good for you?

Yoghurt is loaded with calcium, which is good for women because it builds strong bones and prevents osteoporosis (more common in older women).

Yoghurt also contains good bacteria, which promotes a healthier immune and digestive system. Look for yoghurt that has higher levels of live cultures like *Lactobacillus acidophilus*.

If you're worried about the calorie level, go for plain, low-fat yoghurt and leave out the fruit-flavoured varieties.

### 3. Beans

What's low in fat, but high in protein and fibre?

All sorts of beans and legumes, like broad beans, peas, dhal, mung beans, kidney beans, red beans,

black beans, lentils and soybeans.

Beans and legumes are also believed to have protective effects against heart disease and cancer, and may play a role in regulating female hormones.

They are also high in vitamin B and folate, which are important for pregnancy.

Best of all, there are so many different types of beans and legumes that can be eaten with a variety of meals and dishes, so you will never get tired of them!

### 4. Colourful vegetables

Veggies aren't just green — they come in all sorts of colours, and the more colourful your vegetable tray is, the better!

Dark green vegetables, like choy sum, kai lan, bok choy, spinach and broccoli, are packed with antioxidant vitamins A and C, iron, calcium and beta-carotene.

Red and orange vegetables are even better sources of beta-carotene.

This component that gives fruits and vegetables their red and orange colours, is an antioxidant that is good for our immune system, heart and eyes. Think carrots, tomatoes, sweet potatoes, pumpkins, papayas and red peppers.

### 5. Oats

Finally, to round up the list of must-have foods on your shopping list — oats.

A wholegrain cereal that is high in fibre and low in saturated fat, oats are known to reduce high cholesterol levels and protect against heart disease.

Oats are also high in protein (a good source of long-lasting energy) and antioxidants (good for general health and slowing down ageing).

Oats can be consumed as oatmeal, cereal, muesli, bread or biscuits. It makes for a great breakfast and snack.

The five types of food above are not the only foods you should eat, as there are many other types of foods from the various nutrient groups that are good sources of energy, proteins, vitamins, minerals, fats and fibre.

But having these five types on your frequent eating list will ensure that you get the best of all worlds.

What's to stop you from being Wonder Woman now?

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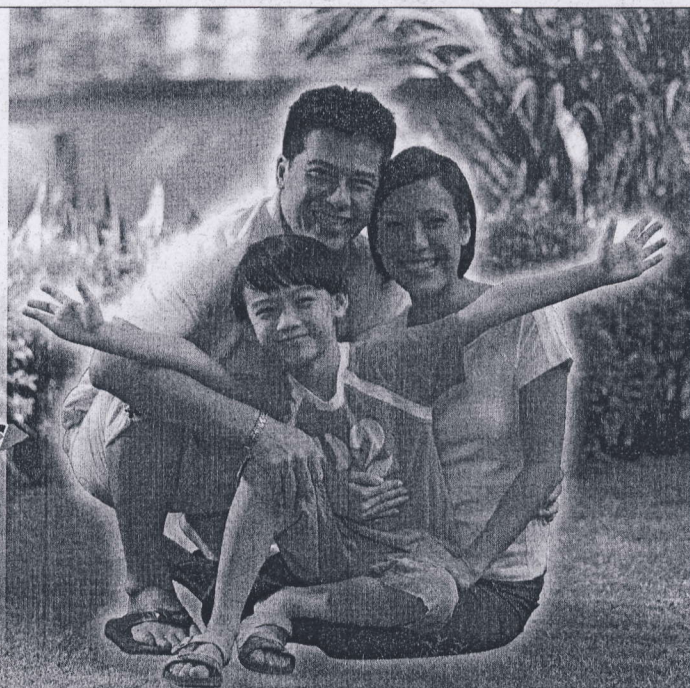
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