## Nutrition Deep Dive – round up of the day

Fat, carbs and protein are all needed in a healthy balanced diet. There are no 'good or bad' calories.

Extremes (low fat, low carb, very high protein) are not ideal in terms of health outcomes like body weight, cholesterol, and are often no more effective than a moderate intake of these nutrients – so why bother!

How much fat, carbohydrate or protein you should eat depends on what you are trying to achieve e.g. general health, weight loss, sport, preventing sarcopenia (agerelated muscle loss), reducing cardiovascular risk or preventing type 2 diabetes.

For weight loss, calories are king, but a lower GI, more fibre and more protein helps. You don't need to avoid carbs and fat can be moderate.

For heart health, choose a moderate fat diet but focus on olive oil (MUFAs), plant oils (PUFAs) and oily fish (omega-3s). Some fibres, like oats/barley, help lower 'bad' LDL cholesterol.

For type 2 diabetes prevention, minimise high GI carbs, boost fibre, exercise and control body weight.

Elderly people and sports people need high protein diets to build and support muscle.

Quality of protein matters. Animal proteins (meat, poultry, eggs, fish) are best as they are 'complete' (i.e. contain all the amino acids needed for health) but vegans/vegetarians can get the right balance of AA by mixing their plant proteins in meals e.g. beans, pulses, tofu, soya, grains.

A holistic diet approach e.g. Mediterranean, Nordic, Balance of Health, is effective for health as well as enjoyable to eat.

Consumers have some knowledge of how carbs, protein and fat work together in the diet but are still confused over the details and how to achieve the right balance. Industry can help bridge the knowledge gap. However, some sources of information are more trusted than others e.g. health professionals, labels, internet and social media are more trusted than celebs or bloggers who are funded by industry.