

food later in the day. Sliced or minced 'shrooms are a great stand-in for meat in stir-fries or as a pizza topping.

DAY 13

HAVE FRUIT FOR DESSERT

The enzymes bromelain (in fresh pineapple) and papain (in fresh papaya) ease digestion by breaking down proteins in meat, tofu, dairy and beans, so food moves through your system faster, which can decrease bloating. So end your meals with one of these fresh, sweet treats.

DAY 14

SLICE UP AN AVOCADO

This fruit is rich in potassium, a mineral that helps you lose the paunch by flushing out excess sodium and reducing water retention. Avocados pack 60 per cent more potassium than bananas and their healthy fats blunt hunger by keeping you fuller longer. Try a avocado-mango salsa over chicken, fish or tofu: Chop a quarter of an avocado and toss it with a quarter cup fresh mango, 1 tablespoon lime juice, fresh cilantro and 1 teaspoon minced jalapeno. For a double hit of potassium, try avocado-banana salsa: Chop a quarter of an avocado and half a small banana, and combine with 1 tablespoon minced onion, 1 tablespoon lime juice and freshly ground black pepper.

win the losing battle

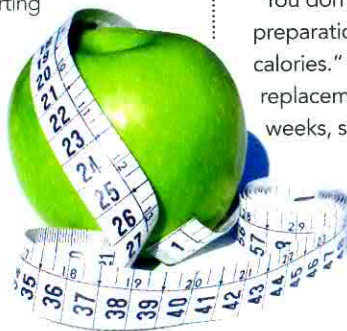
Your workplace can help you to slim down – if you took part in these recent weight-loss competitions: *Lose to Win* organised by the Health Promotion Board and the Nestle Fitness Office Challenge. To win, co-workers formed teams and worked with experts to be the trimmest, leanest and healthiest. For the rest of us who don't have the benefit of a trainer or nutritionist, we asked the experts from these competitions for insider tips to beat the flab.

BURN MORE JOULES

■ **Get FITT** Modify the frequency, intensity, timing and type of exercise (FITT for short) to suit your weight-loss goals, says Hisham Musa, master trainer from Teamfitnessguru.com who designed the fitness bootcamps for *Lose to Win*. Make sure the changes are gradual and progressive. The body needs to adapt to increasing physical demands one step at a time, says Hisham. And don't just stick to cardio exercise; you'll also need to train with works to build muscle and raise your metabolism, he says.

■ **Try Tabata** This high-intensity interval training method is very effective to blast fat, says Chung Tze Khit, physical trainer from Pt.com.sg who provided the weekly workout plans for the Nestle Fitness Office Challenge. This involves 20 seconds of intense metabolic exercise like sprinting or burpees, followed by 10 seconds of rest, repeated over eight sets. To maximise the benefits of this workout, go all out during each 20-second burst, says Tze Khit.

If you're just starting out, swim or do stationary bike exercises first; impact exercises such as running can strain the knees, ankles and backs in heavier people, says Tze Khit.



BE FOOD-SMART

■ **NIP before you eat** Don't buy into seemingly healthy claims on the packaging. Read the nutrition information panel (NIP) before deciding, says Lyvia Lai, dietitian from the National Healthcare Group Primary Care Academy, who conducted the nutrition classes for *Lose to Win*. "Low fat" foods can be high in sugar, while items with "reduced sugar" may sometimes contain a lot of fat, she says.

When a product label reads "unsweetened" or "no added sugar", it actually means no sugars (or ingredients with added sugars, honey and malt) are added during food processing. It does not take into account the sugars from alcohols that are permitted during processing or sugars naturally present in the ingredients. To compare products more accurately, use the "per 100g" values as a guide, says Lyvia.

■ **Simple swaps** Meal replacements are an effective and convenient way to ease into a healthier eating pattern, says Patsy Soh, corporate nutrition adviser from Nestle Singapore. "You don't have to think about food preparation or worry about hidden calories." You could use two meal replacements a day for up to two weeks, she adds.

Lose to Win airs every Wednesday (Channel 5, 9pm) and Friday (Channel 8, 8.30pm) from Oct 21-23.