can remove it before reheating. Snack on fresh fruit and bread, but limit cakes, biscuits, pastries, chocolate and packet snack foods.

Next week (May 4 to May 10) is Heart Week.

Telephone numbers are correct at time of publication but are not continually updated. You may need to check the numbers in the telephone directory.

Why does weight matter?
Why does weight matter?

Both men and women in Australia are becoming fatter and it's partly because of too much fatty food and too little exercise. Some people say, "Why should it matter if I'm overweight as long as I feel okay?" But being overweight does matter because it increases the risk of health problems such as heart disease, stroke, diabetes and some cancers. Being at a healthy weight on the other hand, can help lower blood pressure, make you feel better and give you more energy. If you need to lose some weight, here's some good advice from the National Heart Foundation.

Change your eating habits gradually

Everyone knows that losing weight partly involves cutting down on foods which contain a lot of fat. But this doesn't mean you have to change your eating habits overnight. You're more likely to make permanent changes to your diet if you make them gradually. Allow two weeks to stop eating biscuits with tea or coffee, for instance. When you're comfortable with this change, make another such as using less butter or margarine on bread, or switching to using low fat milk.

Remember you don't have to exercise strenuously

The secret of successful weight control is a combination of sensible eating and regular exercise. Aim for 30 minutes at least four times a week. You don't have to do 30 minutes all at once. It's okay to do ten minutes exercise three times a day. Walking, swimming and cycling are good.

Don't expect to lose weight quickly

It's quite common to lose weight one week and then lose none the next week. If you are exercising, you may find your weight doesn't drop at all. This is because your body is gaining more muscle which weighs more than fat. You'll still continue to lose fat and tone up, even if the scales don't show any weight loss. The way your clothes fit is a better guide to weight loss than weighing yourself all the time. As long as you are keeping to your plan of regular exercise and less fatty food, periods of no weight loss don't usually last more than two weeks.

Eating to lose weight

Bread, cereals, rice pasta, fruit, vegetables and dried peas, beans or lentils are the foods to eat most of every day. By filling up with these healthy, satisfying foods, you'll be less likely to want fatty snacks. You need only moderate amounts of meat, poultry, fish, nuts, seeds, dairy products. A moderate serve of meat, poultry or fish takes up about one quarter of your plate. If you eat dairy foods, choose reduced or low fat varieties. Use only small amounts of margarine, fat reduced spreads, butter, lard and cooking oils. Drink only a little alcohol.

Reducing fat in your meals

Trim all fat from meat and remove fat and skin from poultry before cooking. Use low fat cooking methods such as grilling, steaming, baking, stir-frying in as little oil as possible, microwaving or using non-stick frypans. Avoid fried or deep fried foods. Let soups, casseroles and curries cool - this makes the fat harden on top so you