

# Fact Sheet

Central Adelaide Local Health Network

Diabetes Education Service

## Recipe modification

Food should be nutritious, enjoyable, tasty and easy to prepare. You can modify your own favourite recipes to create healthier meals that are tasty.

### Try some of the following ideas:

#### Meat, chicken, fish and eggs

- > Use lean cuts of meat and limit meat that is marbled with fat. Limit fatty meats like sausages, chops and fatty mince.
- > Take the skin off chicken, preferably before cooking.
- > Eat plenty of fish. Try boiled, grilled/steamed fish or canned fish in water.
- > Poach fish in water, wine, tomato juice, lemon juice and herbs.
- > Include lean cold meats e.g. ham, turkey breast, chicken breast.
- > Grill or roast meats on a rack, without adding fat. Add water to the bottom of the pan to stop meat drying out.
- > When browning meat brush the pan with oil, or use olive, canola or sunflower cooking spray.
- > Barbecue meat on a grill so the fat drips away, and trim visible fat off before cooking.
- > Reduce the meat in bolognese sauces by using half the amount of lean topside mince and adding canned kidney beans or lentils.
- > Instead of fatty bacon in recipes, use lean ham, 97% fat-free short cut bacon or turkey bacon. Trim off any fat.
- > Cook meat-based casseroles and curries in advance, cool and skim fat off with a spoon.
- > When boiling meat or chicken for stock, let the stock cool and skim fat from the top before making soup.
- > Boil or poach eggs, or if scrambling, use a non-stick pan. Make scrambled eggs and omelettes with low-fat milk.
- > Use salt-reduced gravy powders rather than juices from cooked meat to make gravy.
- > Bake schnitzels in the oven rather than frying – try spraying with oil spray.

#### Dairy

- > Preferably use low-fat dairy products, particularly when they are the major ingredient.
- > Use small amounts of cheese and select reduced-fat cheeses (cottage, ricotta, reduced-fat cheddar, extra light cream cheese).
- > Use low-fat or 'diet' flavoured yoghurts or add fruit to low-fat natural yoghurt.
- > Choose low-fat or diet ice creams and limit their intake.

- > Use light coconut flavoured evaporated milk in place of coconut milk or use light coconut milk / cream and limit their intake.
- > Make custards with low-fat milk and sweeteners.

### Pastry

- > Use filo pastry rather than high fat pastries such as puff, shortcrust and choux.
- > Brush layers of filo with low-fat milk or egg wash and spray the outer layers with an oil spray.

### Fats and oils

- > Use low-fat cooking methods where possible; these require no oil or only a small amount.
- > Steaming, blanching (in water), stir frying, pan frying with a small amount of oil or spray oil, grilling, roasting / baking on a rack are all healthy cooking methods.
- > Use non-stick pans or baking paper.
- > Use unsaturated fats such as canola, olive or sunflower-based margarines or oils instead of saturated fats (e.g. lard, copha, butter, ghee, butter blends, coconut oil).
- > Instead of frying or sautéing in oil, use water, stock, wine or juice.
- > Limit oil in salads or use oil-free salad dressings and low-fat mayonnaise.
- > Instead of cream on desserts try yoghurt, Fruche or evaporated skim milk that is chilled and whipped.
- > Instead of sour cream try natural yoghurt or butter milk.
- > When baking cakes use canola or olive-based margarines and oils.
- > Limit the amount of margarine on bread. Instead of margarine, you could try using a thin spread of extra light cream cheese, peanut butter (no added sugar or salt) or avocado.
- > For savoury creamy sauces, use low-fat evaporated milk, butter milk, low-fat natural yoghurt or low-fat milk thickened with cornflour.

### Breads and cereals

- > Use wholegrain varieties where possible (e.g. wholegrain bread, brown rice/pasta or oats).
- > Choose long grain rices e.g. Low GI White Rice, Doongara, Basmati.
- > Choose tomato-based sauces with pasta rather than creamy sauces.
- > Try other grains like couscous, cracked wheat, or quinoa instead of rice for a change.

### Vegetables and fruit

- > Make healthier chips by parboiling them first then spraying with oil and baking in the oven.
- > Avoid white sauces and oil on prepared vegetables.
- > Add legumes (e.g. beans, chickpeas, lentils) to stews, casseroles, soups and pasta sauces to increase the fibre and reduce the amount of meat.
- > When roasting vegetables avoid cooking them in meat fats instead spray or brush with oil and roast in a pan.
- > Instead of adding sour cream to your potato use natural yoghurt or cottage cheese.
- > Leave the skin on fruit (where appropriate).
- > Aim to use fruit in recipes such as cakes and muffins, as this can help to reduce the amount of added sugars in recipes.

## Sugar

- > Try replacing sugar in recipes with dried, fresh or tinned fruit.
- > Use unsweetened fruit juice or apple sauce in recipes instead of sugar.
- > Fruit can be stewed in diet lemonade or fruit juice (remember to keep in the fridge after stewing).
- > Artificial sweeteners can be used instead of sugar in cooking and in recipes. Splenda and Equal can be added during cooking but other sweeteners can go bitter or lose their sweetness when heated.
- > Vegetables such as carrot, pumpkin and zucchini can be used in baking sweet and savoury muffins.
- > Generally sugar can be reduced in a recipe by half and the recipe will not be affected.

## Salt

- > Look for products that are no added salt, low-salt or salt-reduced.
- > Avoid adding salt in cooking and at the table.
- > Use herbs and spices for flavour both fresh and dried.
- > Use low salt marinades for extra flavour e.g. lemon juice, wine, vinegar, tomato puree.
- > Avoid using salt replacements instead of salt e.g. Sea salt, rock salt, pink salt, chicken salt, MSG.

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The information contained within this publication does not constitute medical advice, and is for general information only. Readers should always seek independent, professional advice where appropriate.



### For more information

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