

## HINTS FOR REDUCING FAT & SUGAR

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Food must not only be nutritious; it must be enjoyable and easy to prepare. By experimenting in the kitchen you can modify your own favourite recipes to create healthier meals that are tasty.

### Try some of the following ideas to cut down on fat.

#### When buying food:

- Use lean cuts of meat and avoid meat that is marbled with fat such as sausages and chops.
- Use low fat dairy products such as skim milk, low fat yoghurt, and cottage cheese or ricotta cheese instead of full fat dairy products – eg in sauces such as mornay and in pizza toppings.
- Add vegetables, barley, pasta, rice, dried beans, peas and lentils to soups and stews and use less meat.
- Eat more fish. Try baked, grilled or steamed fish or canned fish in brine or water (not oil).
- Substitute sour cream in recipes with natural yoghurt, buttermilk or light evaporated milk.
- Choose lean meats in sandwiches such as lean ham, corned beef, chicken and turkey breast. Avoid fatty varieties such as salami and fritz.
- Choose low fat dips when entertaining such as tzatziki, salsa and hommous. Serve with vegetable sticks, low fat crackers or pita bread.
- When baking with pastry choose 'filo' pastry. Avoid puff and shortcrust pastry, and homemade pastries made with butter or margarine.
- Choose tomato-based pasta sauces and avoid cream-based types.
- Limit fatty takeaways such as pies, pasties, sausage rolls, and burgers. Choose lower fat alternatives such as Asian stir-fries and steamed rice, rotisserie chicken (skin removed), or a lean meat and salad roll or sandwich with no butter or margarine.
- Buy low fat salad dressing and mayonnaise (eg 'No-oil', 'Free', 'Low joule').



#### When preparing food:

- Grill or roast on a rack, without adding fat. Add water in the bottom of the pan to stop the meat drying out.
- When browning meat or vegetables brush the pan with oil instead of pouring it on or alternatively use a poly or mono unsaturated cooking spray.
- When making gravy, allow meat juices to cool and remove fat or alternatively use low-joule Gravox in water or vegetable juices.
- Barbecue meat on a grill so the fat drips away and trim visible fat off before cooking.
- Poach fish in water, wine, tomato juice, lemon juice and herbs.
- Stir-fry or sauté in non-stick cookware using stock, wine, water, cooking spray (eg olive oil) or a minimum amount of vegetable oil (½ - 1 teaspoon per serve).
- Bake vegetables or fish in foil

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- Steam, boil or microwave vegetables.
- Skim the fat from the tops of soups and stews, by allowing the dish to cool in the refrigerator so the fat solidifies.
- Use low fat milk in mashed potatoes instead of butter or margarine.
- Check amounts of butter, margarine or oil in recipes and reduce if possible; usually fat can be reduced by half. Use poly or mono unsaturated fats and avoid butter.
- Use herbs and spices, and low fat marinades to add flavour to meat, fish, chicken, salads, soups and casseroles.
- Reduce meat in bolognese sauces by adding 50/50 kidney beans or lentils and lean mince.
- Trim the fat off meat or remove skin from chicken.
- Limit amount of margarine on bread.
- Instead of bacon in recipes, use lean ham, 97% fat free bacon or turkey bacon.

### When serving food:

- Reduce meat and chicken serves, and fill the plate with vegetables. Aim for 120-150g of meat per person – ie the size of the palm of your hand.
- Avoid adding high fat dressings to salads. Use low fat mayonnaise, no oil salad dressings, lemon juice, vinegar or low fat natural yoghurt.
- Serve yoghurt, skim milk custard, whipped evaporated skim milk, 50/50 blend of ricotta cheese and low fat yoghurt or low fat ice cream instead of cream with desserts.
- Avoid adding margarine, butter or high fat white sauces to vegetables when serving.

### Try some of the following ideas to cut down on sugar.

- Try replacing sugar in recipes with dried or fresh fruit.
- Use unsweetened fruit juice in recipes instead of sugar.
- Fruit can be stewed in diet lemonade or fruit juice. Remember to keep refrigerated after stewing.
- Artificial sweeteners can be used instead of sugar in cooking and in recipes. Splenda can be added during cooking where 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.

