



Taste 4 Health tips for a healthier menu

With an increasing number of people eating out for meals, it is important for customers to have access to healthier food to help them make better food choices.

Taking responsibility for the health of your customers is an important step towards helping reduce the incidence of diet-related illness and disease in the community.

The following tips have been developed to reduce the amount of fat, salt, sugar and help increase the fibre available in your menu.

By implementing healthier food initiatives, your food business may be eligible to receive a *Taste 4 Health Award*.

SUGAR

Foods that are high in added sugar should be enjoyed on an occasional basis and in small amounts. Provide food and beverage options that are low in sugar to attract health-conscious customers and help customers looking to minimise their sugar intake.

- Promote the availability of free water to customers, and if you don't automatically serve water at the table, have water available for customers to help themselves.
- Offer diet soft drinks or a low sugar alternative to plain water. Options include sparkling water, diet or artificiality sweetened soft drinks.
- Offer smaller serving sizes of desserts and sweet treats or have an option for your customers to share a serving.
- Get creative with low sugar dessert options and feature ingredients such as nuts, seeds, coconut, cocoa powder, cacao, dark chocolate, yoghurt, whole grains and vanilla.
- Offer desserts that feature fresh fruit as the main ingredient. Incorporating fresh or dried fruit into a recipe is a healthier way to add in sweetness without relying on refined sugar such as white or brown sugar, or sugary products such as honey or golden syrup.
- Freshly squeezed fruit juice contains a concentrated amount of sugar, without the benefits of fibre that fruit contains, so offer the option of smaller serving sizes of 250ml or less.
- Display low sugar options in a prominent position at eye level in a display unit.

HOW TO UNDERSTAND FOOD LABELS

Nutrition Information

Servings per package – 16
Serving size – 30g (2/3 cup)

	Per serve	Per 100g
Energy	432kJ	1441kJ
Protein	2.8g	9.3g
Fat		
Total	0.4g	1.2g
Saturated	0.1g	0.3g

Carbohydrate

Total	18.9g	62.9g
Sugars	3.5g	11.8g

Fibre 6.4g 21.2g

Sodium 65mg 215mg

Ingredients: Cereals (76%) (wheat, oatbran, barley), psyllium husk (11%), sugar, rice, malt extract, honey, salt, vitamins.

Ingredients ▲

Listed from greatest to smallest by weight. Use this to check the first three ingredients for items high in saturated fat, sodium (salt) or added sugar.

Total Fat ▶

Generally choose foods with less than **10g per 100g**.

For milk, yogurt and icecream, choose less than **2g per 100g**.

For cheese, choose less than **15g per 100g**.

Saturated Fat ▶

Aim for the lowest, per 100g.

Less than 3g per 100g is best.

Other names for ingredients high in saturated fat: Animal fat/oil, beef fat, butter, chocolate, milk solids, coconut, coconut oil/milk/cream, cophera, cream, ghee, dripping, lard, suet, palm oil, sour cream, vegetable shortening.

Fibre ▶

Not all labels include fibre.

Choose breads and cereals with **3g or more per serve**

◀ 100g Column and Serving Size

If comparing nutrients in similar food products **use the per 100g column**. If calculating how much of a nutrient, or how many kilojoules you will actually eat, use the per serve column. But check whether your portion size is the same as the serve size.

Energy

Check how many kJ per serve to decide how much is a serve of a 'discretionary' food, which has 600kJ per serve.

Sugars

Avoiding sugar completely is not necessary, but try to avoid larger amounts of added sugars. If sugar content per 100g is more than 15g, check that sugar (or alternative names for added sugar) is not listed high on the ingredient list.

Other names for added

sugar: Dextrose, fructose, glucose, golden syrup, honey, maple syrup, sucrose, malt, maltose, lactose, brown sugar, caster sugar, maple syrup, raw sugar, sucrose.

◀ Sodium (Salt)

Choose lower sodium options among similar foods. **Food with less than 400mg per 100g are good, and less than 120mg per 100g is best.**

Other names for high salt ingredients:

Baking powder, celery salt, garlic salt, meat/yeast extract, monosodium glutamate, (MSG), onion salt, rock salt, sea salt, sodium, sodium ascorbate, sodium bicarbonate, sodium nitrate/nitrite, stock cubes, vegetable salt.

Image source: https://www.eatforhealth.gov.au/sites/default/files/files/eatingwell/efh_food_label_example_130621.pdf



SALT

The Heart Foundation recommends 5g of salt (2000mg sodium) as a daily maximum amount, advising that most Australians are consuming more than this.

Too much salt in the diet can cause health problems such as high blood pressure and heart disease, which is a leading cause of death and disability in Victoria. Around 75% of the salt (sodium) we eat comes from packaged foods, such as tinned and bottled products, processed meats, snack foods and crackers, cheese and even bread and breakfast cereals.

- Check the manufacturer's labelling on your packaged ingredients to find out how much salt you are using. The Heart Foundation advises that the best options are up to 120mg sodium per 100g/ml, OK options are up to 400mg sodium per 100g/ml and reconsider options that have more than 400mg sodium per 100g.
- Look for items that state low or reduced sodium/salt when sourcing processed foods such as sauces and canned products. Low salt products must have less than 120mg of sodium per 100g/ml and salt reduced products have 25% less salt content than a comparative reference food.
- Herbs and spices can add colour and flavour to meals without the need to add salt when cooking.
- Explore acidic and aromatic ingredients to boost flavour — for example vinegars, lemon juice, lime juice and garlic.
- Offer menu items that do not contain foods with a naturally high salt content, such as bacon, ham, sausages, and salami.
- Food items such as bread, cheese and sauces can contain an unexpected high amount of salt. Think about the total salt content of your menu items on offer, for example a ham and cheese toasted sandwich could exceed the daily recommended limit of salt intake.
- Have salt shakers only available on request rather than leaving them on the table.
- Everyone's preferences for salt is different and can change depending on their current salt intake, so don't automatically add salt to the finished meal.

Find more salt reducing tips and low salt recipe ideas at www.unpackthesalt.com.au



HERBS AND SPICES FOR COOKING AND HEALTH

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Protein



BEANS Bay leaves, cardamom, chilli, oregano, thyme.



BEEF Coriander, cumin, lemongrass, parsley, thyme.



CHICKEN Basil, cayenne pepper, lemongrass, rosemary, thyme.



EGGS Basil, chives, dill, paprika, pepper.



FISH Cayenne pepper, chives, dill, parsley, tarragon.



LAMB Mint, oregano, rosemary, sage, thyme.



PORK Coriander, fennel, lemongrass, sage, thyme.



TOFU Cumin, garlic, ginger, paprika, parsley, turmeric.



TOO MUCH SALT in our food can cause high blood pressure and increase the risk of heart attack and stroke.

Looking for recipe ideas? Visit unpackthesalt.com.au

*Herbs are listed in alphabetical order.

Image source: <https://unpackthesalt.com.au/resources-category/?category=guides>

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Vegetables



CARROT Cardamom, cumin, ginger, nutmeg, thyme.



CABBAGE Allspice, garlic powder, nutmeg, turmeric.



CAPSICUM Basil, coriander, cayenne pepper, oregano, paprika.



CORN Cardamom, cayenne pepper, cumin.



CAULIFLOWER Nutmeg, paprika, turmeric.



EGGPLANT Basil, cayenne pepper, cumin.



MUSHROOMS Bay leaves, garlic powder, oregano, rosemary.



PEAS Cardamom, rosemary, thyme.



POTATO Cayenne pepper, oregano, paprika, rosemary, turmeric.



PUMPKIN Allspice, cardamom, cinnamon, cloves, ginger, nutmeg, paprika.



SWEET POTATO Allspice, cardamom, cinnamon, ginger, nutmeg.



TOMATO Basil, bay leaves, cayenne pepper, coriander, oregano.



ZUCCHINI Basil, cumin, garlic powder, oregano, thyme.



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FAT

Saturated fats increase the risk of heart disease. Limit your use of saturated fat when cooking and preparing food and use healthier options that have a higher content of monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats.

- Choose oils that have a higher percentage of monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats such as olive oil, canola oil and sunflower oil.
- Avoid using fats that are high in saturated fat such as palm oil, coconut oil, butter and cream.
- Remove visible white fat from meat and the outer skin from poultry before cooking to minimise the saturated fat content of your dishes.
- Incorporate foods that contain polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fats such as avocado, chia seeds, fatty fish, nuts and seeds into menu items.
- Be accommodating to customers' requests for healthier options such as no butter on bread, and sauces or dressings on the side. Offer alternative spreads like unsaturated margarine, hummus or avocado instead of butter.
- Reduced fat varieties of dairy such as cream, milk, and yoghurts should be offered to customers where possible. Use reduced fat cheese such as ricotta and cottage cheese, or smaller amounts of a stronger tasting cheese such as parmesan.
- Use cooking methods that do not require a lot of oil such as steaming, poaching, stir-frying and grilling.

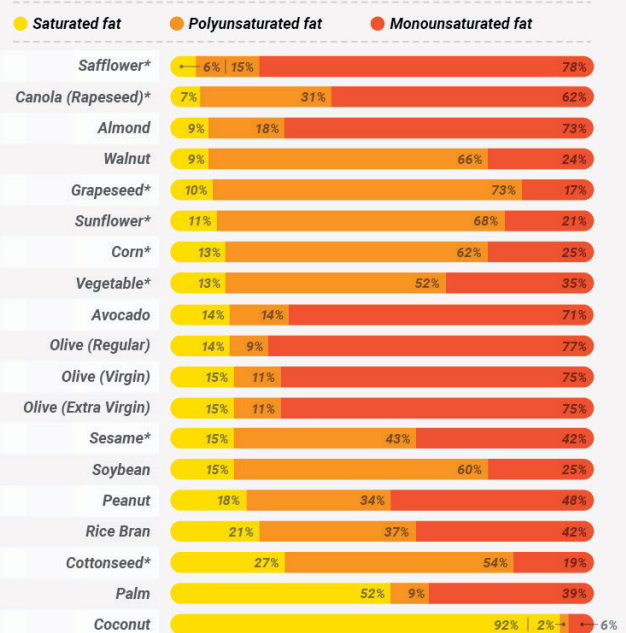
For more information on low fat cooking techniques, visit <https://www.eatforhealth.gov.au/eating-well/tips-eating-well/low-fat-cooking-techniques>

COOKSMARTS

GUIDE TO OILS

FAT COMPOSITION OF COOKING OILS

Below we'll break down common cooking oils by their fat contents so that you can make the healthiest decision for your needs. These oils are ordered by percentage of unsaturated fats (i.e., oils with less saturated fats are listed first).



*These oils are often refined, which means they can be cheaper and more versatile, with a longer shelf life. However, the refining process can also strip oils of their nutrients and introduce chemicals.

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FIBRE

Fibre is the indigestible part of cereals, fruits and vegetables. Fibre is important in maintaining a healthy digestive system and preventing disease — however, most Australians are not consuming enough fibre.

Increasing the fibre content in your menu items means that your customers increase their intake of fibre as well as important vitamins and minerals.

- Leave edible skins on vegetables where possible.
- Include more meals that contain legumes such as chickpeas, beans or lentils.
- Include dishes with polenta, burghul, couscous, oats, quinoa and barley.
- Include wholegrain options and substitutes with ingredients such as brown rice, wholemeal pasta and whole-wheat bread.
- Use wholemeal flour, add in fresh fruit or experiment with chopped vegetables in your baked items.
- When selecting ingredients, look for options that have more than 5g per serve of fibre.
- Have your dishes look more appealing by selecting a variety of colourful vegetables and fruit.
- Incorporate more vegetables into your dishes and substitute meat with chopped vegetables or legumes.
- Offer salads as a main meal and include nourishing high fibre ingredients such as chickpeas, beans, quinoa and nuts, or add in a protein cooked with a low-fat cooking technique.
- Include fresh salads as a side dish option, offer salad as an alternative to fries or chips.
- Include fruit in desserts and fruit salad as a dessert or snack option.

Useful websites

The following websites may be useful for further nutritional information:

Eat for Health

www.eatforhealth.gov.au

Healthy Kids Menu initiative

www.healthykidsmenu.com.au

Heart Foundation

www.heartfoundation.org.au

Nutrition Australia

www.nutritionaustralia.org

Better Health Channel

www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au

Unpack the Salt

www.unpackthesalt.com.au

