

Useful tips

Always buy **fresh ingredients** and eat **raw or in-season** vegetables.

Do not refreeze food that has been thawed.

Trim any visible fat or skin from meat and poultry.

White meat is recommended instead of red meat. Always remove visible fat.

With poultry, take care not to undercook because it contains bacteria.

Keep your fridge clean at all times to prevent bacteria and mould developing.

Throw away tins and jars of food that are past their use-by date.

Do not add **salt** to ready-to-use foods, and try to use less salt when preparing or seasoning.

Use **low sodium salt** as an alternative.

Avoid butter; instead use extra virgin olive oil or margarine with omega 3.

Cut out foods that are rich in animal fats (butter, lard), fat cheeses, fatty meats, offal and fries.

Cooking chocolate can be substituted with cocoa powder and vegetable oil.

Diabetics should take extra precautions with food preparation. “Wet” cooking methods, like boiling and long slow simmering, should be avoided. Instead other methods are recommended that use “dry” heat, such as the oven, microwave or grill.

Eat fibre rich foods such as vegetables, fruit, wholemeal products and pulses. Make use of the wholegrain varieties of products such as flour, barley, pasta, cereal, muesli and oats that are also rich in fibre.

Instead of stock cubes, use home-made meat or vegetable stock and herbs and spices.

Oils: Use extra virgin olive, sunflower, wheat germ or corn oils. We also recommend that you use them in moderation. Don’t judge by eye - measure the amount you need with a spoon and only add to the dish after cooking.

Stir-fry vegetables in a pan, with a little water instead of oil, and serve then “al dente”. This will preserve the vitamins and minerals.

Substitute 1 egg yolk with 1 egg white. When a recipe requires a whole egg, substitute with 2 egg whites, or 1 egg white plus 1 tsp vegetable oil.

Thicken soups with purees, vegetables and skimmed milk powder. This increases the vitamin A, C and calcium content.

INGREDIENT TIPS

We recommend that you use as many of these ingredients as possible....

Raw and cooked vegetables (except carrots); salads; most fresh fruit (except bananas, grapes and mango); all types of fish (including sardine, mackerel, fresh and tinned tuna, salmon and shellfish); certain types of meat (including turkey, chicken, rabbit, veal and game), ‘good’ dairy products (skimmed milk, low-fat yoghurt, low-fat cheeses), oils but choose from olive oil, corn oil, soya oil, sesame seed oil and sunflower seed oil; all pulses (including soya beans, beans, peas, chickpeas and broad beans); wholegrain bread; all cereals (including pasta and barley); powdered bran and cocoa; egg whites; fruit sorbets; water; freshly squeezed citrus fruits.

.....but these should only be used rarely and then in very small quantities

All saturated fats; fried foods of any type; smoked meats and fish; fat meats (including duck, goose, pheasant; offal: liver, brain,

kidney), processed meats (including sausages, salami, frankfurters, bacon, rotisserie products and tinned meats); salted foods and snacks; paté; ‘bad’ dairy products (whole fat milk, whole yoghurt, cream, full-fat cheeses, lard, and margarine); caviar; pasta made with egg; saturated vegetable fats (such as palm oil, coconut oil and mayonnaise); stock cubes; chocolate; bakery products containing butter, cream, eggs, milk, lard, coconut and palm oil; biscuits and assorted snacks; ice cream; drinks such as spirits, aperitifs, beer and fruit juices; simple sugars such as glucose; assorted desserts; dried fruit; sweeteners; potatoes; cooked carrots; bananas, mango and grapes; and all foods containing monosodium glutamate.

These are all cholesterol-free....

Pasta; rice; plain or wholegrain bread; flour; potatoes; olive oil; vegetable margarine; pulses (peas, beans, lentils, chickpeas, soya beans); fresh fruit; dried fruit; vegetables; egg white; sugar; honey; jam; cocoa.

COOKING TIPS

General

It is important to be aware that some cooking methods can actually harm foodstuffs, both in terms of nutritional value and in taste, smell and appearance. All foods including meat, fish and vegetables undergo significant changes during the cooking process depending on technique, temperature, duration and even the type container used. A good rule is never to overcook, especially vegetables and fruit, because this will reduce the vitamin value. The best advice, therefore, is cook little but cook quickly - this way you will retain the consistency, taste and vitamin value of the food. Prolonged cooking of roasts and stews on the other hand causes changes to fatty substances. Use non-stick pans that allow you to use little fat or pressure cookers that allow fast cooking times. The Chinese Wok also allows fast cooking at high temperatures using little fat. Once again, it is essential to stress the importance of learning to cook without fats, and to add them to the plate only after cooking.

Diabetics

Diabetics should take extra precautions as regards food preparation. “Wet” cooking methods such as boiling and long slow simmering should be avoided. Other methods using “dry” heat such as the oven, microwave or grill are recommended.

Boiling

Boiling is an ideal cooking method for cereals such as pasta, rice and spelt, but less effective for vegetables due to the huge loss of hydrosoluble vitamins and mineral salts. It is for this reason that we recommend re-using the water used for cooking vegetables when cooking pasta or sauces as some of the lost ‘goodness’ can be recovered. Use a little water and cook vegetables until they are “al dente” or slightly crunchy. Do not overcook or use salted water as iron minerals dissolve and disappear more easily. Do not cut vegetables into small pieces as the loss of vitamins is directly proportional to the surface area in contact with water.

Steaming

Steam cooking is preferable to boiling as foods do not lose their consistency and vegetables, especially, remain crunchy. This method is recommended for certain foods whose key components are soluble (such as fish and vegetables) or for foods with low fat content. Cooking juices should be re-used for making sauces and creams. Diabetics are advised to eat foods prepared using dry cooking methods.

Microwaves

Microwave ovens are a convenient and fast method for heating, thawing and cooking, especially those with a grill. They are very energy efficient as the cooking times involved are short. One drawback is that microwaved food can still have cold areas after cooking as the water content in the food is not evenly distributed.

Oven

This type of cooking provides evenly distributed temperatures (although sometimes difficult to obtain in a gas oven) but long cooking times