

## Healthy menu suggestions

### Breakfasts

- Porridge made with water, add ground, mixed seeds and/or chopped nuts plus a little fruit e.g. fresh or frozen berries, grated apple or pear, sprinkle of cinnamon. Avoid adding sweeteners – sugar, syrups or honey
- Eggs poached, scrambled or boiled (never fried) on wholemeal toast. A little butter is better than margarines which may contain trans fats/hydrogenated oils. Try poached egg on sliced avocado, no bread.
- Natural, live yoghurt with fresh fruit salad plus ground mixed seeds or chopped nuts
- Scrambled egg with salmon, spinach, mushrooms or tomatoes
- Hummus (chickpea spread) or cashew/hazelnut/almond nut butters on wholemeal toast. NB peanut butter may contain added salt and sugar – check labels.
- Wholegrain cereals – choose no-added-sugar varieties like Shreddies, or health food store varieties but check labels for sugar, with either cow's milk or if dairy free, try other milks such as soya, rice, almond or other nut or grain milks. NB milk powder = lactose (milk sugar)
- Always choose wholegrain or wholemeal bread unless wheat or gluten sensitive

Snacks (if needed - maximum 1-2 a day, midway between main meals as alternative to tea/coffee etc to help balance blood sugar levels)

- Hummus or nut butters – see above - on ½ slice wholemeal bread or 1-2 wholegrain crackers like oatcakes (Nairns), rice cakes, corn crackers, ryvita
- Avoid crackers which are made from white, processed flour and hydrogenated fats
- A piece of fruit and a palmful (e.g. 6 small nuts/ 3 large ones) of mixed, raw, unsalted nuts or equivalent helping of pumpkin or sunflower seeds
- A small handful of dried fruit with nuts can be good but dried fruit concentrates the sugar – avoid overeating
- Crudites (slices of raw veg e.g. carrots, peppers, celery, cucumber etc) with a hard boiled egg, hummus or tahini (sesame seed oil) dips, guacamole (avocado), mackerel pate

### Lunches

- Tinned mackerel, sardines or wild salmon on wholemeal toast – with side salad – fresh lettuce, tomatoes, spinach, spring onions, radishes, avocado...
- Omelette or frittata – with mushrooms, peppers, courgettes, onions, spinach, can add cooked chickpeas or green beans, even peas or sweetcorn..any combination you like, and the more veg the better
- Use leftovers from dinner the night before – cold meat cuts – especially chicken, sliced in a mixed salad
- Leftover brown rice or quinoa mixed up with diced raw vegetables...peppers, tomatoes, spring onions, mushrooms, anything really plus cooked beans.
- Cooked tinned beans ('Bean Cuisine'/mixed beans or chickpeas, pinto beans, aduki beans, cannellini, red kidney, lentils...) – no added sugar /salt varieties add some low fat protein to the meal, and are easy to prepare. If can't get the no salt/sugar varieties, make sure you rinse well before adding to salads, soups, stews etc
- Try eating no more than 1 sandwich a week and add variety to your lunches. If sandwiches are the only bought option, and you can't bring food from home, always choose wholegrain bread, add salad to the mix and have as

wide a variety of fillings as possible. Wraps & bagels are highly processed, as is gluten free bread.

- Homemade vegetable soups are delicious and with added beans or lentils (see above) provide a full balanced meal – use any vegetables to your taste
- Choose ready-made soups from the chiller cabinets, check labels for additives. Avoid tinned or dried soup packs – they are very high in salt and often sugar too.

#### Dinners

- Stir fries – a little olive oil for cooking then stir-fry slices of chicken, fish or prawns with peppers, courgettes, mushrooms, chinese leaves such as pak choi or fresh spinach, mangetout, baby sweetcorn, grated carrot, bean spouts...any variety of vegetables. Add a handful of cashew nuts or sunflower seeds at the last minute. Serve with (ideally brown) basmati rice or noodles
- Slices of chicken breast or salmon fillet steamed with chopped spring onions, peppers, garlic, onions red or white or leeks. Add slices or zest & juice of fresh lemon or lime. Serve with 3-4 vegetables like steamed broccoli, peas, asparagus. Aim for a mix of vegetables but always include some leafy greens
- Meat or vegetable hot pots or casseroles – always add a wide mix of vegetables - sweet potato, butternut squash, courgettes, aubergine, peppers. If vegetarian casserole add tinned beans at the end of cooking for protein
- Wholewheat pasta – with tuna and green beans – plus a side salad
- Make your own sauces – tomato or spinach based. Many bought sauces have high levels of added sugar and salt
- Traybake of roasted vegetables with chicken breast or fish fillet added
- Try to steam, grill, roast or stir fry meat and fish rather than fry.

Avoid all highly processed foods as much as possible

- Biscuits, cakes, pastry, crackers for cheese made from white flour
- Bacon, sausages, ham, processed meats
- Anything in a packet, carton, jar or tin with more than a half dozen ingredients on the label
- Especially if the ingredients are things that don't sound like a fresh food type.

Aim to eat breakfast within an hour of getting up and have your last meal of the day as early as possible – no later than 7.00-7.30pm.

Allow 3 hours after eating last meal before lying down/going to bed.

For weight loss, reduce or even omit starchy carbs (potatoes, rice, pasta, bread etc) in the evening meal – have them earlier in the day

Healthy portion size of starchy carbs – ½ cup cooked rice, pasta per person 75g dry or 180g cooked, potato helping – no bigger than clenched fist, 1-2 slices of wholegrain bread

Keep well hydrated, choose water or non-caffeinated drinks like herbal teas aiming for minimum of 1.5L a day (6-8 glasses/mugs).

Have caffeine drinks after a meal, never on an empty stomach. Keep caffeinated drinks to a minimum as these have a diuretic effect and spike blood sugar levels even when no sugar is added.

