



Recipes for Healthy Eating

Watching what you eat doesn't have to be un-interesting or 'boring'. Here are a few recipes for you to enjoy if you have diabetes, PCOS or a condition, where low Glycaemic eating is a 'must'. For the rest of us who just want to eat healthily try them out!

Tomato with Aubergine

Serves 2 – 4

Spray oil or 1 tsp olive oil
1 large onion, chopped quite chunky
2 big cloves garlic, crushed
Medium piece of cinnamon bark (or ½ tsp ground cinnamon)
½ tsp each ground / grated nutmeg, tamarind paste (if available), chilli flakes, ground cumin
1 tsp runny honey – though not strictly necessary if you are using raisins
Handful of raisins
1 large aubergine, diced
½ pint of stock (chicken or vegetable)
400g can of tomatoes, chopped
2 tbsp tomato puree salt and pepper
Sprig of rosemary (can use dried)

Gently heat the oil in a pan and add the onion and garlic. Once they have started to cook, add the cinnamon, nutmeg, tamarind paste, chilli flakes, cumin, honey and raisins. Mix well. Add the aubergine, making sure it is well covered by the spicy mixture. As the aubergine will immediately soak up the oil, add the stock to stop the pan drying out / the ingredients burning. Cook for around 5 minutes and then add the tomatoes, the tomato puree, salt, pepper and the rosemary. Stir briskly and bring to the boil. Reduce to a gentle simmer. This dish is best when it is well cooked, so if you have time it is worth leaving for as long as possible to allow the stock to reduce and thicken (this will take about an hour, but do keep checking to make sure it doesn't get dried out). Using sliced runner beans instead of aubergine is equally good.

You might like to serve this dish with a low-fat grilled halloumi cheese (available from Greek/Turkish shops and most supermarkets). If you can't get hold of any, crumble some feta over the top (Danish feta tends to be lower in fat than Greek, but the taste is not quite the same). It would also be nice with couscous or, if you are beefing up on unrefined carbohydrates, with brown rice.

Chicken with Apricots

Serves 2 – 4

This is a dish that lends itself well to being eaten with unrefined carbohydrates.

Spray oil or 1 tsp olive oil
1 large onion, cut in large slices
2 cloves garlic, sliced or crushed
Medium piece of cinnamon bark (or ½ teaspoon of ground cinnamon)
½ tsp each ground / grated nutmeg, tamarind paste (if available), chilli flakes, ground cumin
Handful sliced almonds (optional)
Fresh chicken cut in small chunks (1 breast per person)
½ pint of stock (chicken or vegetable)
2 handfuls of dried apricots, chopped (best to use sulphur free)
Large carrots, sliced on the diagonal (at least one carrot per person)
3 tbsp tomato puree
Sprig of rosemary (can use dried)
Salt and pepper
Fresh coriander leaves as an optional garnish

Gently heat the oil in a pan and add the onion and garlic; once they have started to cook, add the cinnamon, nutmeg, tamarind, chilli flakes and almonds, if using. Mix well. Add the chicken and cook quickly to 'brown' all the pieces. (Add a bit of stock if needed to lubricate the pan). Now add in the chopped apricots and carrots and stir to make sure all ingredients are evenly dispersed. Cook for about 5 minutes. Once the carrots start to soften, add the tomato puree, rosemary, salt and pepper and finally the stock. Stir well and bring to the boil. Cover and reduce to a low simmer. Leave for around 20 minutes.

When you return check the carrots to see if they are soft and ready to eat. Once they are, remove the lid and reduce the stock to a gravy consistency. Serve with coriander, if available / desired.

Cheat' s Risotto

Fantastic comfort food and quick and easy to prepare.

Serves 2 – 4

Your choice of content – prawns / seafood, chicken or vegetables (mushrooms, asparagus, broad beans)

For seafood - ½ tsp chilli flakes, juice of about ½ lemon and a tsp of thyme

For vegetable or chicken – try oregano or basil with a little nutmeg

1 tsp olive oil

Medium onion, chopped fine

Garlic (optional)

250g risotto rice

2 tblsp tomato puree or 1 tub of 0% fat yoghurt, depending on whether your soul is crying out for creamy comfort food or more robust redness

575ml stock (chicken or vegetable or Spanish 'paella' sauce if you can find it)

Grated low-fat cheese (optional but really helps)

Gently heat the oil in a deep pan and add your onions, garlic and spices (if using). Cook for about 5 minutes, then add your choice of ingredients in order of the amount of time they will take to cook. Give it a good stir, then add the risotto rice. Season well and, if using tomato puree, add this in now. Give it a good stir, and then add the stock.

Bring back to the boil. Once boiling, give a vigorous stir, and cover immediately. Turn the heat down as low as it will go and leave for 15 minutes. Do not remove lid during this time. Once the time has elapsed, remove the lid – the rice should be cooked. If not you will need to add a little more liquid and keep an eye on it. If you are using yoghurt for a creamy risotto, add it now. Stir and add cheese if desired. Allow to stand and cool for a couple of minutes, sprinkle with a little Parmesan cheese if you like, and serve.

Liver – boosting Potato and Vegetable Salad

This is a detoxifying recipe.

10 small new potatoes with skins on

Black pepper

Sea salt

¼ tsp paprika

2 tblsp cold-pressed olive oil

2 cups broccoli

6 cups washed lettuce, dried and torn into small pieces

2 cups chopped spinach

1 cup alfalfa sprouts

1 cup finely sliced red cabbage

½ cup low-fat mayonnaise

Boil the potatoes for approximately 20 minutes until tender. Drain, cool and cut into chunks. Place in a bowl. Add pepper and salt, paprika and oil and toss well. Place potato mixture on baking paper and bake on the top shelf of a pre-heated oven set at 190°C/375°F/ Gas Mark 5 for 10 minutes.

Steam the broccoli for 5 minutes or until tender. Remove from heat and plunge into very cold water for approximately 40 seconds to prevent overcooking and then drain well.

Place the lettuce and spinach in a bowl, add the sprouts and cabbage. Cut broccoli lengthwise and add to greens. Add the low-fat mayonnaise. Remove potatoes from the oven and add to the salad

Hummus with crudité s

Serves about 4

This is a great dish as it relies on protein-packed chickpeas and fresh vitamin-filled vegetables to fill you up. It' s very easy to prepare (especially if you have a hand-mixer), and also makes a good starter if you have friends for dinner, as it' s not obviously 'diet' food.

1 can chickpeas in water

1 – 2 cloves garlic (according to taste – and how many people you may be breathing on later!)

Juice of approx. ½ lemon

tsp olive oil

tsp tahini paste

Salt and pepper

Drain the chickpeas (but keep a small amount of the water). Blend to your preferred consistency. Crush the garlic and add it and the lemon juice, oil and tahini to the paste. Mix together and season.

Serve with sticks of fresh vegetables such as carrots, cucumber, celery and whole cherry tomatoes. It is also nice with Ryvita, crackers or pitta bread

'Easy Conscience' Vegetable Curry

This is a real 'comfort' treat that is incredibly low fat and nutritionally fantastic, with lots of those amazing and varied vegetables. Protein is somewhat lacking in this meal, but is present in the yoghurt, nuts and the lentils if you choose to include them.

Serves 2 – 4

2 onions

Garlic cloves (as many as you like)

5 sprays of 'fry light' or 1 tsp olive oil

4 white cardamom pods

2 cloves

2 bay leaves

Small piece of cinnamon bark (or ½ - 1 tsp ground cinnamon)

1 tsp fresh coriander (or ½ - 1 tsp ground coriander)

1 tsp cumin seeds (or ½ - 1 tsp ground cumin)

Small nub of chopped fresh ginger (or ½ tsp ground ginger)

½ - 1 tsp each ground turmeric and chilli flakes (or ground chilli)

Handful of peanuts / chopped walnuts / cashews or chopped

Brazil nuts

½ - 1 pint stock

1 medium – sized potato, diced

2 sweet potatoes, diced

4 medium carrots, sliced thick

Any other vegetables you may have (broad beans, baby sweet corn, peas, mushrooms, cabbage, sugar snap peas or mange tout, cauliflower, etc.)

A good squeeze of tomato puree

1 tsp mango chutney

Handful lentils (optional)

Small pot of total 0% fat Greek yoghurt

Coriander as garnish if desired

Finely chop onions, crush garlic and start to sauté in heated, oiled pan. Stir constantly and add the spices and the nuts. Once the aroma starts to be released and your onions start to go translucent, add the powdered spices. If the pan is sticking add a little water or stock. Add the potato and sweet potatoes to the spicy mixture, stirring constantly. Let these soften for about 5 minutes, then add the carrots. Add some stock or water and let this mixture cook for around 5 to 10 minutes.

Add the rest of your vegetables and stir together. Add the tomato puree, mango chutney and the lentils (uncooked) if you are using them. Give a good stir. Add enough stock to more or less cover the vegetables and bring to the boil. Once boiling, cover and immediately reduce the heat. Stir occasionally and check after 15 – 20 minutes to see if vegetables are nearly cooked. Once you feel that they are cooked to your liking, take the lid off to allow the sauce to reduce. Once the consistency is as you like, remove from the heat and allow to cool slightly. Add the yoghurt. If you have any fresh coriander you could use this to garnish.

This is quite a filling, starchy dish. If lentils have been added it should be sufficient as a one-pot dinner. However, you can serve it with a number of things depending on your mood. It works with plain, steamed basmati rice. Whole-wheat chapattis are also good. Another favourite is to have with poppadoms (great if you are trying to be wheat-free, as they are made with gram flour). You can buy uncooked poppadoms and put them in the microwave, with no oil, for just under a minute. Keep an eye on them, as they will puff up quickly and can easily burn.

Dahl

Serves 2 – 4

If you want to cut out wheat and refined carbohydrates, this is a great lunch dish accompanied by wholegrain rice or a green salad. It's also good with grilled meat, fish or curries.

250g red lentils

575ml water

½ tsp each ground turmeric, cumin and coriander

1 tsp olive oil

1 tbslsp black mustard seeds

1 small onion, chopped very fine

Salt and pepper

Splash of milk

Put the lentils in a small-ish saucepan. Cover with the water, add the ground spices and bring to the boil. Once boiling, reduce the heat immediately. Simmer gently until the lentils have absorbed all the water and are a soft, sludgy consistency (you may need to add more water, but do so a little at a time). Once these are cooked – usually after about 20 minutes (but do check throughout cooking because if they burn and stick to the pan it's a nightmare to wash up!) Put them to one side.

Gently heat the oil and add your mustard seeds. You will need to use a pan with a lid, which should be put on as soon as the seeds are added. You will soon hear them start to 'pop' and, once you have judged that most of them have popped, add the onions and give a good stir. The mustard seeds in oil can be quite 'spitty', but any spitting will stop as soon as the onions are added. Cook the onions slowly to make sure they are really soft. Once they are soft enough to be eaten, add the lentil mixture and seasonings, and stir well. If your mixture is not soft enough, add milk to loosen it a little.

Tropical Fruit Loaf

300 g wholemeal plain flour
1 ½ tsp baking powder - or just use self-raising flour
175g muscovado sugar
1 tsp grated lime rind
1 egg
1 medium banana – mashed
1 tub low-fat fromage frais or 0% fat Greek yoghurt
2 handfuls of raisins
25g desiccated coconut

Heat oven to 180°C / 350°F / Gas Mark 4 and prepare a loaf tin with butter and flour or greaseproof paper.

Add the wholemeal flour to a mixing bowl (with baking powder if needed) and stir in the sugar and lime rind. Make a well in the middle of the mixture and add the rest of the ingredients. Stir really well and spoon into your loaf tin. Put in the oven for about 40 minutes – it may need a bit longer, so make sure you check the centre is cooked before you take it from the oven.

Cheat' s Brulee

The soft fruit in this one could include bananas, berries, melon or peaches, or you could gently cook a little apple, pear or rhubarb (just place in a pan on a low heat and leave to stew down in their own juices – though you may have to add a tiny bit of water just to set it off. You could even add a little booze – whiskey, brandy, or amaretto – but that would not be so virtuous!)

Fruit of your choice

1 tub 0% fat Greek yoghurt / low-fat fromage frais
Demerara sugar

Line the bottom of a ramekin with your fruit (about 1 inch deep). You may like to add some spices such as ground cinnamon or clove, or just leave it quite simple. Add your yoghurt to fill the ramekin to the top and generously sprinkle with sugar. Whack under a pre-heated grill until the sugar bubbles.

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PROMOTING HEALTH NATURALLY