At Eisai our corporate mission is to give first thought to patients and their families, and to increasing the benefits health care provides. We call this mission ‘human healthcare’ or (hhc). We believe that in order to truly understand the perspectives of patients and their families that it is important for us to see their situation through their eyes and pick up on thoughts and feelings that might not be expressed in words. Our hhc mission transcends nationalities, national borders, gender and age – bringing us closer to each other and the patients we serve.
Chemo Cookery Club
Around the Kitchen Table
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Foreword

We are delighted to provide this book for people who want to learn more about cancer and nutrition. This practical book is full of useful information and delicious, easy to create recipes to help people with cancer, their family and carers take a positive step in their treatment journey.

The creation of Around the Kitchen Table has been a journey for all of us at Eisai in EMEA. We first met the team at the Maggie’s Centres two years ago and partnered with them as our employee charity. Through Maggie's we were introduced to the needs of people to have the simple extra support that can be found in every centre just to have a cup of tea and a chat around one of the Centre's tables. Maggie’s introduced us to one of their Glasgow centre user's, Marina Carruthers. Maz demonstrated to us immense courage, building a ‘A wee boost’, her programme to bring nutritious food to all of those fighting cancer while she was waging her own battle with ovarian cancer. She inspired us to initiate this project with her and we hope that we reflect in this book her drive and ethos to help others.

We are indebted to Penny Ericson, her husband Simon Hawkins and the team at the Chemo Cookery Club – Barbara Parry and Simon Firullo for sharing with us their experience, creativity and deep knowledge of cancer & food. Throughout the creation of the book colleagues from Eisai across EMEA met people with cancer, learned about their specialised nutritional needs, tested recipes and acted as models for the photography. It has been an engaging and unforgettable experience for us thanks entirely to Penny, Simon, Simon and Barbara.

We hope that you enjoy cooking these wonderful recipes, reading about the experiences of others with cancer, learning from the research and insights as much as we have.

Bon appetite!

Gary Hendler
President and CEO, Eisai EMEA

About Maggie’s Centres

People with cancer need places like these. Located in the grounds of major NHS cancer hospitals, Maggie's Centres are places that can give the extra emotional, practical and social support that people with cancer need.

Information and practical advice about nutrition is essential in supporting a cancer diagnosis as treatment and recovery can affect the appetite in many ways. Cookbooks like this one are an essential component of offering that support and we are delighted that they will be available in Maggie's Centres.

Maz’s story

Glasgow, Scotland

Maz Carruthers was on holiday in Alaska when she was rushed into hospital with stomach pain. “They opened me up and found a box of frogs. So when doctors told me that I had ovarian cancer I laughed because I honestly thought they were joking. But there is nothing you can do – you have to accept what’s happening to you.”

Maz was diagnosed with advanced ovarian cancer. Surgeons removed Maz’s womb, ovaries and parts of her abdomen. She began a gruelling course of chemotherapy. Initially, Maz had a life-threatening allergic reaction to the treatment. Four and a half weeks later, after starting treatment with a different type of chemotherapy, Maz was finally allowed home to Glasgow in Scotland.

In February last year, Maz finished her first course of treatment and was told her cancer was in remission. But just eight months later, it returned. Tests revealed she had four inoperable tumours in her abdomen and she started a second round of chemotherapy. Maz responded brilliantly to the treatment, which finished in April 2012 and the tumours had vanished. Unfortunately, doctors told her that because her cancer is genetic, it would return.

Maz turned her boundless energy and courage to create ‘A Wee Boost’, a social enterprise to bring a juice bar and café to the world famous Beatson Cancer Centre Hospital in Glasgow. The café would help people with cancer and their families to have better, healthier food choices while getting treatment and also provide a project for those taking a break from their jobs during treatment.

“When I first got ill, I realised that if I can make myself feel better and more able to deal with cancer and its treatments through what I eat, then I would try to eat more healthily. It helped me and I hope I can now give others the opportunity to make the same choices with a bit more ease. The trick is to keep my body strong enough to cope with the treatments. When you get cancer you feel as if everything is out of your control, but what you eat and drink is one thing you can still manage. It makes sense to me to give your body all the help it can get when it is dealing with cancer and having organic, healthy choices is one way of doing that. Chemotherapy affects people in different ways – it changes your tastebuds, destroys your appetite, makes you sick and it’s easy to get disheartened, to stop enjoying food but if you can’t eat, you have no fuel. If you have no fuel, you can’t fight. And you need to fight this disease. I intend to keep fighting it with everything I have.”

We dedicate this book to the memory of Marina Carruthers. She was the inspiration for this book.
Introduction

I was thrilled to be asked by the team at Eisai EMEA to write a cookery book in support of people with cancer and their carers. I had no idea that my first book, Chemo Cookery Club, was going to be so well received and Around the Kitchen Table is a perfect extension to what I set out to do – put a cookery book directly into the hands of people at the time they need it. As well as doing something positive about the one thing that we have in our control when things get tricky. We all have to eat and sharing food in the company of others is at the core of our existence.

When my husband and chief guinea pig, Simon was in treatment for his cancer we spent four years in chemo suites, oncology reception rooms and special hospital wards. We’re fortunate because Simon is now at home and doing well. This didn’t happen by magic. It was a real team effort. To start, Simon had to have self-belief, strength and the will to keep going – especially when times got really tough. Then I, along with family and friends, had to keep him strong, positive and looking forward. Next, the very special team of doctors, oncologists, surgeons, nurses and hospital staff kept him alive. The final piece of the team was the life-saving drugs, without which none of his treatment would have been possible. The people that research, develop and bring these drugs and treatments into existence are a silent and invisible part of the team that made all the difference. Not only did the drugs work, they also gave us hope. They deserve a very special thanks.

There are so many ‘special diets’ in the media and on bookshelves. I’ve never bought into them. I do believe in healthy living, moderation and going the extra mile to enjoy the experience of food and drink. To me, this book is a sampler of possibilities. As always, I turn to reliable comfort foods concentrating on waking up the taste-buds and highlighting ingredients we know to be preventative and helpful during treatment as set out in the policies of the World Cancer Research Fund and the American Institute For Cancer Research.

I am, as ever, grateful to my great friend and working partner Simon Firullo, for his beautiful photography and relentless commitment. He too lost his mother to this dreadful disease.

I’m especially grateful to Barbara Parry or as we know her, ‘Mrs Watercress’, for her great cancer research dietitian’s insight and her deep specialised knowledge of nutrition for breast cancer.

I hope that you enjoy this book and find some useful information and creative ideas to help you through your journey. Hopefully turning lemons into lemonade! All the best.

Penny Ericson

Simon’s story

Winchester, England

My name is Simon. I was diagnosed with cancer of the colon in 2009 and had an operation very soon afterwards. This was quickly followed by a three-month course of chemotherapy. Long days in the chemo suite, lots of blood tests and scans. There were many side-effects from the chemo, including baldness and the loss of feeling in my hands and feet but by far the worst was the effect on my taste-buds.

I lost all sense of taste and all interest in food in general. Yes, there was plenty of nutritional advice such as ‘oh you must eat lots of iron’. I was bewildered. How did I cook iron? As the chemo continued my lack of interest in food intensified and I found the treatment tougher and tougher.

Then one night, I was in my local pub getting my usual intake of iron (pints of Guinness) when I met this gorgeous blonde Canadian lady. She was horrified by my lack of nutrition and also my lack of knowledge. I became her project. She created recipes that were designed to give me all the nutrients I needed, which miraculously I could taste and enjoy.

My appetite returned, I got stronger and food once again became a positive part of my life. One of the recipes I enjoyed the most was a posh version of shepherd’s pie that we created together to encourage me to eat lentils. We called it ‘Simon’s Pie’.

Sadly, the cancer returned. I had to endure more ill-health and long courses of chemotherapy but throughout, the food she served me kept me strong. I was fit enough to have the 12-hour ground-breaking operation that saved my life.

I owe that lady my life, that lady is Penny Ericson.
Mary’s story

La Rochelle, France

Mary Novi was first diagnosed with breast cancer in 1994 aged 32. Her cancer is hereditary and has sadly taken her mother. Her sister also has been diagnosed. Mary’s immediate treatment included a two-part mastectomy, chemo and radiotherapy, hormone therapy and reconstructive surgery. Mary’s cancer metastasised in 2011 prompting a further five treatment regimes leaving her exhausted and dispirited about her hair loss and attractiveness.

Up until the return of her cancer Mary was the director of communications at the Chamber of Agriculture for the Charentes Maritime Department in France. She is wonderfully creative enjoying painting, ceramics, clothing and jewelry design. This year she has decided that Italian would be a good language to learn! Her spirit and determination remain strong.

It’s almost impossible to separate the French way of life from the quality and enjoyment of food, for Mary this has been a great challenge. The effects of treatment like ‘metal mouth’ have been a constant challenge. She now feels different from other people in a culture where dining out and inviting people to eat is like drinking water. “People don’t come to me to eat anymore,” she says with a smile.

Now aged 51, Mary has found balance in keeping her diet nutritious and simple, concentrating on fish, fresh vegetables, fruit, poultry, rice and organic whole grains. She does admit to the indulgence of a small bit of fine chocolate and a little butter. Once in a while, she craves a chocolate éclair or a baguette sandwich.

Mary’s commitment to simple and nutritious food has helped her overcome extreme weight loss and the other ravaging symptoms from years of treatment. It’s kept her strong. She is currently preparing to return to the work she enjoys.
A note to our readers

Whilst I have worked very hard to ensure that the recipes and contents of this book are nutritionally sound, everyone has individual needs. This book does not offer specific dietary advice, rather it is a collection of ideas for people and their carers, whose health and treatment have affected the daily pleasures of food. If you have any questions about what is best or appropriate for you, consult your dietician or doctor.

Around the Kitchen Table has been produced, in its entirety, in a home kitchen using domestic tools and appliances and the photography is a true representation of the dishes. As such, things like cooking times, temperature controls and exact ingredient measurements may vary. The oven temperatures are given as °Cf, centigrade, fan-assisted, (see conversion chart, oven temperatures on page 122).

My principles about ingredients and preparation are simple
The process is ‘market to table in a day’. I think of each recipe as a part of ‘a day in the life’ of someone either living on their own and undergoing treatment or a carer responsible for the well-being of someone in treatment of one form or another and thus treated in the manner that they would go about things. In other words, not as professional chefs and medical professionals, but as mere mortals with the resources we have to hand.

I believe in ‘field-to-fork’ by the quickest and closest route. I have used readily available ingredients from markets, butchers, farms, green grocers and supermarkets. The fresher the ingredients the higher their nutritional value, for example, potatoes straight from the field retain their full nutritional value, whereas washed and bagged supermarket potatoes inevitably lose some of their value due to refrigeration, shipping and storage.

There are a few ingredients that I use that may not be familiar and a few others where I use a generic description but use a specific type or brand. They are:

Pastry
I have chosen to use store bought short pastry, puff pastry and filo. Wherever possible the recipes are designed to ease complexity and deliver a great dish. This seemed like a natural shortcut.

Sauces and marinades
Here I have offered a mixture, some from scratch, others store bought. For example, I have given a recipe for Hollandaise sauce but you may find it easier to use store bought. Where I have included a recipe it’s because the flavours are inherent to the dish. Store bought will alter the nutritional analysis as they tend to be higher in salt, sugar and fats.

‘Season to taste’
This generally means add salt and pepper to taste. When preparing dishes I season throughout the process as this produces a different flavour to only seasoning at the end of preparation.

Pepper
This is black pepper unless specified otherwise, for example, white, freshly cracked or chilli.

Salt
I have used Maldon sea salt unless otherwise specified. If this is unavailable, a delicate fleur de sel (also a fine sea salt) is a good substitute. Table salt can be sharper so be careful.

Sriracha
This is a chilli sauce originally from Malaysia. Used judiciously it adds lift to sauces and marinades without the intense heat of other chilli sauces. It is great for bumping up flavour in response to loss of taste as the result of treatment. It is available in many supermarkets and Asian grocery stores. For a bit more information about chilli paste and seasoning with chillies go to The basics, page 124.

A word on wine, spirits and the use of alcohol
Some of the Around the Kitchen Table recipes include alcohol as an ingredient. It’s used to add and enhance flavour, for example, in a marinade or as an aperitif to ‘tingle the taste buds’. The intention is to encourage the enjoyment of food and find ways to enhance its nutritional intake. Remember that, when heated, alcohol evaporates but the flavour remains, so it’s not like you’ll be guzzling down half bottles of wine!

In every instance, the recipes can be followed without the use of alcohol. Substitutes can be used, for example, using a juniper berry infusion to replace gin. I leave it to you, the cook, to choose.

In general, the advice about drinking alcohol after a cancer diagnosis is expressed in terms of whether you’ve been a drinker in the past or not. If you have not previously been a drinker then best not to start! If you have enjoyed a glass or three though, it’s recommended that you have alcohol-free days and try to keep to as little as possible when you do. Ideally, no more than 1-2 units a day, as alcohol is known to increase the risk of a number of cancers.

Sound guidance and helpful information is available on the World Cancer Research Fund (www.wcrf-uk.org) and American Institute of Cancer Research (www.aicr.org) websites.

My thoughts on shortcuts
The spirit of this book is to make good food accessible when times aren’t their best. There are so many well-prepared foods available today. If you fancy a recipe but the preparation seems daunting go and buy it ready-made then do the easy stuff like preparing fresh sauces and condiments.
Cancer & food
What we know so far
Barbara Parry

Barbara Parry, MSc, RD is a senior research dietician in the Winchester and Andover Breast Unit at the Royal Hampshire County Hospital, Winchester, UK. She has been a registered dietician since 1982 and a specialist diet and breast cancer researcher since 1996.

In 2007, the World Cancer Research Fund and American Institute for Cancer Research, published Food, Nutrition, Physical Activity and the Prevention of Cancer: a Global Perspective. This international expert report holds at its heart the provision of dietary guidance to populations and individuals based on high quality and reliable scientific research. That's not to say we know all there will ever be to know about the diet-breast cancer relationship but in the past five decades we've come an incredibly long way. Research has allowed us to be confident that diet and physical activity are of fundamental importance in preventing cancers as well as having a central role to play during both treatment (how well we tolerate our treatment, for example) and recovery (in particular, promoting future health and reducing the likelihood of cancer coming back).

When talking about breast cancer specifically, it's helpful to think of it in all its complexity. We know a lot about its risk factors and how to treat the different types of breast cancer that present with different hormone-sensitivities. Some are diagnosed with an obvious lump, others aren't. Some are found early on in the disease process, so are more advanced, some respond to tablet treatments, some need chemo, some need radiotherapy...and so it goes. There are still gaps in our understanding of what I often refer to as a really complex jigsaw with many, many tiny pieces.

With this in mind, Around the Kitchen Table is not designed to be all things to all people, nor does it attempt to be a sole source of nutritional advice. It's intended to help patients, family and friends who want to find a way through the breast cancer tunnel. It is however, a reliable and evidence-based guiding light.

The most recently updated, breast cancer specific, dietary guidelines follow the evidence originally included in the 2007 global perspective report. These observations and recommendations are:

- 42% of breast cancer cases, (based on UK statistics) are preventable through healthy lifestyle changes
- stay in shape. Be a healthy weight and as lean as possible without being underweight
- be more active. Aim to reach at least 30 minutes moderate activity a day. Moderate activity is anything that gets your heart beating a bit faster and makes you breath more deeply – like brisk walking, gentle swimming or dancing
- cut down on alcohol. It can be all too easy to regularly indulge and the evidence is strongly in support of having no more than one standard drink daily with some alcohol-free days too

Geoffrey’s story
Ashbourne, England

Geoffrey Venison was first diagnosed with thyroid cancer 30 years ago, aged 40, when he found a swelling on his neck. He underwent surgery to remove most of his thyroid gland and recovered well. 25 years on, Geoffrey noticed a reappearance of the swelling and tests quickly confirmed that the cancer had returned. He had further surgery to remove the remainder of his thyroid followed by two courses of radiiodine treatment and one cycle of radiotherapy. Soon after a lump was found confirming that the cancer had spread to his clavicle, ribs and lungs. Geoffrey’s outlook was pretty poor.

In February 2012 Geoffrey was put forward to take part in a clinical trial. Over the past 18 months, the cancer in his lungs and rib has shrunk and it has now reached a stage where it has ‘stabilised’. Whilst the trial treatment has made a positive impact and Geoffrey is virtually pain-free and living actively, he has struggled with diarrhea, weight loss and fatigue.

Geoffrey and his family have had to radically change their diet and change their ideas about healthy food. He and his wife have worked closely with their local hospital dietician to develop a healthy and nourishing calorie-rich, high fat diet. They make the most of basic ingredients such as cream and butter and avoid ‘low-fat’ alternatives.

His cancer and its treatment have also affected what he likes to drink. He previously liked a glass of wine or two with meals, but he no longer likes the taste of wine. His tastebuds have changed so he continues to find new flavours to enjoy.

Now 70, Geoffrey admits that he doesn’t live as actively as before but he still enjoys or round of golf three times a week, spending time riding his classic motorcycle and quality time with his wife and three children. Geoffrey’s still on the move with West Country holidays and planned visit to Australia to visit his son. Well done Geoffrey!
There are many factors that influence our food choices, and these include our experiences from a young age, the influence of family and other significant people, culture and heritage, how we use food for celebration and hospitality and how it comforts us.

Food enjoyment is the result of acknowledging the wide role that food plays in our lives. What a great bonus when good nutrition is also at its heart.

Breast cancer is the most common cancer affecting women. Unlike other cancers, weight gain during treatment is more common than weight loss. Whilst in some respects not losing weight can seem quite reassuring, research has shown that women who gain more than 6kg (14lbs) following their breast cancer diagnosis are more likely to encounter future health problems than those who have better weight control. Healthy weight protects against heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes and importantly reduces the risk of further cancer.

With this book, Around the Kitchen Table we, in the Chemo Cookery Club team aim to offer anyone who experiences the shock of a cancer diagnosis a way to make ordinary food special – with taste-tempting flavours and simple to follow recipes.

Our unique ‘thumbs-up score’ illustrates the nutritional information at a glance so you can easily decide if the dishes will be helpful in meeting dietary needs and preferences, whether you’re a patient, a friend or a carer.

For some, a breast cancer diagnosis is associated with loss of appetite and weight loss. With this in mind, we’ve provided a range of recipes to cover all possibilities. Some of them are low in calories for those working to control weight gain and virtually all are ‘nutrient dense’, meaning they are packed with nutritional value even if the calories are low. That’s where the ‘thumbs-up’ score comes in.

About our thumbs-up nutritional analyses

The information is intended as general guidance, not as clinical research or medical advice. To provide the nutritional values of our recipes we use purpose built software called, Dietplan (version 6). There are too many variables regarding the source of ingredients, age and quality to be perfectly accurate. For detailed information regarding specific foods and ingredients two good sources of information are: the World Cancer Research Fund, www.wcrf-uk.org and the American Institute for Cancer Research, www.aicr.org. If you require specific advice contact your doctor or registered dietician.

The nutritional analysis uses a generous point of reference. The ‘thumbs-up’ scoring for recipes is based on a percentage of Reference Nutrition Intake (RNI), based on a number of general assumptions. Everyone’s nutritional requirements are different, so demonstrating that the recipes are good sources of these nutrients and also being consistent is important.

Penny’s husband Simon was chosen as the ‘standard person’ to base the RNI comparisons on. He’s a 50-ish male of moderate occupational and recreational activity. Male RNIs are generally higher for nutrients than the female equivalent and this offers an approximation for any increased energy needs that people undergoing treatment might have. As the RNI for iron is generally higher for women than men, an average of the male and female RNIs have been used for comparing iron contributions of the recipes. In other words, we used a sample that has covers the best average section of the UK population. Special provision has not been made for children in the nutritional analyses but that is not to say these recipes might not tempt the tastebuds of any age.

If a particular nutrient isn’t listed beside a recipe, this doesn’t mean the recipe is necessarily devoid of that nutrient, just that a portion provides less than 20% of the RNI (and so doesn’t have a thumbs-up equivalent). The thumbs-up scoring is based on:

- >100% → 5
- 80-100% → 4
- 60-79% → 3
- 40-59% → 2
- 20-39% → 1
- 1-19% → nil but may at times be credited for other value

The RNI is the amount of a nutrient that is enough to ensure that the needs of nearly all the population (97.5%) are being met. Individual nutritional needs vary widely. Our figures are based on the UK population, not individuals. For further information about RNI visit www.foodafactoflife.org.uk

Specialist advice

Our recipes may contain some ingredients that you have been advised to avoid by your specialist. We recommend that you follow this advice. The recipes do lend themselves to substituting ingredients (even though this will change the nutrient analysis somewhat) and we encourage you to do this to make a recipe just right for you.

Our recipes are designed to be versatile and flexible. If you’ve been advised by your specialist to avoid eating some foods during treatment and one of them appears as an ingredient, simply substitute an alternative. If an ingredient is something you have a personal distaste for, again, change it to something you like. Bear in mind that cancer treatment can do strange things to your tastebuds, so flavours and textures you haven’t enjoyed in the past may end up becoming your new favourite foods.
Friendly foods

Wouldn't it be grand if food could prevent or cure cancer? Alas, this is not so – YET.

The right food can however, lower the risk of developing the disease, aid in treatment and recovery – physically, mentally and emotionally. Many foods have cancer-fighting properties such as antioxidants and we are beginning to understand how phytochemical compounds protect cells from disease.

Cancer does not manifest overnight. It takes time to develop and goes through stages. We know good eating and a healthy diet can be of great assistance to the quality of life during all stages of cancer, it's many forms of treatment and after. There is extensive and compelling evidence that certain foods and preparation methods can contribute to cancer development.

Initiation, promotion, progression, actual and metastases (spread) are the stages. Get to know them and learn as much as you can about where you are and how nutrition can help.

Don't forget, we eat with our eyes. In many instances, the best nutrition comes from the very components that give food its colour. It seems nature intended wellness to be bold and bright!

Whenever possible, choose foods that are in season and as fresh as they can be. Locally sourced foods have often travelled shorter distances from field-to-shopping basket and so may be better sources of nutrients, particularly if prepared in a way that will preserve those water-soluble and heat sensitive ones.

It might be helpful to include a probiotic supplement if your treatment results in digestive problems such as diarrhea and abdominal discomfort as a result of flatulence. Probiotics are a source of ‘friendly bacteria’ that can help replace the natural bacteria in your gut and aid digestion.

Be mindful that treatment can reduce your white blood cell count, known as neutropenia and if so, you may be advised to avoid foods and drinks (including probiotics, live and bio products, uncooked foods, even ordinary tap water) to reduce your risk of developing a food- or water-borne infection. Be alarmed if your wee turns pink! Add beetroot to salads or make a visually stunning beetroot risotto. Yummy!

Remember, the definitive guide is always best to come from a registered dietician or your doctor. The right food can however, lower the risk of developing the disease, aid in treatment and recovery – physically, mentally and emotionally. Many foods have cancer-fighting properties such as antioxidants and we are beginning to understand how phytochemical compounds protect cells from disease.

Beans – legumes & pulses

Lentils, peas, chickpeas, soya, fava and other varieties are full of phytochemicals found naturally in plants. They are also a great source of fibre that helps our digestive system get rid of waste efficiently, including things that may be harmful to our health. This is one of the reasons why beans and other fibre rich foods are associated with a reduced risk of bowel cancer. Beans are also a great source of protein and a really good source of iron (especially when eaten with foods or drinks that are a good source of vitamin C; vitamin C enhances the absorption of iron from plant foods). Soya beans in particular contain ‘isoflavones’ which are naturally occurring oestrogen-like chemicals that may block breast tumour growth. Lentils and peas are wonderfully versatile and full of flavour. Chickpeas make a great snack as they come, or can be made into hummus.

Berries

Like beetroot, berries are colourful fruits, that are high in fibre and vitamin C. There are so many varieties to enjoy – cherries, cranberries, raspberries, blackberries, blueberries, strawberries, damsons, loganberries, rasberries...the list goes on! Great eaten on their own or added to brighten a meal. How much more delicious is the simplest of fruit salads thanks to the addition of a handful of berries. Start the day with a berry smoothie or freeze grapes and use them as ice cubes.

Avocados

Just one avocado contains one quarter of the adult recommended daily amount of potassium and provides a rich source of a number of nutrients that can act as antioxidants and attack free radicals in the body. Guacamole is an easy and light snack at any time.

Carrots

Carrots are orange in colour because of the β-carotene they contain; β-carotene is one of a group of naturally occurring chemicals called ‘carotenoids’ which are antioxidants. Raw carrots are also a source of ‘falcarinol’ that researchers suggest may slow the growth of cancer cells. Carrots are super as a snack on their own. They are also marvelous juliened and added to any stir-fry as they hold their shape and texture and add the perfect contrast to a green medley. Apricots, squash and sweet potatoes are also a good source of carotenoids. Orange just became one of my favourite colours!

Beans – legumes & pulses

Lentils, peas, chickpeas, soya, fava and other varieties are full of phytochemicals found naturally in plants. They are also a great source of fibre that helps our digestive system get rid of waste efficiently, including things that may be harmful to our health. This is one of the reasons why beans and other fibre rich foods are associated with a reduced risk of bowel cancer. Beans are also a great source of protein and a really good source of iron (especially when eaten with foods or drinks that are a good source of vitamin C; vitamin C enhances the absorption of iron from plant foods). Soya beans in particular contain ‘isoflavones’ which are naturally occurring oestrogen-like chemicals that may block breast tumour growth. Lentils and peas are wonderfully versatile and full of flavour. Chickpeas make a great snack as they come, or can be made into hummus. friendly foods
Cruciferous vegetables – broccoli, Brussels sprouts, bok choi, cabbage, cauliflower & kale
These beautiful vegetables contain chemicals called ‘glucosinolates’ that when digested are broken down into isothiocyanates and indoles. In laboratory and human studies, all of these are demonstrating beneficial effects for cancer prevention.

Raw broccoli is higher in calcium, vitamins A and C, than milk and oranges. As we usually eat broccoli cooked, the heat sensitive and water-soluble nutrients such as vitamin C and calcium can be diminished. We are still learning how powerful these wonderful veggies truly are. Try crucifers with tzatziki and hummus. Delicious!

Organic eggs & egg yolk
Eggs provide us with the highest quality dietary protein, readily providing us with the essential amino acids that our bodies aren’t able to manufacture. The fat profile of eggs varies according to the diet of the hens that lay them. The fat is found exclusively in the yolk. Eggs are also a good source of folic acid and riboflavin (B-group vitamins) as well as the antioxidant trace mineral selenium. Eggs can be prepared to be either savoury or sweet dishes and are easy to eat and digest.

Mushrooms
Mushrooms are a particularly good source of the B-vitamins riboflavin, niacin and panthothenic acid as well as the minerals copper and selenium. Some people just can’t get their heads around the texture of mushrooms. If you are one of them, try not to pass the little belters by. Added as a purée to sauces they don’t have to overpower other ingredients and all the goodness is still there.

Oily fish & flax seed
As a source of omega-3 fats these are unequalled. Oily fish such as herring, mackerel and salmon are important sources of vitamin A, selenium and vitamin D as well as omega-3 fats. Oily fish (in fact, fish in general) are also a good source of protein and naturally low in saturated fats.

Worldwide, there are concerns about the toxins that can accumulate in fish resulting from the pollution of our oceans and rivers. Heavy metal toxicity, e.g. mercury, is a particular concern. Further, certain fishing methods are environmentally destructive which may discourage us from choosing fish as part of our regular eating pattern. Take care in sourcing your fish and shellfish, buy from stockists that have a clear sustainability policy. We have been advised for many years to include oily fish 2-3 times per week for a healthy heart and to reduce risk of stroke but it is emerging as important for cancer prevention as well. Omega-3 fats have been shown through laboratory studies to reduce inflammation and encourage the synthesis of prostaglandins; both processes disrupt the survival of cancer cells.

Salmon from well-managed fisheries, sardines, farmed rainbow trout, barramundi, farmed mussels and other shellfish are less likely to have high levels of environmental toxins but it is always a good idea to ask your fish supplier for more information.

Flax seed is the best plant source of omega 3 fats but the jury is still out as to whether it has a role to play in cancer prevention. While it can boost your intake of magnesium, manganese, selenium, thiamin (vitamin B1) and dietary fibre, it may also interfere with the absorption of some medicines. Using 1-4 tablespoons per day appears to be safe but really it is probably ‘one to watch’ until more is known about its biological effects.

Peppers & jalapenos
Peppers (capsicums) are a top source of vitamin C, especially when eaten raw. Chilli peppers such as jalapenos contain a chemical called capsaicin that is being studied further as it has been shown to kill prostate and lung cancer cells in laboratory studies. Capsaicin is the very ingredient that makes chillies hot and might be just the thing to give a zing to your taste buds during treatment.

Seeds & nuts
Seeds and nuts such as pumpkin, sunflower and sesame seeds, almonds and walnuts are the most concentrated sources of plant protein and also contain other nutritional ‘goodies’ such as potassium, magnesium, zinc, vitamin E, iron, B vitamins and dietary fibre.

Zinc helps vitamin C do its job so healthy levels can improve healing time. Zinc also plays an important role in how well our taste buds work (we lose our taste sensitivity if we become deficient in zinc) so enjoying foods that provide us with zinc could help tantalise a flagging appetite too. Some seeds and nuts can be a non-dairy source of calcium as well.

Being such a powerhouse of nutrition (after all, seeds can be the source of many a thriving new plant in the vegetable garden), they can boost your intake of nutrients even when only small amounts are eaten. While some people argue that peanuts are not truly nuts, peanut butter has to be one of the best comfort foods that delivers so much in such a friendly way. Have it on toast or try it with banana in a smoothie.

Spices – turmeric & pepper – the good ones
Whilst there is no definitive opinion on the curative properties of herbs and spices, the practice of using them as treatment goes back millennia and exists today in every culture. If for no other reason, herbs and spices give us flavour, texture and aroma. Good news for curry fans. Around the Kitchen Table uses spices to delight the taste buds. They are used in small quantities so we have chosen not to focus on their medicinal potential.

Spinach & watercress
Dark green, leafy vegetables are great sources of dietary fibre, folate and carotenoids, all with potential cancer fighting properties. Perhaps it’s the folate they contain that makes them most interesting. Folate is important for producing and maintaining healthy DNA that carries each cell’s reproduction code. An error in the code means a mistake in the healthy division and reproduction of cells that may start the cancer process in the body.
Watercress is a rich source of the glucosinolate, gluconasturtiin (phenethylglucosinolate) and is allied to the cruciferous best friends we referred to earlier. Research is gradually helping us to understand why diets rich in such vegetables actually lowers cancer risk. As recently as last year, for example, an extract of watercress has been shown to disrupt the process by which breast cancer cells maintain their nutrition and blood supply. Without nutrients and blood to carry oxygen to them, cancer cells can’t survive or reproduce, which is great news!

**Tomatoes**
Tomatoes are rich in lycopene, an antioxidant that tackles those free radicals that are thought to trigger cancerous cell growth. Also found in some other vegetables and fruits, lycopene is actually best absorbed after cooking and is the most potent carotenoid antioxidant. Studies have shown lycopene to improve immune function, reduce inflammation and proliferation of cancer cells and even lower LDL (bad) cholesterol.

Tomatoes are also rich in vitamin C, which is most abundant when raw. As variety is the spice of life, enjoy tomatoes raw, cooked and often.

**Water**
Well, it isn’t exactly food but it cannot be ignored. Dehydration is an often overlooked symptom and relief is easy. Drink as much as you can. Little and often. flavour it, chill it, freeze it. Keep it with you.

**Whole grain**
Perhaps a good place to start is by describing just what is meant by whole grain. There are three distinct parts to plant grains; the germ, containing vitamin E and other antioxidant nutrients plus some fat; the endosperm, containing predominantly starchy carbohydrate with some B vitamins and some protein; the bran, a potent source of dietary fibre and other vitamins, minerals and nutrients, many with antioxidants.

Whole grain and wholemeal are terms that we sometimes use interchangeably but when it comes to the type of bread we buy or bake, we tend to think of whole grain as a granary-type while wholemeal is the smooth one. Granary bread is not to everyone’s taste and you’ll still find the wholemeal varieties make a better contribution to your nutrition than a white loaf. Having said that, a plain old white loaf has its place, especially if things are delicate in the colorectal department.

Whole grains are known to play an important role in prevention of cancers of the lower digestive tract and research continues to demonstrate cancer specific and other health benefits. Enjoy any grain-derived food whether it be a variety of bread, breakfast cereal, starchy grain, rice, polenta or pasta and favour those labeled wholemeal or whole grain whenever you can for an extra boost to your nutrient intake. Whole grains are a great source of iron and B vitamins as well.

**Yoghurt & probiotics**
Yoghurt is a light, nutrient-packed food that’s so versatile it can be used in the main course and then again for dessert! You can ‘turn down the heat’ in a curry by adding natural yoghurt but ‘turn up the nutrition’ because it’s a great source of calcium, protein, B-group vitamins and can also be a source of ‘friendly’ bacteria.

A side effect of treatment can be disruption to the normal balance of ‘friendly bacteria’ in the digestive tract causing such problems as bloating, flatulence, abdominal cramps or diarrhea. While everyone’s mix of digestive bacteria is different, it’s important to maintain the balance for healthy digestion and absorption of nutrients and to form part of the ‘first line of defence’ to protect the body from disease.

The Food and Agriculture Organisation/World Health Organisation definition states that probiotics are ‘live micro-organisms which when administered in adequate amounts confer a health benefit on the host’. From a dietary point of view, to be labeled ‘probiotic’ a food must contain a live, ‘viable’, strain of cells with known health benefits. Research into probiotics has focused on groups of diseased subjects and positive benefits in healthy populations have been difficult to demonstrate. Studies continue to define the action of probiotics and suggest some potential benefits in the regulation of the inflammatory response in cells, protection against absorption of ‘unfriendly’ micro-organisms and a possible role in increasing the activity of ‘natural killer cells’, thereby potentially protecting against abnormal tumour cell growth.

Cautionary advice may be given recommending the avoidance of ‘live’ yoghurts if your white blood cell count is low (neutropenia). Remember, the definitive guide is best to come from a registered dietician or your doctor.

In the absence of advice to the contrary, do try a delicious fruit smoothie to start your day.
Here comes the sun
a wee boost

Juices, smoothies and yoghurt are a perfect way to set you up for the day, especially when your appetite might be in need of a wee boost! They can be a quick way to have a nutritious ‘breakfast in a glass’ when time is tight and they’ll boost your intake of vitamin C and other nutrients too. Check out the thumbs-up guide for each recipe.

When yoghurt is an ingredient, you’ll boost your calcium, protein and B group vitamins. Probiotic yoghurts may offer some extra benefits as well.

Smoothies and shakes are simple and can be made in infinite combinations. Simply put everything into a blender and whip until smooth. Adding yoghurt makes a creamier smoothie, you can adjust the thickness using extra ice, frozen yoghurt or ice cream, all of which will adjust the nutritional content somewhat. Adding bananas, will also create a thicker, creamier consistency without adding a high fat or dairy ingredient. Also, pre-frozen fruits are readily available and convenient.

If you are sensitive to seeds, pith and skins, pass the liquidised smoothie through a sieve before serving. All of these mixtures can be frozen in ice cube trays or lolly moulds to make small treats. They can be soothing on dry and tender mouths and can help to combat ‘plastic mouth’ or any ‘metallic taste’ that may be a side effect of your treatment.

Illustration is Fruit cubes & yoghurt, see page 26

Smoothies & shakes

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Grape cubes & juice

Serves 4 (very easy to prepare)

This is a great trick for a sore throat or dry mouth. It also can help as an appetite stimulant when treatment plays havoc with your desire to eat.

24-30 seedless red & green grapes
juice of choice

Wash the grapes and pop into the freezer. When you fancy a glass of juice pour chilled juice over the grapes. Simple!

Each portion provides 0g protein and 75kcal.

Tomato & orange refresher

Serves 4 (very easy to prepare)

Does this sound a bit odd? It might but it’s a delicious and nutritional winner.

4 tomatoes beefsteak
3 oranges
a few ice cubes
a sprig of mint for garnish

Slice the tomatoes and oranges then squeeze using a regular citrus press (juicer). Pass through a sieve. That’s it. Serve on ice.

If you have an ice crusher this makes a great granita that’s wonderfully soothing for a dry mouth or throat. Crushed ice by the bag is available from most supermarkets.

Each portion provides 3g protein and 85kcal.

Smoothies & shakes

nutrient thumbs-up score
vitamin C ★★★★
folate ★★★
vitamin A (total retinol equivalents) ★★★
vitamin B6 ★★★
thiamin ★★★
fibre (as non-starch polysaccharide) ★★★
Zippy mint cooler

Serves 4 (very easy to prepare)

I don’t usually add the honey but for those with a sweeter palate it’s just the ticket.

1 small bunch of fresh mint
300 ml water
1 slice of pineapple, skin & eyes removed (see The basics, page 124)
100 ml pineapple juice
6-8 ice cubes
sprigs of fresh mint for garnish

Pour boiling water over the mint leaves and allow to steep for 5-10 minutes then stir in honey if using.

Strain the mint infusion into a blender and add the fresh pineapple and juice. Blend until smooth. At this point either add the ice cubes to make a smoothie or pour over crushed ice.

Each portion provides 1g protein and 30kcal.

Fruit cubes & yoghurt

Serves 4 (very easy to prepare)

This is simply a delicious cooler and a great source of vitamin C.

500 ml fruit juice or fruit purée
a pinch of sugar (if preparing purée)
125 g yoghurt
125 ml water

Pour the juices into ice cube trays and freeze. For the purées, place various fruits into a blender with a pinch of sugar and mix until smooth. Pass through a sieve, pour into ice cube trays and freeze.

When ready to serve fill a glass with fruit cubes. Mix the yoghurt and water in a blender until frothy and pour over the cubes.

Each portion provides 8g protein and 210kcal.
Smoothies & shakes

Pineapple & mango freeze

Serves 4 (very easy to prepare)

This is a really refreshing smoothie. The sorbet adds zing that helps with dry mouth and can act as an appetite stimulant.

½ fresh pineapple, skin & eyes removed (see The Basics, page 124)
1 mango, peeled & stone removed
1 generous scoop lemon or lime sorbet
a dash of pineapple juice
extra ice cubes for thickness

Put everything in a blender and mix until smooth (use more or less ice for desired thickness).

Each portion provides 0.5g protein and 65kcal.

Berry breakfast

Serves 2 full 250ml portions or 4 light 120ml portions (very easy to prepare)

This is a great way to start the day. Pre-mixed frozen fruit is readily available.

100g yoghurt
225g mixed apple & cranberry juice
1 slice pineapple, skin & eyes removed (see The Basics, page 124)
225g frozen mixed berries
100g strawberries

Put everything into a blender and mix until smooth.
If you want a creamier smoothie use more yoghurt and if you want to adjust the thickness use ice.

This recipe provides 9g protein and 320kcal.

nutrient thumbs-up score
vitamin C
vitamin B6
calcium
fibre
(non-starch polysaccharide)
phosphorus
iodine
folate
potassium
magnesium
iron
copper
thiamin
riboflavin
protein

nutrient thumbs-up score
vitamin C
analysis for double portion
vitamin C
copper

Around the Kitchen Table

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Cool bananas

Serves 4 (very easy to prepare)

Anyone that’s met me eventually ends up with ‘cool bananas’ in their vocabulary. I have no idea what it means or where it came from – it just sounds happy.

3 peaches, peeled and stone removed (or 1 tin)
2 bananas
a squeeze of lime juice
150 ml apple juice
100g probiotic yoghurt drink (or yoghurt)
a few ice cubes

Put everything in a blender and whip up. That’s it! Serve immediately.

Each portion provides 2g protein and 105kcal.

Peanut butter & banana shake

Serves 4 (very easy to prepare)

When I was a kid peanut butter and banana sandwiches were one of my favourites. They still are, so this is for the kid in all of us!

2 ripe bananas
125 ml yoghurt, frozen yoghurt or milk
4 tbsp peanut butter
1 tbsp sugar (optional)

Cut the banana into chunks and place all ingredients in a blender and mix until thick and smooth. Add a drizzle of milk if too thick and more ice or frozen yoghurt if too thin. Easy-peasy!

Each portion provides 9g protein and 290kcal.
Elevensies
little & often

‘Little and often’. It’s a perky little statement that gets the point across but for any chemo suite warrior it’s a fine line. Food is one of the few things that remains familiar in varying degrees, something we can be in charge of when undergoing treatment. We all have to eat and drink. Listen to your body and encourage your brain when it comes to meals. A slow gentle start is good for everyone.

A cancer diagnosis can have any number of effects on how, what, when, where and why we eat but one thing is undeniable, providing your body with the nutrition it needs to tackle the disease and recover from treatment is really important. Go for the most nutritious foods you can when your appetite is small or your food tolerance is variable as it’s not just any old calories you need!

Concentrate on the positives. Turn lemons into lemonade! Try to savour the smell of freshly baked bread, the sound of bacon sizzling in the pan, the sight of a dramatic brandy flambé, the creamy texture of a soufflé just out of the oven. Tasting is just part of the experience. Don’t forget to enjoy it with all rest of your senses as well!

There’s something irresistible about in between time light dishes. It’s the perfect solution to using odd bits and leftovers as well. Here are a few sumptuous light dishes that are generally easy to prepare and a delight at anytime.

Illustration of asparagus with courgette ribbons, see page 39

Light meals

- Bacon & egg cupcakes
- Easy eggs Arlington
- Perfect pretzels
- Moroccan carrot & orange salad
- Asparagus with courgette ribbons
- Herb & fava bean tortilla
- Crispy shallot & tomato & broad bean pesto bruschetta
- Hummus & pita toasties
Bacon & egg cupcakes

Serves 6, 2 cupcakes per person (easy to prepare)

These little bundles of happiness are a super fast way to prepare a light and nutritious meal and a great way to use leftovers.

8 large, free-range eggs  300ml milk
4 bacon rashers, fried 1 tsp mixed herbs
100g Emmental cheese, or salt & pepper
cheddar, finely grated  small knob of butter
300ml sour cream

Preheat oven to 160°Cf. For this dish I use silicon cupcake moulds. Crack eggs into a bowl and beat in sour cream, milk and herbs until smooth. Be careful not to add too much air. Season to taste. Lightly butter the moulds, sprinkle in a layer of bacon bits and cheese then pour in the egg mixture to ¾ full. Allow to bake until fully cooked, about 15-20 minutes. When finished they should be well risen and springy but not turning colour. Serve immediately.

Each portion provides 10g protein and 270kcal.

Easy eggs Arlington

Serves 4 (medium to advanced difficulty to prepare)

The Hollandaise sauce makes this dish a bit fiddly so use store bought to make it easier. It’s delicious!

6 fresh eggs  small jar lumpfish caviar
50 ml milk  (optional)
300g Alaskan smoked salmon  4 English muffins
Hollandaise sauce  butter

Prepare the Hollandaise in advance and keep warm for serving. Whisk the eggs, milk and a bit of salt and pepper in a bowl then scramble in a lightly buttered pan until just cooked through. Toast and butter the English muffins. Place the muffins on a plate then make a nest on top using the salmon strips. Spoon the eggs into the nest, drizzle with Hollandaise and top with a dollop of caviar. Serve hot.

Each serving provides 41g protein and 1240kcal.

nutrient thumbs-up score

| vitamin A (total retinol equivalents) | 4
| vitamin B12 | 3
| calcium | 3
| phosphorus | 3
| sodium | 3
| chloride | 3
| riboflavin | 3
| copper | 3
| protein | 3

| vitamin D | 3
| niacin | 3
| riboflavin | 3
| iodine | 3
| selenium | 3
| vitamin B6 | 3
| thiamin | 3
| folate | 3
| calcium | 3
| iron | 3
| magnesium | 3
| zinc | 3
### Perfect pretzels

Yields 8 large pretzels (medium difficulty to prepare)

These are plain old-fashioned fun. Serve them with salt, herbs, cheese, bacon or crispy onions. The plain ones are perfect with lashings of mustard. Yum!

**For the dough**
- 2½ cups plain flour
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp sugar
- 2¼ tsp instant yeast
- 1 cup warm water

**For the topping**
- 1 cup boiling water
- 2 tbsp baking soda
- coarse salt (pepper, herbs, bacon & cheese – whatever you like!)
- 3 tbsp unsalted butter, melted

Make the dough by hand or using a bread machine.

By hand, place the dough ingredients in a bowl and combine thoroughly. Knead the dough for 5 minutes until soft, smooth but quite slack. Flour the dough and place it in a bag. Allow it to rest for 30 minutes.

By machine, place the dough ingredients into the pan and set the programme to dough or manual. Put it through the kneading cycle, cancel the programme, remove the dough then flour and place in a plastic bag to rise as above.

Next combine boiling water and baking soda, stirring until dissolved and set aside to cool to lukewarm in a 22cm pan.

Preheat oven to 200°Cf and line a baking sheet with parchment.

Transfer the dough to a lightly greased work surface and divide it into eight pieces allow to rest uncovered for 5 minutes.

Roll each piece of dough into a 30” thin rope and twist into a pretzel knot or shape of your choice. Place 4 pretzels into the pan of soda water and ladle so each is completely covered. Leave them in the water for 2 minutes then transfer to the baking sheet. Sprinkle them lightly with coarse salt or preferred toppings and allow them to rest, uncovered, for 10 minutes.

Bake the pretzels for 8 to 9 minutes, or until golden brown.

Remove from the oven and brush generously with melted butter. Using all the butter will give them their unctuous flavour.

Each portion provides 4g protein and 190kcal.
Moroccan carrot & orange salad

Serves 6 (easy to prepare)

Inspired by the North African sunshine this salad is full of zest & flavour.

450g carrots
2 large oranges
seeds of 1 pomegranate
1 tbsp olive oil
juice & zest of 1 lemon

a pinch of sugar
½ tsp ground cumin
½ tsp ground cinnamon
a handful of pine nuts, toasted
salt & pepper

Trim, peel and roughly grate the carrots. Peel the oranges over a bowl removing the white pith and seeds and catching any juice then cut into bite-sized slices. Whisk together the olive oil, orange juice, pinch of sugar, cumin and cinnamon. Carefully add the lemon juice and zest and season to taste. Toss the carrots, orange slices, pomegranate seeds and pine nuts in a bowl and toss with dressing. Serve chilled.

Each portion provides 2g protein and 100kcal.

Asparagus with courgette ribbons

Serves 4, 2 parcels per person (easy to prepare)

This is a fun way to serve asparagus and the melon is soothing for a dry mouth.

12 spears large asparagus
1 large courgette
1 ripe cantaloupe melon
1 flat vegetable peeler

Break the asparagus ends off and trim so you are left with the tender green spears and tops. Lightly steam until cooked through yet still firm. Allow to drain on a sheet of kitchen roll.

Using the flat vegetable peeler, gently scrape the full length of the courgette to create long, thin ribbons. Lay flat on a sheet of kitchen roll and lightly salt to extract excess water. Leave to stand for a few minutes, turn them over and repeat on the other side.

Wrap two or three asparagus spears together in a ribbon of courgette and serve with sliced melon. Easy!

Each portion provides 3g protein and 25kcal.

nutrient thumbs-up score

vitamin A (total retinol equivalents)
vitamin C
folate
vitamin B6
thiamin
sodium
chloride
fibre (as non-starch polysaccharide)
potassium
Herb & fava bean tortilla

Serves 4 (medium difficulty to prepare)

_A traditional Spanish tapas, this can be served as a tart or canapés. It stores well and a little goes a long way. Frozen broad beans (fava) are just fine to use._

Heat half the oil in a deep pan. Add the onions and potatoes tossing to lightly coat. Sauté on low heat for about 30 minutes or until the potatoes are tender. Stir occasionally to prevent onions from burning.

Meanwhile, cook the beans in a pan of salted boiling water for about 4-5 minutes (half the time if using frozen), drain and set aside to cool. When cool, peel and discard the outer skins. Add the beans and thyme to the potatoes and season to taste. Cook for 2-3 minutes until heated through.

In a separate bowl beat the eggs and herbs together with a bit of seasoning then pour the mixture over the potatoes. Increase the heat to medium and cook gently for a few minutes until the bottom is set. While cooking gently pull the sides of the tortilla away from the pan allowing uncooked liquid to run underneath. It will be ready when the egg is still quite soft but there is no liquid.

Now for the tricky bit, cover the frying pan with a large plate and flip the tortilla onto the plate. Add the remaining oil to the pan. When hot, slide the tortilla back into the pan and cook for another 4-5 minutes until the bottom is lightly golden.

Slide the tortilla back onto the plate and allow to cool. Cut into wedges or bite-sized cubes. Serve warm or cold. For a more substantial dish add a handful of diced ham to the bean mixture.

Each portion of rice provides 25g protein and 410kcals.
To prepare the pesto, cook the broad beans in boiling water for about 4-5 minutes (about half the time if using frozen). Drain and rinse under cold water. Shell and discard the skins. Next put the beans, basil, garlic and Parmesan cheese into a food processor and whiz for a few seconds until combined but not completely smooth. Then, with the motor running, add the oil in a steady stream until you have a thick sauce. Season to taste.

To prepare the crispy shallot, heat enough oil in a pan to deep-fry the shallot rings. Place them into the hot oil and fry until golden then remove with the slotted spoon and place on paper towel. Next chop the tomatoes into 4 ‘petals’ by slicing lengthwise. Scoop out the seeds and chop roughly. Lightly mix with a drop of lemon juice, a drizzle of olive oil and salt & pepper.

To make the bruschetta, toast the bread, lightly drizzle both sides with olive oil and season to taste. Place under a boiler until just golden, flip and toast on the other side. Next cut the garlic clove in half and rub one side of the toast with it. Cover half the toast slices with the tomatoes and finish topping with a few crispy shallot rings and sprinkle with herbs. Spread the pesto over the rest of the toasts and garnish with a pinch of lemon zest.

Each portion (two slices) provides 6g protein and 290kcal.
Hummus & pita toasties

Serves 6, approx 675g (easy to prepare)

Once you’ve made this you’ll never settle for store bought again. It’s a great snack or condiment for any meal. Make the butter in advance and keep it handy in the fridge.

For the hummus

- 424 g (1 can) chick peas, drained and rinsed
- 50 g tahini (sesame paste)
- juice of 1 lemon
- 2 cloves garlic, puréed
- ½ tsp ground cumin
- ½ tsp salt
- 1 small bunch of parsley, finely chopped
- 1 tsp sesame oil
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tsp paprika for garnish

For the pita toasties

- 6-8 rounds pita bread
- 175g butter
- 2 tbsp parsley, finely chopped
- 1 tbsp chives, finely chopped
- 1 clove garlic, pureéd
- 1 tsp lemon juice
- salt & pepper

In a blender, place the chickpeas, tahini, lemon juice, garlic purée, cumin and salt and blend until smooth. If the mixture is thick add a few drops of water until it is creamy. Place the mixture in a bowl and stir in the parsley and oils. Chill for at least 30 minutes and garnish with paprika to serve.

To make the herb butter, whip the butter, parsley, chives, garlic and lemon juice into a smooth paste. This can be rolled into cling film and refrigerated until ready to use.

Next preheat oven to 180°C.

Open the pita rounds into halves then cut into bite-sized pieces and place on a baking tray. Melt butter and lightly brush the pita pieces then place in the oven until just turning golden.

Each portion provides 14g protein and 550kcal.

# Nutrient thumbs-up score

- vitamin A (total retinol equivalents)
- sodium
- chloride
- vitamin C
- iron
- folate
- thiamin
- calcium
- copper
- fibre (non-starch polysaccharide)
- magnesium
- phosphorus
- protein
- zinc
Soups and salads conjure up every idea and emotion we have about food and comfort, health, flavour, beauty and convenience. Just about every ingredient imaginable can become a centre piece for a salad, sweet or savoury and there’s nothing better than a cup of soup to sustain, cheer and nurture both body and soul. Whether it’s for winter warming or a palate refreshing chilled variety, soups offer the same ingredient options that salads do and you can enjoy them on the go – just pour from a flask.

Sometimes the aromas and even sight of cooked food on a plate can be a bit off-putting during treatment. Salads and chilled soups offer nutrition without the intensity of cooking aromas and soups are an easy way to get nutrition to simply slide past a sore throat or dry mouth.

It’s a good idea to try new flavour combinations to encourage your appetite and soups can even be a way to take in foods you don’t think you’re going to enjoy but that you’ve heard might be good nutritional sources.

Take cruciferous vegetables as an example. Not everyone is a fan of cauliflower, Brussels sprouts, cabbage or horseradish but they’re a great source of glucosinolates that have been shown in various studies to have cancer fighting properties. And what about beans and pulses? Yes, chickpeas, lentils, baked beans, kidney beans, broad beans (fava). Perhaps they aren’t to everyone’s taste but zizzed up in a soup they provide a boost to your protein, B-vitamins and iron intake without a high fat content.

If you’re trying to avoid weight gain during treatment, soups and salads can be filling without adding too much to your calorie intake.

Illustration of pickled cucumber & dill salad, see page 59
Wild mushroom cappuccino

Serves 4 (easy to medium difficulty to prepare)

This vegetarian soup has everything. It’s packed with nutrition, freezes in small portions and most of all, it’s packed with flavour and fun. Wild dried porcini are easily available and give an intense flavour finish.

800g chestnut and or cup mushroom
1 medium red onion
2 shallots
1 clove garlic, smashed
olive oil
1 litre vegetable stock
250 ml single cream
1 tbsp thyme leaves, finely chopped
a dash sriracha
(see The basics p124)
salt & pepper
50 ml milk
a few dried porcini

Grate the mushrooms with a cheese grater and finely chop the onions and shallots.

Next, lightly coat a large frying pan with olive oil then add the mushrooms. Leave on a low heat and allow the mushrooms to fry until the moisture is gone. This will take 30-40 minutes. Add the onion, shallots, garlic and sriracha and thyme. Continue on low heat until the onions and shallots are cooked through.

Transfer the mixture into a pan on medium heat and add the stock. Cover and let simmer for 20-30 minutes. Add the cream then continue to simmer until the soup is a nice consistency – not too watery but not too thick.

Cream the soup using a hand blender then pass through a sieve. Return to the pan to keep warm and season to taste. If the soup gets thick thin with a bit of water.

To make the cappuccino dust, place the dried porcini in a coffee bean grinder and whiz into to a fine dust. Pass through a sieve.

When ready to serve, make cappuccino milk foam by heating milk in a pan to scalding being careful not to boil. Whisk continuously so the milk develops into a thick foam. To serve, pour the soup into a cup and top with foamed milk as you would a cappuccino. Dust with the porcini powder and serve immediately.

Each portion provides 8g protein and 200kcal.
Cut the peppers into quarters and remove the white flesh and seeds. Brush lightly with olive oil and place skin-side up on a baking tray and place under the grill until the skins are well charred. Place in a plastic bag or covered bowl and allow to rest. When cool remove and discard the charred skin and chop into rough chunks.

Next coat a large pan with oil and add the onion, garlic and sriracha and cook without colour. Add the tomatoes and peppers and cook over medium low heat for 10 minutes. Add the wine and simmer for a further 5 minutes. Finally add the stock, check seasoning and simmer for 20-30 minutes.

Puree the soup with a hand mixer and pass through a sieve. Allow to chill for 2-3 hours. When chilled season to taste and garnish with a dollop or crème fraîche, crostini and chives.

Each portion with crostini provides 7g protein and 400kcal.
Soups & salads

Creamy spiced butternut soup

Serves 8 as a starter, 4 as a main (easy to medium difficulty to prepare)

This is a lively soup that can wake up tired taste buds. The creaminess is easy on the tummy. Use un-smoked bacon if you are concerned about dietary carcinogens associated with smoked foods or none if you prefer vegetarian.

4 rashers smoked bacon
50g butter
a dash of sriracha (see The basics p124)
1 medium onion, chopped
2 cloves garlic, chopped
900g butternut squash
1 tbsp coriander seeds
2 tsp cumin seeds
2 small dried chillies
1 litre chicken or vegetable stock
100 ml coconut cream
salt & pepper

Fry the bacon until very crisp and break into bits. Set aside to use as garnish.

Melt the butter in a large saucepan, add the sriracha and cook the onion and garlic without colour.

Peel and seed the butternut squash taking care to remove the stringy bits. Chop into 2 inch cubes then add to the onion.

Cook until the squash is lightly golden and softening.

In a separate pan toast the coriander and cumin seeds over a low heat for about 2 minutes. They will release a lovely perfume. Place in a mortar, add the chilies and grind to a fine consistency. Add the spices to the squash and cook for 1 minute. Add the stock and simmer for 20 minutes or until the squash is tender.

Pour in most of the cream and blitz with a hand blender until smooth. Heat again until piping hot. Season to taste. Garnish with a drizzle of cream and bacon bits. Serve hot.

Each portion provides 11g protein and 280kcals.

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Tuscan bean soup

Serves 4 (medium difficulty to prepare)

This is a grand Italian tradition. As with all classics there’s no ‘right way’ so feel free to adjust to your taste. Try some braised cabbage or add a bit of pasta.

2 tbsp olive oil
1 litre vegetable stock
a dash of sriracha
(see The basics p124)
2 cloves, garlic, peeled
and crushed
2 onions, chopped
2 leeks, chopped
2 carrots, chopped
2-3 sprigs fresh rosemary
2 bay leaves
1 litre vegetable stock
juice of ½ a lemon
400g chopped tomatoes
1 tin cannellini beans
1 tin borlotti beans
300g spicy Italian sausage,
(approx. 4 links)
a bunch of parsley, chopped
50g Parmesan cheese,
finely grated
salt & pepper

Heat oil in a large saucepan and gently cook the garlic, onions, leeks and carrots until soft. Add thyme, rosemary and bay leaves, stock, lemon juice and tomatoes and simmer for 20 minutes. Add beans and some chopped parsley. Season to taste and continue to simmer for another 10 minutes.

In a separate pan grill the sausages. When cooked, remove the meat from casings, crumble then set aside.

Ladle 1½ cups of the soup into a separate pan and purée using a hand blender then re-introduce into the soup and add the sausage. This will give the soup body without making it too thick. Season to taste.

Garnish with grated Parmesan cheese and serve hot with crusty bread.

Each portion provides 31g protein and 600kcal.
Soups & salads

Pearl cous cous, roasted tomato & asparagus salad

Serves 6 (easy to medium difficulty to prepare)

Pearl cous cous is also called ‘giant or Israeli cous cous’. It’s actually pasta and a wonderfully diverse alternative in salad or served as a hot side dish. For this simple salad you can use any veg or add a bit of feta or buffalo mozzarella.

250g pearl cous cous
2 litres vegetable stock
8-10 cherry tomatoes
8-10 fine asparagus tips
1 shallot, very finely chopped
olive oil
a dash of balsamic vinegar
juice & zest of 1 lemon
a small bunch of flat leaf parsley, chopped
salt & pepper
a few basil leaves

Boil the cous cous in salted water for 5-6 minutes or until the pearls are al dente. Rinse well toss with a light splash of olive oil.

Preheat oven to 180°Cf.

Give the tomatoes a light coating of olive oil and pop a drop or two of balsamic vinegar on the tops then place on a baking tray. Bake them for about 4-5 minutes. Just when the skin starts to split remove them from the oven.

Trim the asparagus and steam until tender but firm and drain on a piece of kitchen roll.

Mix together the lemon juice, zest and enough olive oil to lightly dress the salad. Season to taste.

Toss all the ingredients and dressing in with the cous cous and garnish with a few shredded basil leaves. Allow to chill for a few hours before serving.

If you are adding cheese do this when ready to serve.

Each portion provides 3g protein and 100kcal.

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Spinach, watercress & crispy shallot salad

Serves 6-8 (easy to prepare)

This big peppery salad is great on its own or with a tart or creamed gazpacho.

For the crispy shallots, heat enough oil in pan to deep-fry. Place the rings into the hot oil until golden then remove with the slotted spoon and drain on kitchen roll. They are quite delicate so it only takes a minute. In the meantime, prepare beds of spinach and watercress on plates, mix together the dressing ingredients and season to taste. Arrange the shallot rings on the salad, drizzle with dressing and garnish with spikes of chive.

Each portion provides 4g protein and 220kcal.

Pickled cucumber & dill salad

Serves 4 (easy to prepare)

Northern Europeans serve this fresh salad with fish, rye bread and cheese.

Place the cucumber and onion slices in a bowl and sprinkle with salt. Let stand for 10 minutes. Add the vinegar, a drizzle of cold water and dill. Toss until nicely mixed and chill for a few hours.

Each portion provides 1g protein and 25kcal.
**Greek salad**

**Serves 4-6** *(easy to prepare)*

*This is a salad to enjoy with all your senses. It’s so bright and full of texture and packed with vitamins. To enhance the texture and aroma use variety of tomatoes. It’s perfect with Spanikopita and Simon’s Pie.*

**For the dressing**
- 1 clove of garlic
- 2 tsp red wine vinegar
- 2 tsp of olive oil
- a dash of sriracha
  *(see *The basics* p124)*
- salt & pepper

**For the salad**
- 600g tomatoes-baby plum/beef/vine ripened pomadoro
- half a red onion finely sliced
- half a green pepper finely sliced
- 70g pitted black olives
- juice of ½ a lemon
- 200g of feta cheese
- handful of fresh oregano

Slice the tomatoes into a variety of shapes, add the onion and the pepper rings and squeeze the olives into your hands to drop into the salad. Crumble the feta cheese on top and add lemon juice.

Drizzle on the dressing and top with the sprigs of oregano.

Smash the clove of garlic and add to vinegar, sriracha and oil. Season to taste.

Each portion provides 10g protein and 200kcal.
Afternoon snacks come in a variety and in every culture. The Spanish have tapas, the Italians have antipasti and the English have afternoon tea. Something to stimulate the appetite and wake up our desire for food might be just what you need! Afternoon tea, or ‘high tea’ is a lovely tradition that offers endless ideas for more ‘little and often’. When you are undergoing treatment, so many things can sap your interest in food and change your taste preferences. Sometimes this is a direct consequence of the medicines prescribed and that can be a big deal psychologically as well as physically.

Frequently it can be the tastes that you don’t think you’re going to enjoy that become a new taste sensation and a favourite flavour combination. Try not to rule anything out and be open to a bit of trial and error when it comes to what makes your tastebuds tingle and try new flavour combinations. Here are a few ideas.

Illustration of courgette bread, see page 71

**Bites & snacks**

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- Courgette bread 71
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Bites & snacks

Cranberry tea cakes

Yield 18-24 muffins (easy to prepare)

These are so morish. Sweet and a bit tangy at the same time. If you use fresh cranberries coarsely chop them and add a bit more milk so the batter isn’t too stiff to spoon out.

500 ml flour
125 ml sugar
4 tsp baking powder
½ tsp salt
2 eggs
50 ml sunflower oil
125 ml milk
250 ml whole cranberry sauce
(or fresh cranberries, coarsely chopped)
knob of butter

Preheat oven to 170°C and grease muffin tins (if not using muffin liners).

Sift together flour, sugar, baking powder and salt into a bowl and make a well in the middle.

In a separate bowl whisk eggs until frothy then stir in the oil, milk and cranberry sauce or cranberries. Pour the mixture into the well and stir with a spoon until fully moistened but still lumpy. Don’t over stir. If the mixture is dry add a bit more milk.

Fill tins to ¾ full and bake for 20-25 minutes until a toothpick comes out clean. Remove from the oven, brush with melted butter and sprinkle with sugar.

Each portion (2 tea cakes) provides 9g protein and 450kcal. (Adding a preserve, marmalade, butter or cream will significantly increase the nutritional value and yum factor)

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Mom’s sour cream coffee cake

Yield 1 cake, 9 pieces (easy to medium difficulty to prepare)

This recipe always brings back lovely memories of sitting in my mother’s kitchen with a cup of coffee. Her table was always full of friends and family and this cake was in great demand.

For the cake batter
- 1½ cups castor sugar
- ¾ cup butter, softened
- 3 eggs
- 1½ tsp vanilla extract
- 3 cups flour
- 1½ tsp baking powder
- 1½ tsp baking soda
- ¾ tsp salt
- 1½ cups sour cream

For the filling
- ½ cup packed brown sugar
- ½ cup walnuts, finely chopped
- 1½ tsp cinnamon

For the glaze
- ¼ cup brown butter
- 2 cups icing sugar
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 2 tbsp milk

Preheat oven to 170°Cf and grease and flour a 22x22 cm tin (or bundt tin).

Cream butter, sugar and 1 egg together until creamy. Beat in the other eggs until smooth. Sift the flour, soda, baking powder and salt into a separate bowl. Beat into the wet mixture alternately with portions of sour cream until fully mixed and smooth. Pour half the batter into the tin.

Mix together the brown sugar, cinnamon and nuts then sprinkle over the batter. Spoon in the remaining batter and bake for 45 minutes to 1 hour or until a toothpick comes out clean.

Prepare the glaze by mixing all ingredients into a bowl and stirring until completely smooth.

When the cake is baked, remove from the tin while warm and place on a plate. Drizzle with glaze and allow to cool.

Each portion provides 10g protein and 910 kcals.
Mushroom duxelle on melba toast

Serves 6-8 (medium difficulty to prepare)

Whether you’re a vegetarian or not, these little chappies are little bundles of happiness. The Hollandaise isn’t essential but it’s delicious.

4 slices day old bread
4 shallots (or 1 medium onion), finely chopped
a knob of butter
200g mushrooms, finely chopped
1 tbsp dijon mustard
salt & pepper
a dash of sriracha (see The basics p124)
Hollandaise sauce (see The basics p124)

Make the toast in advance. Removing the crusts from the bread slices then roll thin with a rolling pin. Cut into rounds with a scone cutter or simply cut into 5 cm squares and place on a baking sheet. Toast under the grill until lightly golden on both sides.

Grate the mushrooms with a food processor or cheese grater. Fry the shallots in butter until soft but without colour. Add the mushrooms and cook until the mixture has reduced and is quite dry. Add the mustard and sriracha and season to taste.

Each portion (4 pieces) provides 3g protein and 140kcals.
Carrot loaf

Yields 1 loaf, 8 slices (easy to prepare)

I love breads and cakes made from vegetables. They’re so perfect with a cuppa.

Preheat oven to 180°Cf and grease and flour a 23x12 cm loaf tin. Beat the oil, eggs and sugar together until well blended then stir in the carrots. In a separate bowl mix the remaining ingredients. Pour into the batter and stir until just moistened. Turn into the loaf tin and bake for approximately 1 hour or until a toothpick comes out clean. Allow to cool in the tin for 10 minutes before removing.

Each portion provides 9g protein and 450kcals.

Courgette bread

Yields 1 loaf, 8 slices (easy to prepare)

This is simply scrumptious served hot with lashings of butter or cream cheese.

Preheat oven to 180°Cf and grease and flour a 23x12 cm loaf tin. Beat the eggs in a bowl until light and frothy, add the oil and sugar and beat until smooth. Add the courgette and vanilla. In another bowl combine the flour, baking powder, soda, salt and cinnamon. Fold in the courgette mixture. Pour into the tin and bake for 50-60 minutes or until a toothpick comes out clean.

Each portion provides 5g protein and 370kcals.
Spanakopita & tzatziki

Yield 20 pieces (medium to advanced difficulty to prepare)

These chappies were one of the first hors d’oeuvres I learned to make. I don’t make them often enough. They’re a perfect starter or great as a small bite.

For the spanakopita

500g spinach, washed, stalks removed and finely shred
a splash olive oil
a dash of sriracha
(see The basics p124)
½ small onion, finely chopped
2 spring onions, finely chopped
100g feta cheese
1 egg
1 tbsp Parmesan cheese, grated
a pinch of nutmeg
a few leaves of mint, finely chopped
6 sheets of filo pastry
100g butter, melted
fine bread crumbs
1 egg

Heat the olive oil in a large pan and cook the onion and sriracha without colour. Add the spinach a handful at a time and warm until wilted. Tip into a colander and press out excess moisture. Return to the pan, add the spring onions and sauté for 1 minute. Crumble the feta cheese into a bowl then add the eggs, Parmesan cheese, spinach, nutmeg and mint. Mix and season to taste.

Preheat oven to 180°C.

Next brush a sheet of filo with melted butter and lightly sprinkle with breadcrumbs. Place another layer on top and repeat with the rest of the sheets. Cut the filo stack into 7.5 cm strips then place a teaspoon of the spinach mixture in the middle of the strip. Fold the strip diagonally over the spinach then continue to gently fold the pastry to make triangular parcels. Brush the bottoms and tops with butter and place on a baking sheet. Bake for 20-30 minutes until crisp and golden. Serve immediately.

Each portion provides 16g protein and 520kcals.

For the tzatziki

3 tbsp olive oil
1 tbsp vinegar
2 cloves garlic, puréed
½ tsp salt
¼ tsp white pepper
225g Greek yogurt
225g sour cream
1 large cucumber peeled, seeded & finely chopped
1 tsp dill tops, finely chopped

Combine the olive oil, vinegar, garlic, salt, and pepper in a bowl. Whisk the yogurt and sour cream together then add the oil mixture. Finally, stir in the cucumber and dill. Chill for at least two hours before serving.

Each portion provides 4g protein and 190kcals.
Marinated pepper & goat’s cheese crostini

Yields approximately 30 pieces (easy to prepare)

The power of the pepper! These are great little morsels that burst with flavour. The marinated peppers will last for a couple weeks if refrigerated in a sealed container.

3 red peppers
olive oil
garlic, crushed
fresh herbs, finely chopped
baguette, sliced and toasted
soft goat’s cheese

Coat the peppers lightly with olive oil and grill until the skin is charred and blistered. Put in a plastic bag and leave to sweat. When cool, peel and soak in olive oil infused with garlic and a few herbs. To serve, slice finely and pile on toasted baguette spread with soft goat’s cheese.

Each portion provides 12g protein and 290kcal.
Italian stuffed bread

1 loaf serves 4 as a starter or snack

This is one of your best friends for so many reasons. Tomatoes and mushrooms for a start. It’s filled with good nutrition and crammed with flavour. It’s so fast and simple.

pre-made croissant dough or puff pastry*
olive oil
8-10 fine slices parma ham
8-10 fine slices mozzarella cheese
2 large tomatoes, finely sliced
6-8 white mushrooms, finely sliced
dried Italian herbs
salt & pepper
1 egg, whisked

Preheat the oven to 170°C.
*There are two easy ways to prepare the dough. I prefer the croissant dough but puff pastry works as well. The pre-made croissant dough usually comes in a tube and is perforated into triangles. Remove the dough and make a large rectangle of dough by squidding together perforated edges. It does work.

On a floured surface, roll out the dough into a rectangle the thickness of fine piecrust. Brush with a thin film of olive oil. Layer the ham, cheese, tomatoes and mushrooms. Sprinkle generously with herbs. Roll up and tuck the ends under, brush all over with egg wash and bake for about 20 minutes until golden brown. Allow to set for about 5 minutes. Slice and serve warm.

Each portion provides 35g protein and 740kcal.

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Supper time
meals & full portions

Treatment can radically affect the way you perceive food and one common challenge with loss of appetite and the desire to eat is portion size, particularly on or just after treatment days. Even with main dishes the ‘little and often’ rule is helpful.

Sharing meals with family, friends and loved ones is a positive antidote and soothing for the soul. Try to think of foods that are easy to serve in small portions. Choose lean and tender cuts of meat and vegetables that are naturally easy to digest and trust your body to tell you what it needs.

Most of all, be patient with yourself. Not all meals need to be prepared in 15 minutes and consumed in five! When my husband Simon was in treatment we always had simple dishes before, on and just following treatment days. Things like Simon’s Pie, simple egg dishes or even just beans on toast. I thought through dishes that were easy to prepare in advance and it made coming home welcoming.

Save your favourite dishes and foods for the top of your cycle so you associate the things you enjoy most with feeling stronger and well. It’s a simple and powerful way to keep food on your side.

Illustration of potato purée, see page 124

Main dishes

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- Chicken on a cloud 83
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- Sri Lankan wet fish curry 88
- Stuffed marrow with tagliatelle 91
- Tuna, courgette & pepper frittata 92
- Turkey rigatoni 95
Beetroot risotto

Serves 4 (medium difficulty to prepare)

The colour of this is simply marvellous. It’s wonderful as a dish, on its own and a great partner with fish and shellfish. I love it with prawns or langoustine.

500g beetroot
2 tbsp olive oil
1 onion, finely diced
1 clove garlic, pureed
250g risotto rice
150ml white wine
700ml vegetable stock
a few shavings of Parmesan cheese
a few sprigs of fresh dill
crème fraîche
salt & pepper

Preheat oven to 180°C.

Cut the beetroot into quarters, lightly brush with oil and place in the oven on a baking tray. Roast for 1 hour or until soft. Set aside to cool then remove the skins. Purée half with a hand blender and finely dice the other half.

Coat the bottom of a pan with oil, melt the butter then add the onion and garlic and cook without colour on medium heat. Add the rice and stir to coat the grains and allow to warm. Pour in the wine and simmer for 1 minute.

Add the beetroot purée to the stock and start adding this to the rice a ladle at a time allowing the rice to absorb the stock and checking the seasoning as you go. When the rice is al dente stir in the beetroot and a bit of the cheese. Season to taste. Garnish with a dollop of crème fraîche, a few shavings of Parmesan cheese and a sprinkle of dill. Serve immediately.

Each portion provides 10g protein and 360kcal.
Heat oil in a large frying pan on medium-high heat and add the garlic and shallots and cook without colour. Add the chicken cubes and cook through until nicely browned. When nearly done, if you fancy some drama, flambé with brandy or just add it to the meat and simmer for a minute. Remove from heat and set aside to rest.

Next deglaze the pan using a splash of the white wine. Add mushrooms, shallots and leek and cook over medium heat until most of the moisture has evaporated. Now add the remainder of the wine and allow to simmer for a minute then add the chicken stock and allow to reduce by at least half on low heat. Stir in sour cream and mustard and then slowly stir in cream, allowing the sauce to reduce by half. Season to taste.

Add the chicken to the sauce to warm. When ready serve over a potato purée and top with a sprig of thyme.

Each portion provides 26g protein and 410kcal.

4 boneless chicken breasts, skinless & cubed
2 garlic cloves, smashed
2 shallots, finely diced
a splash of olive oil
a splash of brandy
salt & pepper

For the sauce
200g button mushrooms
1 small leek, white only, thinly sliced
2 shallots, finely diced

120ml white wine
175ml chicken stock
75g crème fraîche
100-150ml single cream, as required
1 tsp Dijon mustard
salt & pepper
a small bunch of curly parsley, finely chopped for garnish
a sprig of thyme for garnish
potato purée to serve

Chicken on a cloud

Serves 4 (medium difficulty to prepare)

This is such a comforting dish any time of year. Slow cook it well in advance so the meat is really tenderised.

Heat oil in a large frying pan on medium-high heat and add the garlic and shallots and cook without colour. Add the chicken cubes and cook through until nicely browned. When nearly done, if you fancy some drama, flambé with brandy or just add it to the meat and simmer for a minute. Remove from heat and set aside to rest.

Next deglaze the pan using a splash of the white wine. Add mushrooms, shallots and leek and cook over medium heat until most of the moisture has evaporated. Now add the remainder of the wine and allow to simmer for a minute then add the chicken stock and allow to reduce by at least half on low heat. Stir in sour cream and mustard and then slowly stir in cream, allowing the sauce to reduce by half. Season to taste.

Add the chicken to the sauce to warm. When ready serve over a potato purée and top with a sprig of thyme.

Each portion provides 26g protein and 410kcal.
Escalope of pork with juniper & Marsala

Serves 4 (medium difficulty to prepare)

This dish is straight out of the Sicilian hills. Use the leanest and finest pork loin you can find. It’s simply bursting with flavour. I would serve this with green vegetables or tagliatelle.

25g dried porcini mushrooms
10 dried juniper berries
4 lean pork escalopes
10 ml balsamic vinegar
knob of butter
8 cloves of garlic
45 ml Marsala
3-4 sprigs fresh rosemary
salt & pepper

Place the porcini in a bowl and just cover with hot water. Do the same for the juniper berries. Leave for 30 minutes. Strain, reserving the liquid. Crush the berries with the side of a knife.

If the escalopes are quite thick you may want to pound them out with a meat mallet. Place each escalope between a layer of cling film. Pound to 1 cm thickness (this stage is optional). Brush the escalopes with vinegar.

Melt butter with a drop of oil in a large pan on medium high heat. Brown the escalopes on one side then flip and fry for a further minute, no more. Add the garlic, Marsala, rosemary, mushrooms & berries with the remaining vinegar. Season and allow to gently simmer on low heat for 3 minutes. Season to taste and serve immediately.

Each portion provides 15g protein and 150 kcals.
Simon’s pie

Serves 4-6 (easy to medium difficulty to prepare)

I made this dish up from leftover Sunday dinner when Simon was on chemotherapy. It’s a super nutritious take on shepherd’s pie.

To prepare the lamb

- 4 lamb shanks
- 2 tsp olive oil
- 1 bottle of red wine
- 6 garlic cloves
- 2 onions, chopped
- a generous handful of mixed herbs
- 500ml lamb stock
- a dash of sriracha
- salt & pepper
- 3 bay leaves

Slow cook the lamb and ingredients on medium for 6-8 hours. The meat should fall off the bone. When ready strain the jus through a fine sieve. Pull the meat from the bones ensuring there is no fat. Next boil and mash potatoes and season with salt, pepper and nutmeg.

To make the gravy, bring the jus to hard boil then reduce heat to simmer. Using flour and water, make a smooth paste and whisk into the jus avoiding lumps. Bring back to the boil. Season to taste.

Preheat oven to 200°C.

Finally, layer the lentils, shallots and lamb in a casserole. Add sufficient gravy to completely cover the meat then cover with a generous layer of potatoes adding seasoning and a dash of nutmeg. Seal to the edges to prevent the sauce from boiling over. Rough up the surface using a fork. Bake until golden brown on top. Remove from heat and leave to rest for 10 minutes before serving.

Each portion provides 77g protein and 1080kcals.
Sri Lankan wet fish curry

Serves 4 (medium difficulty to prepare)

This is a delicious and traditional dish that ticks every box for colour, aroma and oodles of flavour. It’s perfect with the rice, poppadoms and mango chutney.

Cook the mustard seeds in some hot oil until they start to pop. Add the onion, garlic, ginger and curry leaves, lower the heat and cook for 5 minutes. Next add the coconut, turmeric and chilli powder and cook for another 5 minutes. Add the tamarind sauce and cook for another 5 minutes, then add the coconut milk, chillies, sweet potato, green beans and chicken stock, stir well and simmer for about 30 minutes until the sweet potato is cooked through but still firm. Add the fish and simmer for another 15 minutes then garnish with coriander and serve with rice.

Each portion provides 48g protein and 560kcals with rice.

For the rice

1 cup jasmine rice
1 cup water
1 cup coconut milk

Cook the rice in the water with coconut milk. Bring just to the boil then turn heat to low and allow the rice to absorb the liquid. When nearly cooked turn the heat off and be careful not to burn the bottom of the pan. Serve hot.

Each portion of rice provides 43g protein and 310kcals.
Cut the marrow in half and scoop out the seeds and string and discard then scoop out some of the flesh so that the cavity is about 3 cm thick. Roughly chop the flesh to add to the ragu.

For the ragu, heat the oil and butter in a large pan, add 1 clove garlic, carrot, celery and onion and cook without colour on low heat. Add the chopped tomatoes and half the herbs and cook for another 30 minutes seasoning to taste. Liquidise the mixture.

In a lightly oiled pan, brown the pancetta and minced meats with the remaining garlic and sriracha. Add herbs and seasoning using a wooden spoon to break up evenly. When browned, add wine and bubble for a few minutes to allow the alcohol to evaporate. Stir in a little stock to prevent the mixture sticking. Next add tomato purée and dilute with a bit more stock as required. Place the tomato mixture and meat in a pot and simmer for approximately 1½ hours, adding stock as the sauce reduces. Season to taste.

Preheat oven to 180°C.

When ready to stuff and bake, mix in most of the cheese, leaving a little for the top of each. Stuff the cavity to slightly over full then sprinkle on the remaining cheese and replace the top. Place on a baking tray in the oven for about 1 hour. You know it’s done when you give it a light squeeze and it gives but remains firm.

Cook tagliatelle in boiling salted water to al dente.

Each portion provides 27g protein and 480kcal.
To start, rub the pepper with a fine coat of oil and put on a hot bbq or under a grill turning until the skin is evenly charred. Place in a plastic bag and allow to cool. Peel away and discard the charred skin, remove the seeds and slice the flesh into fine slices. Next heat half the oil in a shallow pan and add the onion, courgette and pepper, stir frequently and cook without colour on low heat for about 5 minutes. Chop the tuna into thin slices and add to the vegetables. Season to taste.

Preheat the grill to medium.

Whisk the eggs, milk and herbs in a bowl then pour evenly over the tuna mixture occasionally pulling the sides into the middle to allow the uncooked mixture to run to the edges and continue to cook until the bottom is lightly golden.

Sprinkle the cheese onto the frittata and place under the grill and cook until the cheese has melted and the frittata is golden brown. Serve hot with a light salad and vinegrette.

Each portion provides 23g protein and 240kcals.
Warm oil in a large pan, add one clove of garlic and cook without colour. Add the turkey mince breaking it into a fine texture with a wooden spoon and cook until browned. Remove from the pan.

Next add the rashers, onions, carrots and white wine to the pan and allow to simmer for 5 minutes until the vegetables are cooked. Place the mixture in a bowl and using a hand blender whiz into a rough purée and return to the pan with the mince.

Add the tomato purée and chicken stock to the mixture and season with herbs and salt & pepper to taste. Allow the turkey ragu to simmer on low heat for at least 30-45 minutes to allow the flavours to blend adding additional stock if needed. Continue to check seasoning.

Preheat oven to 160°C.

Boil the rigatoni in salted water to al dente, drain thoroughly and mix with the ragu. Transfer to a deep casserole sprinkle generously with cheese and pop in the oven for 20-30 minutes. Serve hot with crusty garlic bread.

Each portion provides 35g protein and 480kcal.

**Turkey rigatoni**

*Main dishes*

**Turkey gets a bit of a bum wrap except at Christmas. It shouldn’t. It’s one of the healthiest and nutritious meats and it’s readily available.*

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Ingredient</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a splash of olive oil</td>
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<tr>
<td>275g minced turkey</td>
<td>2 carrots, finely diced</td>
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<tr>
<td>150g smoked turkey or bacon rashers, chopped</td>
<td>50 ml tomato purée</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 cloves garlic, smashed</td>
<td>225g dry rigatoni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>120 ml white wine</td>
<td>50g Parmesan cheese, grated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 onion, finely chopped</td>
<td>mixed herbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 carrots, finely diced</td>
<td>50 ml tomato purée</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>275g minced turkey</td>
<td>300 ml chicken stock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>150g smoked turkey or bacon rashers, chopped</td>
<td>mixed herbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 cloves garlic, smashed</td>
<td>225g dry rigatoni</td>
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<tr>
<td>120 ml white wine</td>
<td>50g Parmesan cheese, grated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 onion, finely chopped</td>
<td>mixed herbs</td>
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Nutrient thumbs-up score:
- Vitamin A (total retinol equivalents)
- Vitamin B12
- Phosphorus
- Protein
- Sodium
- Chloride
- Vitamin B6
- Niacin
- Riboflavin
- Thiamin
- Folate
- Calcium
- Copper
- Iron
- Magnesium
- Potassium
- Selenium
- Zinc

Around the Kitchen Table 95
Something sweet sugar, dairy & empty calories

Something sweet to finish a meal can be a real reward and real comfort. Just as an aperitif to start a meal can stimulate the appetite, a digestif can calm and aid digestion. When we are in full health we often worry about adding unnecessary calories to already rich diets but when appetite is diminished we need to adjust our perception.

You may have heard the term ‘empty calories’ used to describe any high sugar or high fat foods that don’t contain substantial essential nutrients. You might also be familiar with the saying, ‘I’ve never met a calorie I didn’t like!’ These foods are frequently processed fast foods and between meal snacks. If you’re watching your weight, being cautious about empty calorie foods is a good idea but if your appetite is poor, they could be a godsend!

In recipes, ingredients that add sugar or fat can be important for flavour and ultimately how much you enjoy the food; an important part of the recipe’s flavour profile. If appetite is poor and you need to pack more calories into a small portion of a food, adding sugar, butter, oil or cream maybe just what you need until you are able to eat larger portions to meet your nutritional needs. So, far from being just ‘empty calories’ these foods could be the stars of the show!

I hope I don’t confuse too many fellow bakers in this section. I haven’t been consistent in the use of metric and empirical measures. Some recipes are in grams and milliliters and where I’ve used cups and teaspoons it’s because the recipe is old and works perfectly as it is. I hope you don’t mind.

Illustration of fresh fig filo tart, see page 103
Puddings

Lemon posset

Serves 4

Though it's not a nutritional giant this is so fresh and palette cleansing and the creamy lemon cuts through plastic mouth and is easy to swallow. It's frequently served with lemon shortbread. Mmmmm.

600 ml double cream
150 g granulated sugar
2 lemons, juice and zest
fresh raspberries for garnish

Over low heat bring the cream and sugar just to the boil and simmer for 3 minutes. The sugar should be completely dissolved. Whisk in the lemon juice and zest and pour into glasses and chill until ready to serve.

Be careful when zesting the lemon to take only the yellow of the skin, the white is bitter.

Each portion provides 3g protein and 890kcal.

nutrient thumbs-up score

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<th>iodine</th>
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nutrient thumbs-up score

<table>
<thead>
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<th>600 ml double cream</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Stacked mangos & raspberry coulis

Serves 4

This dessert is so fresh. If ripe mangos are hard to find, tinned will work.

1-2 sheets filo pastry
40g butter, melted
2 ripe mangoes
raspberry coulis

Preheat oven to 180°Cf.

Lay a filo pastry sheet on a clean work surface. Use a scone cutter to make 12 10 cm rounds. Place on a non-stick baking sheet and brush lightly with butter. Bake in the oven until crisp and very lightly golden. Carefully transfer to a wire rack to cool.

Peel the mangoes and carefully cut into slices around the stones. If using tinned drain and pat dry.

To assemble the dish, lay a filo pastry disk on 4 plates then a layer of mango and a drizzle of coulis. Repeat this twice more then top with remaining mango and coulis. Dust with icing sugar and serve.

Each portion provides 2g protein and 160kcal.

nutrient thumbs-up score

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>vitamin C</th>
<th>2 ripe mangoes</th>
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<td>600 ml double cream</td>
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**Limoncello gelato**

Serves 4

I get asked for this more than any other dessert. It’s a little taste bud tingling jewel. The limoncello gives it mouth-watering flavour. It is soothing on the throat as well.

- juice and zest of 3 large lemons
- 190g icing sugar
- 450ml double cream
- 3 tbsp limoncello, frozen

Place the lemon zest and juice in a bowl. Add the icing sugar, stir to combine and leave for 30 minutes.

Whip the cream and limoncello to soft peaks, then add the lemon and sugar mixture and whip together. Freeze overnight. Spoon the mixture into hollowed lemon halves to serve.

Each portion provides 2g protein and 790kcal.
Auntie Winona’s brownies

Serves 4

These brownies are moist and sooo chocolatey! A real pick me up.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ingredient</th>
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<tr>
<td>½ cup cocoa</td>
<td>(add splash of hot water)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 cup confectioners (icing) sugar</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>½ cup butter, softened</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 eggs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>½ cup flour</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 tsp vanilla extract</td>
<td>a pinch of salt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a pinch of salt</td>
<td>½ cup walnuts, chopped</td>
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For the icing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ingredient</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 tbsp butter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 tbsp cocoa</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 tsp vanilla extract</td>
<td>a pinch of salt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>½ cup walnuts, chopped</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Heat the oven to 180°Cf. Cream the butter, sugar and cocoa. Add the remaining ingredients and mix until smooth and creamy. Pour into a 22cm square, (9x9) greased and floured cake tin and bake for 20-30 minutes or until an inserted toothpick comes out clean.

For the icing put all ingredients in a bowl and whip together until smooth. Ice the brownies and sprinkle with chopped walnuts.

Each portion provides 10g protein and 1230 kcals.

Fresh fig filo tart

Yield 1 25x16 cm tart, serves 4

This is a delicious Mediterranean classic. The riper the figs the better. Don’t be put off if you can’t get figs, substitute with any fruit you want. Plums and blueberries work a treat!

<table>
<thead>
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<tr>
<td>25g butter (and a little extra for greasing)</td>
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<tr>
<td>a handful of fine bread crumbs</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 sheets filo pastry</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 fresh figs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75g flour</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75g caster sugar</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 eggs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>450 ml milk</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>½ tsp almond extract</td>
<td>1 tbsp icing sugar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>greek style set yoghurt to serve</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Preheat oven to 170°Cf and grease a 25x16 cm baking pan.

Melt the butter and lightly brush a sheet of pastry with it then dust with a few breadcrumbs. Line the tin with the pastry and repeat with the remaining sheets. Using scissors cut any excess to leave a little bit of filo pastry hanging over the edge.

Cut the figs into wedges and arrange them in the pastry.

Next sift the flour into a bowl and stir in the sugar. Add the eggs and a bit of milk and whisk until smooth. Whisk in the remaining milk and almond extract. Pour the mixture evenly over the figs and bake for approximately 1 hour until the batter is set and lightly golden. If the surface browns too quickly, cover with a lightly greased piece of foil.

Allow the tart to cool in the tin. When cool dust with icing sugar. If you do this when hot the sugar will dissolve. Serve with yoghurt.

Two slices, one of each provides 7g protein and 330 kcals.
Champagne soused raspberry jelly

Serves 4

This is a playful pudding and the raspberries tingle the taste buds. If you don’t want residual alcohol, soak the berries in water then simply plop them in at the end.

- 600ml champagne (cava or prosecco will suffice)
- 120g sugar
- 8 sheets (20g) leaf gelatin
- a punnet of fresh raspberries
- 300ml whipping cream (for garnish)

Place 4 jelly glasses or moulds into fridge to chill. Next pour the wine into a bowl with the raspberries, saving a few for garnish, and allow to soak for 1-2 hours.

Place the gelatin leaves in cold water to allow to soften.

Pour the champagne into a saucepan through a fine sieve keeping the berries. Place the liquid on medium heat and add the sugar stirring constantly until sugar is fully dissolved. Do not allow the mixture to boil. Remove the gelatin from the water and add to the champagne mixture and stir until completely dissolved. Remove from heat.

Place the berries into the chilled glasses (moulds) and fill with the liquid. Place in the fridge for several hours until firmly set. Serve cold with whipped cream and a few fresh berries.

If you want to substitute the champagne you can use white grape juice.

Each portion provides 6g protein and 540kcals.
Orange cake

Yield 1, 22 cm cake, serves 8

This is about the juiciest cake on the planet! It’s a cake that puts a smile on your face. Make it for someone you love.

250 ml butter, softened
250g caster sugar
4 eggs
zest of 1 orange
250g self-raising flour
85 ml freshly squeezed orange juice

For the icing
125g icing sugar
5 tsp freshly squeezed orange juice

Preheat oven to 160°Cf and grease and line a 22 cm round cake tin with baking parchment.

Cream the butter and sugar together for 3-4 minutes, until pale and fluffy. Next add the eggs one at a time, each with a sprinkling of flour to avoid curdling. Stir in the orange zest and flour then slowly add the orange juice until you have a smooth batter.

Bake for 45-50 minutes or until a toothpick come out clean. If the top starts to brown too quickly loosely cover with buttered foil.

Allow to cool then carefully remove from the tin and discard the parchment. Place on a plate.

For the icing, sift the sugar into a clean bowl and stir in small amounts of juice until you have a spreadable consistency. Spread evenly over the top and let it drizzle down the side and leave to set.

Each portion provides 6g protein and 560kcals.
Pink & pineapple fluff

Serves 4

Sometimes old-fashioned puddings are the best. This bit of frippery makes everyone smile. There are a few stages to this recipe so you'll need to prepare in advance.

- 1 litre cranberry juice
- 2 tbsp sugar
- 7 leaves of gelatin
- 300 ml whipping cream
- 2 tbsp sugar
- 300 ml pineapple, puréed
- 100 ml raspberry coulis (see the basics pxx)
- small fresh strawberries, tops removed and sliced

Set out 4 clean parfait glasses and a container large enough to hold ½ litre. Place another clean glass bowl for whipping the cream in the fridge to chill.

Pour the cranberry juice into a saucepan, add the sugar and warm on medium-low heat. Meanwhile, soak the gelatin leaves in a bowl of cold water. When the juice is simmering place the softened gelatin into the juice one at a time and stir until completely dissolved. Pour half the liquid into a container and portion out the rest evenly in the parfait glasses. Leave for a couple hours until firmly set.

When the jelly is set, whip the cream with sugar and divide in half. Roughly whip in the set jelly then carefully spoon this in equal layers into the parfait glasses then add a layer of strawberries.

Fold the pineapple purée into the second half of the whipping cream and spoon this on top of the strawberries. Place back in the fridge for another half hour or until ready to serve. Garnish with a whole strawberry and serve chilled.

Each portion provides 10g protein and 580kcals.
Colour me pink
drinks & alcohol

It can be tricky to understand whether alcohol is friend or foe when it comes to cancer. Alcohol is associated with cancer risk—the more you drink, the greater your risk—but it’s not as black and white as that when consumed in moderation. Having a drink with friends can be a powerful anecdote for feeling normal. Additionally, it can be part of your family and food tradition and many cultures enjoy a pre-dinner drink. An aperitif is taken specifically to whet the appetite for what is to come.

The most important thing is to follow the professional medical advice you are given that is specific to you and use common sense. If you are trying to control your weight, you can save calories by enjoying your cocktail into a mocktail!

When using fresh fruit such as strawberries and you are sensitive to roughage such as seeds, piths and skins, once liquidised, pass through a sieve and if you’d prefer to avoid the alcohol these drinks are still delicious without it. All of these mixtures can be frozen in ice cube trays or lolly moulds to make small snacks and they can be soothing on dry and tender mouths and also give your appetite a lift when it needs it!

Illustration of northern sunset, see page 113

Cocktails & mocktails

Slush 113
Northern sunset 113
Gin & tonic ice lollies 114
Chocolate & mint yoghurt shake 116
Apple à la mode 117
Iced chai latte 118
Frozen strawberry margarita 119
Frozen watermelon with ginger & lime ice 120
**Slush**

**Serves 4 (easy to prepare)**

*You can keep portions of slush in the freezer and help yourself to a scoop whenever you fancy. It’s wonderful to have on hand on warm afternoons.*

- 3 bananas
- 2 apples
- 250 ml orange juice
- 250 ml pineapple juice

Purée the bananas, apples and juices in a blender. Pour into a sealable container and freeze. When ready to serve pop a couple ice cubes in a large glass and half fill with lemonade or ginger beer (or fizzy wine for adults) then plop in a scoop or two of the frozen slush. Serve immediately.

Each portion provides 2g protein and 180kcals.

**Northern sunset**

**Serves 4 (easy to prepare)**

*This is an old family recipe. It's an interesting twist on mulled cider. It conjures memories of après ski and glowing fires.*

- 500 ml apple cider
- 250 ml cranberry juice
- 3-4 tsp instant coffee
- 1 tbsp brown sugar
- 3 cloves

Pour the cider and juice into a large saucepan and warm over medium-low heat. Stir in the coffee and brown sugar and drop in the cloves and cinnamon stick. Simmer for a few minutes then add the orange juice and peel. Serve hot.

Each portion provides 1g protein and 120kcals.
Gin & tonic ice lollies

Makes 6 large or 8 small (easy to prepare)

These aren’t quite nutritional giants but they can stimulate appetite and soothe a sore mouth and throat. There’s a bit of fun factor as well.

6 tbsp gin (or vodka)
375 ml sugar syrup
375 ml tonic water
1 lime (or lemon)

Zest and juice the lime then strain the juice. Mix together the gin, sugar syrup, tonic water and juice. Pour into lolly moulds, allowing 1cm clearance at the top and freeze overnight.

If you want the flavour but not the alcohol you can infuse the sugar syrup by heating it with a few juniper berries.

Apparently this is a number one hit in the Marie Curie kitchens! No protein but a real morale booster and posh way to help with dry mouth and nausea and to stimulate appetite. Bring it on.

One lolly provides 359kcal and 0g protein.
Chocolate & mint yoghurt shake

Serves 2 full portions (easy to prepare)

Luscious, smooth, cool, fresh and chocolate. That’s heaven in a glass!

100g frozen chocolate yoghurt
25-50 ml crème de menthe, or 1 tbsp mint extract
a splash of milk
chocolate shavings
sprig of fresh mint

Scoop the frozen yoghurt into a blender. Add the crème de menthe and splash of milk and whiz until thick and smooth. Add more milk if too thick and a bit of ice if too thin. Dust with chocolate shavings and garnish with mint.

Each portion provides 2g protein and 170kcal.

Apple à la mode

Serves 4 (easy to prepare)

This is a lovely, refreshing drink. It’s like mom’s apple pie in a glass (with an extra kick if you fancy).

100 ml (4 measures) dark rum
200 ml (8 measures) apple juice
4 small scoops vanilla ice cream
2 cups ice
mint sprigs for garnish

Place all the ingredients in a blender and whip until smooth and creamy. Garnish with a small dollop of ice cream and a drizzle of rum and mint sprig. Serve immediately.

Each portion provides 2g protein and 190kcal.

nutrient thumbs-up score
vitamin B12 ✅

nutrient thumbs-up score
vitamin C ✅
Iced chai latte

Serves 4 (easy to prepare)

This is a spicier and less sweet version of the coffee shop variety and it’s great to have on hand. The milk isn’t essential to enjoy a nice cooler.

Bring water to the boil. Remove from heat, stir in tea bags. Cover and let steep for 5 minutes. Remove tea bags. Stir in honey and spices until honey is dissolved. Allow to cool a bit and then cover and refrigerate until cold. Stir before serving to mix in the spices that have settled on the bottom.

For a pitcher full: stir 2 cups milk directly into the cold tea. Pour into glasses over ice.

For individual servings: Fill glass with ice. Top with ½ cup cold tea and then with ¼ cup milk. Stir to serve.

Each portion provides 5g protein and 140 kcals.

nutrient thumbs-up score

- vitamin B12
- riboflavin
- calcium
- iodine
- phosphorus

Frozen strawberry margaritas

Serves 1 (easy to prepare)

This lovely concoction was invented in Tijuana in the 1940’s. You can replace the strawberry with any fruit you want.

Coat the rim of a wide-mouthed glass by running a wedge of lemon around it then sprinkling with sugar. Place all the ingredients with a generous handful of ice in a blender and blitz until ice is fully crushed. Pour into glass and serve immediately.

To make a virgin margarita simply replace the tequila and triple sec with a bit more orange juice.

Each portion provides 0g protein and 180 kcals.
Frozen watermelon with ginger & lime ice

Serves 4 (easy to prepare)

This is a real pick me up. It’s fresh and zingy. For an adult version throw in a shot of vodka or mix with lashings of fizz. Ooh-ahh!

1 ripe round watermelon, halved & de-seeded
5 cm ginger, peeled & grated
juice of 2 limes
sugar (optional)
 zest of 1 lime cut into fine strips for garnish
 ice cubes
1 measure per serving of vodka (optional)

Put the flesh of the ½ watermelon, ginger and lime juice into a blender and blend until smooth. Add a touch of water if too thick. Check for sweetness, you may find you don’t require any sugar. Pour into ice cube trays and freeze.

When ready to serve put the remaining watermelon into the blender and blend until smooth. Pop the fruit cubes into glasses, pour over with juice and garnish with a few lime shavings. Serve immediately

Each portion provides 1g protein and 80kcal.

nutrient thumbs-up score
vitamin C: 4
### Conversion chart

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The basics
These are some of the principles we follow and a few traditional methods

Boiling pasta
When using dry pasta, generously salt the water, approximately 1 tbsp per litre of water. When the pasta is ready, strain and rinse thoroughly with cold water to stop the cooking process and remove excess starch. If the pasta is going to be standing for a time before being used, add a small amount of olive oil to prevent it from sticking. Finally, once your sauce is prepared, add pasta to the sauce in a pan and gently warm then plate and serve. This will also ensure that your pasta is not sticky.

Serving portions are generally 50-75g per person for a side dish and 75-100g for a main.

Brown butter (beurre noisette)
Melt the butter in a pan over medium heat, whisking until the solids turn brown. The flavour will become nutty. This is used frequently in baking and to give depth of flavour to sauces.

Clarified butter (ghee)
Put the butter into a heavy-bottomed saucepan and melt over medium heat. Skim off the foam. Carefully pour the clear liquid into a container and discard the whey (white solids). Clarified butter keeps for several weeks in the refrigerator. It’s good for sealing potted dishes and pâtés and is excellent for frying and basting as it can withstand high temperatures without burning.

Hollandaise sauce
325 ml clarified butter
2 egg yolks
2 tbsp of cold water
1 tbsp of lemon juice
1 tsp of salt
1 tsp of sugar
1 drop of sriracha or pinch of cayenne pepper
In a clean glass bowl, whisk the egg yolks with 2 tbsp of cold water until frothy. Place the bowl over the pan of simmering water and whisk until thickened. Remove from the heat and whisk for a further minute to allow the eggs to cool then place back over the hot water but remove the pan from the heat. Slowly pour the melted butter into the egg yolk mixture continuously whisking. Add the remaining ingredients until they have blended together and the sauce is as thick as you require.

Mayonnaise
The type of oil will determine the richness. Use sunflower for light and olive for richer and peppery. This contains raw egg so must be kept refrigerated in a sealed container and used within 2 days.
1 egg yolk, 1 tbsp dijon mustard
1 drop of sriracha
salt and freshly cracked black pepper, to taste

Whisk the egg yolk, mustard, salt and pepper until smooth and the salt is dissolved. Then whisk the oil a drop at a time until the mixture begins to emulsify. Continue to add in a steady but delicate stream until thick. Add lemon juice and final seasoning to taste.

Potato purée
700g floury potatoes (maris piper are good)
100 ml milk
60g butter
Peel the potatoes and chop into 2-3 inch pieces. Place in a pot of cold salted water then boil until fully cooked. (A knife or fork should pass easily through). Drain, then pass through a ricer. Next whisk in butter and milk until the consistency is smooth and creamy. Season to taste and grate in a bit of nutmeg.

Raspberry coulis
Puree the 115 g raspberries an1 tsp sugar in a blender with 3 tbsp water. Pass through a sieve and set in the fridge until ready to use.

Sriracha, chilli paste and using chillies for seasoning
I have used a chilli sauce for decades called Sriracha which is a ‘Sambal Malaysian’ variant. It adds more lift and less heat to sauces and marinades. Others are: North African Harissa; Ancho, which is a Mexican variation; and Nam Prik Pao the Thai version made from roasted chillies. Generally, fresh chillies are less intense than dried. If you want full flavour but not so much heat remove the seeds.

Vinaigrette
This is based on classic French cookery. To this you can add flavours such as, raspberries, honey or whatever suits your menu.
½ litre olive oil
1 tbsp dry mustard
splash of balsamic vinegar
1 garlic clove, crushed
1 shallot, finely chopped
¼ cup fresh herbs or ¼ cup herbs de provence
1 egg yolk
drop of sriracha
salt & pepper

Pineapple, skin and eyes removed
Cut off the top and bottom and stand on end. A bread knife is a good tool for this. Notice that the ‘eyes’ run down in columns. Take off the skin in vertical slices, with a column of eyes in the centre, just deep enough to remove them. Follow the shape of the fruit. Remove any leftover eyes then cut in 1 inch thick slices. If not fully ripe the core might be a bit hard and can also be removed.

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**Glossary**

- **bundt tin** – traditional ring-shaped European cake tin
- **beetroot** – beet
- **caster sugar** – refined sugar. When using sugar for jellies or other fine desserts where the sugar is melted in liquid, use granulated sugar as it is ‘cleaner’
- **cook without colour** – sauté until softened but not browning
- **coriander** – cilantro
- **crème fraîche** – lightly soured cream
- **deglaze the pan** – adding liquid (stock or wine) to a pan to loosen food particles to make a sauce
- **double cream** – heavy cream
- **granita** – a semi-frozen dessert made from sugar, shaved ice and flavourings
- **grill** – grill or salamander
- **Italian tomatoes** – roma or pomodoro tomatoes
- **jelly** – gelatine dessert ‘jello’ or jellied condiment
- **julienne** – finely sliced slivers
- **Maldon salt** – flaked sea salt from east of England. When seasoning raw meats and fish use course salt as fine table salt will leech into the meat
- **parchment** – waxed paper
- **poulette** – dusted with flour
- **spring onions** – green onions or scallions (a larger version)
- **sriracha** – a chilli sauce originating from Thailand. Available in most supermarkets
- **tomato purée** – tomato paste
- **wild mushrooms** – includes chanterelles, chestnut, field, porcini (cépe), bunny bun, trompette and japoneses

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| Pepper | 11, 19 |
| Peppers | 19 |
| - marinated with goat's cheese & crostini | 75 |
| Pesto; crispy shallot & tomato & broad bean bruschetta | 43 |
| Phyllo pastry (see filo pastry) |  |
| Pickled cucumber & dill salad | 46, 59 |
| Pie; Simon's | 87 |
| Pineapple | 125 |
| Pineapple & mango fluff | 29 |
| Pink & pineapple fluff | 108 |
| Pita toasts | 44 |
| Pomegranate | 39 |
| Pork; escalope, with juniper & marsala | 84 |
| Potato puree | 78, 125 |
| Probiotics | 21 |
| Pulses | 17 |

### R

| Raspberry; coulis | 98, 108, 125 |
| Rigatoni; turkey | 95 |
| Risotto; beetroot | 80 |

### S

| Salad |  |
| Greek | 60 |
| Moroccan carrot & orange | 39 |
| Pearl cous cous, asparagus & roasted tomato | 56 |
| Pickled cucumber & dill | 59 |
| Salt | 11 |
| Sauces | 10 |
| 'Season to taste' | 11 |
| Seeds | 19 |
| Shakes |  |
| Chocolate & mint yoghurt | 116 |
| Peanut butter & banana | 31 |
| Simon's pie | 87 |
| Smoked salmon; Alaskan | 35 |
| Slush | 113 |
| Soup |  |
| Creamy spiced butternut | 52 |
| Gazpacho | 51 |
| Tuscan bean | 55 |
| Wild mushroom cappuccino | 48 |
| Spanikopita & tzatziki | 72 |
| Spices | 19 |
| Spinach | 19, 72 |
| Spinach, watercress & crispy shallot salad |  |
| Sri Lankan wet fish curry | 88 |
| Sriracha | 11, 125 |
| Stacked mangoes & raspberry coulis | 98 |
| Strawberry; frozen margueritas | 119 |

### T

| Tagliatelli; stuffed marrow with ragu & tahini | 91, 44 |
| Tart; fresh fig & filo | 96, 103 |
| Tea cakes; cranberry | 64 |
| Tomatoes | 20 |
| - crispy shallot & broad bean pesto bruschetta | 43 |
| Tomato & orange refresher | 25 |
| Tortilla; herb & fava bean | 40 |
| Tuna, courgette & pepper frittata |  |

### V

| Vinaigrette | 125 |

### W

| Water | 20 |
| Watercress | 19 |
| - spinach, & crispy shallot salad |  |
| Watermelon; frozen with ginger & lime ice | 59 |
| Wild mushroom cappuccino | 48 |
| Wholegrain | 20 |

### XYZ

| Yoghurt | 21, 26 |
| - chocolate & mint, shake | 116 |
| Zippy mint cooler | 26 |