

Diet Diaries: Expo

"I have high cholesterol"

At 1.57 m and 52 kg, Belynda Lim is within the healthy range, according to the Health Promotion Board's BMI calculator. Belynda, a mum of two who works as an executive assistant, believes she has a balanced diet. "I don't really snack. And although I don't count calories, I eat quite well and try to have the different food groups." She jogs twice a week to keep fit, and would like to lose some weight as she says she's never passed a fat analysis test. But what surprised her most were the results on a recent medical report. "I was told that I had high cholesterol and LDL levels. So I definitely need to watch my diet and exercise more!"

Belynda's Weekly Diet

MONDAY

Breakfast Hot drink of 2 tps Milo with 2 tpsps Anlene milk powder, 2 hotdog buns with a slice of cheese and a slice of honey baked ham

Lunch Thai buffet: 1 plate white rice with 2 tpsps green chicken curry, 1 chicken wing, 1 tbsp basil chicken, 2 tpsps phad thai noodle, 2 tpsps kai lan and mushrooms, 2 pcs dark soy tofu, 3 tpsps seafood tom yam soup

Dinner 1 chicken thigh, 2 tpsps vegetables, 2 tpsps fo shou gua, ½ bowl fish, 1 bowl tofu mushroom soup, 1 pear

Snack 1 cup non-fat yoghurt, 1 slice mango ice-cream cake, 2 tpsps Oreo ice-cream cake

TUESDAY

Breakfast 2 tpsps instant oats, hot drink of 2 tpsps Milo with 2 tpsps Anlene milk powder

Lunch 1 plate fried bee hoon

Dinner ½ bowl vegetables, 1 slice steamed fish, ½ bowl beans, 1 bowl vegetable soup

Snack 2 apples, 5 tpsps mango salad



WEDNESDAY

Breakfast Hot drink of 2 tpsps Milo with 2 tpsps Anlene milk powder, 2 soft-boiled eggs, 2 slices wholemeal bread

Lunch Japanese bento set of salmon, soba, pumpkin, salad and 2 sushi

Dinner 2 forkfuls of pasta, 4 slices off a 9-inch pizza, ½ bowl mushroom soup, 5 pcs calamari rings, 5 tpsps pudding

Snack 1 apple, 2 slices toasted traditional bread with butter and kaya

THURSDAY

Breakfast Hot drink of 2 tpsps Milo with 2 tpsps Anlene milk powder, 4 slices toasted traditional bread with butter and kaya

Lunch 2 ang ku kuih, 2 steamed sweet potatoes

Dinner 1 bowl mui fan (fish, pork, fish ball, vegetables), 2 bowls sweet corn, melon, carrot soup

Snack 1 apple, 1 slice wholemeal bread, 100 ml vitamin C water



FRIDAY

Breakfast 1 slice raisin bread, hot drink of 2 tpsps Milo with 2 tpsps Anlene milk powder

Lunch 1 bowl sliced deep-fried fish noodle with milk

Dinner 3 fish balls, 1 lady's finger, 7 pcs yong tau foo, vegetables, bee hoon

Snack 1 ¼ apples, 1 orange, 1 slice raisin bread

SATURDAY

Breakfast ½ plate fried noodle with cabbage, ½ bowl bean curd

Lunch Rice, ½ bowl vegetables, ½ bowl char siew, ½ meat ball

Dinner 1 bowl tofu soup, 1 slice steamed fish, 1 tbsp vegetables, 1 omelette

Snack ½ plate fried noodle with cabbage, ½ bowl bean curd, 200 ml orange juice, 1 ¼ oranges, ½ apple, ½ slice raisin bread

SUNDAY

Breakfast 2 pcs ang ku kueh, 1 slice raisin bread

Lunch 1 bowl bee tai mak, fish cake, vegetables, dao pok

Dinner Herbal soup, vegetables, fish, bean curd

Snack 5 cups oolong tea, 1 pc chewing gum, 1 slice raisin bread, 1 glass chin chow drink, 1 apple



The Expert's Verdict

"Belynda should try to keep her calorie intake at below 1,600 calories a day; and as she's diagnosed with high cholesterol, she has to watch her food, especially those high in saturated fat such as kaya, egg yolk, fried bee hoon, ham and cakes," observes Jaclyn.

"She can eat fruit to stop the urge for an afternoon high-calorie snack. To help keep cholesterol levels in check, she should switch from kaya to jam or olive oil spread, and limit egg yolks to four a week. Exercise helps increase HDL cholesterol and aid weight loss, so she can add a light weights routine at home on days when she's not running."

Belynda's Verdict

"I have to remind myself to eat healthy. I will certainly try to cut back on eggs as I do want to control my cholesterol levels. I now realise how damaging snacking on white bread can be. I will try to eat the more low-fat options Jaclyn has recommended and choose wholemeal bread as well."

sed!

How effective is a food diary in our fight against bad eating habits? We asked four women to keep a weekly one, and went to Dietitian Jaclyn Reutens of Aptima Nutrition & Sports Consultants for advice

"I don't eat regular meals"

Standing at 1.58 m and weighing 44 kg, Theresa Li's BMI is 17.6, which puts her below the healthy range and at risk of deficiency diseases and osteoporosis. The 30-year-old volunteer worker at Life Centre says that although she eats pretty well, there's still room for improvement as she'd like to include the five main food groups for a more balanced diet. Theresa also realises that she's not consistent enough when it comes to mealtimes, eating when hungry or when an urge comes on. She exercises daily and says, "Weight-wise, I am happy with where I'm at."

Theresa's Weekly Diet

MONDAY

Breakfast Half a cup of coffee with ¼ cup milk and 1 ½ tsp sugar, bun with pork floss and egg
Lunch 1 packet roast pork/char siew rice
Dinner 1 bottle mangosteen juice (no added sugar)
Snack 1 Dark Mocha Frappuccino, 2 scoops chocolate ice-cream, ¼ cup apricot tea, 1 cup hot chocolate

TUESDAY

Breakfast ½ cup coffee with ¼ cup low-fat milk and 1 tsp sugar, 1 pc blueberry cake
Lunch 1 plate sweet and sour fish, ½ cup iced lemon tea
Dinner 2 bowls vegetable soup, 1 steamed egg
Snack ½ cup coffee, 1 sweet, 1 glass fruit juice, ½ red apple, ½ green apple, 1 bottle Yakult Lite, ¼ cup apricot tea, 2 scoops chocolate and vanilla ice-cream

WEDNESDAY

Breakfast ½ cup coffee with ¼ cup low-fat milk and 1 tsp sugar, 1 pc blueberry cake
Lunch 1 bowl wanton noodle, 1 cup teh si
Dinner 1 MacSpicy burger
Snack ½ cup coffee, fruit cocktail, a few gummies, ¼ cup iced milk tea, ¼ cup apricot tea, 1 bowl almond jelly, 1 green apple

THURSDAY

Breakfast 1 cup green tea, 1 pc blueberry cake
Lunch ½ bowl rice, claypot tofu
Dinner 1 cup low-fat yoghurt, fruit cocktail
Snack 2 small aloe vera jelly, fruit cocktail, ½ cup coffee, 4 pcs durian, ¼ cup apricot tea, 1 cup hot chocolate



FRIDAY

Breakfast ½ cup coffee with ¼ cup low-fat milk and 1 tsp sugar
Lunch 1 pc bread with butter, 1 bowl of soup, 1 slice fish fillet, 6 potato wedges, lettuce, 1 cup iced peach tea, 2 mini-bowls ice-cream
Dinner 1 chicken pie
Snack 1 cup coffee with 2 tps sweetened condensed milk, 5 pcs biscuits, 1 cup lime juice, 1 apple, ¼ cup orange tea

SATURDAY

Breakfast ½ cup fresh milk
Lunch 1 packet carrot cake, 1 cup teh si
Dinner None
Snack 1 green apple, 1 cup iced lemon tea, 2 slices French toast with peanut butter and pork floss, 1 bowl almond paste, orange and apple slices, 2 scoops ice-cream, 1 hot chocolate



SUNDAY

Breakfast 1 cup green tea, 3 pcs biscuits
Lunch 1 packet roast pork/char siew rice
Dinner Lasagne
Snack ½ cup coffee, few pcs soft candy, 1 can 100 Plus, 1 pc nougat, 1 slice honeydew, 1 slice pineapple, few pcs of mango, ¼ cup orange tea, 1 green apple

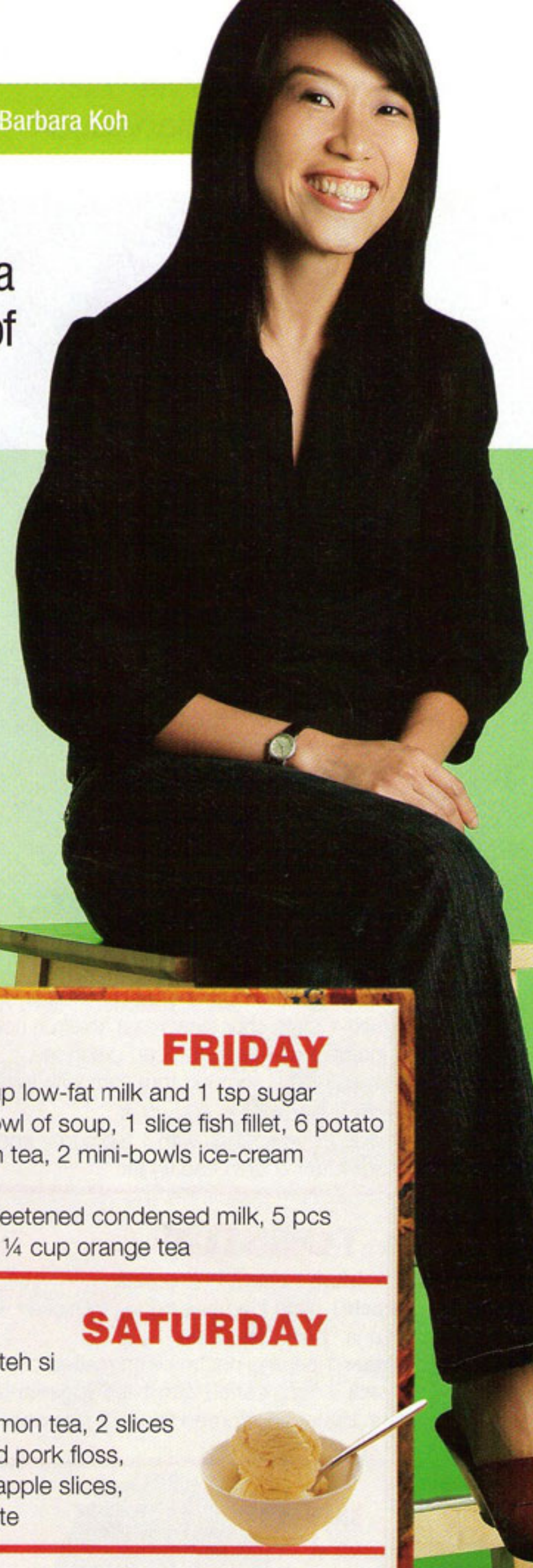
The Expert's Verdict

"Theresa's calorie intake is insufficient. She can definitely eat more as she's also exercising regularly. She's got some good habits, such as having sufficient fruit and calcium," commends Jaclyn.

"However, it's her irregular meals which are unhealthy. Theresa should have three main meals with healthy snacks in between. She must include carbohydrates from rice or noodles, protein from fish or chicken, and fibre from vegetables every evening."

Theresa's Verdict

"I am underweight, but I am happy with my body. I definitely agree with Jaclyn that I need to eat regular meals. I now schedule mealtimes and make sure I have my five food groups during each meal, especially dinner."



"I live to eat!"

Marguerita Tan, a PR consultant, adores food. "I live to eat," she shares, "so dieting is not in my vocabulary." At 1.55 m and 71 kg, Marguerita's BMI puts her at high risk of developing heart disease and diabetes. Labelling herself a snacker, she does realise that it can contribute to extra kilos – and has tried to add more healthy snacks to her diet such as carrots and nuts, although "biscuits and chocolates are still a must". The 46-year-old adds, "I used to be worse. I hardly ate fruits and veggies and drank a constant flow of fizzy drinks. Now I make an effort to cut down on oily stuff and try to eat more low-GI carbohydrates." Cutting back on food is a challenge for Marguerita, as she also hosts food tastings as part of her job. In an effort to drop some kilos, she's trying to add more exercise into her weekly running routine.

Marguerita's Weekly Diet

MONDAY

Breakfast 1 cup 3-in-1 coffee
Lunch 1 plate char siew/roast chicken rice, 1 bowl salted vegetable duck soup, 1 can green tea
Dinner 1 bowl seafood tom yam with kway teow, 1 Thai coconut, 2 onion rings, 1 banana, ½ curry puff
Snack 2 cups coffee with 1 tsp sugar and 1 tsp creamer, 1 slice papaya, 1 pc butter shortbread finger

TUESDAY

Breakfast 1 cup 3-in-1 coffee
Lunch 1 plate fried bee hoon, 1 chicken wing, fried egg and sambal long beans, 1 can green tea
Dinner 1 serving nachos with melted cheese, 1 tall glass iced lemon tea
Snack 4 cups coffee with 1 tsp sugar and 1 tsp creamer, 1 slice papaya, 1 pc butter shortbread finger, 2 pcs pork belly with bun

WEDNESDAY

Breakfast 1 cup 3-in-1 coffee
Lunch 1 plate of rice with sweet and sour pork, salted egg, stewed tang hoon, vegetables, 1 can green tea
Dinner Stir-fried beef kway teow, 1 can green tea
Snack 1 ang ku kueh, 1 ondeh ondeh, 4 cups coffee with 1 tsp sugar and 1 tsp creamer, 2 cups brewed green tea, 1 mango

THURSDAY

Breakfast 1 cup 3-in-1 coffee
Lunch Slices of salmon, tuna belly and yellowtail sashimi, 1 piece unagi, ½ cup chawanmushi, 1 tempura prawn, 2 cups brewed green tea
Dinner Rice with lean braised pork, fried ikan bilis with peanuts, broccoli, 1 glass canned green tea
Snack 3 cups coffee with 1 tsp sugar and 1 tsp creamer, 1 char siew bao

FRIDAY

Breakfast 1 cup 3-in-1 coffee
Lunch Hainanese chicken rice (no skin), kai lan, 1 can green tea
Dinner Char kway teow with cockles
Snack 3 cups coffee with 1 tsp sugar and 1 tsp creamer



SATURDAY

Breakfast 1 cup 3-in-1 coffee
Lunch Hainanese chicken rice (no skin), 1 bowl yong tau fu soup with fish balls, ladies' fingers, taukwa and chye sim, 1 can green tea
Dinner Tuna and lettuce on two slices of buttered wholemeal bread, half a mooncake, a glass of yoghurt drink
Snack Half a mooncake

SUNDAY

Breakfast 1 cup 3-in-1 coffee
Lunch Eurasian rice with Devil's curry, 1 fried egg, sambal kangkong, 1 can green tea
Dinner 1 bowl canned curry with three slices wholemeal bread
Snack 1 cup coffee with milk and sugar, 1 tall cup Dark Mocha Frappuccino, 2 mini spring rolls, 1 mini salmon baguette, 1 mini roast beef baguette

The Expert's Verdict

"Marguerita eats too much snack foods, and many of her choices, such as fried bee hoon and chicken wings, are laden with saturated fat. She should reduce portion sizes and cut back on canned drinks, and instead choose low-fat yoghurt or instant oats. When there's a food tasting, she can opt not to finish the dishes," says Jaclyn.

"Not eating a proper breakfast is probably what's causing the poor food choices. She should have a high-fibre breakfast such as a wholemeal sandwich with low-fat cheese. Her four-cup a day coffee habit is also harmful. One cup is already about 90 calories."

Marguerita's Verdict

"When I'm hungry, I will eat because I can't work on a growling stomach. But I have been trying to cut down on my portions and not overeat. I will try to get back to having a proper breakfast. As for the coffee, I knew she'd pick on that! I know that it adds to the calories and I am trying to cut down – slowly."

"I eat even when I'm full"

At 1.68 m and 60 kg, 36-year-old Wendy Lee's BMI is 21.3, which puts her within the healthy range. The mother-of-two says she has gotten rid of a snacking habit, but needs to pick up a fruit-eating habit. "I try to eat my vegetables and avoid sinfully-rich foods, but I just don't eat fruits." Wendy also complains that she can't refrain from eating her favourite foods even when she's already full. She shares, "I want to learn to control myself and not eat too much." Although she's considered healthy, Wendy says, "I'd love to lose five kilos."

Wendy's Weekly Diet

MONDAY

Breakfast 2 slices white bread with ½ slice cheese, ½ slice ham, ½ hard-boiled egg
Lunch 1 bowl rice, deep-fried chicken, 2 sticks cucumber, 1 cup lime juice
Dinner ½ portion of spaghetti
Snack 2 durian puffs



TUESDAY

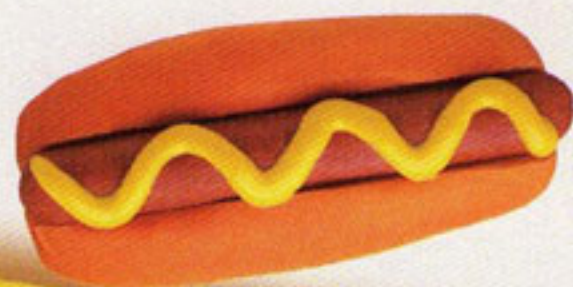
Breakfast 2 slices 12-grain bread with olive oil spread and 4 mini hotdogs, 250 ml chocolate milk
Lunch Fried bee hoon with potato, ota and broccoli
Dinner 2 litres homemade vegetable soup

WEDNESDAY

Breakfast 2 slices 12-grain bread with olive oil spread and 4 mini hotdogs, 250 ml chocolate milk
Lunch 1 bowl yee mee soup, 1 cup lime juice
Dinner Red, green and yellow peppers, salmon, two large bowls lotus soup

THURSDAY

Breakfast Fish fillet, hotdog bun
Lunch Fried Hokkien mee
Dinner 5 sticks chicken satay and ngoh hiang



FRIDAY

Breakfast 2 slices 12-grain bread with olive oil spread, 1 slice picnic ham, 180 ml chocolate milk
Lunch Buffet lunch: Salmon and tuna sashimi, 5 bowls herbal chicken soup, 1 prawn tempura, 2 slices watermelon, 2 wedges dragonfruit, 1 cup lime juice, 1 scoop vanilla ice-cream, few pcs keropok
Dinner Half bowl chicken rice, one deep-fried chicken wing

SATURDAY

Breakfast 2 slices 12-grain bread with olive oil spread, 1 slice picnic ham, 250 ml chocolate milk
Lunch ½ bowl spaghetti chicken Bolognese, 3 broccoli florets
Dinner Half bowl chicken rice, 1 deep-fried chicken wing, 1 cup lime juice
Snack 25 rolls love letters



SUNDAY

Breakfast 2 slices 12-grain bread with olive oil spread, 1 slice picnic ham, 250 ml chocolate milk
Lunch 2 plain roti prata with curry
Dinner ¾ bowl rice, 3 spoons vegetables, 3 spoons steamed fish and minced meat



The Expert's Verdict

"It's good that Wendy eats three main regular meals. Her calorie intake comes mostly from fried foods; she should choose soupy dishes and go for steamed lean meats," states Jaclyn.

"She is right to say that she isn't taking enough fruits. For breakfast, she should change fillings to something lower in fat, such as low-fat cheese. For dinner, she should also try to include more vegetables. "If she feels the urge to keep eating, she should first drink a tall glass of water, eat a piece of fruit, then have her sweet treat."

Wendy's Verdict

"I never thought foods such as hotdogs and ham could be unhealthy for me! It's when we eat out that it gets more challenging; I usually eat my son's leftovers! "Although I love kaya and butter, I realise they are adding unwanted kilos. I am so short on time as it is, but I will try to squeeze in an activity when I can."

>> Turn the page for more tips to achieve a balanced diet.

