

HOW TO COOK DIABETIC-FRIENDLY MEALS

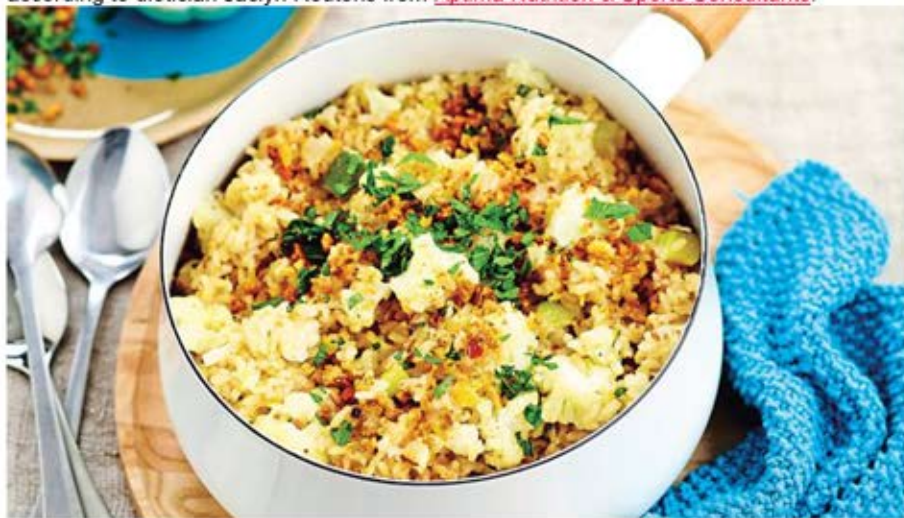
Lisa Twang | Published February 21, 2017

If you or someone in your family has diabetes, chances are you're considering a massive overhaul in your diet. You may also be unsure about what a diabetic can, or cannot eat. The good news is, there isn't a specific "diabetes diet", according to endocrinologist Dr Alice Cheng from the University of Toronto.

"I always tell my diabetic patients that they can eat the same meals I do, which are part of a healthy, balanced diet," said Dr Cheng at the launch of Toujeo, a new long-acting insulin drug approved by the Health Sciences Authority.

Video: <http://www.womensweekly.com.sg/health/nutrition/cook-healthy-meals-family-diet-diabetes/>

Here are some tips for cooking healthy, guilt-free meals for family members with diabetes, according to dietician Jaclyn Reutens from [Aptima Nutrition & Sports Consultants](#).



1. Choose Low GI foods

Foods high on the glycemic index (GI) can raise someone's blood sugar level too quickly, which is not good for someone with diabetes. The GI measures how carbohydrates in food are converted into glucose, and foods with a GI around 55 or lower – like brown rice, quinoa and couscous – are preferable to high GI foods like white rice, and white bread.

TRY: Organic Mixed Brown & Red Rice With Cauliflower Risotto
(<http://www.womensweekly.com.sg/recipe/organic-mixed-brown-red-rice-with-cauliflower-risotto/>)

Photo: Bauer/Rob Shaw



2. Eat Higher GI foods In Moderation

"My clients ask me if they can eat foods like mangoes for dessert if they have diabetes, as they have a higher GI (55) than other fruits," says Jaclyn. "The answer is, you can still have foods with higher GI – you just have to eat less of them. For fruits with lower GI, you can eat them in larger quantities without raising your blood sugar level as quickly."

Try fruit salads for dessert, which are a great way to introduce a healthy variety of fruits into your diet.

RELATED: 3 Diabetic-Friendly Low Sugar Fruits You Can Eat More Of

[\(http://www.womensweekly.com.sg/health/nutrition/3-diabetic-friendly-low-sugar-fruits-you-can-eat-more-of/\)](http://www.womensweekly.com.sg/health/nutrition/3-diabetic-friendly-low-sugar-fruits-you-can-eat-more-of/)

Photo: Pexels



3. Cut Down On Carbs

"Most of us eat too many carbohydrates," says Jaclyn. "Most diabetics should have about three to four servings of carbohydrate exchange per meal. Each exchange is 15 g of carbs, so this works out to 45-60 g of carbs per meal, and normally includes one serving or carb exchange of fruit."

If you're having brown rice, you can have 180 g of rice to meet 3 carb exchanges (a full rounded Chinese rice bowl is 200 g). For white rice, you can have a 145 g portion.

Photo: Pixabay



4. Include Healthy Proteins

Proteins keep you full for longer, and also do not elevate one's blood sugar level. Jaclyn recommends a palmsized amount of protein per meal, which is about 90 to 120 g of cooked meat. Be sure to grill, bake or steam meat if possible, as deep-fried meat is higher in calories and fat.

TRY: Bak Kut Teh Chicken (<http://www.womensweekly.com.sg/recipe/bak-kut-teh-chicken/>)

Photo: Sam Leong



5. Choose Low-Sodium Condiments

There's no need to cut out condiments you love, like oyster sauce and soy sauce, says Jaclyn. Just look for these products with the Healthier Choice symbol, which are lower in sodium and sugar.

RELATED: How To Break Your Sugar Addiction And Protect Your Waistline
(<http://www.womensweekly.com.sg/health/break-sugar-addiction-protect-waistline/>)

Photo: Health Promotion Board



6. Cook With A Variety Of Veggies

Don't just stick with green veggies; having multi-coloured vegetables in your diet (purple cabbage, orange carrots, etc.) is healthier as they all have different nutrient profiles.

Pro tip: red bell peppers, which are fully ripe, contain more nutrients than their green counterparts. They have more beta-carotene, vitamin C and vitamin A, which is also why they are costlier at the market.

RELATED: 10 Delicious Vegetarian Dishes For A Healthier You
(<http://www.womensweekly.com.sg/at-home/10-delicious-vegetarian-dishes-healthier/>)

Photo: Bauer

Source: <http://www.womensweekly.com.sg/health/nutrition/cook-healthy-meals-family-diet-diabetes/>