

Hints for healthier Arabic cooking: a quick guide

Here are three steps to help you cook healthier meals that you and your family can enjoy:

1 Choose healthier types of foods

2 Choose a healthier way to cook

3 Choose the right serving size

1. Choose healthier types of foods

Try these healthier swaps:

Fats and oils

Instead of:	Choose:
Butter or ghee	Small amounts of olive, canola or vegetable oil or spread
Cream	Low-fat plain yoghurt, low-fat ricotta, or light/skim evaporated milk
Sour cream	Light sour cream or low-fat plain yoghurt
Cream-based dressings	Olive oil mixed with fresh/dried mint or garlic, and lemon juice or olive oil mixed with balsamic vinegar
Coconut milk and cream	Light coconut milk, light coconut cream, soy milk

Salt

Instead of:	Choose:
salt, stocks or chicken/beef cubes	Fresh herbs, spices, garlic and ginger, lemon juice and vinegar to enhance flavour



Sugar

Instead of:	Choose:
1 cup sugar, honey or syrup	3/4 cup of Natvia or Raw Earth Stevia and Monk Fruit

Dairy foods

Instead of:	Choose:
Full-fat milk	Low-fat/skim milk, calcium-fortified soy or unsweetened plant milks
Cream cheese like Puck or Kiri	Reduced-fat ricotta, low-fat cottage cheese or extra light cream cheese
Hard cheese	Reduced-fat cheese, parmesan, or a nut-based cheese
Yoghurt	Low-fat natural yoghurt or diet yoghurt

Breads, rice, cereals and flours

Instead of:	Choose:
White bread or white Lebanese bread	Whole wheat Lebanese bread or whole wheat bran bread like Khubuz Enkhaleh, Qameh Kamel or Khubuz Tannour. You can also choose dense grainy/seeded bread, wholemeal sourdough or rye bread
Short/medium grain rice like Calrose or jasmine rice	Long grain rice like Doongara rice, Basmati brown rice or other grains like quinoa, barley, freekeh, burghul, semolina, or pearl couscous
White flour for baking	Wholemeal flour, nut flour, chickpea (besan flour) or a mix of these flours
Shortcrust or puff pastry	Filo pastry (brushed with egg white or milk instead of oil), reduced-fat puff pastry or make a base with wholegrain bread/crushed nuts/low GI rice

Meat, chicken and fish

Instead of:	Choose:
Fatty meat	Lean cuts of meat, with visible fat removed, or lean mince. You can also halve the quantity of minced meat and swap it for lentils
Poultry with skin	Skinless chicken or turkey (breast or thigh)
Sausages	Lean meat rissoles or meatballs
Deli meats like luncheon, salami, mortadella, chicken roll, pastrami or sujuk	Shredded BBQ chicken, lean roast meats, turkey or chicken breast
Fried or crumbed fish	Fresh or canned fish in springwater

2. Choose healthier cooking methods

The next step is to choose a healthier way to cook.

When cooking lean meat, skinless chicken, fish and vegetables:

- » choose low-fat cooking methods like steaming, microwaving, stir-frying, poaching, grilling, or barbequing
- » use a non-stick pan with olive or canola oil cooking spray
- » leave vegetable skins on, where possible, for extra fibre.

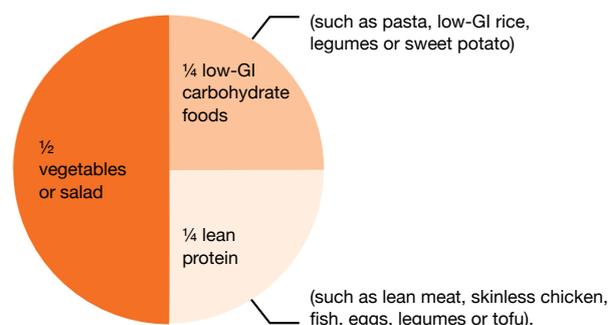
When baking:

- » use a non-stick pan, or a dish lined with baking paper
- » swap butter/ghee for small amounts of olive oil
- » try adding mashed, chopped or pureed fruit instead of sugar, or use an alternative sweetener.

3. Choose the right serving size

The last step is to choose the right serving size. Serving sizes are important to help manage your diabetes and weight. Talk to a dietitian about serving sizes that are right for you.

For breakfast, lunch and dinner, try to balance your plate like this:



The NDSS and you

A wide range of services and support is available through the NDSS to help you manage your diabetes. This includes information on diabetes management through the NDSS Helpline and website. The products, services and education programs available can help you stay on top of your diabetes.