

## Tips for healthier cooking

### Healthy choices

Swapping less healthy ingredients with healthier alternatives can improve the nutritional quality of your favourite recipes. By making some simple changes you can reduce the **RED** options on your menu and increase **GREEN** and **AMBER** foods and drinks at the same time.

Use the tables below to help you make some healthy ingredient swaps.

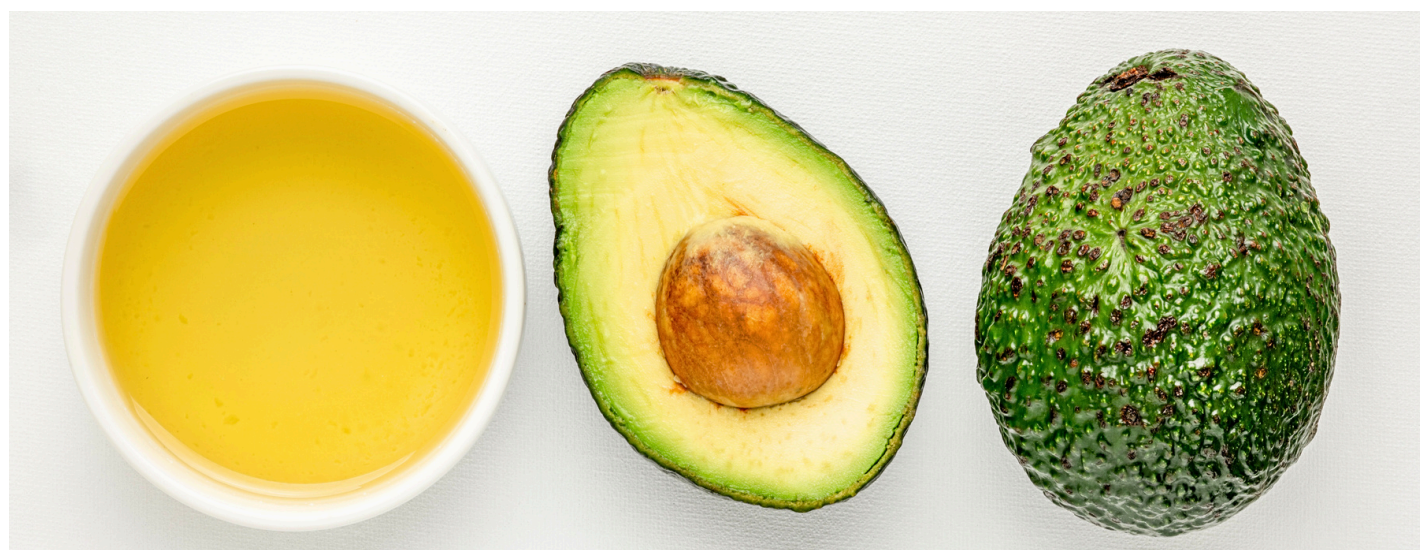
### Dairy products and alternatives

RED	AMBER	GREEN
N/A	Milk (regular fat)	Milk (reduced fat)
N/A	Evaporated milk (regular fat)	Evaporated milk (reduced fat)
N/A	Yoghurt (regular fat)	Yoghurt (reduced fat)
N/A	Cheese (regular fat)	Cheese (reduced fat)
N/A	Long life cheese spread (from jar)	Cottage cheese, ricotta, cream cheese (reduced fat)
N/A	Custard (regular fat)	Custard (reduced fat)
Cream (regular fat)	Cream (reduced fat)	Evaporated milk (reduced fat)
Sour cream (regular fat)	Sour cream (reduced fat)	Natural yoghurt (reduced fat)



## Fats and oils

RED	AMBER	GREEN
Butter or dairy blend spread	Margarine	Spread: avocado, ricotta or cottage cheese (reduced fat) Baking: natural yoghurt (reduced fat)
Palm oil, coconut oil, ghee, lard, copha, shortening	Mono- or polyunsaturated oil e.g. canola, olive, peanut, sesame, sunflower, safflower	N/A
Coconut cream / coconut milk (regular fat)	Coconut milk (reduced fat)	Coconut flavoured evaporated milk (reduced fat)





## Fruit and vegetables

RED	AMBER	GREEN
N/A	Vegetables in oil or brine e.g. sundried tomatoes, olives	Fresh vegetables Frozen vegetables Roasted vegetables (lightly sprayed with olive oil – add herbs for extra flavour)
Deep-fried hot potato chips, wedges, potato cakes, hash browns, gems	Oven-baked commercial hot potato chips, wedges, potato cakes, hash browns, gems*	Hot potato chips and wedges prepared on-site from fresh potatoes and oven-baked with minimal oil/salt
N/A	Canned fruit in syrup or jelly	Canned fruit in natural juice
N/A	Stewed fruit with added sugar	Stewed fruit with no sugar added
N/A	Dried fruit (plain)	Dried fruit (plain)



\* These examples are of a general nature only. To identify AMBER options, please refer to Table 2 in the [Healthy choices: food and drink classification guide](#).



## Meat, poultry, fish and nuts

RED	AMBER	GREEN
Sausages, frankfurts, chorizo	Meat or poultry (regular, with visible skin or fat)	Meat or poultry (lean, skinless, without crumbs or coating)
Sausage mince	Mince meat (regular)	Mince meat (lean)
Processed meats (regular fat, regular salt) e.g. bacon, ham, salami, Strasburg, Devon, kabana	Processed meats (lean)* e.g. lean ham and pastrami	Sliced cooked meat or poultry e.g. roast beef, chicken/turkey breast
N/A	Canned fish (in brine, oil or sauce)	Canned fish (in spring water)
N/A	Smoked salmon Note: reduced salt smoked salmon is a healthier option than regular salt varieties	Canned salmon slices (in spring water)
Chicken (deep-fried) e.g. chicken nuggets	Chicken fillet (with skin)	Chicken fillet (skinless)
Fish fillet (battered, deep-fried)	Fish fillet (commercial, crumbed, oven-baked or grilled)*	Fish fillet (plain, steamed) Fish fillet (coated on-site using minimal oil/salt, oven-baked or grilled)
Tofu (deep-fried)	Tofu (marinated in sweet/salty sauce, pan-fried in mono- or polyunsaturated oil)	Tofu (plain, pan-fried in mono- or polyunsaturated oil, steamed or stir-fried)
N/A	Meat or vegetable patties/balls (oven-baked or shallow-fried with extra oil/salt)*	Meat or vegetable patties/balls (lean with minimal oil/salt, grilled or oven-baked)
Nuts with sweet or savoury coating	Nuts or seeds (roasted in oil and/or lightly salted without coating)	Nuts or seeds (raw or dry-roasted and unsalted)





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## Bread and pastry

RED	AMBER	GREEN
N/A	Focaccia	Turkish bread, wholemeal and wholegrain bread, rolls and wraps
Puff pastry (regular fat) or shortcrust pastry	Puff pastry (reduced fat)	Filo pastry



## Sauces, dressings and seasonings

RED	AMBER	GREEN
N/A	Tomato sauce, BBQ sauce, Worcestershire sauce (regular salt/sugar)	Tomato sauce, BBQ sauce, Worcestershire sauce (reduced salt/sugar)

Asian style sauces (regular salt/sugar) e.g. soy, satay, oyster, kecap manis, sweet chilli	Asian style sauces (reduced salt/sugar) e.g. soy, satay, oyster, kecap manis, sweet chilli	N/A
Chutney, relish, cranberry sauce (regular sugar/salt)	Chutney, relish, cranberry sauce (reduced sugar/salt)	N/A
Pesto (regular fat/salt)	Pesto (reduced fat/salt)	N/A
N/A	Tomato paste (regular salt)	Tomato paste (reduced salt /no added salt)
Gravy (regular fat, regular salt)	Gravy (reduced fat, reduced salt)	N/A
Creamy sauce (regular fat) e.g. mayonnaise, aioli, tartare	Creamy sauce (reduced fat) e.g. mayonnaise, aioli, tartarein)	Natural yoghurt (reduced fat), mixed with garlic, herbs or lemon juice
Creamy salad dressing e.g. Caesar or coleslaw dressing	Oil-based salad dressing e.g. French dressing	Citrus or vinegar-based salad dressing e.g. Balsamic vinegar or lemon/orange juice
N/A	Stock (regular salt)	Stock (reduced salt)
Salt	N/A	Herbs and spices (no added salt/sugar)





## Healthier cooking methods

Cooking methods can have a big impact on how nutritious the meal is. Where possible, avoid deep-frying as this adds unnecessary energy (kilojoules) to the meal. Boiling or braising food can cause the loss of valuable nutrients.



### Important information

All deep-fried foods and meals containing deep-fried ingredients are classified as **RED**.

To keep the meal as nutritious as possible, try the following healthy cooking methods:

- grill
- stir-fry
- roast or bake with minimal oil (e.g. use spray or lightly brush with oil)
- steam or blanch in boiling water
- microwave.

## Additional tips

Swap this	for this
Baking trays greased with butter/oil	Baking trays lined with baking paper
Extra fat (butter or oil) to prevent food from sticking to cookware	Non-stick cookware or a light spray of oil
Pastry cases for pies	Ramekins (individual crockery pie dishes) with a pastry lid for pies
Quiches (with pastry)	Frittatas (without pastry)
Large amounts of sugar, fat or salt in recipes	Reduced amounts of sugar, fat and salt in recipes (use some of the healthier ingredient swaps listed in the section above for ideas)
All white flour in recipes	Half wholemeal flour and half white flour in recipes

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