



*Healthy
Eating For
Life*

lifted

A happier, healthier you

Hi, my name is Viv and I'm a Health Coach

I love what I do as it enables me to use my love of people, my passion for healthy living together with my energies and health coaching skills to give others the support they need to make better health and lifestyle choices that help them live their best lives.

I have a very simple vision, and that's to see a world where people enjoy a long and happy health span; being kinder to themselves, having more joy, and taking control of their health and wellbeing so they can truly thrive.

I work with people who want to feel happier and healthier. More energy, less stress, weight- and fitness-levels they're happy with, and a future they can really look forward to.

I'll help you build resilience so you can deal with whatever challenges life throws at you; empowering you with the confidence to take control of your life, your health, and wellbeing so you feel lifted to the very best version of yourself.

“My mission is to inspire, motivate, and support you in creating unique, long-term healthy eating and lifestyle habits that last.”



It all starts with eating healthily, balancing blood sugar, and feeding your whole body!

We all need a healthy eating plan that is delicious, simple, satisfying, and that really works with the design of our bodies; a plan that becomes a new way of life rather than a short term fix. As a Health Coach, with a passion for food, I can help you understand how to nourish your whole body for both mental and physical health and wellbeing.

The blood sugar balancing solution

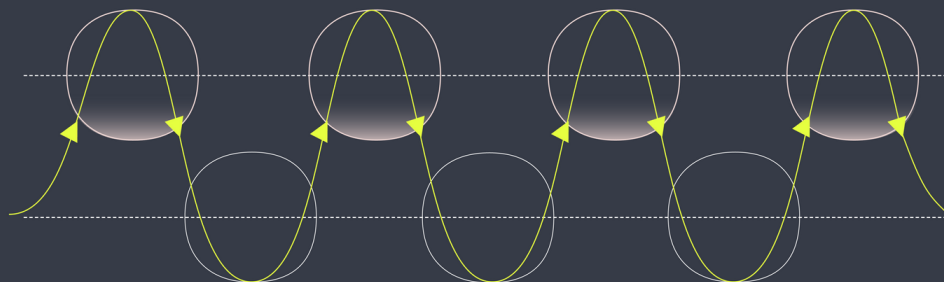
One of the key solutions to the worrying rise in obesity and health problems such as T2 diabetes, heart disease, dementia and other chronic illnesses, starts with what, and how we eat. Often referred to as 'lifestyle' diseases due to their close connection with how we live and what we eat, there's just so much we can do to help avoid them while protecting our longterm health.

It's all about keeping blood sugars balanced and avoiding the rollercoaster caused by a sugar-laden carb overload and absence of other key dietary elements such as protein, fibre, and healthy fats. The diagram explains what keeping blood sugars balanced can do for us and the risks of opting not to.

Want to feel Lifted? Get to grips with sugar!

Extra sugar stored as fat

The more blood sugar goes up and down, the more fat is stored



High blood sugar triggers insulin release, can cause inflammation, damage arteries organs and more

Low blood sugar triggers cortisol release, can lead to tiredness, low mood and poor concentration

Keeping blood sugar evenly balanced maintains energies, avoids fat storage and helps protect health and wellbeing

Your simple guide to blood sugar balancing

Menu planning

For some people the very idea of menu planning is intimidating, while for those who love a good checklist, menu planning is a joy! But menu planning doesn't mean complete change, it's about zoning in on the healthiest choices from the foods we have readily available. It's also about looking what you enjoy, seeing how you can make it an even healthier while experimenting with new foods, flavours, textures and style of eating.

Breakfast

Cereal

Finding the perfect breakfast cereal is a challenge. Many marketed as healthy are actually highly processed and contain hidden sugars that can cause rapid blood sugar spikes. To avoid this, opt for rolled/jumbo porridge oats, which are healthier options. You can easily use these for porridge or overnight oats. Don't forget overnight oats can be made in a batch for use over 3-4 days and are a great, portable option.

If you love muesli, look for low-carb granola or muesli that doesn't contain dried fruit. If you're looking for a gluten-free option, quinoa flakes or buckwheat are both great choices as well.



Toast

For many of us toast is an easy option for breakfast and lunch. Now's the time to super-charge it! Use toast as a base for eggs, avocado, smoked salmon, nut butters, baked beans, hummus, cheese, and mushrooms. Sprinkle seeds and add greens, tomatoes, or chopped peppers/chillis for extra nutrients, taste and texture. Choose sourdough, wholegrain/whole wheat, rye, or gluten-free and limit to one small slice.

Yoghurt

Yoghurt is a quick, healthy breakfast option, but be mindful of what type you choose. To avoid added sugar go for full-fat, plain yoghurt – Greek is a good and organic is preferable, as it contains higher levels of probiotics that help feed your gut. Avoid low-fat, fruit flavoured varieties that give lower nutritional value.

Contrary to popular belief, full fat yoghurt is healthy; it's more satisfying than low-fat varieties and contains more nutrients due to minimal processing. Pair plain yoghurt with fresh berries that have a lower blood sugar impact, as well as nuts, and seeds. When making smoothies, choose a berry and yoghurt blend over a mango or pineapple version, which can have a higher blood sugar impact.

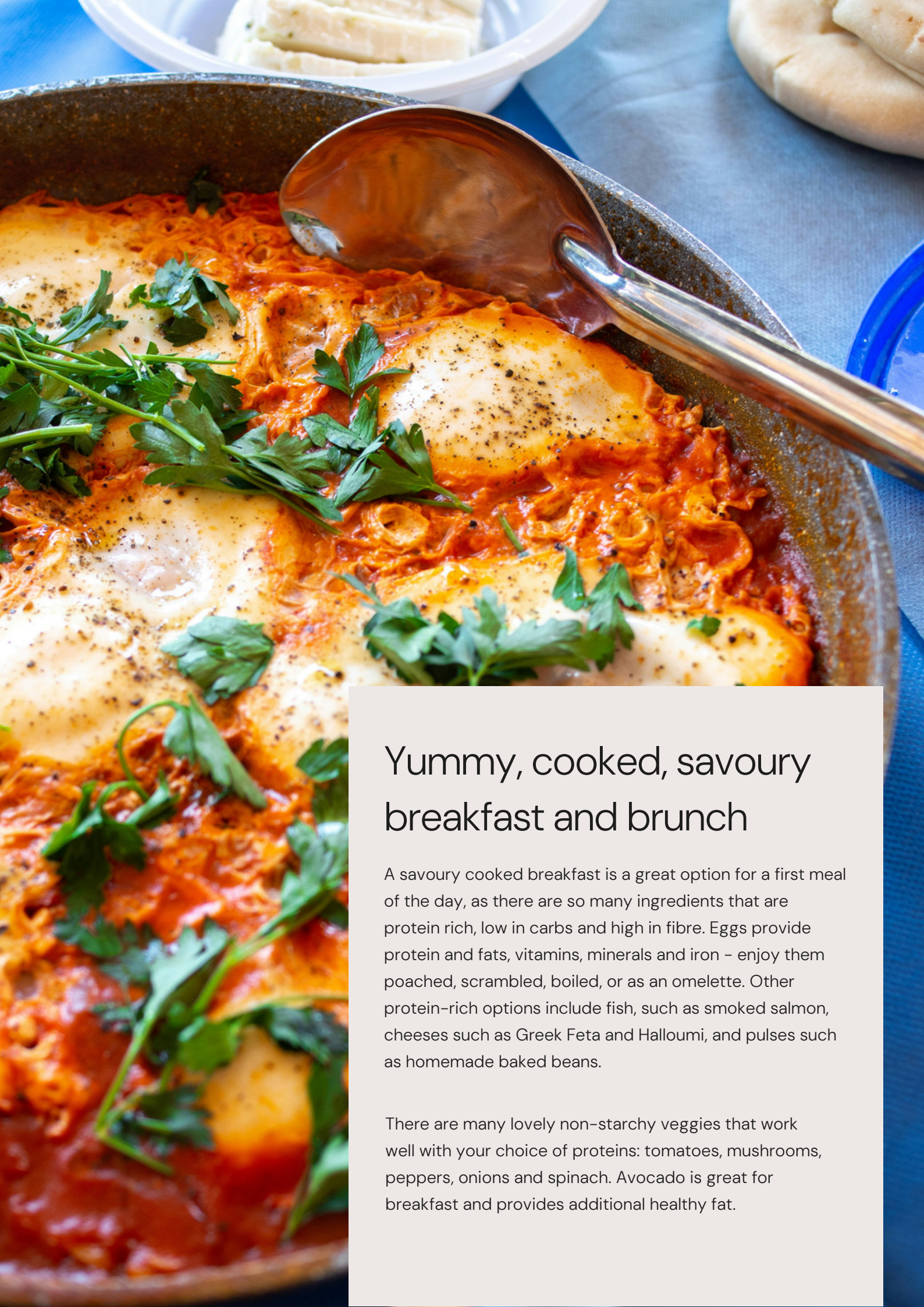


Fruit

While grabbing a banana on the run is easy, eating fruit alone as the first meal of the day can really spike blood sugar. Because it is digested so quickly it's best to combine fruit with a good source of protein, like cottage cheese, yoghurt or nuts and seeds to avoid this sugar spike.

Fruit is a key ingredient in most smoothie recipes – keep an eye out for recipes that use spinach, cucumber and lemon for a refreshing green smoothie. Adding protein powders to smoothies can lower their blood sugar impact greatly.

Avoid dried fruit for breakfast – its sugar content is concentrated and it's easy to eat too much, which is likely to cause a sugar spike.



Yummy, cooked, savoury breakfast and brunch

A savoury cooked breakfast is a great option for a first meal of the day, as there are so many ingredients that are protein rich, low in carbs and high in fibre. Eggs provide protein and fats, vitamins, minerals and iron – enjoy them poached, scrambled, boiled, or as an omelette. Other protein-rich options include fish, such as smoked salmon, cheeses such as Greek Feta and Halloumi, and pulses such as homemade baked beans.

There are many lovely non-starchy veggies that work well with your choice of proteins: tomatoes, mushrooms, peppers, onions and spinach. Avocado is great for breakfast and provides additional healthy fat.

Breakfast supplies

Cereals

- Whole rolled oats
- Quinoa flakes
- Buckwheat flakes
- Weetabix (lowest sugar commercial cereal)

Dairy/Alternatives

- Milk
- Plain full fat (Greek) yoghurt
- Halloumi, Feta
- Cream cheese (full fat)
- Plain kefir
- Cheddar / Gouda (+/-40g)
- Soy or Almond milk are best alternatives to cows milk

Healthy fats

- Chia seeds (also high in protein)
- Sunflower seeds
- Pumpkin seeds
- Flax seeds
- Almond butter & whole almonds
- Sugar-free peanut butter
- Avocado (1/2 a small avo)
- Toasted coconut flakes

Bread & Wraps

- Sourdough (1 slice)
- Rye Bread (1 slice)
- Nairns Oat Cakes
Wholemeal (1 slice)
Wholemeal wrap

Non-starchy veg

- Tomatoes
- Mushrooms
- Onions
- Spinach
- Courgettes
- Peppers
- Pea shoots
- Cucumber
- Lettuce

Fruit

- Blueberries
- Strawberries
- Blackberries
- Red/Black currants
- Raspberries
- Apples, Pears
- Kiwi
- Plums
- Nectarines
- Bananas (1/2 medium)
*Try to avoid: mango, grapes
pineapple in the morning

Proteins

- Chicken
- Trout
- Salmon
- Tuna
- Haddock
- Kippers
- Sardines
- Tofu
- Eggs
- Butter Beans (protein and carb combined)

Spices & Flavours

- Cinnamon
- Vanilla
- Cacao
- Paprika
- Herbed salts
- Pepper
- Tabasco Sauce

Sweeteners

- *Honey
- *Maple Syrup
- *Agave Syrup
- **Xylitol
- **Erythritol

*Honey, maple syrup and agave are equal in terms of sugar content (1 tsp of honey = 1tsp of sugar), so best to use sparingly.

** Xylitol and erythritol are very low in calories and have limited blood sugar impact but are toxic to dogs and can create stomach problems if over-used.

Oat recipes



Overnight Oats

1/2 cup/50g of jumbo rolled oats

2 tsp chia seeds

1 tsp cinnamon or cacao for chocolate taste

1/2 cup/120ml milk of choice (or half milk/half water)

Optional extras: 1 tsp sugar free peanut butter or almond butter, 1 handful of berries, some grated or chopped apple/pear, a few chopped nuts, 1 tbsp Greek yoghurt

Mix the oats, chia seeds, cinnamon, nut butter and milk/water together until well incorporated. If you feel you need more moisture, add a splash more milk or water. Allow to sit in the fridge for at least two hours, preferably overnight. Serve topped with berries, chopped fruit, nut, seeds for extra flavour, texture and goodness. Delicious served with a big dollop of Greek yoghurt!

Oat wraps

1/2 cup/50g rolled oats

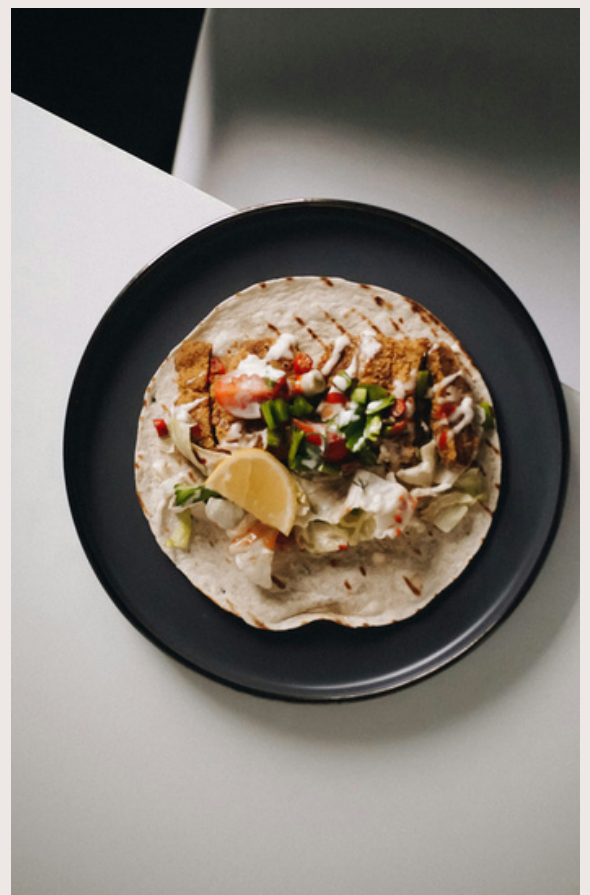
3/4 cup/175ml water

Coconut oil for frying

Add the oats and water to a blender and blitz until at pancake batter consistency. Allow the mixture to sit for 5mins - if it thickens, mix in a few tbsp of water until thin enough to pour like pancake batter. Heat a non-stick pan to medium/hot, add 1/4 tsp coconut oil, heat to lightly cover the base of the pan.

Pour half the mixture into the pan, spread with the back of spoon. Allow to cook until firm (2mins), flip and cook for a further minute. Repeat with remaining batter. 1/2 cup of oats makes two large wraps - the second will keep in an airtight container for 48hrs.

Fill the wrap with yoghurt, berries, nuts, seeds and a sprinkle of cinnamon, or use it as a savoury wrap and fill with avocado, salmon or smoked chicken, tomato and cream cheese etc - ideal for lunch and dinner too.



Good lunch & dinner choices

Salads

Salads are a fantastic for lunch and dinner. Easy to prepare, ingredients keep in the fridge, and flavours are endless when you play with ingredients and dressings. It's important to include a good source of protein: roast or smoked chicken, boiled eggs, trout, tuna, salmon, tofu, etc.

You can also add whole grains or legumes – cooked quinoa, brown rice, lentils, chickpeas, or beans, as well as starchy vegetables such as butternut and sweet potato in small amounts. For a balanced meal, make sure that the portions of protein and starchy foods are similar to what you would have when using the balanced plate model, which is about 1/4 plate for each. No need to limit the quantity of salad foods and non-starchy veg, use them to fill up your plate and tummy!

If you're feeling stuck and need inspiration, try searching online for "Buddha Bowls" or "Nourish Bowls". These dishes offer a fresh take on salads and can give you some ideas to break free from your usual routine.



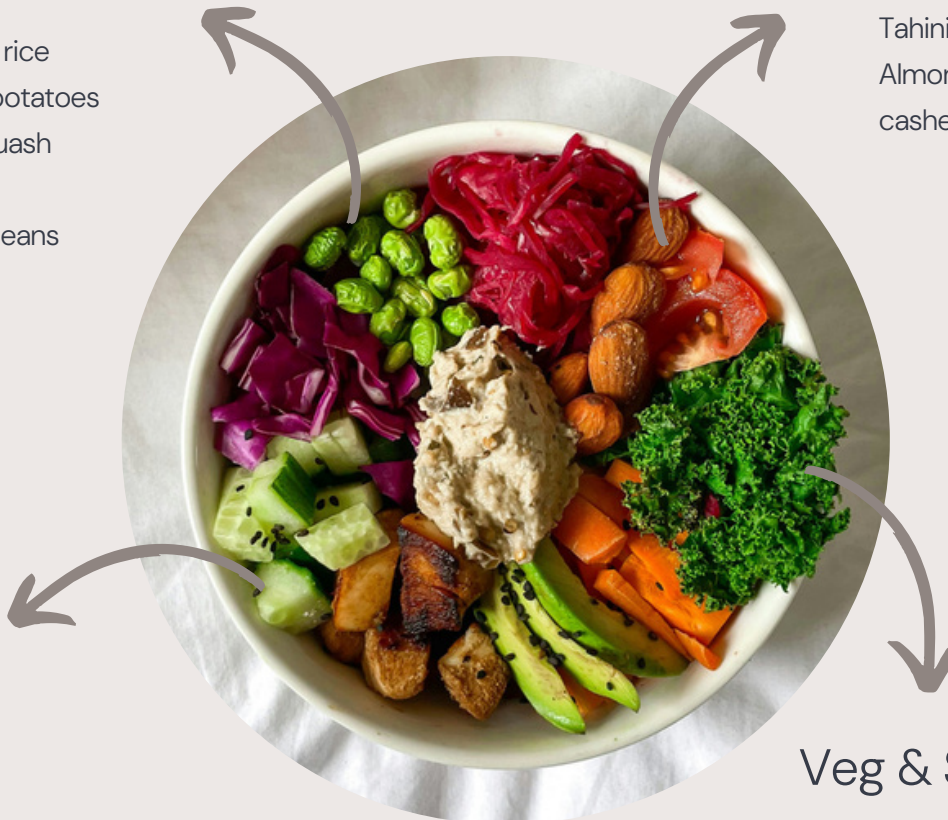
The Salad Matrix

Fruit & Carbs

Quinoa
Bulgar wheat
Brown / Wild rice
New/sweet potatoes
Butternut squash
Butter beans
Red kidney beans
Lentils
Apple
Figs
Nectarine
Plums
Berries

Fats

Feta, Mozzarella, Halloumi
Avocado
Toasted pumpkin seeds
Sesame, sunflower seeds
Tahini (sesame paste)
Almonds, walnuts,
cashews, pecans etc.



Protein

Chicken
Trout
Tuna
Salmon
Lean beef
Lean ham
Tofu
Boiled eggs

Veg & Salad

Lettuce, rocket, watercress
Baby spinach, herbs inc.
coriander, basil, mint
Carrot
Tomatoes
Micro-greens
Green beans
Sugar snap peas
Green or purple cabbage
Broccoli
Beetroot
Cucumber

Example Salad

Always include a protein (fat optional)

Chicken
Romaine lettuce, basil, tomato
Steamed broccoli, brown rice
Walnuts, feta topping - choose a dressing from pg 12



Dressings make food more exciting!

The element that really pulls a salad together is a yummy dressing. Store bought dressings are often filled with hidden sugar, so it is best to make your own simple dressings at home.

Experiment with flavours and then make your favourites in small batches that will keep in a jar in the fridge for up to a week.

Olive oil, apple cider vinegar and lemon juice are pantry staples that you can use to dress your salad, and if you're keen on something creamy, rather than turning to mayonnaise, which can also have hidden sugar and has a very high calorie load, look to something like full fat yoghurt combined with lemon juice, garlic, fresh herbs, and seasoning.

There are dozens of tasty dressings that are good for your health and don't have to be limited to using on salads only. The next page features some easy-to-make examples (2-3 servings).

Lemon & Thyme

2 tbsp lemon juice
1 garlic clove minced
1/2 tsp Dijon mustard
2 tsp thyme leaves
1/4 cup/60ml olive oil
1/4 tsp sea salt

Mediterranean

1 tbsp wine vinegar
1 garlic clove grated
1/2 tsp dried oregano
1 diced sundried tomato
1/4 cup/60ml olive oil
1/4 tsp sea salt

Avo & Dill / Basil

1 ripe avocado, smashed
2 tbsp lemon juice
1/4 cup fresh dill / basil
2 tbsp water
2 tbsp olive oil
1/2 tsp sea salt, black pepper
Optional sprinkle of chilli flakes

Roasted Pepper

1 roasted red pepper 1
clove roasted garlic 2
tbsp lime juice
1 tsp smoked paprika
1/4 cup olive oil
1/4 tsp sea salt

Lemon Tahini

1/4 cup/60ml tahini
2 tbsp lemon juice
3 tbsp water
1 garlic clove grated
1/2 tsp maple syrup
1/4 tsp sea salt

Cashew & Coconut

1/4 cup/60g cashew butter
1/2 cup/120ml coconut milk
2 tbsp lime juice
1 tbsp tamari or soy sauce
1 tsp sriracha

Ginger & Miso

2 tbsp miso
2 tbsp rice vinegar
1 tbsp tamari or soy sauce
1 tsp grated ginger
2 tbsp olive or sesame oil
Option 1 tsp grated garlic

Chickpea & Chive

1/4 cup/60g hummus
1/4 cup/60ml water
1 tbsp chopped parsley
1 tbsp minced chives
2 tsp minced tarragon
1/4 tsp sea salt



Making carbohydrates work for you

It is a common practice for people to rely heavily on carbohydrates in their daily meals. However, when it comes to regulating blood sugar levels, carbs should only make up 1/4 of your plate, equivalent to a closed fist portion.

Wholegrain or whole-food based carbs such as quinoa, brown or wild rice, buckwheat, and bulgur wheat are ideal. Nutritious sources of carbs like pumpkin, butternut, beetroot, new potatoes, and sweet potatoes are good in moderation. It is best to steer clear of white rice, white pasta, and processed carbs.

Luckily, there are many low-carb vegetables you can use as substitutes to add more fibre to your meals without compromising blood sugar levels. Swap regular spaghetti with spiralized courgettes, or opt for cauliflower rice instead of traditional rice.

If you still want to use pasta or rice, try a clever food hack – eat a small salad, or some raw/steamed veggies first to slow the rate of sugars entering your blood, or simply mix spiralized courgettes with whole wheat spaghetti, or combine brown rice with cauliflower rice to add bulk while keeping glucose levels low.



Ready Meals

We all have days when a store-bought meal is the only option. While there's a wide variety available, it's important to choose meals that are less processed and contain less saturated fat.

Tomato-based sauces or non-creamy meals such as curries, bakes, dishes with veggies, fish, and meat without pasta, potatoes, or white rice. Pair the meal with a salad pack to balance out your plate. It's best to avoid pizza, burgers, battered or crumbed foods (fish/chicken), pies, lasagna, and pastries. Food labelling makes it much easier now to compare meal options so that food on the go really can be healthy too.

Sauces & Adding flavour

It's easy to follow old habits and add chutney or ketchup to a meal, but doing so can undermine all the hard work and consistency you put into preparing a healthy meal. Instead, try using natural ingredients like garlic and lemon, herbs, chilli, soy sauce, tomato salsa, olive tapenade, and pesto to add flavour and marinade meat and fish.

Many chilli sauces, such as Tabasco and other hot sauces, have no added sugar, so be sure to check the labels when shopping to find something that works for you.

Be wary of bought pickled gherkins, onions, and beetroot, as they often contain large amounts of sugar for preservation purposes.





Super-yummy soups

Soups are not only a quick and easy meal, but they are also ideal for preparing in advance and freezing for the days when you're short on time. Making your own is also an easy way to use up left over veggies.

Some of the best soups to make are legume-based eg. tomato and red lentil, kale and butterbean, or mixed veggies and chickpeas. Variations on the humble tomato soup are endless – see below for a quick tomato, lentil and red pepper soup.

To add creaminess – blend in soaked raw cashews or a tablespoon of plain yoghurt just before serving (these also boost protein). Add flavour by using bay leaves, or spices – cumin enhances so many homemade soups, add a teaspoon when you are sweating onions at the beginning.

It's worth remembering that root veg (potato, carrots, swede, etc.) are starchy carbs and as such can cause sugar spikes unless combined with pulses, protein or other fibre-rich veggies in the soup.

Many people opt for bread or toast with soup, but this is largely habit and there are healthier options. Try a larger portion of soup or have two oatcakes on the side, which have less of an impact on blood sugar. And if you really do love bread with your soup then a small slice of sourdough, rye or wholemeal are best.

QUICK RECIPE IDEA: Quick Tomato, Pepper, Lentil Soup
Heat 1tbsp olive oil in large pan, add large chopped onion and soften for 5mins (add couple of chopped carrots and sticks of celery if you have them but not essential). Add 1tsp each turmeric, smoked paprika, cumin to the pan and fry for 2mins more, add in 2 chopped red peppers, 220g red lentils and 2 tins tomatoes + 750ml water, salt and pepper. Bring to the boil, simmer for 25 mins until veggies are soft. Whizz using a stick blender, check seasoning and thickness. Lovely topped with crumbled Feta, chopped coriander or just plain.

The Good Snack Guide

With processed snacks dominating store shelves, it's easy to end up with high-sugar cereal bars, pretzels, crisps, or biscuits that spike blood sugar levels. But there are plenty of alternatives, with a bit of planning and know-how.

The key to a healthy snack is to combine carbohydrates with protein, which helps stabilise blood sugar and keeps you feeling fuller for longer. Take a look at the following list of carbohydrate and protein foods that can be paired. It's not comprehensive, but it will give you some ideas as to how to create your own carb-protein combinations. A snack typically needs to be quick and easy to prepare, tasty and easy to transport take with you wherever you're going. Put time aside to plan, get some containers and then enjoy getting creative with your on-the-go, at your desk, and between meal snacks.



Carbohydrate

1 cup of blueberries / strawberries / raspberries / blackberries

1 Apple / Pear / Orange

1 Nectarine / Peach / Kiwi

2 Oat cakes

1 Slice rye bread

1 Small wholewheat wrap

1 Oat wrap

+

Protein

1 tbsp of raw almonds / walnuts / mixed toasted seeds

1/2 cup/2tbsp full fat, plain yoghurt

1/4 cup/1tbsp hummus

1-2 tsp sugar free almond, cashew, or peanut butter

1 boiled egg

Small amount Salmon/Tuna /Sardine

2-4 cubes of cheese

Don't forget - you can add any non-starchy salad and veg to the above snack combinations, like tomato, mushrooms, avocado, a few olives, lettuce, spinach, cabbage etc,



The good pudding guide!

Maintaining healthy blood sugar levels doesn't mean giving up desserts. Simply apply the same blood sugar balancing principles to enjoy a sweet finish to your meal.

Most recipes can be adapted to reduce the sugar content, eg. fruit crumbles can be made healthier by halving the sugar and adding in oats and chopped nuts for extra fibre, protein, crunch and texture. Desserts featuring ground almonds instead of flour and those majoring on berries, fruits and nuts are good options.

Try melting 70% dark chocolate and dipping in your favourite fruits: clementine segments, kiwi slices, and strawberries. Or plate the chopped fruit, sprinkle over nuts and drizzle with melted chocolate.

Protein-rich natural or Greek yogurt is a wonderful creamy element to pair with desserts, not only does it taste good but it also slows the speed of sugar release into the blood. And if you're having cake, then definitely serve a dollop on the side! Try poaching plums, apricots, peaches, cherries with a cinnamon stick and star anise with a hint of sugar ...bubble to reduce, cool and pour over thick, creamy Greek yoghurt,

Choose good-quality ice cream and especially Italian gelato, which are higher in protein, over sorbets, which is much higher in sugar.

Take care with dried fruits, which might seem healthy but are actually a concentrated form of glucose. And try to minimise sugar substitutes – if used in quantities, these can cause stomach upsets. And don't forget that mango, banana, pineapple, and grapes are the four fruits to avoid eating alone to avoid sugar spikes.

For more inspiration search online for low-sugar puddings and bakes.

Good drink choices

When it comes to balancing blood sugar, it's essential to shift to a more conscious mindset to hydrate our bodies healthily. Water is the most beneficial drink for optimal health and weight loss, with a recommended daily intake of 1.5–2 litres. Buying a dedicated water bottle with timed slots on the side can really help encourage drinking more water regularly.

Many people tend not to drink enough water and instead opt for sugary, fizzy drinks that contribute to blood sugar spikes. Fruit juice is a major culprit. Drinking a full glass of orange juice is equal to consuming the same glucose found in four oranges while missing the fibre benefits of the whole fruit. If you love fruit juice, then ideally opt for diluted apple juice in a 50/50 ratio.

Green tea and unsweetened herbal teas count towards your daily water intake and are great choices. Try to limit caffeinated tea and coffee to one cup per day.

It's also important to reduce alcohol consumption while working towards blood sugar balancing. Try to stick to a maximum of five glasses of wine, tots of spirits, or half pints of beer per week.





Work with me

As a passionate cook and food lover, one of the most fascinating parts of my own health journey is to continuously learn how to adapt what I know and love to cook while experimenting with new foods and recipes. Let me help and inspire you to find new ways to bring joy into life through your own food and drink choices.