

Healthy meals in minutes



Ten delicious and easy recipes
by Dr Nancy Priston



Introduction

The recipes in this booklet are designed for anyone with an interest in healthy eating, but who doesn't have the time or inclination to spend hours in the kitchen cooking.

So if you are looking for delicious dishes, which are simple, nutritious and quick to prepare, then I thoroughly recommend these recipes, developed by Dr Nancy Priston, our Health and Fitness Ambassador.

Nancy has chosen a selection of her favourite recipes - five savoury dishes and five sweet ones - which she is delighted to share with you. We hope there are plenty of ideas to inspire and tempt you, particularly if you are recovering from cancer treatment and are lacking energy or appetite.

The recipes are extremely versatile and can be adapted according to whether you are a vegetarian or not.

Thank you Nancy for kindly allowing us to share your culinary creations.

Mark Guymer

Mark Guymer
Chief Executive
Cancer Support UK

Nancy's association with Cancer Support UK began in July 2022, when she volunteered to lead our hugely successful Sh'bamathon, which raised considerable funds for the charity. A second Sh'bamathon fundraiser event was a similar success in 2023. Nancy shares her expertise through a health column, which is featured on the Cancer Support UK website and the monthly Enews. Her advice is aimed at anyone who has received a cancer diagnosis and who is interested in becoming healthier and fitter. After starting life as a university lecturer and researcher, Nancy embarked on her own personal journey of fitness and health, which led her to a full-time career in the fitness industry. Nancy has actively fundraised for a variety of charities over the years.



Savoury recipes

Page

- 3 Asian veggie mince and rice bowl
- 4 Chilli con veggie
- 5 Lemon vegetarian chicken and bacon rice
- 6 Spicy peanut Quorn chicken
- 7 Veggie sausage casserole

Sweet recipes

Page

- 8 Amazing flapjacks
- 9 Biscoff berry porridge
- 10 Craving beating chocolate pudding
- 11 Poached cinnamon plums
- 12 Quick healthy banana pancakes

Asian veggie mince and rice bowl

This is a dish I used to have regularly when I was working in Southeast Asia and so I thought I'd recreate it for you here.

This recipe makes a fabulous dinner or lunch, and can be modified if you don't have all the sauces available (I've added some alternatives in the ingredients below).

It serves approximately 4-5 people and is around 367 calories per portion if using vegetarian mince. You can also use pork, turkey or chicken mince, but this will increase the calories.

Ingredients

- 200g rice (I used brown basmati rice)
- Vegetable oil for cooking
- 1 medium red onion chopped
- 1 bunch spring onions chopped (save some for garnish)
- 1-2 cloves garlic chopped
- 400g vegetarian mince
- 3 tbsp sweet soy sauce (Ketjap Manis) or 1 tbsp brown sugar if you don't have it
- 5 tbsp light soy sauce
- 3 tbsp black bean sauce (alternatively you can use fish sauce or Worcestershire sauce)
- 1-2 tsp chopped mint, plus a few leaves for garnish

Directions

1. Cook the rice in your usual way.
2. Heat a little oil in a wok, add the onions and garlic and sauté them until softened.
3. Add the spring onions.
4. Once browned add the mince, breaking it up as you go and cook until it starts to brown.
5. Add the sauces and keep the heat high to reduce the liquid quickly and almost caramelize the mince.
6. Add the chopped mint and stir well.
7. Taste the mixture and, if you wish, add a little more of the sauces – different brands have slightly different strengths.
8. Finally, mix in the cooked rice and heat through.
9. Serve with some fresh mint and chopped spring onions!



Chilli con veggie

This easy vegetarian chilli is a tasty option for weekday dinners and light on calories. It's a super versatile recipe – you can use it for spaghetti bolognese, lasagne, shepherd's pie, or as a chilli with rice or jacket potato. This chilli will keep in the fridge for at least a week or you can freeze portions.

Don't be afraid to use frozen vegetables – often they're actually higher in nutrients than fresh, as they're frozen immediately.

This recipe makes approximately eight generous servings at 245 calories per serving.

Ingredients

- 1000g of Quorn mince (or any other meat substitute)
- 1500g passata
- Either –
 - 1 bag of soffritto mix (finely diced onion, carrots, celery)
 - Or 1 onion, 2 sticks of celery and 1 large carrot all finely chopped
- Other mixed vegetables (fresh or frozen) – pepper, courgette, aubergine
- 3 vegetable stock cubes
- 1 tbs balsamic vinegar
- 1 tsp sugar
- 1/2 tsp of chilli (to taste)
- 1/2 tsp cayenne pepper
- 1/2 tsp smoked paprika
- 1/2 tsp mixed herbs
- Dash of Worcestershire sauce (vegetarian brand if necessary)
- Spoonful of Marmite (optional)
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Yoghurt (to serve)
- Spinach leaves (to serve)

Directions

1. Heat a little oil in a large pan. Add the onion, celery and carrot and sauté for a few minutes.
2. Add the mince, mix well and heat it through. (If using turkey, beef etc, then ensure the meat browns at this point).
3. Add the stock cubes and mix well.
4. Add the other vegetables and stir well. Heat for a few minutes.
5. Stir in the passata and add all the spices, sugar, Worcestershire sauce, balsamic vinegar and marmite (if using). Mix well and allow to simmer for at least 20 minutes or longer if you can as it helps to give a better flavour.
6. Taste and adjust seasoning to taste.
7. Serve with spaghetti, jacket potato or rice, with a dollop of yoghurt and a few spinach leaves.



Lemon vegetarian chicken and bacon rice

The lemon gives this dish a zingy freshness, which is perfect for a spring/summer dinner or lunch.

If you aren't vegetarian, you can obviously use real chicken and bacon, but it's worth considering the vegetarian alternatives, as they do save a lot of calories without sacrificing taste or satisfaction. You can use either freshly cooked or leftover rice.

Serves four. Approximately 320 calories per portion.

Ingredients

- 200g rice (uncooked weight)
- Zero calorie cooking oil spray
- 1 onion, diced
- 300g chicken alternative (eg Quorn chicken pieces)
- 120g bacon alternative (eg Quorn bacon)
- A couple of handfuls of frozen peas
- 1/2 tsp oregano or mixed herbs
- Black pepper to taste
- Juice and zest of one large lemon (plus extra wedges for serving)

Directions

1. Cook the rice as you would usually. Drain and put to one side.
2. Spray the oil in a hot pan, add the diced onion and sauté until brown.
3. Add the veggie chicken pieces and allow to brown.
4. Chop the veggie bacon into small pieces and add to the pan. Allow to brown.
5. Add the peas – as many as you like.
6. Cook through for a couple of minutes. Add the cooked rice and stir well.
7. Mix in the oregano/mixed herbs, black pepper and lemon zest.
8. Finally, pour the lemon juice over and stir in well. Serve with lemon wedges.



Spicy peanut Quorn chicken

This is one of my favourite dishes. It's quick, easy to make and tastes amazing. You can of course use chicken instead of Quorn.

This recipe makes four servings at 312 calories per serving.

Ingredients

- 1 onion
- 1/2 pepper
- Olive oil
- 1 x 350g pack Quorn chicken
- 1/4 tsp chilli powder
- 2 tsp curry powder
- 1/4 tsp paprika
- 1/4 tsp cayenne
- 100g peanut butter
- 400g chopped tinned tomatoes (plus water to rinse out the can)
- 2 tbsp soy sauce

Directions

1. Dice the onion and pepper. Add a little olive oil in a non-stick wok or frying pan and put the onions and peppers in to soften.
2. Add the Quorn and allow to brown.
3. Add all the spices and stir well (if you're not sure how spicy you want it, then just add a little of the chilli and save the rest to add later).
4. Add the peanut butter and stir.
5. Add the chopped tomatoes. Use some water to rinse the can out and add that, too.
6. Finally add the soy sauce. Mix really well and allow to simmer.
7. Taste and add more chilli if required. Allow to simmer for approximately 5 to 10 minutes.
8. Serve with grains or cauliflower rice.



Veggie sausage casserole

This is an easy meal for a mid-week dinner. I like to cook up a batch of this, to give me a few meals. You can use any sausages you like, but vegetarian sausages reduce the calories without sacrificing the taste. If you want to save time use a bag of frozen grilled vegetables, or just use any vegetables you have in the fridge. Please note that traditional Worcestershire sauce contains anchovies, so if you're vegetarian choose a brand that's made without animal products.

This recipe serves six people at about 220 calories per portion.

Ingredients

- Approximately 500g mixed fresh vegetables – 1 onion, 2 sticks celery, 1 pepper, 1 courgette, 1 small aubergine. Or a pack of mixed frozen vegetables
- Cooking oil
- 6 vegetarian sausages
- 800g passata or chopped tomatoes
- 2 vegetable stock cubes
- 1/2 tsp paprika
- 1/4 tsp chilli powder (adjust for taste)
- 1/2 tsp cayenne pepper
- 1 tsp mixed herbs
- 1/2 tbsp balsamic vinegar
- 1/2 tsp Worcestershire sauce (optional)
- 1 tbsp Marmite (optional)
- 1/2 tsp of sugar
- Salt and pepper to taste

Directions

1. Prepare and chop all the fresh vegetables.
2. Heat a little oil in a pan, add the onion and allow to soften.
3. Slice the sausages, add them to the pan and allow to brown. Or brown them in a separate pan, to add later.
4. Add the vegetables to the pan. If using a pack of mixed vegetables, just add the entire pack.
5. Cook for a couple of minutes until the vegetables start to soften and then add the passata. Stir well and bring to a slow simmer.
6. Add the stock cubes, all the spices, balsamic vinegar, Worcestershire sauce and Marmite (if using), then stir well.
7. Add the sugar, as this brings out a richer tomato flavour. If you browned the sausages separately then add them now.
8. Bring to a simmer and allow to cook through for about 10-15 minutes.
9. Serve with green vegetables, grains or a jacket potato. It's also delicious eaten on its own.



Amazing flapjacks

After a workout I get really hungry and love tucking into a flapjack or energy bar. But I hate the fact that many of the store bought ones are full of sugar, while the 'healthier' versions I find tasteless. So I've created these homemade flapjacks, full of natural ingredients, which are the perfect post-workout snack. They're great to put in lunchboxes, too.

This recipe makes 16 portions of around 350-380 calories per piece, depending on the type of dates/nut butter/sweetener used.

Ingredients

- 300g rolled porridge oats (gluten-free or spelt if you prefer)
- 100g desiccated coconut
- 100g flaked almonds
- 100g pumpkin seeds
- 215g dried, soft prunes
- 315g dried dates
- 175g almond butter (or your nut butter of choice)
- 100g liquid sweetener (I use rice malt syrup, but you can also use Agave syrup, maple syrup, honey etc)
- 2 tbsp coconut oil (measured when solid)
- 4 tbsp water
- 2 generous tsp cinnamon
- 1/2 tsp salt

Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 170 C.
2. Line a baking tin (20 x 20cm one) with baking paper. Mix the oats, almonds, pumpkin seeds and coconut oil together and pour into the baking tin. Place in the oven for 20 minutes or until starting to brown. Make sure you turn the tin regularly so the whole mixture is evenly toasted.
3. Put the dates and prunes into a blender or food processor and blitz to a paste. You may need to keep stopping to scrape the mixture back down in to the bowl. It doesn't need to be completely smooth – a few lumps are fine.
4. Remove the oats from the oven. Allow to cool.
5. Put the date and prune mixture, nut butter, liquid sweetener, coconut oil, water, cinnamon and salt in to a large saucepan and heat very gently. Stir and allow the mixture to come together. Remove from the heat and pour the oats into the liquid mixture and mix really well.
6. Using a spatula, scrape the mixture back into the lined baking tin and press down firmly. Then allow to cool and put in the fridge.
7. Once set, cut into slices.



Biscoff berry porridge

When the weather is cold and miserable, I am drawn to warm, comforting food and this combination of Biscoff spread and berries works really well as a hearty breakfast porridge or even for brunch.

It's around 350 calories per portion (using water not milk).

Ingredients

- 50g porridge oats
- 1/4 to 1/2 tsp cinnamon (depending on your taste)
- Water or milk
- A handful of berries (blackberries, raspberries or blueberries)
- 20g Biscoff spread
- 20g berry jam (optional)

Directions

1. Mix the cinnamon with the oats and then prepare your porridge using water (or milk) as you normally would.
2. Transfer the cooked porridge to a bowl and add half the berries. Mix them up a little to release the juices.
3. Add the remaining berries and dollops of Biscoff spread throughout the porridge. If using the jam, add that, too.
4. Optional – put the porridge in the microwave for one minute. This helps to melt the Biscoff spread and release the fruit juices. You could also do this in a saucepan on the hob.



Craving beating chocolate pudding

This is one of my favourite desserts (or even mid afternoon snack). It's like having a huge chocolate mousse. It's creamy, sweet and filling, as the Greek yoghurt is high in protein, which means you're less likely to be tempted to snack afterwards. It's also quick and easy to prepare.

Calories vary depending on which fruit and toppings you use, but allow roughly 160-250 calories.

Ingredients

- 125g 0% Greek Yoghurt
- 1 serving of hot chocolate powder (Options works well) or 1 large tablespoon cocoa powder – you can sweeten this with low calorie jam or zero calorie flavoured syrups
- A handful of mixed berries (around 120g) i.e. strawberries, raspberries and blueberries
- A few chocolate chips (or choice of topping, such as puffed rice or coco pops)
- Sweetener if required

Directions

1. Place the hot chocolate powder or cocoa powder in a bowl
2. Add the Greek yoghurt
3. Using a spoon, mix the hot chocolate powder/cocoa powder into the Greek yoghurt (it may look like it's going to be too dry, but keep going).
4. Mix well until the chocolate/cocoa powder is thoroughly blended and the mixture is creamy.
5. Sweeten to taste with honey, maple syrup, zero calorie syrup, low calorie jam etc.
6. Add the berries.
7. Sprinkle over your topping of choice and enjoy



Poached cinnamon plums

This makes a delicious dessert or breakfast option, served with a big dollop of Greek yoghurt. It's also a perfect base for a crumble.

Before we sold my late Nannie's bungalow we harvested the last of her Damsons and so I decided to put them to good use and stew them up into a tasty pud.

The calories for this recipe vary depending on the number of plums used and the amount of sugar you add, so allow around 50 calories per plum.

Ingredients

- Plums (as many as you want)
- Sugar to taste
- Cinnamon to taste

Directions

1. If you have a glut of plums then you may prefer to freeze some for later use. Cut the plums in half, remove the stones and lay on a baking tray. Then pop in the freezer for a couple of hours. Once they've firmed up you can transfer to a ziplock bag or Tupperware and store in the freezer until needed.
2. If using fresh plums then cut into halves (or quarters if you prefer), remove the stones (these can also be removed after cooking if the plums are a little on the hard size). Place in a wide pan (I used a frying pan).
3. Add a little water to stop them burning (a couple of tablespoons should be sufficient) and a little sugar (you can add more later if necessary).
4. Using a very low heat allow the plums to start to soften. Then add cinnamon – start with a small amount, i.e. a pinch, and then add more to taste later.
5. Put a lid on the pan and allow to gently cook through until they reach the desired softness (this may only take a few minutes) and then remove the lid.
6. Taste and add more sugar and cinnamon if you feel you need it.
7. Allow the softened damsons to cool down a little further. As the mixture cools, the liquid will form a slightly sticky syrup and the plums will continue to break down.
8. Transfer to a bowl or Tupperware and store in the fridge or freeze it.



Quick healthy banana pancakes

Another one of my favourite recipes. These work great as a breakfast, light lunch or afternoon snack. They're quick and easy to make and taste amazing. This recipe makes two small pancakes, enough for one person, and contains around 200 calories, plus the fruit.

Ingredients

- 1 banana
- 1 egg
- 2 tbsps flour (any flour you like)
- Cinnamon (optional)
- Oil spray
- Fruit of your choice

Directions

1. Mash the banana with a fork in bowl, add the egg and mix well.
2. The mixture will vary in consistency depending on your banana size and ripeness, and egg size.
3. Add the flour and cinnamon and mix well.
4. The batter will be lumpy, but that's fine. Spray a pan with oil and then add the batter. Leave to cook on one side, then flip and cook the other side.
5. Serve with fruit. You can also add some maple syrup or other liquid sweetener, but I generally find the fruit is sweet enough.





Cancer Support UK provides practical and emotional support to people with cancer, during and after the treatment period. We support people with all kinds of cancer across the UK. Our services, including our Cancer Coach support groups, Cancer Kits and Workplace Cancer Support Training, are designed and delivered by people who have experienced cancer themselves to improve the experience of others.

We hope you enjoyed reading this recipe booklet.

For more information about our work, please visit:
www.cancersupportuk.org

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