



## **Healthier Eating:** African, Caribbean and South Asian cuisines

A guide for Healthier You NHS Diabetes  
Prevention Programme coaches

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Salma and Joan were commissioned to deliver this project for the NHS Diabetes Programme team at NHS England.

Developed in partnership with

**Carbs & Cals**

Visit **[www.carbsandcals.com](http://www.carbsandcals.com)** to see their award-winning resources for diabetes and weight management.

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# Introduction

This guidebook has been designed for coaches delivering the Healthier You NHS Diabetes Prevention Programme. Our ambition is that this guidebook will support coaches in providing tailored advice to participants on the programme from black and South Asian backgrounds who are more at risk of type 2 diabetes.

The content has been shaped by a 2019 insight project which gathered feedback from black Caribbean, black African and South Asian participants on the programme, as well as those at risk of type 2 diabetes within the same communities.

The insight showed that increased knowledge and confidence among Healthier You coaches around cultural foods - especially in offering realistic healthier alternatives - could support and encourage uptake and retention on the programme by people from black and South Asian backgrounds.

An additional handbook summarising the insight project and providing guidance on how best to communicate and engage with black and South Asian communities is available [here](#).



# Empowering Healthy Food Choices

The advice in this booklet provides an easy-to-use visual guide and helps you to suggest healthier choices to people from African, Caribbean and South Asian communities.

Education about the range of foods will enable you and the people you are coaching from the different communities to improve their knowledge and better manage their overall health.

The toolkit is based on the [Carbs & Cals World Foods book](http://www.carbsandcals.com) ([www.carbsandcals.com](http://www.carbsandcals.com)), and consists of a selection of popular food and drink items from African, Caribbean and South Asian cuisines.

This resource is primarily aimed at Healthier You coaches but may also help healthcare professionals working with people at risk of developing type 2 diabetes, to help them implement healthier cooking practices, understand portion sizes and lose weight where necessary.



The content was commissioned by NHS England and NHS Diabetes Programme, and developed by two healthcare professionals, Dr Joan St John (GP with Special Interest in Diabetes, and Diabetes UK Clinical Champion) and Salma Mehar (Consultant Dietitian), who are passionate about empowering black, Asian and minority ethnic communities with self-management resources to improve the care and health outcomes for these communities.

## A note on exercise:

Food guidance should be given alongside advice on physical activity. Adults should do some type of physical activity every day. Any type of activity is beneficial. The more physical activity, the better. [NHS recommendations](https://www.nhs.uk) are that adults should:

- do at least 150 minutes of moderate intensity activity a week or 75 minutes of vigorous intensity activity a week.
- do strengthening activities that work all the major muscles (legs, hips, back, abdomen, chest, shoulders and arms) on at least 2 days a week.
- reduce time spent sitting or lying down and break up long periods of not moving with some activity.

# The Eatwell Guide

The Eatwell Guide shows how much of what we eat overall should come from each food group to achieve a healthy, balanced diet. Read more about the [Eatwell Guide](#) and download the [full graphic](#). The proportions shown are representative of your food consumption over the period of a day or even a week, not necessarily each meal time.

The individual food lists at the end of each section are colour-coded in line with the Eatwell Guide to show where common foods from black African, black Caribbean and South Asian cuisines fit within the five food groups.



Mango

## Fruit and vegetables

Eat at least 5 portions of a variety of fruit and veg a day, such as green beans, spinach, butternut squash, callaloo, karela, mango and papaya.



## Foods high in fat, salt and sugar

Examples include puri, chin chin, cornmeal pudding, carrot punch, halwa, rasmalai and gulab jamun, as well as ghee, palm oil and coconut oil.



These should be eaten less often and in small amounts.

## Beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat and other proteins

Including goat, stomach, oxtail, kidney beans, dal and chana. Eat more beans and pulses, and 2 portions of sustainably sourced fish per week, one of which is oily. Eat less red and processed meat.



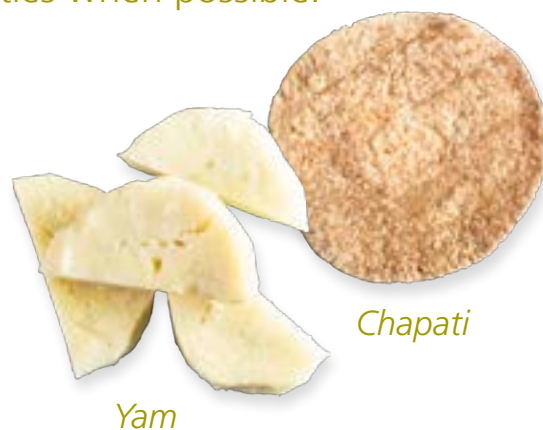
Much of the food people eat is in the form of dishes or meals with more than one kind of food component in them. For example, soups, stews, curries, patties, ackee & saltfish, lassi and raita are all made with ingredients from more than one food group. These are often called 'combination' or 'composite' foods.

To make healthy choices, people will need to identify the main food items or ingredients in combination foods and think about how these fit with the proportions shown in the Eatwell Guide.



### Potatoes, bread, rice, pasta and other starchy carbs

Base meals on fufu, banku, gari, plantain, yam, dumplings, chapati, paratha or other starchy carbs. Choose higher fibre wholegrain varieties when possible.



### Oils and spreads

Examples include vegetable oil and sunflower oil. Choose unsaturated oils and use in small amounts.

### Dairy and alternatives

Such as evaporated milk, soya milk, plain yogurt and paneer. Choose lower fat and lower sugar options.



Paneer

# African Cuisine

This section provides an insight into some of the traditional foods from Africa and how they are consumed. It is important to remember that Africa is a continent not a country, and it covers over 30 million km<sup>2</sup>. The cuisine is as varied as the people and so when we speak of 'African foods' in this guide, we are using this as a shorthand for the regions of Africa represented in this guide. Here, we provide a flavour of the foods eaten by people from the west (e.g. Nigeria and Ghana) and eastern areas (e.g. Somalia) of Africa, as these are representative of some of the most populous black African communities living in the UK.

## Traditional African Foods

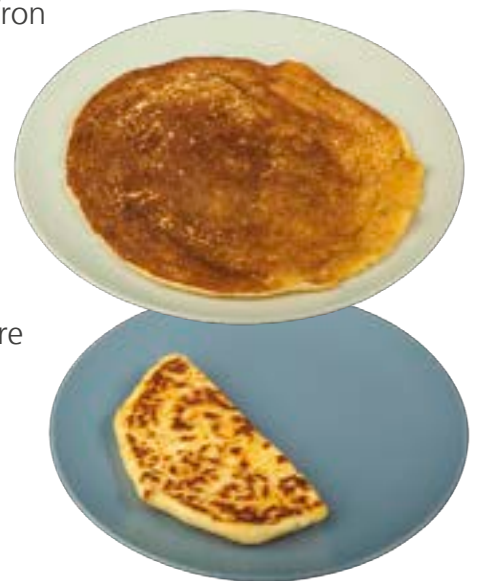
The traditional African diet can be balanced and healthy, and can have a high proportion of carbohydrate foods in the overall calorie intake. Rice, potatoes and tubers such as cassava and yam, as well as starchy vegetables such as plantain, form these carbohydrate-based staples. Meat, poultry and fish are eaten, and fresh fruit provides vitamins and fibre. Food tends to be seasoned with salt and herbs and prepared by frying, stewing or boiling.

## Food Groups

Starchy carbohydrates should make up just over a third of the food we eat. We should all try to reduce our intake of free sugars, such as fruit juice, smoothies, honey, syrups, white or brown sugar, and sugar added to food and drink to sweeten it. You do not need to worry about sugar in plain milk, plain yogurt, whole fruit or whole vegetables.

The carbohydrates commonly consumed include rice eaten plain, or with added tomatoes, peppers, onions and spices (e.g. jollof rice), or with spices, seasoning, saffron and raisins (Bariis). Tubers such as cassava or yam are commonly eaten fried or boiled. They can be fermented, pounded and mixed with water to produce amala, banku, fufu or gari that are served with soups or stews throughout West Africa. Additional carbohydrate foods are eaten in the form of snacks (e.g. puff puff and chin chin), so overall the diet can have a relatively high proportion of carbohydrates.

Choose wholegrain or higher fibre versions of starchy carbohydrates where possible. In the eastern areas of Africa, corn (in the form of cornmeal or maize) is one of the main carbohydrate ingredients for foods such as flatbreads or pancakes (e.g. anjero and muufo) or alternatively made into soor, which is eaten with stews. Plantain, sweet potato and spaghetti are other important carbohydrate staples.





Protein in the diet tends to be in the form of meat, poultry and fish, as well as a lesser contribution overall from lentils and nuts. Soups or stews often contain meat or fish, or the protein source may be served individually. Fish may be preserved with salt, which contributes to the salt intake in the diet. Salt is also added in the seasoning of food and with the consumption of meals. High salt has been linked to high blood pressure.

Traditional fruits and vegetables consumed include banana, mango, papaya and pineapple, as well as greens, spinach and green beans.

Fried snacks and drinks with added sugar traditionally form an important part of the diet and need to be considered, as these can add a significant contribution to the overall calorie intake. Fried snacks include sambuus, chin chin and puff puff.



## Cooking Practices

Meals such as stews, soups and main dishes tend to be fried in oil such as vegetable or palm oil. Additionally, tomatoes, onions and peppers commonly form the base ingredients for sauces. Herbs, salt and sometimes prepared seasonings or stock cubes (that can contain added salt) are used to add flavouring. Rice or a starchy accompaniment (as well as vegetables) are added to the meal if these are not already included in the main part of the meal (e.g. soup or stew).

## Summary

African diets can be healthy and balanced. Salt, sugar and fat used in food preparation (or flavourings added during and after cooking) can add to the overall calorie, fat and salt intake. This may have implications for health conditions (including diabetes and hypertension) that these communities disproportionally suffer from.

Use less fat when cooking and choose lower fat options when shopping. Go for unsaturated fats (e.g. vegetable or rapeseed oil) rather than a saturated fat (e.g. palm or coconut oil) when cooking. Reducing salt by choosing low salt stock cubes and reducing added sugar can also help make traditional foods healthier.

Fat, salt and sugar may already be present in many foods and it's important to be aware of this and choose lower fat, salt and sugar options when shopping for food and drinks.



## Roast Chicken

*with jollof rice, grilled plantain, boiled green beans & spinach*

- Use less oil for cooking and choose unsaturated oil (e.g. vegetable oil).
- Roast plantain, then grill to finish.
- A little hot oil stirred into rice at the end gives an authentic appearance.
- Roast chicken, allowing oil to drain.



## Pepper Goat Soup

*with gari, boiled green beans & spinach*

- Roast and grill goat meat.
- Don't add the skimmed fat back into dish.
- Adding more vegetables will help to increase fibre.
- Use less oil for cooking and choose unsaturated oil (e.g. vegetable oil).
- Measure and limit salt.



## Spinach Stew

*with gari, moi moi & boiled green beans*

- Use less oil for cooking and choose unsaturated oil (e.g. vegetable oil).
- Cover half the plate with green veg or salad.



## Grilled Fish

*with waakye, grilled plantain  
& boiled green beans*

- Roast or grill the fish and plantain to use less oil.
- Use less salt. Adults should be consuming no more than 6g salt per day. This includes the salt we add to foods, and salt already in the foods we buy.



## Grilled Salmon

*with spaghetti & salad*

- Grill fish (not fry) to use less oil.
- Use less salt. Adults should be consuming no more than 6g salt per day. This includes the salt we add to foods, and salt already in the foods we buy.
- Cover half the plate with green veg or salad.



## Egusi Soup

*with fufu, boiled green beans & spinach*

- Reduce and measure oil.
- Cover half the plate with green veg or salad.
- Add more vegetables to contribute towards your 5-a-day.





## Peppered Eggs

*with boiled yam*

- Boil yam (rather than fry) to reduce fat content.
- Use less oil for cooking and choose unsaturated oil (e.g. vegetable oil).



## Fish Stew

*with boiled yam, green beans & spinach*

- Roast or grill fish (rather than fry) to reduce fat content.
- Add lots of veg and boil yam (instead of fried).



## Chicken Stew

*with jollof rice, fried plantain & salad*

- Use less oil for cooking and choose unsaturated oil (e.g. vegetable oil).
- Roast plantain, then grill to finish.
- A little hot oil stirred into rice at end gives an authentic appearance.
- Roast chicken, allowing oil to drain.

## Yam (fried)

185  
CAL



75g

SWAP  
FRIED TO  
BOILED >

SAVE  
**105**  
CAL

## Yam (boiled)

80  
CAL



60g

## Jollof Rice

135  
CAL



100g

SWAP TO  
HEALTHIER >  
RECIPE

SAVE  
**20**  
CAL

## Jollof Rice (using less oil & butter)

115  
CAL



100g

## Yam (fried)

185  
CAL



75g

SWAP TO >

SAVE  
**65**  
CAL

## Cassava Fries (baked)

120  
CAL



45g

## Gari / Eba

475  
CAL



400g

SWAP TO  
SMALLER  
PORTION  
SIZE

SAVE  
295  
CAL

## Gari / Eba

180  
CAL



150g

## Fufu

500  
CAL



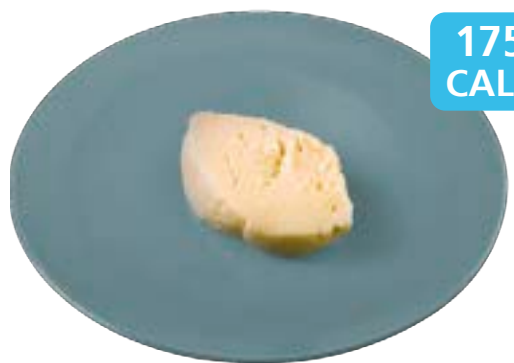
375g

SWAP TO  
SMALLER  
PORTION  
SIZE

SAVE  
325  
CAL

## Fufu

175  
CAL



130g

## Puff Puff

665  
CAL



210g

SWAP TO  
SMALLER  
PORTION  
SIZE

SAVE  
445  
CAL

## Puff Puff

220  
CAL



70g



## Mirinda

155  
CALs



330ml

SWAP TO >

SAVE  
**150**  
CALs

## Diet Lemonade

5  
CALs



330ml

## Cola

135  
CALs



330ml

SWAP TO >

SAVE  
**130**  
CALs

## Diet Cola

5  
CALs



330ml

## Zobo Drink

125  
CALs



250ml

SWAP TO >

SAVE  
**120**  
CALs

## Squash (sugar free)

5  
CALs



250ml

VEG / FRUIT



Banana



Green Beans



Greens



Mango



Papaya



Pineapple



Salad



Spinach

CARBS



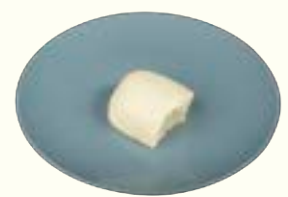
Amala



Anjero



Bariis



Banku



Coconut Rice



Fufu



Gari



Jollof Rice



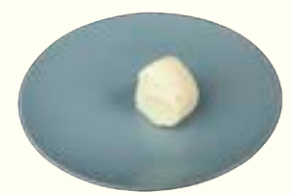
Muufo



Pap



Plantain



Pounded Yam



Sabaayad



Soor



Spaghetti



Yam

PROTEIN



Chicken



Fish



Salmon



Stomach

HIGH IN FAT, SALT OR SUGAR



Chin Chin



Puff Puff



Palm Oil

COMPOSITE



Beef Stew



Cambuulo / Ambulo



Chicken Stew



Egusi Soup



Fish Stew



Moi Moi



Peanut Soup



Pepper Goat Soup



Peppered Eggs



Spinach Stew



Waakye



# Caribbean Cuisine

This section provides an insight into some of the traditional foods of Caribbean communities living in the UK, and how the foods are consumed. The Caribbean is comprised of over 20 island nations with a shared history but diverse cultures and traditions, which is reflected in the similar but differing cuisines. We are highlighting a sample of the traditional Caribbean foods.

## Traditional Caribbean Foods

The traditional Caribbean diet can be healthy and balanced, and can have a high proportion of carbohydrate foods in the overall calorie intake. Rice and starchy carbohydrates such as yam, sweet potato, plantain and green banana form important carbohydrate staples. Meat, poultry and fish are eaten (with the exception of some religious observances - for example Rastafarians do not eat meat). Fresh vegetables such as callaloo, spinach, okra and avocado as well as fruit provide minerals, vitamins and fibre. Food tends to be seasoned with salt and herbs and prepared by frying, stewing or boiling.

## Food Groups

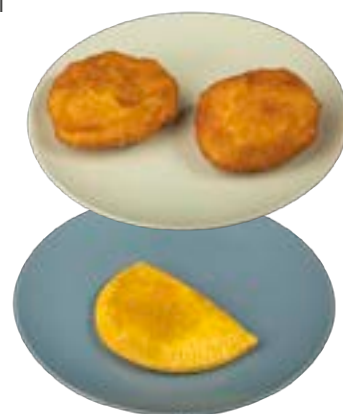
Starchy carbohydrates should make up just over a third of the food we eat. We should all try to reduce our intake of free sugars, such as fruit juice, smoothies, honey, syrups, white or brown sugar, and sugar added to food and drink to sweeten it. You do not need to worry about sugar in plain milk, plain yogurt, whole fruit or whole vegetables.

The carbohydrates commonly consumed include rice eaten plain, or with added beans (e.g. kidney beans or black eyed peas) to form 'rice & peas'. Other starchy foods include tubers such as yam and sweet potatoes, plantain, green banana or pumpkin. These may either be boiled, fried or roasted. The term 'hard food' is sometimes used to denote foods like yam, plantain, green banana and sometimes boiled dumplings eaten together. Traditionally more than one source of starchy carbohydrate is served in the same meal, so rice, yam and plantain may be served together with a protein source of fish, poultry or meat, along with salad or green vegetables (such as spinach or callaloo).

Other carbohydrates consumed throughout Caribbean populations in the UK include breads, cereals, pasta (such as macaroni cheese) and flour used in pastry such as in patties, desserts, or dumplings (which can be fried or boiled). Additional carbohydrate foods are eaten in the form of snacks, so overall the diet can have a relatively high proportion of carbohydrates.

Protein in the diet tends to be as meat, poultry or fish. Depending on the cultural or religious practices, pulses such as lentils will make up a significant contribution to the protein in the diet. Salt, herbs and other seasonings (which may be pre-prepared) are added to the food to marinate it before cooking.

Soups containing meat or fish, with vegetables and pulses (kidney beans or gunge peas) can be healthy and balanced, and may be eaten on a weekly basis in the traditional diet.



Salted fish is used in many island communities for main dishes or snacks (such as fishcakes) and the added salt contributes to the salt intake in the diet. A particularly high salt intake may occur if salt and seasonings are used as marinades for the food before cooking, and then also added with consumption of meals. High salt has been linked to high blood pressure. Ensuring that the recommended amount of 6g of salt per day is not exceeded could be achieved by choosing low salt options when possible, and being aware of the amount of salt used in seasoning or added to food after cooking.

Dairy foods can traditionally include condensed or evaporated milk, which can have added sugar. These are used in tea or coffee, added to porridge and desserts, or used to make drinks like Guinness punch. Lower fat and reduced sugar options are recommended. Vegetables consumed include callaloo, spinach, cho cho, okra and cabbage; and fruits include guava, soursop, mango, custard apple, papaya and pineapple.

Fried snacks and drinks with added sugar traditionally form a significant part of the diet and need to be considered, as these can add a significant contribution to the overall calorie intake. Fried snacks include fried dumplings and fishcakes. Choose sugar free / no added sugar drinks, and use unsaturated oils.

## Cooking Practices

Meat, fish and poultry tend to be fried in oil to brown before either being served, or added to a variety of ingredients such as onions, garlic or pepper to make a sauce.

Vegetable or coconut oil may be used to fry dishes. The sauces usually include herbs as well as tomatoes, prepared seasonings or stock cubes (that can contain added salt), and are used to add flavour and colour to the dish.

Rice and/or another starchy accompaniment are added to the meal, as well as vegetables and sometimes salad.

## Summary

Traditional Caribbean diets can be healthy and balanced, with an extensive source of fresh fruit and vegetables providing vitamins, minerals and fibre. Salt, sugar and fat used in the preparation, seasoning and flavouring of food add to the overall calorie, fat, sugar and salt intake. This may have implications for health conditions (including diabetes and hypertension), which these communities disproportionately suffer from.

Use less fat when cooking and choose lower fat options when shopping. Go for unsaturated fats (e.g. vegetable or rapeseed oil) rather than a saturated fat (e.g. coconut oil) when cooking. Reducing salt by choosing low salt stock cubes and reducing added sugar can also help make traditional foods healthier.

Fat, salt and sugar may already be present in many foods and it's important to be aware of this and choose lower fat, salt and sugar options when shopping for food and drinks.





## Red Pea Soup

- Add more red peas.
- Add more soup liquid.



## Steamed Fish

*with baked plantain, boiled butternut squash, green beans & spinach*

- Steam fish and reduce oil.
- Bake plantain and grill to crisp it.
- Limit salt, using other herbs and spices instead.
- Cover half the plate with plenty of vegetables.



## Jerk Chicken

*with baked plantain, rice & peas, boiled runner beans, green beans & spinach*

- Use more peas (to add more fibre).
- Reduce amount of added coconut.
- Bake plantain and grill to crisp it.
- Cover half the plate with plenty of vegetables.





## Ackee & Saltfish

*with baked plantain, avocado & tomato*

- Use less oil for cooking and choose unsaturated oil (e.g. vegetable oil).
- Add tomato and avocado to contribute towards your 5-a-day.
- To reduce fat, carbs and calories, try without dumplings.



## Sweet Potato Curry

*with baked plantain, rice & peas, okra, boiled runner beans & green beans*

- Use more peas (to add more fibre).
- Reduce amount of added coconut.
- Bake plantain and grill to crisp it.
- Cover half the plate with plenty of vegetables.



## Curried Goat

*with baked plantain, rice & peas, okra, boiled runner beans & green beans*

- Use more peas (to add more fibre).
- Reduce amount of added coconut.
- Bake plantain and grill to crisp it.
- Cover half the plate with plenty of vegetables.

## Chicken Patty

365  
CAL



130g

SWAP TO >

SAVE  
185  
CAL

## Chicken Wings (baked)

180  
CAL



150g

## Plantain (fried)

320  
CAL



120g

SWAP  
FRIED TO  
BAKED >

SAVE  
120  
CAL

## Plantain (baked)

200  
CAL



100g

## Roti

570  
CAL



200g (whole)

SWAP TO  
SMALLER  
PORTION  
SIZE >

SAVE  
285  
CAL

## Roti

285  
CAL



100g (half)

## Cornmeal Porridge

605  
CAL



450g

SWAP TO  
HEALTHIER  
RECIPE >

SAVE  
310  
CAL

## Cornmeal Porridge

(using semi-skimmed milk, light coconut milk, light evaporated milk and stevia sweetener)

295  
CAL



300g

## Dumplings (fried)

570  
CAL



230g

SWAP TO >

SAVE  
390  
CAL

## Hard Dough Bread

180  
CAL



70g

## Plantain (fried)

160  
CAL



60g

SWAP  
FRIED TO  
BOILED >

SAVE  
65  
CAL

## Plantain (boiled)

95  
CAL



85g



## Apple Crumble

440  
CALs



220g

SWAP TO  
SMALLER  
PORTION  
SIZE >

SAVE  
**200**  
CALs

## Apple Crumble

240  
CALs



120g

## Cornmeal Pudding

275  
CALs



100g

SWAP TO  
HEALTHIER >  
RECIPE

SAVE  
**90**  
CALs

## Cornmeal Pudding

(using light coconut milk  
and stevia sweetener)

185  
CALs



100g

## Carrot Cake

600  
CALs



160g

SWAP TO >

SAVE  
**475**  
CALs

## Fruit

125  
CALs



250g

## Nurishment

395  
CALs



400ml

SWAP TO >

SAVE  
105  
CALs

## Nurishment & Milk

(½ tin Nurishment and 200ml  
semi-skimmed milk)



+



290  
CALs

400ml

## Guinness Punch

165  
CALs



200ml

SWAP TO  
HEALTHIER >  
RECIPE

SAVE  
60  
CALs

## Guinness Punch

(using less condensed milk  
and light evaporated milk)



200ml

105  
CALs

## Supermalt

210  
CALs



330ml

SWAP TO >

SAVE  
60  
CALs

## Supermalt Less Sugar

150  
CALs



330ml

## Coconut Milk

255  
CAL



150ml

SWAP TO >

SAVE  
**135**  
CAL

## Coconut Milk (light)

120  
CAL



150ml

## Condensed Milk

465  
CAL



150ml

SWAP TO >

SAVE  
**305**  
CAL

## Condensed Milk (light)

160  
CAL



150ml

## Evaporated Milk

250  
CAL



150ml

SWAP TO >

SAVE  
**90**  
CAL

## Evaporated Milk (light)

160  
CAL



150ml



VEG / FRUIT



Avocado



Banana



Butternut Squash



Cabbage



Carrots



Callaloo



Custard Apple



Green Beans



Kiwi



Mango



Okra



Pumpkin



Runner Beans



Salad



Spinach



Tomato

PROTEIN



Chicken Wings



Fish



Jerk Chicken



Kidney Beans

CARBS



Breadfruit



Bulla Cake



Cornmeal Slice



Dumplings (boiled)



Green Banana



Hard Dough Bread



Porridge



Plantain



Rice



Roti / Dhalpuri



Sweet Potato



Yam

HIGH IN FAT, SALT OR SUGAR



Apple Crumble



Beef Patty



Carrot Cake



Cassava Crisps



Chicken Roti



Coconut Oil



Coconut Tart



Cornmeal Pudding



Creamed Coconut



Dumplings (fried)



Hot Pepper Sauce



Ritz Crackers

HIGH IN FAT, SALT OR SUGAR



Carrot Punch



Cocoa Tea



Condensed Milk



Ginger Beer



Guinness Punch



Nurishment



Sorrel



Supermalt

COMPOSITE



Ackee & Saltfish



Coleslaw



Cornmeal Porridge



Curried Goat



Macaroni Cheese



Omelette



Oxtail & Butter Beans



Red Pea Soup



Rice & Peas



Saltfish Fishcake



Split Pea Soup



Stewed Chicken

# South Asian Cuisine

The section provides an insight into the dietary habits of South Asian communities including Indians, Punjabis, Pakistanis, Nepalis, Tamils and Bangladeshis living in the UK.

## Traditional South Asian Foods

The traditional South Asian diet can be healthy and balanced, and can have a high proportion of carbohydrate foods in the overall calorie intake. It is high in lentils, pulses, vegetables and meats, providing a range of vitamins, minerals, fibre and protein. Meals tend to have a high amount of salt, fat and sugar added during cooking, which can increase the overall calories.

## Food Groups

Starchy carbohydrates should make up just over a third of the food we eat. We should all try to reduce our intake of free sugars, such as fruit juice, smoothies, honey, syrups, white or brown sugar, and sugar added to food and drink to sweeten it. You do not need to worry about sugar in plain milk, plain yogurt, whole fruit or whole vegetables.

Commonly eaten starchy carbohydrates include basmati rice and flatbreads including chapatis, naan breads, puris and parathas. Potatoes are added into vegetables, meat or rice dishes. These foods form the main source of energy at each mealtime. Choose wholegrain or higher fibre versions of starchy carbohydrates where possible, for example using wholemeal flour to make chapatis.

Protein foods include lentils, chickpeas and seeds for vegetarians, and meat, chicken and fish are commonly prepared in curries for non-vegetarian diets. Dairy foods (such as paneer and yogurt) also provide protein. Choose lower sugar and lower fat options where possible.

The South Asian diet consists of plenty of fresh vegetables and salads, including cauliflower, okra, spinach and green beans. Common fruits include banana, grapes, melon, mango, papaya and pineapple.

Traditionally consumed snacks include Bombay mix, ghatia, sev, chevda, fried cereals with added dried fruits, and nuts coated with salt, sugar and spices. These snack foods can often be high in fat, salt or sugar. Common deep fried snacks include samosas, bhajis and potato snacks, which are deep fried in a pan called a kadai / karahi.





Desserts have become more common than just at special occasions, and find their way into daily meals. Popular desserts include kheer, halwa (gajrela), rasmalai, mithai, gulab jamun and jalebi. Many of the sweets are made with gram flour, semolina and jaggery (a type of sugar).

Tea (also known as Indian tea, cha or chai) is commonly consumed in the South Asian community. It has a high proportion of milk to water, with spices (such as cardamom and cinnamon) and sugar added. Rosewater and mango syrup are also added to water or milk as a refreshing drink called lassi.

Drinks and desserts can be high in fat, sugar and salt, so choose lower fat options and sugar free / no added sugar drinks.



## Cooking Practices

South Asian meals are generally prepared as curries, accompanied with a type of flatbread or boiled rice. Plenty of herbs and spices including curry spice, coriander, chilli, garlic and ginger are used in cooking. Oils and salt are added to curries, rice and flatbreads as well as snacks.

## Summary

South Asian diets can be balanced and provide essential minerals, vitamins, fibre and protein. A variety of spices and herbs are added to enhance flavour. Meals can be prepared using less fat in cooking and less salt. Vegetables are included at each meal either in cooking or as side salads. Snacks include fruits, nuts, seeds and fried snacks. Traditional desserts are made at home on a regular basis, as well as on special occasions.

Adapting cooking techniques to use less fat, sugar and salt, adding more vegetables and fruit, and choosing wholegrain or higher fibre versions of starchy carbohydrates where possible, can help to ensure this diet meets the healthy eating guidelines and reduce the total calorie intake, without affecting taste.

Use less fat when cooking and choose lower fat options when shopping. It is recommended to switch from ghee and coconut oil to vegetable or sunflower oil, using less oil for frying and in the base of curries. Instead of curry pastes (which will have added salt and fat), use curry powder and powdered spices with fresh garlic and ginger. Reducing salt by choosing low salt stock cubes and reducing added sugar can also help make traditional foods healthier.

Fat, salt and sugar may already be present in many foods and it's important to be aware of this and choose lower fat, salt and sugar options when shopping for food and drinks.



## Paneer

*with 1 chapati, raita & salad*

- Use less oil for cooking and choose unsaturated oil (e.g. vegetable oil).
- Swap chapati flour to brown flour (and don't use fat).
- Add plenty of salad and raita made with lower fat yogurt.



## Dal

*with 1 chapati, rice, raita & salad*

- Use less oil for cooking and choose unsaturated oil (e.g. vegetable oil).
- Swap chapati flour to brown flour (and don't use fat).
- Use low fat yogurt and add side salad.
- Try brown rice to increase fibre.



## Chana

*with 1 chapati, okra, raita & salad*

- Use low fat yogurt and add side salad.
- Use less oil for cooking and choose unsaturated oil (e.g. vegetable oil).
- Make chapatis with wholemeal flour for more fibre.



## Meat Curry

*with 1 chapati, raita & salad*

- Use less oil for cooking and choose unsaturated oil (e.g. vegetable oil).
- Use curry powder instead of curry paste.
- Swap chapati flour to brown flour (and don't use fat).
- Add plenty of vegetables to raita.



## Chicken Curry

*with rice, raita & salad*

- Use less oil for cooking and choose unsaturated oil (e.g. vegetable oil).
- Use curry powder instead of curry paste.
- Add side salad and plenty of veg.
- Use low fat yogurt.



## Fish Curry

*with rice, raita & salad*

- Use less oil for cooking and choose unsaturated oil (e.g. vegetable oil).
- Use curry powder instead of curry paste.
- Add side salad.
- Try brown rice to increase fibre.



## Veg Samosa (fried)

285  
CAL



80g

SWAP  
FRIED TO  
BAKED >

SAVE  
135  
CAL

## Veg Samosa (baked)

150  
CAL



70g

## Chicken Kebabs (fried)

140  
CAL



90g

SWAP  
FRIED TO  
BAKED >

SAVE  
60  
CAL

## Chicken Kebabs (baked)

80  
CAL



80g

## Pakora

270  
CAL



105g

SWAP TO >

SAVE  
185  
CAL

## Dhokla

85  
CAL



35g



## Namak Para

230  
CAL



40g

SWAP TO >

SAVE  
55  
CAL

## Nuts (plain)

175  
CAL



30g

## Bombay Mix

200  
CAL



40g

SWAP TO >

SAVE  
105  
CAL

## Chana (dry roasted)

95  
CAL



30g

## Ghatia

165  
CAL



30g

SWAP TO >

SAVE  
70  
CAL

## Popcorn

95  
CAL



20g

## Halwa

515  
CAL



150g

SWAP TO  
HEALTHIER >  
RECIPE

SAVE  
260  
CAL

## Halwa

(using semi-skimmed milk,  
and less sugar and ghee)

255  
CAL



100g

## Kheer

300  
CAL



200g

SWAP TO >

SAVE  
180  
CAL

## Fruit Salad

120  
CAL



200g

## Gulab Jamun

690  
CAL



225g

SWAP TO >

SAVE  
465  
CAL

## Rasmalai

225  
CAL



150g

## Rubicon Guava

110  
CAL



500ml

SWAP TO >

SAVE  
**105**  
CAL

## Squash (sugar free)

5  
CAL



250ml

## Mango Lassi (sweet)

325  
CAL



500ml

SWAP TO >

SAVE  
**95**  
CAL

## Plain Lassi

230  
CAL



500ml

## Cola

135  
CAL



330ml

SWAP TO >

SAVE  
**130**  
CAL

## Diet Cola

5  
CAL



330ml

**VEG / FRUIT**



Banana



Cauliflower



Grapes



Green Beans



Mango



Melon



Okra



Onion & Tomato



Papaya



Pineapple



Salad



Spinach

**CARBS**



Chapati



Dhokla



Paratha



Rice

**PROTEIN**



Chana



Chicken Kebab



Fish



Nuts (plain)



**HIGH IN FAT, SALT OR SUGAR**



Bombay Mix



Cola



Ghatia



Gulab Jamun



Halwa



Kheer



Mango Lassi



Namak Para



Pakora



Rasmalai



Rubicon Guava



Veg Samosa

**COMPOSITE**



Chicken Curry



Dal



Fish Curry



Meat Curry



Omelette



Paneer Tikka Masala



Raita



Veg Curry

## White Bread

175  
CAL



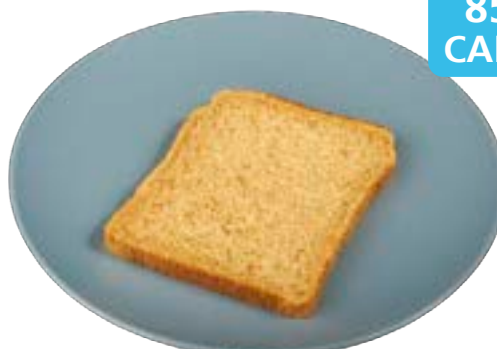
80g

SWAP TO  
SMALLER  
PORTION  
SIZE >

SAVE  
90  
CAL

## Wholemeal Bread

85  
CAL



40g

## Chips (deep fried)

820  
CAL



300g

SWAP TO  
SMALLER  
PORTION  
SIZE >

SAVE  
545  
CAL

## Chips (deep fried)

275  
CAL



100g

## White Rice

510  
CAL



355g

SWAP TO  
SMALLER  
PORTION  
SIZE >

SAVE  
305  
CAL

## Brown Rice

205  
CAL



155g

VEG / FRUIT



Banana



Butternut Squash



Dates



Fresh Fruit Salad



Grapes



Mango



Pineapple



Sweetcorn

CARBS



Bulgur Wheat



Chips



Egg Noodles



Pitta Bread



Popcorn (plain)



Porridge



Potatoes



Quinoa

CARBS



Rice (white)



Rice (brown)



Rice (long grain)



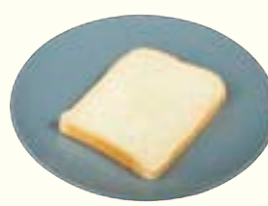
Rice Noodles



Spaghetti  
(white)



Spaghetti  
(whole wheat)



White Bread



Wholemeal Bread

HIGH IN FAT, SALT OR SUGAR



Apple Crumble



Cake



Cola



Crisps



Digestive Biscuits



French Fries



Ice Cream



Pretzels



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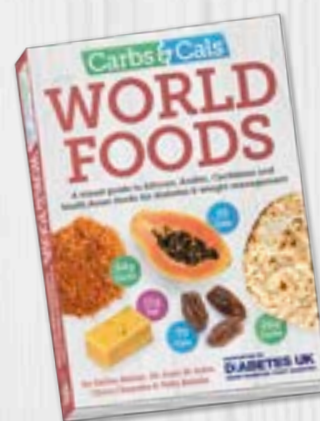
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