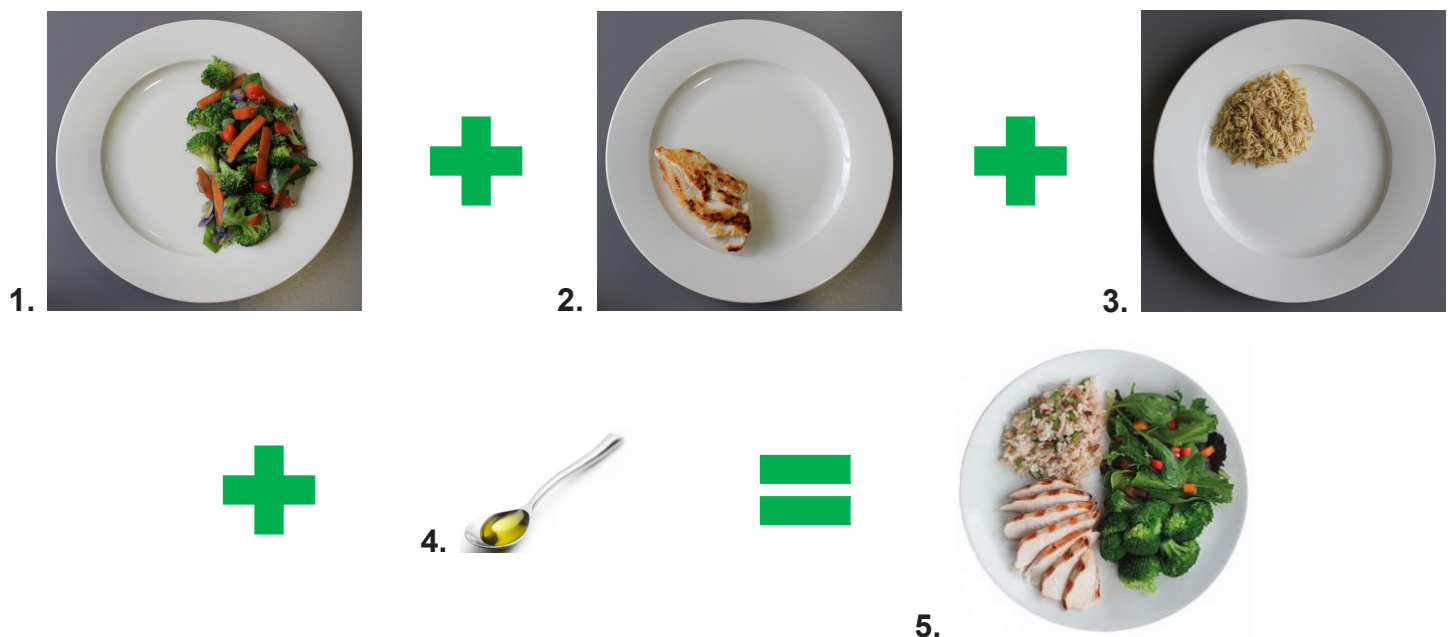


Making healthy meals

Choosing a new recipe or adapting a family favourite to create a healthy meal can be achieved with some simple strategies — make room for vegetables, use a suitable cooking method and select the right ingredients.





Take a balanced approach





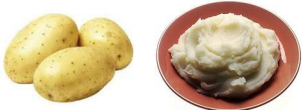











1. Prioritise vegetable — aim for half of your recipe, chopping board and plate to be vegetables
2. Pick a protein — fish, skinless chicken, lean red meat, lentils, egg or tofu
3. Choose a lower GI carbohydrate — corn or sweet potato, pasta or quinoa, grain bread or barley
4. Add a splash of healthy fat — cook with canola or drizzle olive oil on salad vegetables



Reducing energy (kJ) and staying satisfied

Simple swaps can transform meals into lower energy (kJ) options and boost vegetable intake. If you are aiming to reduce weight, reducing energy (kJ) intake by 2000kJ/day is often the target.

Transform this...		Into this...		Energy (kJ) saved
2 cups pasta with 1 cup vegetables and cream sauce		1 cup pasta with lean mince and tomato sauce plus 2 cups vegetable or salad as a side dish		≈1040kJ
2 cups rice, 200g chicken and 1 cup stirfry vegetables		1 cup cooked rice, 100g skinless chicken or tofu and 2 cups stirfry vegetables		≈1490kJ

Transform this...	Into this...	Energy (kJ) saved
250g steak, 2 cups wedges and 1 cup steamed vegetables 	150g steak, 1 medium potato and 2+ cups steamed vegetables 	≈825kJ
Roast potato, sweet potato, pumpkin 	Roast capsicum, eggplant, zucchini 	≈987kJ
Potato mash 	Reduce potato content and mash together with cauliflower or celeriac or frozen peas 	≈470kJ
Noodles 	Replace half your usual serve of noodles with shredded cabbage or bean shoots OR try Konjac noodles 	≈600kJ
Spaghetti 	Replace half your usual serve of spaghetti with grated zucchini “ribbons” OR try Konjac pasta 	≈650kJ
Rice 	Place cauliflower florets in a food processor and chop fine to create “cauliflower rice” OR try Konjac rice 	≈875kJ
Salami and regular cheese sandwich 	Choose lean meat OR reduced fat cheese and plenty of salad to fill a multigrain sandwich 	≈1000–1500kJ
Meat / chicken kebab 	Thread kebab with half meat and half vegetables 	≈300kJ per kebab

Healthy cooking methods



Foil parcels

Great for vegetables (e.g. jacket potato, beetroot, pumpkin; fish, meat or chicken pieces). Add herbs and spices to increase flavour.



Slow cooking

Brown lean meat or skinless chicken and an onion in 2 tablespoons oil. Add a variety of vegetables, a can of diced tomatoes and enough water to cover. Simmer for 1–2 hours. Adjust flavour by adding different herbs or spices, pepper or mustard.



Steaming

Cook skinless chicken, fish or vegetables without direct water contact or extra oil. Place chicken or fish in steamer basket over boiling water. Steam until flesh is cooked through, especially for chicken. Add vegetables for the last 5 minutes of cooking for a one pot meal.



Oven baking

Lay lean meat, skinless chicken or fish on baking paper in an oven dish and spray or lightly coat with oil. Bake in the oven. This method can also be used for crumbed foods.



BBQ or grill

Grill lean meat, skinless chicken, fish, seafood or vegetables on the BBQ or use a grill pan. Lightly coat food with oil to avoid sticking.



Stir-fry

Cook finely sliced chicken, pork or beef in a tablespoon of oil on a high heat. Add plenty of finely sliced vegetables (cabbage, Asian greens, capsicum, carrot, mushroom etc.). Stir through bean shoots just before serving for extra crunch. Add fresh herbs or chilli for extra flavour.



Poach

A great way to cook chicken or eggs. Place a pan with water (10cms depth) on a medium-low heat. When little bubbles appear on the bottom of the pan, stir water add chicken or eggs. Cook for 2–3 minutes for eggs or 15–20 minutes for a skinless chicken breast until cooked through.









Microwave

Place lean meat, skinless chicken, fish, eggs or vegetables in a microwave safe container. Microwave on medium-high until cooked. This is especially convenient for frozen vegetables.





Ideal ingredients

Recipes can be improved by switching ingredients to reduce saturated fat, salt and sugar and increase dietary fibre.

To reduce saturated fat

Replace this:	With that:
<p>Cream, sour cream, coconut milk</p> 	<p>Ricotta, natural yoghurt, evaporated milk – plain / coconut</p> 
<p>Full fat – tasty, feta or cream cheese</p> 	<p>Reduced fat – tasty, feta, cream or cottage cheese</p> 
<p>Butter, lard, ghee, coconut oil, copha</p> 	<p>Olive, sunflower, peanut, canola oils or avocado</p> 
<p>Fatty beef, lamb, pork, sausage, chicken with skin</p> 	<p>Lean beef, pork, lamb, kangaroo, skinless chicken or turkey</p> 
<p>Puff, shortcrust pastry</p> 	<p>Filo pastry</p> 














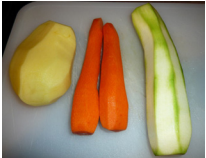

To reduce salt

Replace this:	With that:
<p>Salt and seasonings with added salt</p> 	<p>Herbs and spices, garlic and ginger, lemon juice or vinegar</p> 
<p>Stock, sauces</p> 	<p>Salt reduced stock and sauces or canned tomato</p> 

To reduce added sugar

<p>Chocolate</p> 	<p>100% cocoa powder or sugar-free chocolate powder</p>  	<p>200g chocolate = ½ cup powder</p>
<p>Sugar, honey, syrup</p>  	<p>Splenda sugar blend, Natvia baking (Stevia), Equal baking, sugar-free maple flavoured syrup</p>    	<p>1 cup sugar/honey/syrup = ½ cup Splenda, Equal = ¾ cup Natvia (stevia)</p>

To increase dietary fibre

Replace this:	With that:
<p>White flour, panko crumbs</p>  	<p>Wholemeal flour, besan (chickpea flour), multigrain breadcrumbs, quinoa flakes</p>   
<p>Mince meat (halve the quantity)</p> 	<p>Combine with brown or red lentils or mushrooms</p>  
<p>White pasta, rice, couscous</p>   	<p>Wholemeal pasta, brown or red rice, quinoa</p>   
<p>Peeled vegetables</p> 	<p>Vegetables unpeeled</p> 

Refer to Baker Institute resources:

- Supermarket shopping guide — identify healthy food choices when you are shopping.
- Plating it up: the portion guide — detailed portion size suggestions.
- Healthy eating out and take away foods.