

TIPS FOR CHINESE RESTAURANTS

The following tips will help you provide healthier food by making a few small changes to the ingredients you use and the way you cook, serve and promote your existing dishes. And, where you see the symbol '££', these tips could help boost your profits too.

GET THE BALANCE RIGHT

The Eatwell Plate shows the type and balance of food in a healthy diet. Around a third of our diet should come from fruit and vegetables and another third from starchy foods such as rice or noodles. To help customers get the right balance:



- Offer steamed (not fried) vegetable side dishes; encourage customers to buy one ££.
- Use a bit less meat and bulk out dishes and sauces with extra fruit (e.g. pineapple), vegetables (e.g. peppers, Pak Choy, onions) or pulses (e.g. black beans) ££.
- Serve a bit more rice or noodles and a bit less sauce to balance the meal ££.

The smallest part of the diet should be foods high in fat (especially unhealthy saturated fat) and sugar. Most people should eat less salt too. Help your customers by:

- Add healthier, non-fried options to your menu e.g. hot and sour soup (with minimal salt), steamed dumplings, plain (un-battered) chicken or vegetable chop suey.
- Think about portion size. If you are over generous you'll be serving up extra fat and salt and wasting your profits too. Encourage staff to stick to strict portion sizes ££.
- For children/people with small appetites, offer smaller portions of healthier meals ££.

CHOOSE INGREDIENTS WISELY

	Sugars	Fat	Saturates	Salt
What is HIGH per100g	Over 15g	Over 20g	Over 5g	Over 1.5g
What is MEDIUM per100g	Between 5g and 15g	Between 3g and 20g	Between 1.5g and 5g	Between 0.3g and 1.5g
What is LOW per100g	5g and below	3g and below	1.5g and below	0.3g and below

Read the label

- Check food labels when buying supplies - use the guide to the left to try to choose products low in fat, salt and sugar. Or ask your supplier for the information instead.

Food allergies and intolerances

Some customers may have concerns about ingredients they are allergic or intolerant to (e.g. peanuts, milk, monosodium glutamate (MSG/E621), eggs). It's good practice to:

- Keep up-to-date records of recipes and ingredients, including ingredients in ready made products such as sauces or noodles. See the allergen control checklist for further advice.

KNOW YOUR FATS

- Cook with a small amount of vegetable oil (e.g. rapeseed, sunflower or soya oil) but not palm oil which is high in saturated fat and more expensive **££**.
- Be wary of oils labelled 'vegetable oil' – they can contain added palm oil.
- Cut off white fat from meat, or skin from poultry (e.g. chicken), before cooking.



Lower fat cooking:

- Try cooking without fat by grilling, steaming, poaching, dry frying in natural juices (e.g. meat), boiling (e.g. noodles) or baking **££**.
- If you do fry, use a minimal amount of oil and do not double or re-fry – this adds even more fat to food. Always drain food before serving **££**.
- If you deep fry food, change the oil regularly and get oil to the right temperature each time you fry a new batch (check the packet/fryer instructions but usually around 180°C) – food will absorb less fat, be crisper and you'll use less oil too **££**.



USE LESS SALT

- Chefs' often cook 'to sight' so some might use more salt than others. Try to agree a set amount to use, measuring the salt out precisely (e.g. with teaspoons, not ladles).
- Try to use less salt in each of part of the dish (e.g. rice, sauce, noodles, batter). If you gradually cut down your customers are unlikely to notice the change **££**.
- The same goes for monosodium glutamate (MSG or E621); this adds a lot of sodium (one part of salt) to dishes – try using less. Add MSG *or* salt to dishes, not both **££**.

Watch out for hidden salt

You might be surprised where added salt can be found, in ingredients such as:

- Frozen chicken breast or pieces – go for fresh chicken with no added salt if you can.
- Tinned tomatoes or tomato paste or sauce – go for brands with no added salt.
- Soy sauce is very high in salt – try using less and go for reduced-salt options if you can.
- Ready-made sauces (e.g. hoisin, oyster, fish and blackbean sauce) – compare labels.
- Egg noodles contain added salt – look for lower salt varieties and don't add extra salt.

ENCOURAGE THE HEALTHIER OPTION

- Make sure staff can advise customers on healthier options at the point of ordering.
- Run price promotions such as meal deals (e.g. include a free vegetable dish) **££**.
- Include healthier options on set menus.

- Put a note on your menu about healthy changes you've been making, without compromising on taste (e.g. "we've kept our great taste and reduced our use of saturated fat and salt").

