



Newsletter

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Welcome to my winter newsletter. Thankfully so far we have not had to reach for too many warm winter clothes, but I am sure it won't be long before the real cold weather sets in.

Porridge

At this time of the year many people enjoy a warm start to the day with a serving of porridge. Oats have a low glycaemic index, which means they take a longer period of time for our body to digest and break down the naturally occurring sugars in the oats. Starting the day with porridge is a great breakfast as it is a food that can help keep you feeling satisfied for longer. As porridge has a low glycaemic index you can even get away with adding a little brown sugar, but it is certainly best if you don't add any cream!

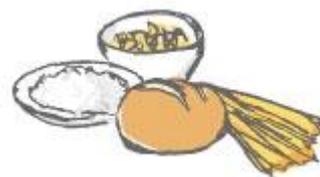
The range of porridge options you can buy has really increased over the years, with a large number of 'instant' type sachet choices filling the shelves. While plain oats are naturally low in sugar this is not the case with all sachet or flavoured porridge options.

Examples of just some of the single serve oat sachets you can buy on the market include 'oat singles honey and golden syrup', 'oats honey buzz', 'oat singles plain' and 'instant oats sachets apricot'.

Plain rolled oats have just oats as the ingredient and have only 1 gram of sugar in 100grams.

The 'oats singles plain' (Harraways brand) is just individual serves of rolled oats, with no additional ingredients so it too just has 1 gram of sugar in 100grams.

The 'oats singles honey and golden syrup' (Harraways brand) however has 23.7 grams of sugar in 100grams. The product is made up of 71% oats the rest comes from raw sugar, honey powder, skim milk powder, golden syrup flavour, honey flavour, cream flavour and burnt sugar powder.



'Instant oat sachets apricot' (Pams brand) has 15.4 grams of sugar in 100grams. It is made from 78% oats along with raw sugar, dried apricots (7%), skim milk powder, and natural flavour.

'Oats singles honey buzz' (Uncle Toby's brand) has 28.4 grams sugar in 100grams. With 70% rolled oats along with sugar, milk powder, maize maltodextrin, corn syrup solids and dried honey. Other than the oats and the milk powder all the other ingredients in this product are a type of sugar.

All are relatively low in fat and high in fibre. It is interesting to see that the 'oats honey buzz' is slanted towards children with a 'fun' picture of a bear on the box and the big print stating '50% of your child's daily wholegrain target' – and this is the one with the highest sugar content.

All but one packet had 10 sachets while one had 12, cost ranged for the sachet oats ranged from \$3.29 - \$5.49, while a packet of oats for considerably more serves was a similar price.

It does not take long to make porridge so buying single serves is an expensive option and one that can have a much higher sugar value. I would suggest you make your porridge from plain oats, add some brown sugar if you wish and add some extra fruit (fresh, dried or stewed) if you want some further flavour or sweetness.

Coming into season:

Did you know that rhubarb is actually a vegetable? Most of us (including me!) think of it as a fruit as we may use it as a 'fruit' on our breakfast cereal or we use it in desserts. While it is available all year round it is at its best from may until October.

Young rhubarb stalks just need to be washed and cut into pieces. Older, thicker rhubarb stalks need to have any coarse strings removed before slicing. Remember don't eat the leaves as these are poisonous.

Stew rhubarb with just a little sugar and add to your breakfast cereal, or use in a fruit crumble either on its own or combine with some apple. You can make a low fat crumble topping by combining ½ cup rolled oats, 1 Tbsp brown sugar, 1 Tbsp lite margarine, 1 Tbsp ground almonds.

Recipe: Smoked chicken filo parcels

Filo pastry is a good low fat alternative to other pastry.

1 packet filo pastry
½ smoked chicken shredded
250g low fat cream cheese
½ bag baby spinach leaves
1 red onion
2 rashers lean bacon chopped
Cranberry jelly

1 Tbsp oil mixed with 1 Tbsp milk for brushing over pastry

Cook onion and bacon together in a non-stick pan.
Pour boiling water over spinach until it wilted, drain, then squeeze as much water off as possible. Roughly chop the spinach.
Combine (chicken, spinach, cream cheese, bacon, onions together.

Take one sheet of filo pastry and lay out flat with the short end closest to you, using a pastry brush gently brush with the milk /oil mixture. Place another sheet of filo over this.
Spoon a serve of the chicken mixture on to pastry approx 10cm in from the short end in the middle. Place a teaspoon of cranberry sauce on the chicken mixture. Fold the pastry over the chicken to make a rectangular parcel, tucking the ends underneath. Place with seam side down on oven tray. Brush top with oil and milk mixture. Repeat till all mixture is used. Bake in oven 200 degrees 20 mins.

Hint: if you are not used to working with filo pastry the trick is not to let it dry out. Remove it from the box and lay it out flat then cover it with a clean dry tea towel while you are making the parcels. If it dries out the pastry can easily tear and it can be difficult to separate the tissue thin sheets of pastry.

I hope you all manage to stay warm with the cooler weather that is slowly heading our way. If you are finding it difficult to stay on track with your eating, now might be the time to book another consultation with Fiona.

Call Fiona on 07 574 7999 or email fiona@foodsolutions.net.nz

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Regards

