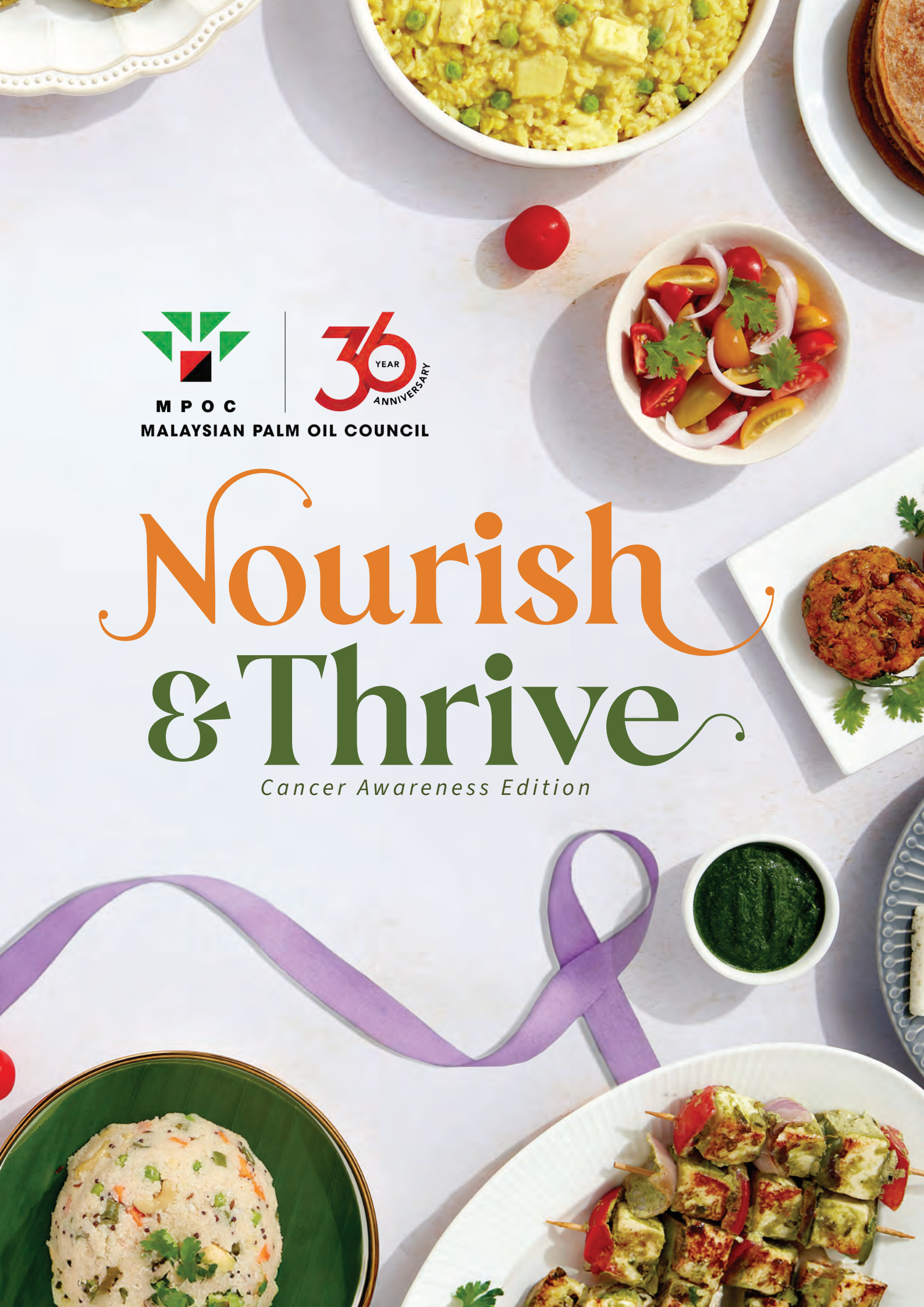
MPOC
MALAYSIAN PALM OIL COUNCIL

30 YEAR ANNIVERSARY

Nourish & Thrive

Cancer Awareness Edition



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About MPOC

The Malaysian Palm Oil Council (MPOC) is dedicated to positioning Malaysia as the global leader in certified sustainable palm oil. MPOC prioritises the promotion of Malaysian palm oil as a healthy, sustainable, and ethical choice for consumers worldwide, by actively engaging with stakeholders, while improving market access and acceptance of certified sustainable palm oil.

MPOC has a network of regional offices in Shanghai (China), Cairo (Egypt), Istanbul (Turkiye), Nairobi (Kenya), Lagos (Nigeria), as well as Mumbai and Chennai (India).

Through its head office in Kuala Lumpur and the regional offices, MPOC plays a vital role in facilitating the Malaysian palm oil industry's trade expansion by constantly identifying and capitalising on the latest market trends and opportunities.



Foreword



Dr. Raghavendra Rao M.

BNYS, PhD
Healthcare Global Enterprises Ltd.

"Good food will not replace treatment. But on a hard day, a good meal can help someone feel cared for."

When someone hears the word "cancer", food is rarely their first thought. Yet once treatment begins, daily life is felt most during meals. Favourite dishes taste different, appetite comes and goes, and energy runs low. Many people are told to "eat well", but few are shown what that looks like in everyday Indian food. For the family members who prepare them, every plate can carry a quiet question: am I doing enough?

In more than two decades of research in integrative medicine, I have seen how much daily food and routine matter. Medical treatment does the heavy lifting. Around it, rest, calm and a good meal help people feel more like themselves. The evidence agrees: good nutrition helps people stay strong, cope with treatment and recover, and what we eat afterwards shapes long-term health[1–4].

Nourish & Thrive was created with that reality in mind. Its 15 recipes are familiar, gentle and made with everyday Indian ingredients, and each has been reviewed by a radiation oncologist. The book does not promise a cure or replace your doctor's advice. It offers something simpler: nourishing food that is easy to make on a hard day. And it looks beyond the recipes: why added sugar calls for caution, how to make protein and fibre appealing and what the Indian idea of Agni can teach us.

I am grateful to the Malaysian Palm Oil Council (MPOC) for supporting this initiative, and to everyone who brought their care to these pages.

To every reader in treatment, and every caregiver beside them: may this book make your day a little easier.

.....
Signature

HCG The Specialist in Cancer Care
adding life to years

Get to know

The Expert



Dr. Sonali Karnwal

MD, Radiation Oncologist
Medanta Super Speciality Hospital, Noida

Dr. Sonali Karnwal is a radiation oncologist with over six years of experience in cancer care, spanning advanced radiotherapy, chemotherapy, and multidisciplinary oncology.

For ***Nourish & Thrive***, she reviewed all 15 recipes to assess their suitability for patients undergoing cancer treatment. Drawing on her experience with patients and families, Dr. Karnwal explains why nutrition matters during treatment.

"Patients and families often ask me: what should I eat? Treatment can change appetite, taste and digestion. Good nutrition helps the body cope and keeps strength up. No food treats cancer, but regular, balanced, freshly cooked meals you enjoy really do help. treats cancer, but regular, balanced, freshly cooked meals you enjoy really do help."

How the recipes were reviewed:

- ***Gentle:*** *Soft textures and mild spices*
- ***Balanced:*** *Protein, grains, vegetables and healthy fats*
- ***Safe:*** *Well-cooked ingredients and simple hygiene*
- ***Easy:*** *Short ingredient lists and simple steps*

**Every patient's needs differ. Check with your oncologist or dietitian before changing your diet.*

Get to know
The Chef



Chef Amit Singh

Culinary R&D Specialist and Recipe Developer

Chef Amit Singh has over 14 years of experience in hospitality, food media and recipe development, and has created recipes for 50+ brands. For this book, he developed, tested and styled all 15 recipes, each cooked with Malaysian palm oil.

"I wrote these recipes for patients tired from treatment who still deserve a meal that tastes like home. This meant less chilli, gentle flavour from ginger, jeera and fresh herbs, softer textures and fewer steps."

Chef Amit's tips

- ***Eat small, eat often.*** *Smaller meals can feel easier.*
- ***Flavour gently.*** *Try lemon, coriander or mint if sense of taste has changed.*
- ***Store safely.*** *Refrigerate leftovers and reheat until piping hot.*
- ***Let others help.*** *Every recipe is easy for a caregiver to follow.*

**Scan the QR code on each recipe for Chef Amit's recipe video.*

Introduction

Why Food Matters Now?

Cancer treatment changes the way a person eats. Appetite fades. Favourite foods taste strange. Swallowing can hurt.

It is tempting to see food as inconsequential next to surgery or chemotherapy. It isn't unimportant. Malnutrition and muscle loss are common in cancer care and make treatment harder to bear, which is why international guidelines ask that every patient be checked for nutritional risk and helped to eat well from the start[3,4].

Food matters beyond treatment, too. The American Cancer Society (AACR) estimates that about four in ten cancers in US adults are linked to risks we can change, including excess weight, alcohol, red and processed meat, and too little fruit, vegetables and fibre[5]. The AACR agrees[16], and survivors now have a nutrition guideline of their own[2].

Closer to home, the Indian Council of Medical Research, National Institute of Nutrition (ICMR-NIN) Dietary Guidelines for Indians build on what our kitchens already know: grains, millets, dals, vegetables, fruit, milk and nuts, with less salt, sugar and packaged food[15]. This book puts that guidance on the plate.

Every recipe is cooked in Malaysian palm oil, and the science pages explain why. But no single food treats cancer, so the post-recipes chapters look wider: at eating through treatment, protein and fibre, sugar, Agni, and everyday eating for the long term.

Throughout this book, we distinguish between what is proven, what is rooted in tradition, and what remains uncertain. Above all, your oncologist and dietitian are best placed to guide you according to your individual needs.



The Science of Palm Oil

Palm oil comes from the fruit of the oil palm. It has been part of kitchens across Asia and Africa for generations, and is used in cooking around the world today.

Two kinds of vitamin E

Vitamin E is not a single nutrient. It is a family of eight compounds in two groups: tocopherols and tocotrienols. Most vegetable oils contain mainly tocopherols. Palm oil is one of the richest natural sources of tocotrienols, the less common form.

Vitamin E is an antioxidant. Antioxidants help protect the body's cells from damage caused by everyday processes, as part of a balanced diet.

- ***Vitamin E = 8 forms.*** *4 tocopherols + 4 tocotrienols.*
- ***Where they come from.*** *Tocopherols: most seed oils, nuts. Tocotrienols: palm oil, rice bran, some cereals.*
- ***What's in palm oil?*** *Palm oil's vitamin E is about 70% tocotrienols and 30% tocopherols.*
- ***What vitamin E does.*** *An antioxidant nutrient that helps protect cells from damage and is an important part of a balanced diet.*



Made for Indian cooking

Steady under heat

Indian cooking uses oil at high temperatures: tadka, bhuna and shallow-frying.

When any oil is heated past its limit, it starts to break down, smoke and lose quality. Palm oil has a high smoke point of around 235°C and a balanced mix of fats; roughly equal amounts of saturated and unsaturated. It is also low in polyunsaturated fats (about 10%), which makes it more resistant to breaking down when heated. This keeps it stable at everyday cooking temperatures.

Naturally semi-solid and trans-fat free

Palm oil is semi-solid at room temperature and is naturally trans-fat free.

Good cooking habits with any oil

- *Heat oil on a medium flame; don't let it smoke.*
- *Avoid reusing oil.*
- *Use sparingly: a little goes a long way.*
- *Store oil in a cool, dark place with the lid closed.*



Why healthy fats belong on the plate

During treatment, many people find it difficult to conjure up sufficient appetite. When every spoonful counts, fat is the most concentrated source of energy on the plate.

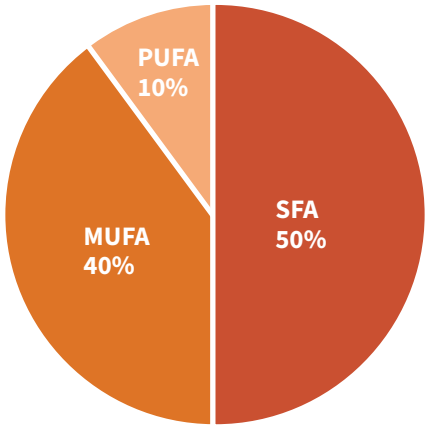
Good cooking habits with any oil

- ***More energy in less food.*** *Every gram of fat, including palm oil, gives about 9 calories, more than twice the 4 calories in a gram of carbohydrate or protein.*
- ***A little goes a long way.*** *Just one teaspoon of palm oil in a bowl of khichdi or dal adds about 40 calories, without making the portion any bigger for a small appetite.*
- ***Helps vitamins work.*** *Fat helps the body absorb vitamins A, D, E and K from foods like vegetables, dals and dairy.*

The aim is balance, not excess. Your oncologist or dietitian can advise how much fat suits you, especially if you have heart, liver or digestive concerns.

Fat composition of Palm Oil

Saturated (SFA) ~50% nounsaturated (MUFA) ~40% lyunsaturated (PUFA) ~10%.



**The values above are approximate. Composition may vary slightly depending on the source and processing.*

Stock Your Kitchen

A pantry for gentle, nourishing meals

A well-stocked kitchen makes cooking easier on low-energy days. Most of these are already in an Indian home.

• Grains and staples

☐ Rice and broken wheat *(dalia)*



☐ Rolled oats, poha and suji



☐ Whole wheat atta, jowar flour



• Dals and protein

☐ Moong dal and masoor dal
(quick-cooking and easy to digest)



☐ Paneer and fresh curd



☐ Eggs, and chicken or fish
if you eat them



• Vegetables and fruits

☐ Lauki, pumpkin, carrot, beans & spinach



☐ Banana, papaya, apple & seasonal fruit



Flavour, oil and kitchen safety

- **Gentle flavour**

☐ Jeera, haldi, hing and ajwain



☐ Fresh ginger, lemon, coriander and mint



- **Cooking oil**

☐ Malaysian palm oil



Malaysian palm oil has a neutral taste that lets the flavours come through, and it holds up well to the high heat of tadka, bhuna and shallow-frying.

Kitchen safety during treatment

- *Wash hands, vegetables and fruits well.*
- *Cook eggs, meat and fish thoroughly.*
- *Use pasteurised milk and fresh curd.*
- *Store leftovers in the fridge, eat within a day, and reheat until piping hot.*

204 kcal
per serving

Serves **4**

10.9 g
protein/serving



Creamy broccoli tikka *with protein-rich paneer* and vitamin-rich greens.

Malai Broccoli Tikka

Prep Time: 20 mins | Cooking Time: 20 mins

Appetiser *Breakfast* *Main* *Dessert*

Ingredients

For the Broccoli

- 500 g Broccoli florets
- 2 litres Water
- ½ tsp Turmeric powder

For the Marinade

- 150 g Hung curd
- 75 g Fresh Paneer, crumbled
- 20 g Cashews, soaked for 30 mins
- 1 tbsp Fresh cream
- 1 tsp Ginger paste
- 1 tsp Garlic paste (optional, if tolerated)
- ¼ tsp Turmeric powder
- ¼ tsp White pepper powder
- ½ tsp roasted Cumin powder
- ½ tsp Pink salt or regular Salt
- 1 tsp + 2 tsp Palm oil

For the Garnish

- 1 tsp finely chopped Coriander leaves



Method

Step 1: Prepare the Broccoli

1. Bring water to a gentle boil.
2. Add turmeric powder.
3. Blanch broccoli florets for 2 minutes.
4. Immediately transfer them to chilled water.
5. Drain thoroughly and pat dry.

Step 2: Prepare the Malai Marinade

1. Blend soaked cashews, paneer into a smooth paste.
2. In a mixing bowl combine, Hung curd, Crumbled paneer, Cashew paste, Fresh cream, Ginger paste, Garlic paste, Turmeric, White pepper, Roasted cumin powder, Salt and Palm oil
3. Whisk until smooth and creamy. Add broccoli florets to the marinade.
4. Coat gently without breaking the florets.Refrigerate for 30–45 minutes.

Step 4: Cook

i) Oven Method (Preferred)

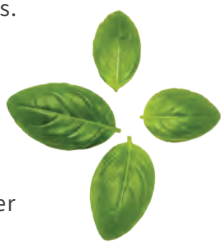
1. Preheat the oven to 200°C.
2. Arrange broccoli on a lined baking tray.
3. Roast for 12–15 minutes until lightly golden.
4. Avoid excessive charring.

ii) Air Fryer Method

1. Preheat the air fryer to 180°C.
2. Cook for 8–10 minutes.
3. Turn once midway.

Step 5: Finish

1. Garnish with coriander leaves. Serve warm.











Soft, flavourful kebabs *offering plant-based* protein and fibre.

Rajma Kebab

Appetiser | Breakfast | Main | Dessert

Prep Time: 20 mins (excluding soaking time) | Cooking Time: 25 mins

Ingredients

For Boiling

- 1 cup Chitra rajma (Kidney Beans)
- Water, as required
- A large pinch of Salt

For the Kebab Mixture

- 2 medium Potatoes, boiled and cooled
- 150 g fresh Paneer, grated
- 2 tsp Ginger, finely chopped
- 1 small Green chilli, finely chopped (optional)
- A handful fresh Mint leaves, finely chopped
- A handful fresh Coriander leaves, finely chopped
- 2 tbsp roasted Besan
- ¾ tsp Turmeric powder
- 1 tbsp Coriander powder
- ½ tsp Kashmiri Red chilli powder
- ½ tsp Garam masala
- 1 tsp Dry mango powder (Amchur)
- ½ tsp Black salt
- A pinch Black pepper powder
- Salt, to taste

For Cooking

- Palm Oil, as required



Method

Step 1: Cook the Rajma

1. Wash rajma thoroughly and soak it overnight in plenty of water.
2. Next morning, discard the soaking water and transfer the soaked rajma to a pressure cooker. Add in salt and enough fresh water to cover the rajma completely.
3. Close the lid and pressure cook for 4 - 5 whistles or until the rajma is completely soft and mashable.
4. Remove from flame and allow the pressure to release naturally.
5. Then, strain the cooked rajma and reserve the cooking stock for preparing a nourishing rajma soup.

Step 2: Prepare the Kebab Mixture

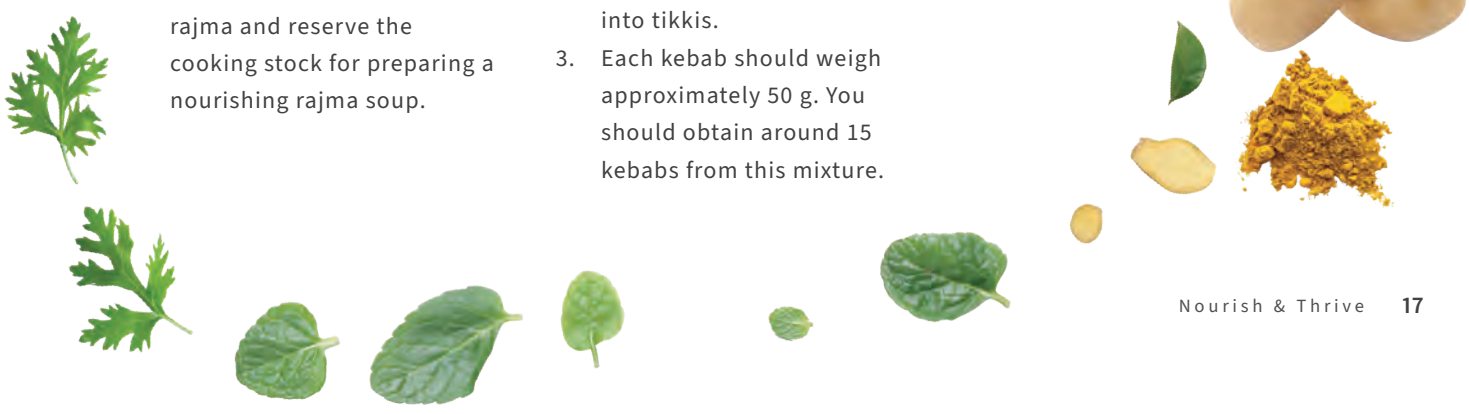
1. While the rajma is still warm, mash it along with the potatoes until smooth.
2. Now, add in all the other ingredients for the kebab mixture and mix thoroughly until it all comes together and holds shape.
3. Allow the mixture to rest for 5 - 10 minutes.

Step 3: Shape the Kebabs

1. Divide the mixture into equal portions.
2. Shape each portion into a round ball and gently flatten into tikkis.
3. Each kebab should weigh approximately 50 g. You should obtain around 15 kebabs from this mixture.

Step 4: Cook the Kebabs & Serve

1. Heat a non-stick pan or tawa over medium-low heat. Lightly brush the surface with palm oil.
2. Place the kebabs on the pan without overcrowding. Cook slowly for 3 - 4 minutes on each side until golden brown.
3. Turn gently to avoid breaking. Continue cooking until both sides develop a light golden crust. (Avoid excessive browning or charring, as gentle cooking helps preserve nutrients and improves digestibility).
4. Serve warm.




197 kcal
per serving
Serves 4
26.4 g
protein/serving
Gently pan-fried fish *for quality protein to*
support muscle maintenance.

Surmai Fish Fry

Appetiser | Breakfast | Main | Dessert

Prep Time: 15 mins | Marination Time: 15-20 Mins | Cooking Time: 10-12 mins

Ingredients

For the Fish

- 500g Surmai (King Mackerel) steaks or fillets

For the Marinade

- 1 tbsp Ginger-Garlic paste
- 1 tbsp Lemon juice
- ½ tsp Turmeric powder
- 1 tsp Coriander powder
- ½ tsp Cumin powder
- ½ tsp Kashmiri Red chilli powder
- ¾ tsp Salt or to taste
- 1 tsp Palm oil
- 7-8 Curry leaves, finely chopped

For Cooking

- 2 tsp Palm oil

For Cooking

- Fresh Coriander leaves
- Lemon wedges (serve separately)





Method

Step 1: Prepare the Fish

1. Wash the surmai thoroughly under clean running water.
2. Pat dry gently using a clean kitchen towel.
3. Ensure excess moisture is removed while keeping the fish naturally moist.

Step 2: Prepare the Marinade

1. In a mixing bowl, combine together all the ingredients for the marinade.
2. Mix well to form a smooth aromatic mixture.

Step 3: Marinate the Fish

1. Apply the marinade evenly over each piece of fish.
2. Ensure all sides are coated thoroughly.
3. Cover and refrigerate for 15-20 minutes. (Avoid marinating for longer than 1 hour as the lemon juice may begin to soften the fish excessively).

Step 4: Cook the Fish using Pan-Seared Method and Serve

1. Heat a non-stick pan over medium-low heat.
2. Brush the pan lightly with palm oil.
3. Place the marinated fish pieces on the pan.
4. Cook for 4 - 5 minutes on the first side.
5. Carefully flip and cook for another 4 - 5 minutes.
6. Continue cooking until the fish is fully cooked and flakes easily with a fork. The exterior should be lightly golden while the inside remains moist and tender.
7. Serve immediately.




453 kcal
per serving
Serves 4
27.8 g
protein/serving
Herb-marinated paneer tikka *for protein*
in every flavourful bite.

Pahadi Paneer Tikka

Prep Time: 20 mins | Marination Time: 30 Mins | Cooking Time: 15 mins

Appetiser *Breakfast* *Main* *Dessert*

Ingredients

For the Green Pahadi Paste

- 1 cup Fresh Coriander leaves, tightly packed
- ½ cup Fresh Mint leaves, tightly packed
- 8 - 10 Curry leaves
- 1 inch piece of Ginger
- 3 - 4 cloves Garlic
- 1 small Green chilli (optional)
- 15 - 20 Cashews, soaked for 30 mins
- 1 Ice cube
- 1-2 tbsp Water, if required

For the Marinade

- ½ cup Hung curd
- Prepared Green Pahadi Paste
- 1 tbsp roasted Besan
- ½ tsp Ajwain (Carom Seeds), lightly crushed
- ½ tsp Kasuri methi
- A pinch of Garam masala
- A small pinch Black salt
- ½ tsp Lemon juice
- 1 tsp Palm oil
- Salt, to taste

For the Tikka

- 500 g Paneer, cut into large cubes
- 1/3 cup diced Capsicum
- 1/3 cup Onion petals
- 1/3 cup diced Tomato Flesh
- 1 tsp Palm oil, for brushing

Method

Step 1: Prepare the Green Paste

1. Blend together all the ingredients for the green paste along with a little water in a mixer grinder. Make into a smooth, vibrant green paste.
2. It should be thick and creamy.

Step 2: Prepare the Marinade

1. In a large mixing bowl, combine all the ingredients for the marinade and mix thoroughly until smooth and well combined.
2. Allow the marinade to rest for 5 minutes.

Step 3: Marinate the Paneer and Vegetables

1. Add in the paneer cubes, capsicum, onion petals and diced tomato flesh to the marinade.
2. Gently coat everything without breaking the paneer.
3. Cover and refrigerate for 30 minutes.

Step 4: Skewer the Tikka

1. Thread the vegetables and paneer alternately onto skewers.
2. Begin and end with vegetables to help secure the paneer pieces.
3. Avoid overcrowding the skewers.

Step 5: Cook the Tikka using the Oven Method (Recommended) and Serve

1. Preheat the oven to 200°C.
2. Arrange the skewers on a lined baking tray.
3. Roast for 12 - 15 minutes until lightly golden.
4. Remove and serve immediately while warm.



230 kcal
per serving

Serves 4 | 8 Patties
Approx 50g each

10.4 g
protein/serving



Soft vegetable patties *providing energy,*
fibre and protein.

Broccoli & Sweet Potato Patties

Prep Time: 20 mins | Cooking Time: 15 mins

Appetiser Breakfast Main Dessert

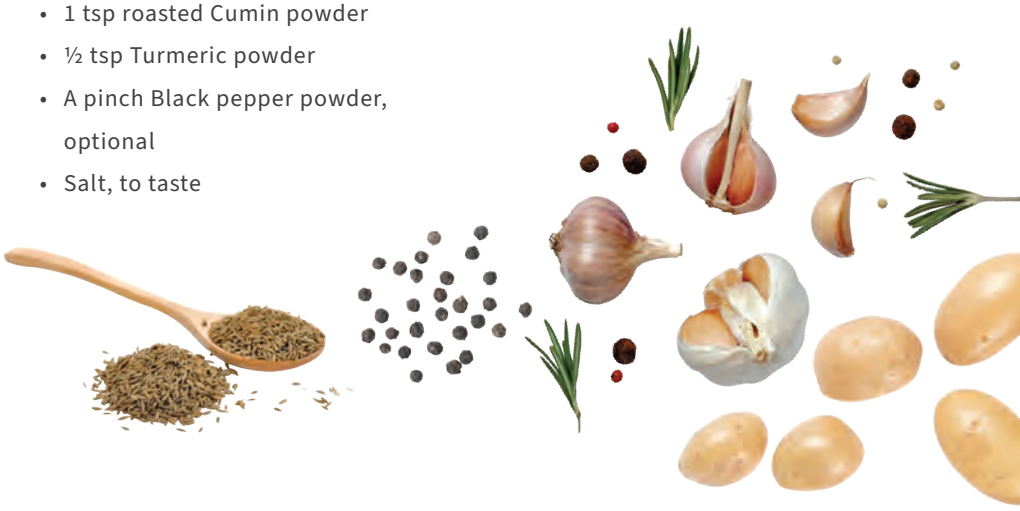
Ingredients

For the Patties

- 2 medium (approximately 300 g) Sweet potatoes (boiled, peeled and grated)
- 1 cup Broccoli florets, finely chopped
- 150 g Paneer, grated
- 1 small Onion, finely chopped
- 1 clove Garlic, finely chopped
- 1 tsp Ginger, grated
- 3 tbsp roasted Besan
- 1 tsp roasted Cumin powder
- ½ tsp Turmeric powder
- A pinch Black pepper powder, optional
- Salt, to taste

For Cooking

- Palm oil



Method

Step 1: Prepare the Broccoli Mixture

1. Steam the broccoli florets for 3 - 4 minutes until just tender.
2. Remove and finely chop them.
3. Heat a non-stick pan and add a few drops of oil. Add garlic, ginger and sauté gently for 30 seconds.
4. Add onions and cook until they turn soft and translucent. Avoid browning.
5. Add in the chopped broccoli and cook for a minute. Remove from heat and allow the mixture to cool.

Step 2: Prepare the Patty Mixture

1. In a large mixing bowl, combine the cooked broccoli mixture along with all the other patty ingredients and mix gently but thoroughly until a soft mixture is formed.
2. Allow the mixture to rest for 5 - 10 minutes so that the besan absorbs excess moisture.

Step 3: Shape the Patties

1. Divide the mixture into 8 equal portions. Shape each into a round patty, approximately 1.5 cm thick.
2. If the mixture feels too soft, add 1 additional tablespoon of roasted besan.

Step 4: Cook the Patties using Pan-Seared Method and Serve

1. Heat a non-stick pan over medium-low heat. Lightly brush with palm oil.
2. Place the patties on the pan. Cook for 3 - 4 minutes on each side until lightly golden.
3. Avoid excessive browning or charring.
4. Serve immediately while warm.




158 kcal
per serving
Serves 4
4.7 g
protein/serving
Wholesome jowar pancakes *for sustained energy* and plant-based fibre.

Jowar & Veggie Pancake

Prep Time: 15 mins | Cooking Time: 15 mins

Appetiser | *Breakfast* | Main | Dessert

Ingredients

For the Pancake Batter

- 1 cup Jowar flour
- ¼ cup roasted Besan
- 1/3 cup Carrot, finely grated
- ½ cup Bottle gourd, finely grated and squeezed
- ½ cup Spinach, finely chopped
- 1 tsp Ginger, grated
- 1 tsp Cumin powder
- ¼ tsp Turmeric powder
- Salt, to taste
- 1 to 1¼ cups Water

For Cooking

- Palm oil





Method

Step 1: Prepare the Vegetables

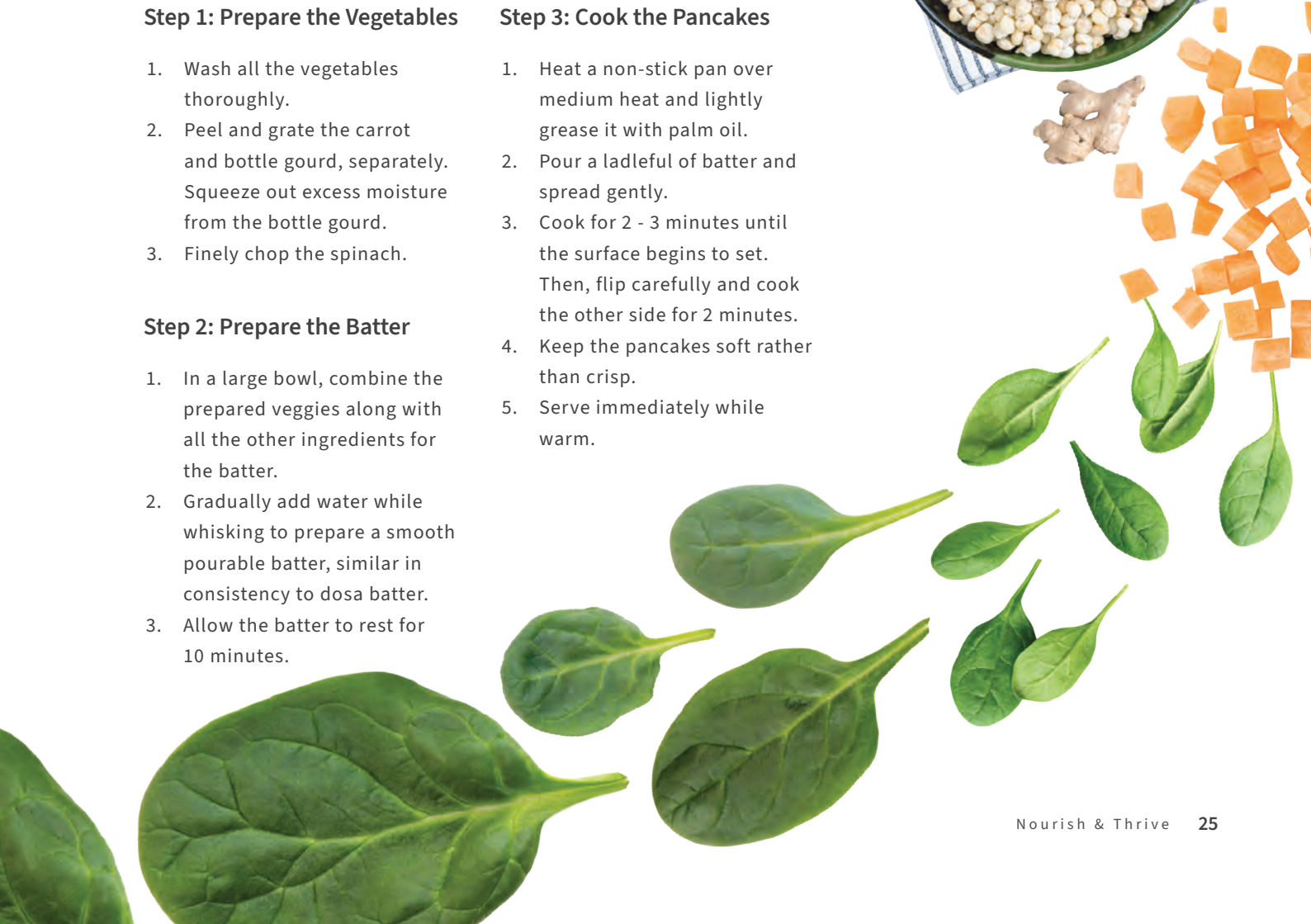
1. Wash all the vegetables thoroughly.
2. Peel and grate the carrot and bottle gourd, separately. Squeeze out excess moisture from the bottle gourd.
3. Finely chop the spinach.

Step 2: Prepare the Batter

1. In a large bowl, combine the prepared veggies along with all the other ingredients for the batter.
2. Gradually add water while whisking to prepare a smooth pourable batter, similar in consistency to dosa batter.
3. Allow the batter to rest for 10 minutes.

Step 3: Cook the Pancakes

1. Heat a non-stick pan over medium heat and lightly grease it with palm oil.
2. Pour a ladleful of batter and spread gently.
3. Cook for 2 - 3 minutes until the surface begins to set. Then, flip carefully and cook the other side for 2 minutes.
4. Keep the pancakes soft rather than crisp.
5. Serve immediately while warm.




220 kcal
per serving
Serves 4
7.1 g
protein/serving
Soft, comforting upma *providing energy*
with the goodness of vegetables.

Vegetable Upma

Prep Time: 20 mins | Cooking Time: 20 mins

Appetiser | *Breakfast* | Main | Dessert

Ingredients

For the Upma

- 1 cup fine Semolina (Rava/ Sooji)
- 1 small Onion, finely chopped
- ½ cup Carrot, finely chopped
- ¼ cup Green peas
- ¼ cup French beans, finely chopped
- 1 tsp Ginger, finely grated
- 8–10 Curry leaves
- 8–10 Cashews
- Salt, to taste

For Tempering

- 2 tsp Palm oil
- ½ tsp Mustard seeds
- ½ tsp Cumin seeds

Optional Garnish

- Fresh Coriander leaves, finely chopped



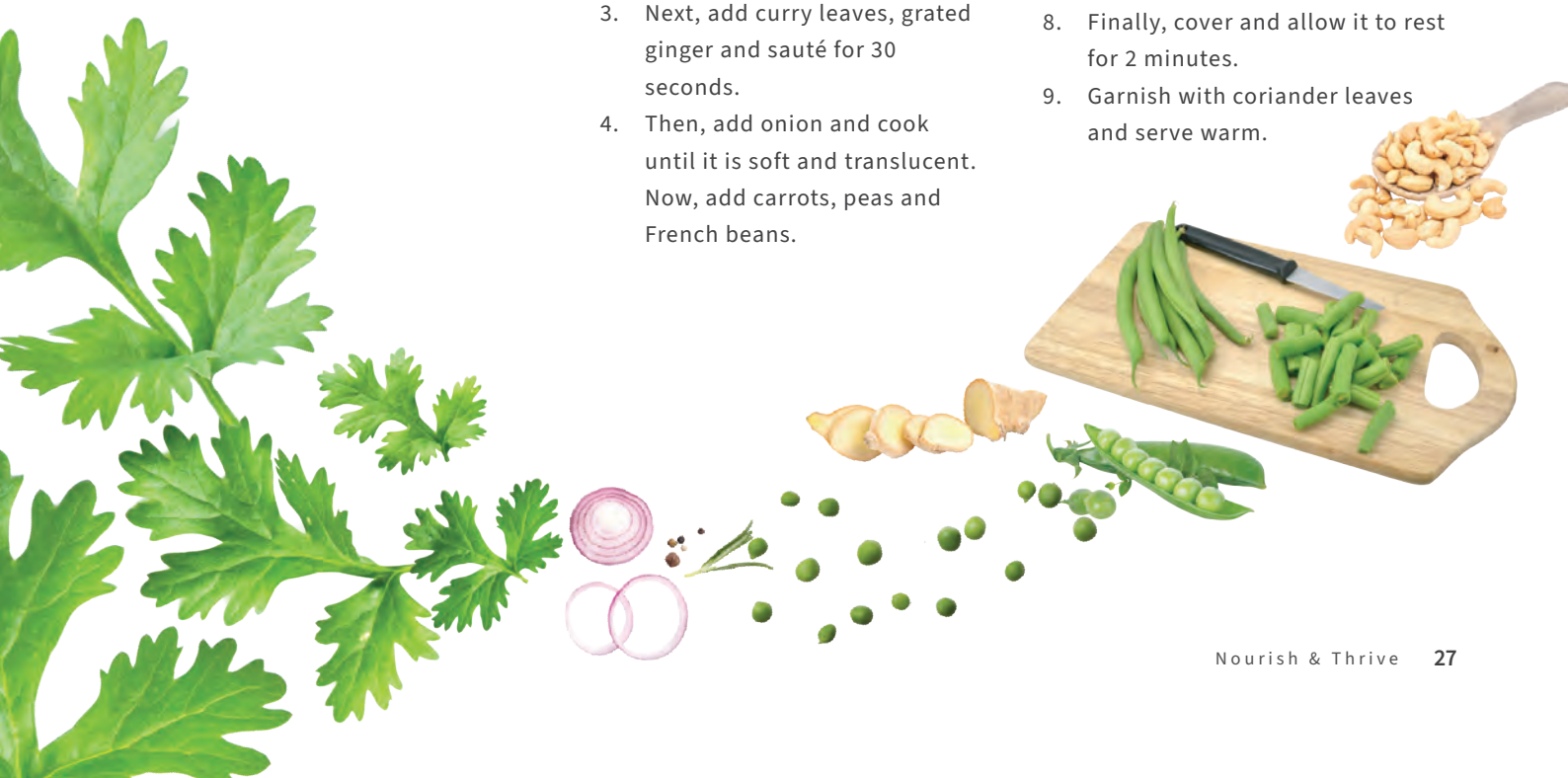
Method

Step 1: Roast the Semolina

1. Heat a dry pan over low heat.
2. Add the semolina and roast gently for 4 - 5 minutes, until it turns aromatic. Do not allow it to brown.
3. Remove and set aside.

Step 2: Prepare the Vegetable Base

1. Heat palm oil in a heavy-bottomed pan. Add mustard seeds and cumin seeds.
2. Once they begin to crackle, add the chopped cashews and sauté for 1 - 2 minutes, until lightly golden.
3. Next, add curry leaves, grated ginger and sauté for 30 seconds.
4. Then, add onion and cook until it is soft and translucent. Now, add carrots, peas and French beans.
5. Cook for 3 - 4 minutes, until the vegetables begin to soften.
6. Add the roasted semolina and stir for a minute. Then, add water, salt and bring the mixture to a gentle boil.
7. Cook on low heat for 4 - 5 minutes until semolina absorbs the water.
8. Finally, cover and allow it to rest for 2 minutes.
9. Garnish with coriander leaves and serve warm.





Light, steamed dhokla *for energy and protein* from rice and lentils.

Rice Dhokla

Prep Time: 20 mins | Fermentation Time: 8-12 Hours
Soaking Time: 4-5 Hrs | Cooking Time: 10-15 mins

Appetiser | *Breakfast* | Main | Dessert

Ingredients

For the Batter

- ½ cup Urad dal
- 1½ cups Kolam rice
- ½ tsp Fenugreek seeds
- ½ cup Poha
- 2 tbsp sour Curd
- ½ cup Water, or as required for grinding
- ¼ tsp Asafoetida (Hing)
- ½ tbsp Sugar
- 1 tbsp Ginger paste
- 2 tbsp Palm oil
- ¼ tsp Baking soda
- Salt, to taste
- 150 g Hung curd
- 75 g Fresh paneer, crumbled
- 20 g Cashews, soaked for 30 minutes
- 1 tbsp Fresh cream
- 1 tsp Ginger paste
- 1 tsp Garlic paste (optional if tolerated)
- ¼ tsp Turmeric powder
- ¼ tsp White pepper powder
- ½ tsp roasted Cumin powder
- ½ tsp Pink salt or Regular salt
- 1 tsp + 2 tsp Palm oil



For Greasing

- Palm oil, as required

Optional Garnish

- Finely chopped Coriander leaves



Method

Step 1: Soak the Rice and Dal

1. Wash the rice and urad dal together, thoroughly until the water runs clear.
2. Add the fenugreek seeds to the same bowl. Soak for 4 - 5 hours.

Step 2: Soak the Poha

1. After the rice and dal have been soaked, wash the poha.
2. Add it to the soaked rice and dal mixture and allow it to soak for 5 - 10 minutes.

Step 3: Grind the Batter

1. Drain the soaked ingredients and transfer them to a mixer grinder.
2. Add sour curd, water and grind to a semi-fine batter. (The texture should feel similar to fine semolina when rubbed between your fingers).

Step 4: Ferment the Batter

1. Transfer the batter to a large bowl or stock pot. Add asafoetida and sugar.
2. Whisk for 1 - 2 minutes to incorporate air. Cover and keep in a warm place to ferment.

Fermentation Time

- Summer: 8–10 hours
- Cooler weather: 12–15 hours

Once fermented well, the batter should become light and airy and increase in volume.

Step 5: Prepare for Steaming

1. Bring water to a boil in a dhokla steamer.
2. Once the batter has fermented, add in ginger paste, palm oil, baking soda, salt and mix gently without deflating the batter excessively.

Step 6: Steam the Dhokla

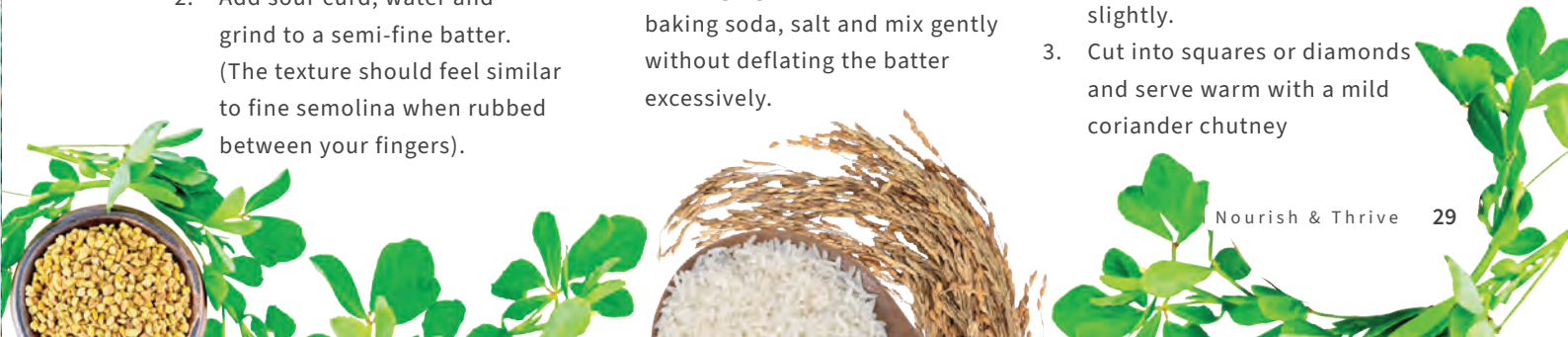
1. Lightly grease the dhokla plates with oil. Pour batter into the plates according to the desired thickness.
2. Gently tap the plates to spread the batter evenly.
3. Place the plates in the preheated steamer and steam the dhoklas.

Steaming Time

- Thin dhokla: 8–10 minutes
- Thick dhokla: 12–15 minutes

Step 7: Finish and Serve

1. Remove the steamed dhoklas from the steamer.
2. Lightly brush the surface with a small amount of oil to retain moisture and allow it to cool slightly.
3. Cut into squares or diamonds and serve warm with a mild coriander chutney





308 kcal
per serving

Serves **6**

13.3 g
protein/serving

Soft, wholesome parathas combining *protein-rich paneer with* iron-containing spinach.

Palak
Paneer Paratha

Appetiser | *Breakfast* | Main | Dessert

Prep Time: 25 mins | Marination Time: 20 Mins | Cooking Time: 15 mins

Ingredients

For the Dough

- 2 cups (300 g) Whole wheat flour
- 250 g fresh Spinach (Palak)
- ¼ cup fresh Fenugreek leaves (Methi), loosely packed
- ½ inch piece Ginger
- 1 tsp Salt
- ½ tsp Sugar
- 1 tsp Palm oil

For the Paneer Filling

- 200 g Paneer, grated
- 1 small Green chilli, finely chopped
- 1 tsp Ginger, grated
- 2 - 3 tbsp fresh Coriander leaves, finely chopped
- ½ tsp Salt
- ½ tsp roasted Cumin powder
- ¼ tsp Turmeric powder
- ⅛ - ¼ tsp Dry mango powder (Amchur)

For Cooking

- Palm oil



Method

Step 1: Prepare the Palak-Methi Puree

1. Wash the spinach and methi leaves thoroughly.
2. Bring water to a boil and blanch the spinach for a minute.
3. Add the methi leaves during the last 20 - 30 seconds.
4. Drain and allow the greens to cool slightly.
5. Transfer the spinach, methi and ginger to a blender.
6. Blend into a smooth puree using very little water.

Step 2: Prepare the Dough

1. In a large mixing bowl, add whole wheat flour, salt, sugar and palm oil.
2. Add the prepared palak - methi puree gradually and knead the mixture into a soft, smooth dough. Add a little water, only if required.
3. Cover and rest the dough for 15 - 20 minutes.

Step 3: Prepare the Filling

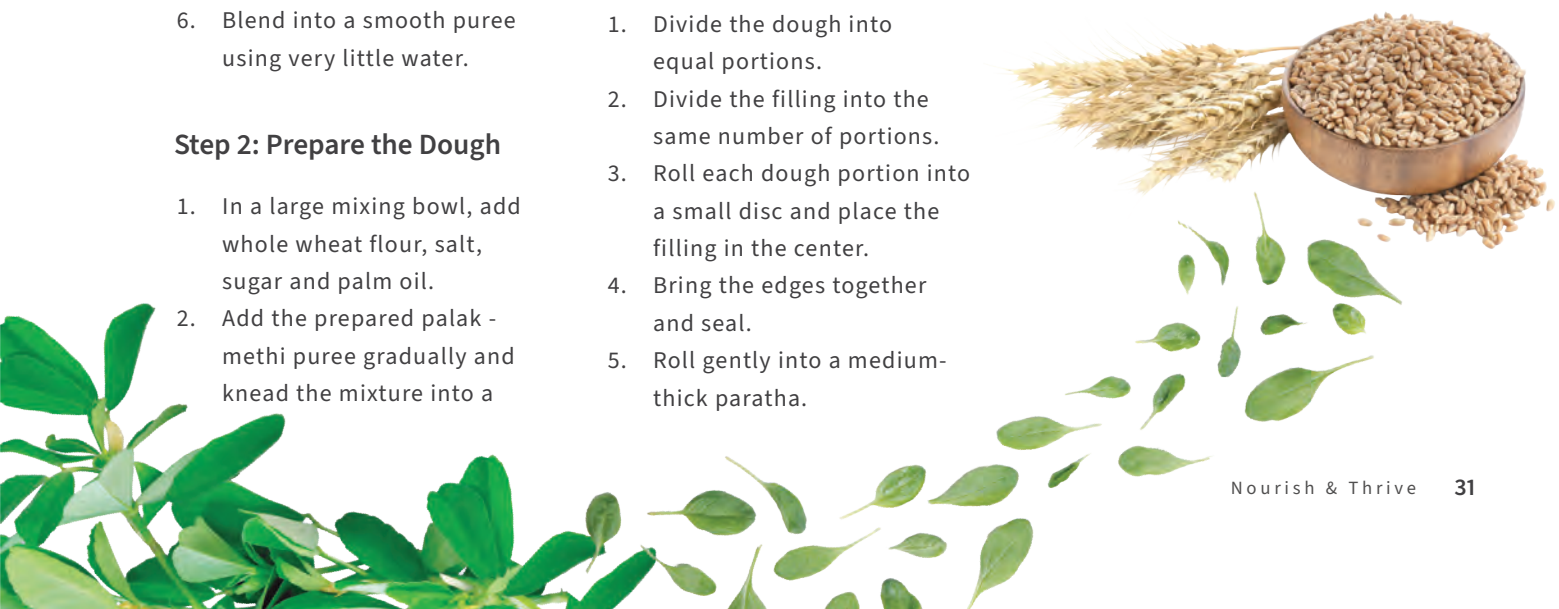
1. In a mixing bowl, combine all the ingredients for the filling and mix gently, until evenly combined.

Step 4: Shape the Parathas

1. Divide the dough into equal portions.
2. Divide the filling into the same number of portions.
3. Roll each dough portion into a small disc and place the filling in the center.
4. Bring the edges together and seal.
5. Roll gently into a medium-thick paratha.

Step 5: Cook the Parathas

1. Heat a tawa over medium heat.
2. Place the paratha on the hot tawa and cook until light bubbles begin to form.
3. Flip and apply a small amount of palm oil. Cook on both sides until lightly golden and fully cooked. (Avoid making the parathas overly crisp to maintain a soft texture).
4. Serve warm.





Tender eggs in tomato gravy *for protein and* **essential nutrients.**

Egg Shakshuka

Appetiser | **Breakfast** | Main | Dessert

Prep Time: 15 mins | Cooking Time: 20 mins

Ingredients

For the Shakshuka Base

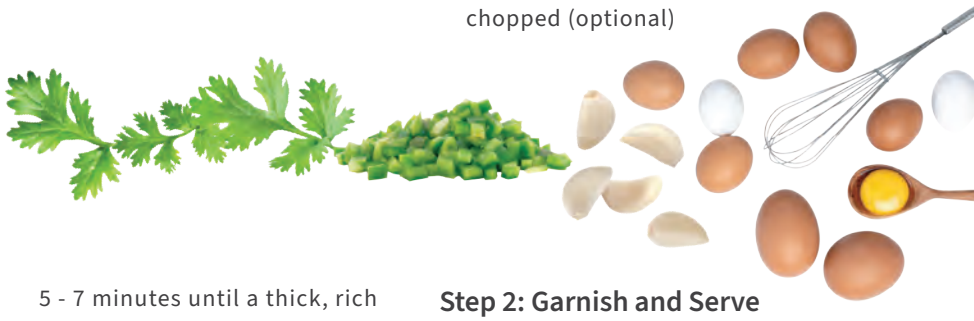
- 1 tbsp Palm oil
- 1 large Onion, sliced
- 1 medium Capsicum, diced
- 2 medium Tomatoes, diced
- ½ cup Tomato puree
- 2 cloves Garlic, finely chopped
- ½ inch piece of Ginger, finely chopped
- 1 small Green chilli, finely chopped
- ¼ tsp Degi red chilli powder
- ¼ tsp Turmeric powder
- Salt, to taste
- ¼ tsp Sugar
- ¼ cup Water, or as required

For the Eggs

- 4 Eggs
- ¼ cup grated Cheese

For Garnish

- 1 tbsp Fresh Coriander leaves, finely chopped
- 1 tbsp Spring onion greens, finely chopped (optional)



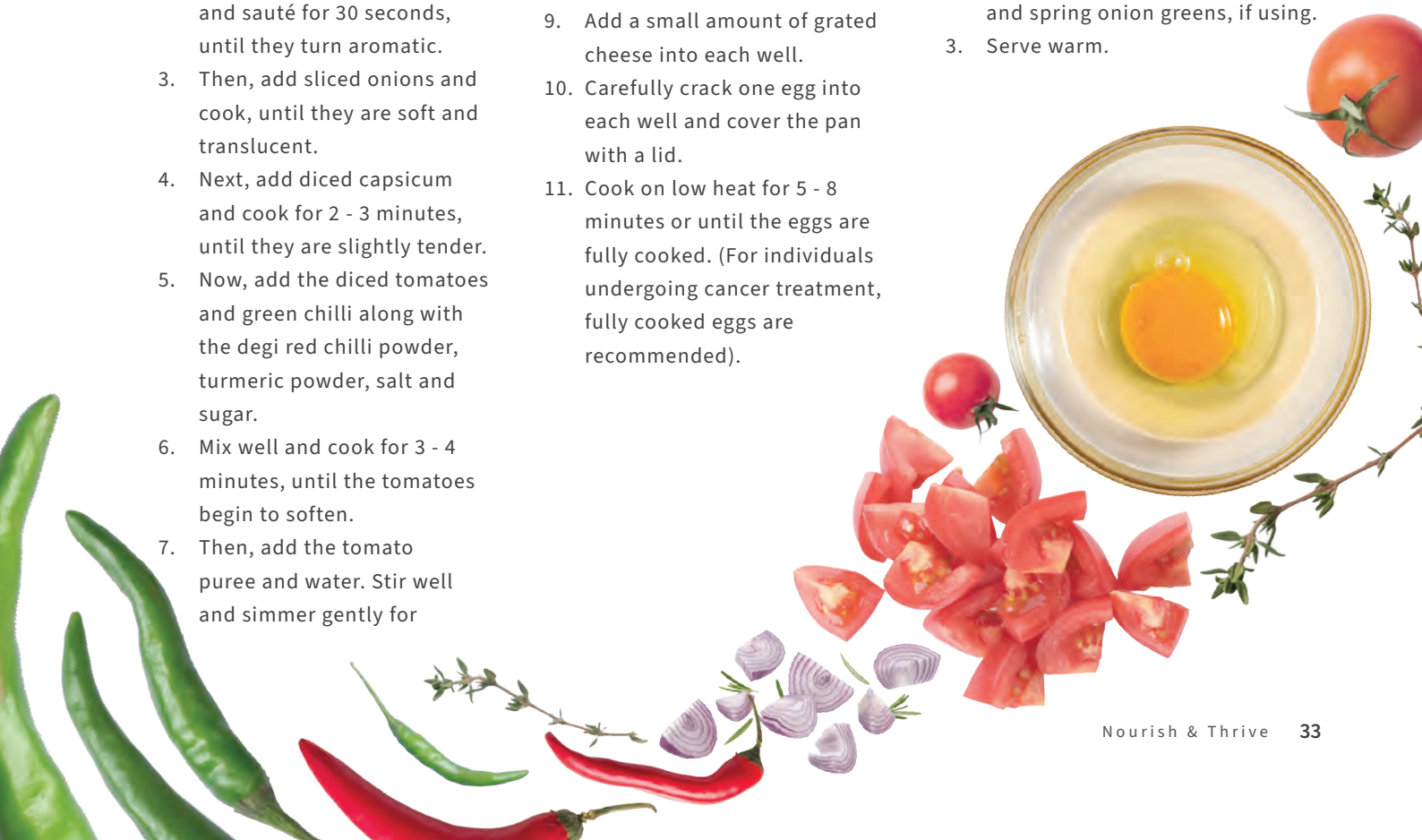
Method

Step 1: Prepare the Vegetable Base

1. Heat palm oil in a wide pan over medium heat.
2. Add in chopped garlic, ginger and sauté for 30 seconds, until they turn aromatic.
3. Then, add sliced onions and cook, until they are soft and translucent.
4. Next, add diced capsicum and cook for 2 - 3 minutes, until they are slightly tender.
5. Now, add the diced tomatoes and green chilli along with the degi red chilli powder, turmeric powder, salt and sugar.
6. Mix well and cook for 3 - 4 minutes, until the tomatoes begin to soften.
7. Then, add the tomato puree and water. Stir well and simmer gently for 5 - 7 minutes until a thick, rich sauce forms.
8. Now, using the back of a spoon, make four small wells in the sauce.
9. Add a small amount of grated cheese into each well.
10. Carefully crack one egg into each well and cover the pan with a lid.
11. Cook on low heat for 5 - 8 minutes or until the eggs are fully cooked. (For individuals undergoing cancer treatment, fully cooked eggs are recommended).

Step 2: Garnish and Serve

1. Sprinkle the remaining grated cheese over the top.
2. Garnish with coriander leaves and spring onion greens, if using.
3. Serve warm.



299 kcal
per serving

Serves **4**

9.1 g
protein/serving



Flavourful spinach & chickpea pulao
offering plant protein and fibre.

Palak Chana Pulav

Prep Time: 20 mins | Cooking Time: 25 mins

Appetiser Breakfast **Main** Dessert

Ingredients

For the Palak Puree

- 250 g Fresh Spinach (Palak)
- ½ inch of piece Ginger
- Water, as required

For the Pulao

- 1 cup Basmati rice
- 1 cup cooked Chickpeas (Kabuli Chana)
- 1 tbsp Palm oil
- 1 medium Onion, finely sliced
- ½ tsp Cumin seeds
- 1 Bay leaf
- 2 Green cardamoms
- 1 small piece of Cinnamon
- ¼ tsp Turmeric powder
- Salt, to taste
- 1¾ cups Water

Optional Garnish

- Fresh Coriander leaves, finely chopped



Method

Step 1: Prepare the Spinach Puree

1. Wash the spinach thoroughly.
2. Blanch in hot water for a minute. Drain and cool slightly.
3. Blend with ginger and a little water into a smooth puree.
4. Set aside.

Step 2: Prepare the Rice

1. Wash the rice until the water runs clear.
2. Soak for 20 minutes. Drain and keep aside.

Step 3: Cook the Pulao and Serve

1. Heat palm oil in a heavy-bottomed pan or pressure cooker. Add cumin seeds, bay leaf, cardamom and cinnamon.
2. Sauté for a few seconds, until they turn fragrant.
3. Then, add sliced onions and cook until soft.
4. Next, add the spinach puree and cook for 2 - 3 minutes.
5. Now, add turmeric powder, salt and stir in the cooked chickpeas along with the soaked rice.
6. Gently mix without breaking the grains and pour in the water.
7. Bring to a gentle boil. Then, cover and cook on low heat until the rice is tender and the water is absorbed.
8. Turn off the flame and let the pulao rest for 5 minutes.
9. Fluff gently with a fork and garnish with coriander leaves.
10. Serve warm.




457 kcal
per serving
Serves 4
33.4g
protein/serving
Soft whole-wheat rolls *protein-rich chicken*
for satisfying nourishment.

Chicken Roll

Prep Time: 25 mins | Cooking Time: 20 mins

Appetiser Breakfast Main Dessert

Ingredients

For the Chicken Filling

- 400 g boneless Chicken breast or thigh, thinly sliced
- 1 tbsp Ginger-Garlic paste
- 1 tsp Lemon juice
- ¼ tsp Turmeric powder
- ½ tsp roasted Cumin powder
- ½ tsp Coriander powder
- Salt, to taste
- 1 tbsp Palm oil

For the Vegetable Filling

- 1 small Onion, thinly sliced
- ½ cup Capsicum, thinly sliced
- 1 tsp Palm oil

For the Green Chutney

- 1 cup Fresh Coriander leaves
- ½ cup Fresh Mint leaves
- ½ inch piece of Ginger
- 2 tbsp roasted Dalia (Roasted Chana Dal)
- ½ tsp Lemon juice
- Salt, to taste
- 2 - 3 Ice cubes
- Water, as required
- 1 Green chilli, optional

For the Wrap

- 2 cups Whole wheat flour
- A pinch of Salt



Method

Step 1: Prepare the Green Chutney

1. Wash the coriander and mint leaves thoroughly.
2. Add in all the ingredients for the green chutney to a blender and blend into a smooth chutney, using a little water as required.
3. Keep aside until needed.

Step 2: Marinate the Chicken

1. In a bowl, combine chicken, ginger-garlic paste, lemon juice, turmeric powder, cumin powder, coriander powder and salt. Mix well and marinate for 20 - 30 minutes.

Step 3: Cook the Chicken

1. Heat palm oil in a pan over medium heat. Add the marinated chicken.
2. Cook until the chicken is fully cooked and tender. Allow it to cool slightly and then, shred or chop into small pieces, if required.

Step 4: Prepare the Vegetables

1. Heat palm oil in a pan. Add onion and capsicum.
2. Sauté for 2 - 3 minutes, until they are slightly softened.
3. Remove from flame and set aside.

Step 5: Prepare the Wraps

1. Combine whole wheat flour and salt in a bowl.
2. Add water gradually and knead a soft dough.
3. Cover and let it rest for 15 minutes.
4. Then, divide the dough into 4 equal portions and roll each into a thin roti.
5. Cook the rotis lightly on a hot tawa, until soft and fully cooked.

Step 6: Assemble the Rolls

1. Place a warm roti on a flat surface.
2. Spread 1 - 2 tablespoons of the green chutney evenly over the roti.
3. Add a portion of the cooked chicken and top with the sautéed onions and capsicum.
4. Roll tightly and serve warm.





186 kcal
per serving

Serves **4**

21.7 g
protein/serving

Delicately cooked fish wrapped in banana leaves, *offering essential* quality protein.

Patrani Machi

Prep Time: 20 mins | Cooking Time: 10-12 mins

Appetiser Breakfast **Main** Dessert

Ingredients

For the Fish

- 4 Pomfret fillets
- Salt, to taste

For the Green Chutney

- ¼ medium bunch Fresh Coriander leaves
- ¼ medium bunch Fresh Mint leaves, plus a few extra leaves for wrapping
- 1 tsp roasted Cumin seeds
- 4 - 5 cloves Garlic
- 1 small Green chilli
- ½ cup fresh Coconut, scraped
- Salt, to taste
- ½ tsp Sugar
- 1 - 2 tsp Lemon juice

For Cooking

- 1 - 2 tsp Palm oil
- 4 pieces Banana leaves

For Garnish

- Fresh Mint leaves
- Lemon wedges (optional)



Method

Step 1: Prepare the Green Chutney

1. Wash the coriander and mint leaves thoroughly.
2. Roughly chop the herbs.
3. Add the coriander, mint, roasted cumin seeds, garlic, green chilli and fresh coconut to a blender.
4. Blend into a smooth, thick chutney using very little water and transfer to a bowl.
5. Add salt, sugar, lemon juice and mix well.

Step 2: Prepare the Fish

1. Wash the pomfret fillets and pat them dry.
2. Sprinkle a little salt on both sides and set aside for 10 minutes.

Step 3: Assemble the Parcels

1. Place a piece of banana leaf on a flat surface and spread a spoonful of the prepared green chutney in the center.
2. Place one fish fillet on top. Spread another layer of chutney over the fish and add a few fresh mint leaves.
3. Fold and seal the parcel securely.
4. Repeat with the remaining fillets.

Step 4: Cook the Fish

1. Heat a non-stick pan over medium-low heat.
2. Lightly brush the pan with palm oil.
3. Place the parcels in the pan.
4. Cover with a lid and cook for 4 - 5 minutes on one side.
5. Carefully flip and cook for another 4 - 5 minutes.
6. The fish should be tender, moist and cooked through.
7. Alternatively, the parcels can be steamed for 12 - 15 minutes.

Step 5: Serve

1. Carefully open the parcels just before serving.
2. Garnish with fresh mint leaves.
3. Serve warm with steamed rice.





Soft moong dal and paneer khichdi *offering protein* and energy.

High Protein Khichdi

Prep Time: 15 mins | Cooking Time: 20-30 mins

Appetiser | Breakfast | *Main* | Dessert

Ingredients

For the Khichdi

- 1 cup Rice
- 1 cup Yellow Moong dal
- 250 g Paneer, cut into small cubes
- 1 cup Cauliflower, cut into small florets
- ½ cup Green peas
- 1 small Potato, peeled and diced
- 1 tsp Ginger, finely grated
- ½ small Green chilli, finely chopped (optional)
- ½ tsp Cumin seeds
- ½ tsp Coriander powder
- ¼ tsp Turmeric powder
- 1 tbsp Palm oil
- Salt, to taste
- 7 - 8 cups Water

For Garnish

- 1 tbsp Fresh Coriander leaves, finely chopped
- 1 tsp Ghee (optional)



Method

Step 1: Prepare the Rice and Dal

1. Wash the rice and yellow moong dal thoroughly until the water runs clear.
2. Soak them together for 20 minutes. Then, drain and set aside.

Step 2: Cooking

i) Pressure Cooking

1. Heat palm oil in a pressure cooker or a heavy-bottomed pan.
2. Add cumin seeds and allow them to splutter.
3. Add grated ginger, finely chopped green chilli and sauté for 30 seconds until they are fragrant.
4. Add the cauliflower, potato, green peas and cook for 2 - 3 minutes, stirring occasionally.
5. Add coriander powder, turmeric powder and mix well.
6. Add the soaked rice and moong dal along with paneer cubes. Mix gently until everything is evenly combined.
7. Pour in 7 - 8 cups of water, add salt and give a good stir.
8. Close the lid and pressure cook for 3 - 4 whistles on medium heat.
9. Turn off the flame and allow the pressure to release naturally.
10. Serve warm.

ii) Pot Method

1. Cover and cook for 30 - 35 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the rice, dal and vegetables are soft and creamy.
2. Add coriander leaves, mix well and cook for another 1-2 minutes.
3. Serve hot or warm.









15 g
protein/serving

352 kcal
per serving

Serves **3**

Banana-oat pancakes providing *energy, fibre and* protein from curd.

Banana Oat Pancakes

Prep Time: 15 mins | Cooking Time: 15 mins

Appetiser Breakfast Main **Dessert**

Ingredients

Dry Ingredients

- 1 cup (100 g) Rolled oats, ground into oat flour
- ½ cup (60 g) Whole wheat flour
- 1 tsp Baking powder
- ¼ tsp Cinnamon powder, optional
- A Pinch of salt

Wet Ingredients

- 2 medium (220 g) ripe Banana
- ¾ cup (180 g) Greek yogurt or thick unsweetened Curd
- ¼ - ⅓ cup (60–80 ml) Milk (or fortified soy milk), as needed
- ½ tsp Vanilla extract

For Cooking

- 1 - 2 tsp Palm Oil

Toppings

- Honey
- Fruits of your choice like stewed Apple, stewed Pear



Method

1. Blend together banana, yogurt, milk and vanilla until smooth.
2. In a bowl, combine the oat flour, whole wheat flour, baking powder, cinnamon and salt.
3. Fold the wet mix into the dry mix, until just combined. If the batter is too thick, add a little more milk.
4. Let the batter rest for 10 minutes so that the oats hydrate.
5. Heat a non-stick pan over low to medium heat and lightly grease it with palm oil.
6. Pour about ¼ cup of batter for each pancake.
7. Cook for 2 - 3 minutes until bubbles appear, then flip and cook for another 2 minutes.
8. Remove, naturally sweeten with the toppings and serve immediately.

Easier Days: Eating Through Treatment

There is no perfect diet during cancer treatment. The goal is simpler, and kinder: eat sufficiently, keep your strength, keep drinking and keep food safe[3,4].

- ***Little and often.*** *Eat small amounts every two to three hours instead of large meals. It makes the protein and energy targets on easier to reach[3,4](More on p.46).*
- ***Make the good hours count.*** *Many people feel best in the morning or just before the next chemotherapy cycle. Make the most of these times to enjoy your meals and nourish your body.*
- ***Keep moving gently.*** *A short walk can help appetite and mood, and The European Society for Clinical Nutrition and Metabolism (ESPEN) pairs nutrition with exercise[4]. Ask your doctor what's right for you.*
- ***Rest without guilt.*** *Let others cook on hard days.*
- ***No secrets from your oncologist.*** *Tell your oncologist about everything you take, even if they are herbal supplements.*

When side effects get in the way

- ***Nausea:*** *Sip ginger water or nimbu pani slowly, and try cold or room-temperature foods, which smell less strong. Take anti-sickness medicine as prescribed.*
- ***Mouth sores or a sore throat:*** *Choose soft, moist foods like khichdi, dal and soups, and avoid very spicy, sour or crunchy foods until it heals.*
- ***Diarrhoea:*** *Sip oral rehydration salts (ORS), buttermilk or dal water, and call your team if it lasts more than a day.*
- ***High blood sugar from steroids:*** *Choose complex carbohydrates and protein over sweet drinks.*

For taste changes and a reduced appetite, see p.46. For what to eat when experiencing diarrhoea or constipation, see p.47.

Staying hydrated

Sip fluids throughout the day, unless your doctor has advised a limit. Water, coconut water, buttermilk, clear soups and dal water all count.

What about a "neutropenic diet"?

When white cells are low, how food is handled matters more than how much is cut. Reviews, including one of 15 studies and 4,320 patients, found a strict neutropenic diet did not reduce infections or deaths for most people[13,14]. Stem cell transplant patients may need extra care; your team will say. For everyone: follow the kitchen safety steps on p.13, and skip raw eggs, raw sprouts and unpasteurised milk.

A gentle day on a plate

When	*What to eat*
• *On waking*	*Ginger-jeera water; dry toast if queasy*
• *Breakfast*	*Oats upma, moong dal chilla or egg bhurji*
• *Snacks*	*Banana with milk, buttermilk, a sattu drink or soaked almonds*
• *Lunch*	*Soft rice or roti, dal, vegetable, curd*
• *Dinner*	*Moong dal khichdi; warm milk if it suits you*

Call your care team if you:

- *Have a fever (call at once)*
- *Can't eat or drink for more than a day*
- *Lose weight without trying*
- *Experience diarrhoea, vomiting or constipation that doesn't settle*
- *Notice a dry mouth, dark urine or dizziness*

Protein and Fibre, Made Palatable

Protein is the quiet hero of treatment. It repairs tissue, fights infection and holds on to muscle when everything else is pulling it away.

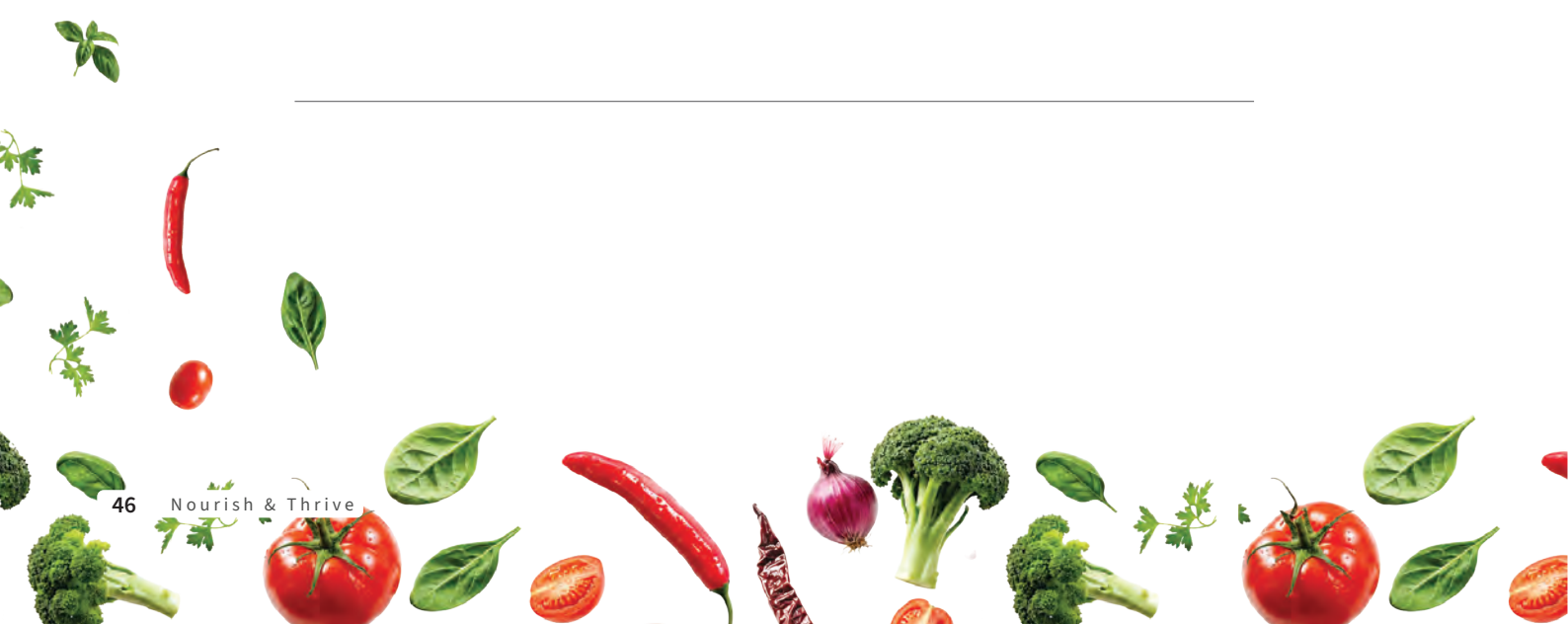
How much? More than usual. ESPEN recommends over 1 g of protein per kg of body weight a day, up to 1.5 g, with about 25–30 kcal per kg[3,4]: roughly 60–90 g of protein for a 60 kg person. Your dietitian will set your target, especially if your kidneys or liver needs care.

Ask your dietitian for a list of protein-rich foods with exact amounts, calculated from the Indian Food Composition Tables (IFCT).

When protein is hard to swallow

- *Food tastes of metal? Swap red meat for eggs, paneer or dal. Use plastic or wooden spoons, rinse the mouth with salted water before eating, and add lemon, mint or coriander.*
- *Smells turn your stomach? Go cold or room-temperature: lassi, raita, chilled sattu sharbat or a fruit smoothie.*
- *Mouth sore? Choose soft, moist dishes like khichdi, egg custard, scrambled paneer and dal soup.*
- *Reduced appetite? Stir skimmed milk powder into dal or porridge, or sattu into buttermilk.*

Have some protein at every meal. Take protein powder only on medical advice.



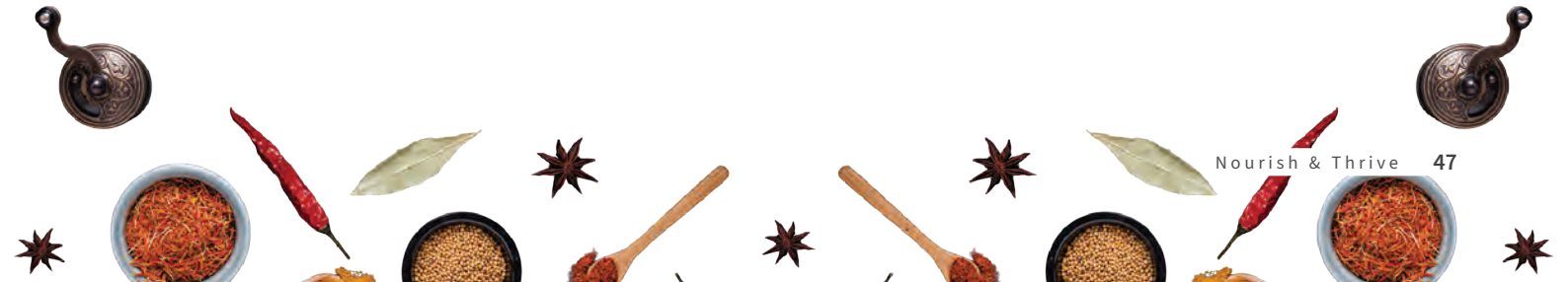
Fibre and starch: comfort with a purpose

Fibre keeps the gut healthy; the American Cancer Society recommends plenty[1], and more fibre has been linked with lower mortality in breast cancer survivors[8]. During treatment, let your gut set the pace.

Eating for how your gut feels

- ***During abdominal radiotherapy, or with diarrhea, nausea or a sore mouth:*** *Choose soft rice, khichdi, idli, banana and dal water; limit raw salads, whole pulses, bran and fried foods.*
- ***Constipation:*** *Reach for oats, ragi, papaya, cooked vegetables and soaked figs, with plenty of fluids; avoid sudden bran or fibre without water.*
- ***No digestive symptoms:*** *Enjoy whole grains, millets, whole dals, fruit and nuts, and cut back on maida and sweetened cereals.*

Cook grains soft, blend vegetables into dal or chilla, and lean on idli, dosa and dhokla. Add fibre slowly, with plenty to drink. With a stoma or narrowed bowel, ask your doctor first.



Less Sugar, More Sense

"Should I stop eating sugar?" It is one of the first questions families ask, often after a forwarded message warns that sugar feeds cancer.

The honest answer: every cell, healthy or not, runs on glucose, and the body makes its own from rice, roti and dal anyway. Giving up sugar will not starve a tumour. Giving up meals, though, costs the weight and muscle you need to get through treatment[3,4].

So this is not about fear. It is about good sense:

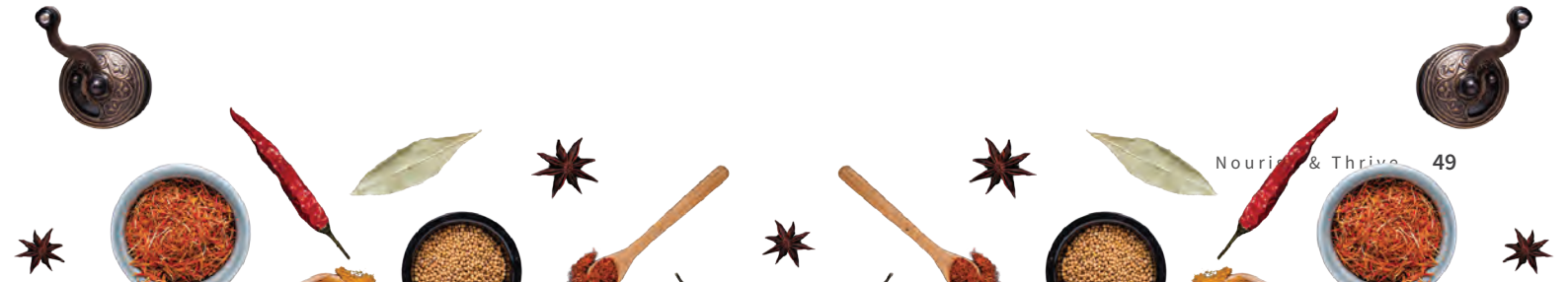
- ***Weight and insulin.*** *Excess weight is a leading cancer risk we can change[5]; the American Cancer Society advises limiting sugary drinks, processed food and refined grains[1,2].*
- ***Blood sugar during treatment.*** *Steroids such as dexamethasone, and some targeted drugs, push glucose up, and many patients already have diabetes. A sweet-heavy diet makes control harder.*
- ***Research leans the same way.*** *High-glycaemic diets are linked with higher colorectal, breast and bladder cancer risk, though the evidence is weak6. In colorectal cancer survivors, unhealthy diets were linked with poorer survival and whole grains with better survival outcomes[7].*
- ***Space is precious.*** *When you can manage only a few spoonfuls, mithai fills you up without much protein or fibre.*
- ***A sore mouth suffers.*** *Sticky sweets worsen tooth decay, mouth sores and thrush; very sweet drinks can worsen nausea or diarrhoea.*

ICMR-NIN, too, advises keeping added sugar low[15].

One exception. If you are losing weight or struggling to eat, don't cut sweet foods on your own. A spoon of jaggery in ragi porridge may be just what helps.

Instead of	*Try*
• *Cold drinks, packaged juices*	*Nimbu pani, buttermilk, coconut water, fruit with curd*
• *Mithai, biscuits*	*Roasted chana, a banana, soaked nuts*
• *Two spoons of sugar in chai*	*Half a spoon less each week, with cardamom or ginger*
• *Sweetened cereals*	*Oats, dalia or poha, sweetened with fruit*

Jaggery and honey are still sugar, just in nicer packaging. Ask your dietitian about sweeteners, and check labels for sucrose, glucose syrup, dextrose and maltodextrin. If your doctor has prescribed a nutrition drink, remember to keep taking it as advised.



Agni: Listening to Your Digestive Fire

Long before nutrition science, Ayurveda had a word for how well we digest: Agni, the inner fire that turns food into nourishment. Classical texts describe four states of it: balanced (samagni), irregular (vishamagni), sharp (tikshnagni) and weak (mandagni)[9,10].

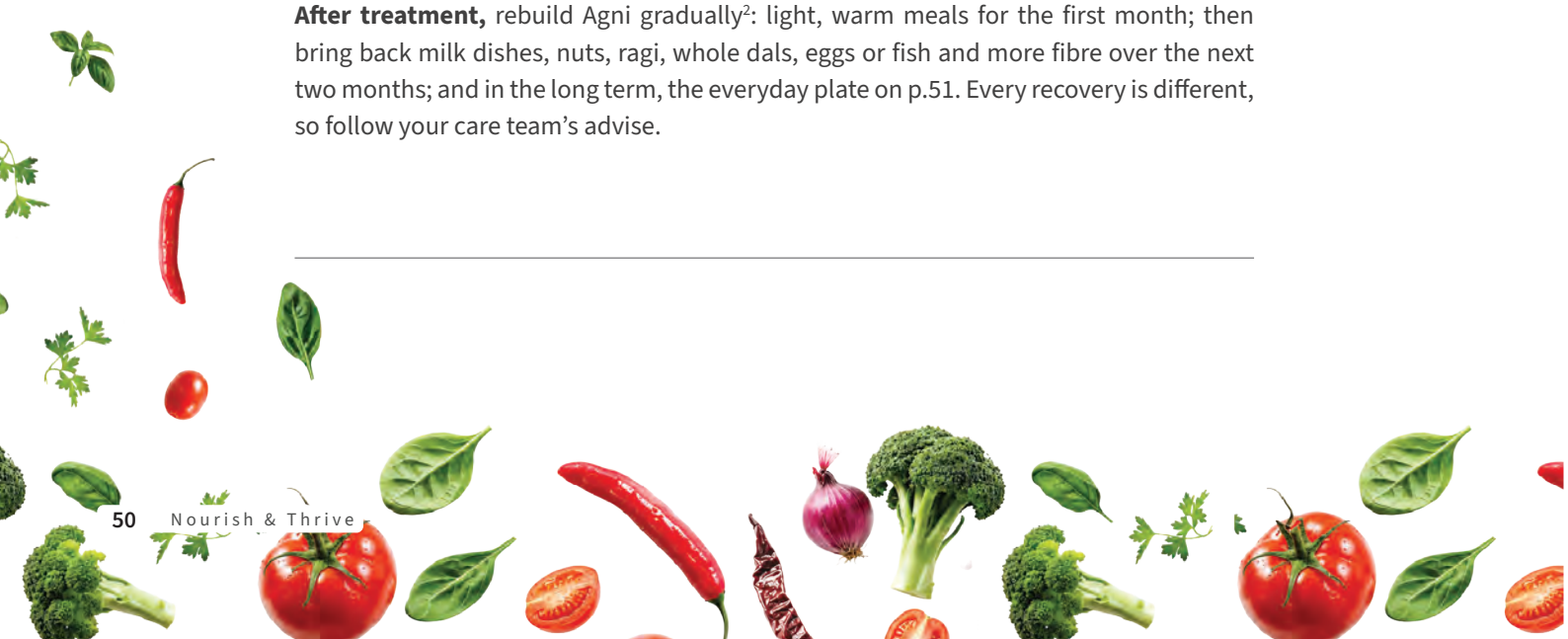
Researchers have begun testing ways to measure Agni[9–11], but there is no evidence that eating by Agni changes the course of cancer. We share it as a traditional way to tune meals to how you feel, alongside medical advice, never in place of it.

During treatment, many side effects resemble a disturbed Agni. Here is a gentle guide:

- *Mandagni (weak): Reduced appetite, nausea, heaviness. Eat small, light, warm meals often, such as peya or thin khichdi.*
- *Vishamagni (irregular): Appetite and bowels change day to day. Keep regular mealtimes and warm, soft food.*
- *Tikshnagni (sharp): Burning, acidity, loose stools, often with steroids. Choose cooling foods like rice, milk dishes and coconut water, and refrain from fasting.*

Avoid taking herbal powders, bhasmas or other Ayurvedic medicines during treatment without telling your oncologist; some interact with chemotherapy or affect the liver, kidneys or blood counts.

After treatment, rebuild Agni gradually[2]: light, warm meals for the first month; then bring back milk dishes, nuts, ragi, whole dals, eggs or fish and more fibre over the next two months; and in the long term, the everyday plate on p.51. Every recovery is different, so follow your care team's advise.



Eating to Lower Cancer Risk: The Everyday Plate

No food can promise that cancer will never happen. But what we eat, what we weigh and how much we move all shift the odds, and the American Cancer Society[1], ESPEN[4] and ICMR-NIN[15] agree on how. The good news: an Indian kitchen is already well stocked for it.

Fill up on colourful vegetables and fruit, from palak to pumpkin to cauliflower; millets and whole grains like ragi, jowar and bajra; dals, rajma and sprouts; a few nuts or seeds and a katori of curd. Too little fruit, vegetables and fibre is itself a risk we can change[5].

Go easy on

- *Red meat, and skip processed meats like salami[1,5]*
- *Sugary drinks, packaged snacks and maida[1]; salty and pickled food[15]*
- *Charred foods, and oil reuse*
- *Musty grains, peanuts and spices, which can carry aflatoxins linked with liver cancer*

Refrain from alcohol and tobacco in any form.

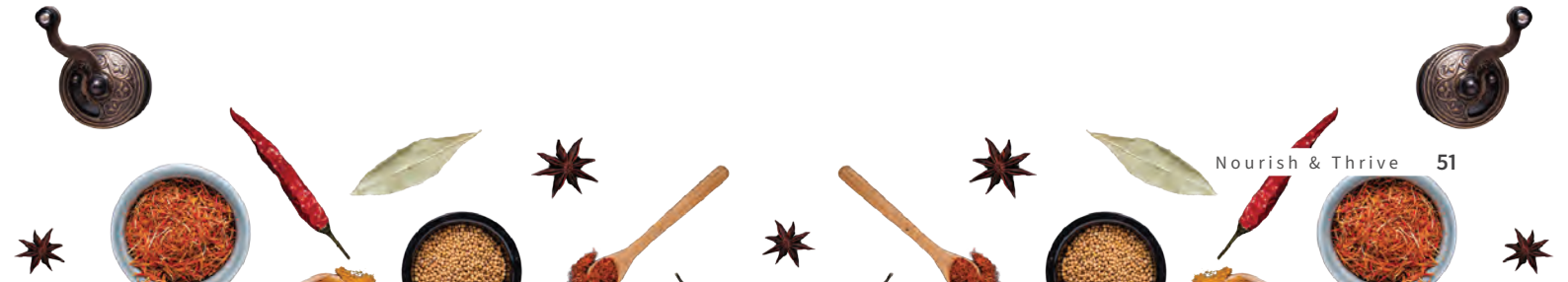
Move more, weigh right. Excess weight is the next-biggest changeable risk[5]. Aim for 150–300 minutes of moderate activity a week[1]; a brisk walk or yoga both count.

Your everyday thali: Half vegetables and fruit, a quarter whole grains, a quarter protein. Oil in moderation, sweets for celebrations. It is the plate for every day, and the one to come home to after treatment.

A final note

There will be good days and hard days. On the good ones, cook something you love. On the challenging ones, something simple is enough. Every meal is a small act of care, for yourself or for someone you love.

We hope ***Nourish & Thrive*** keeps you company along your journey.



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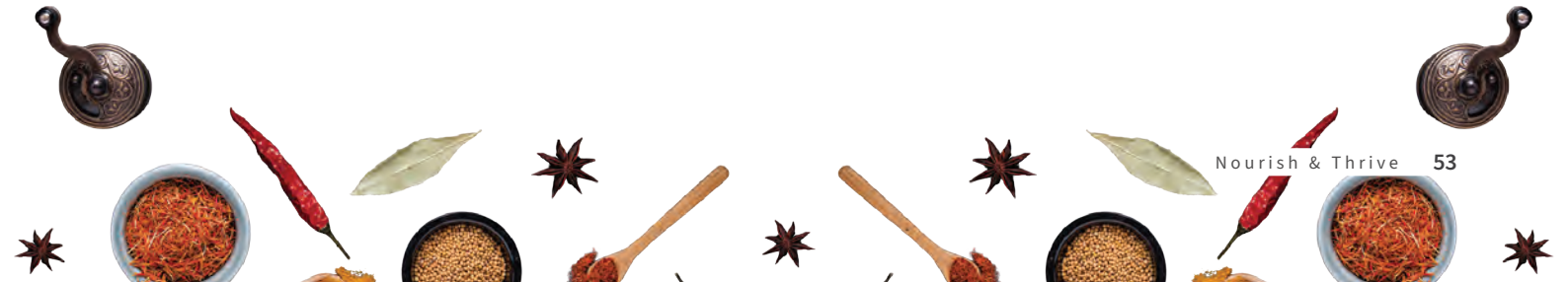
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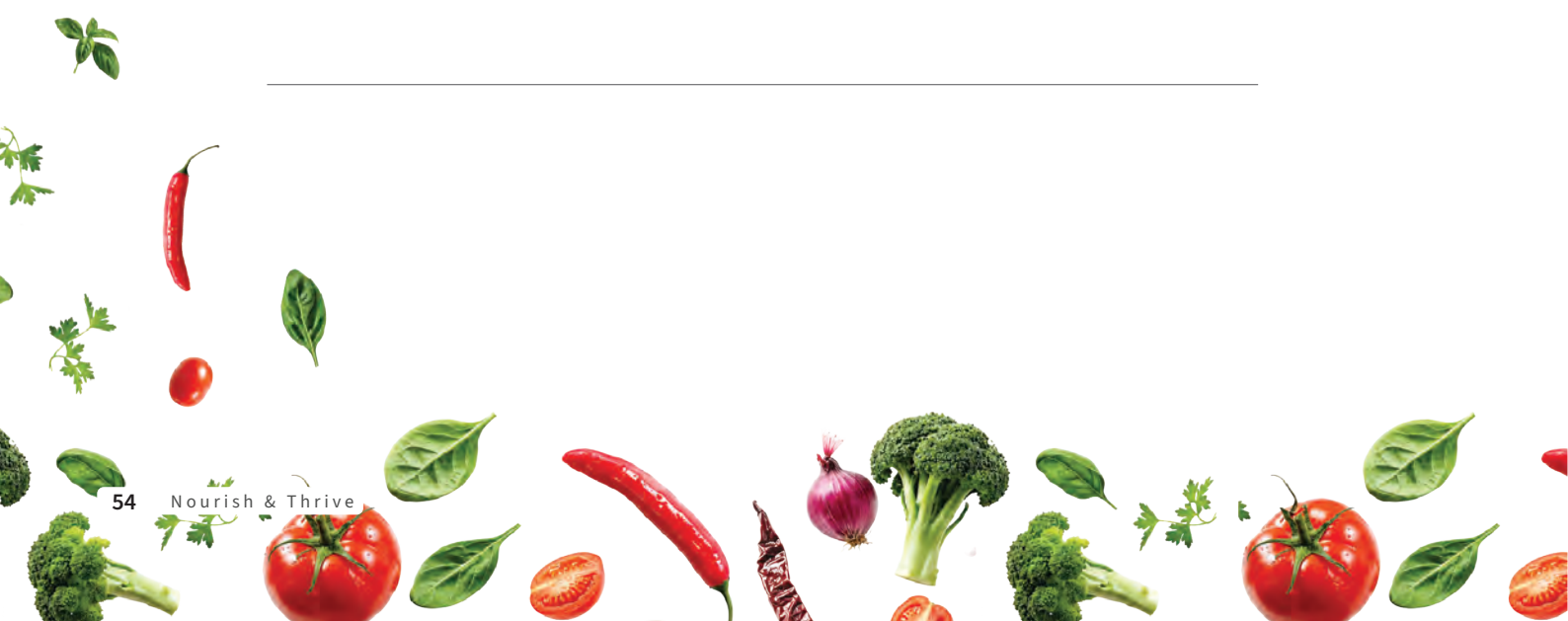
Glossary and Useful Resources

Glossary

- **Agni:** In Ayurveda, the digestive "fire" that turns food into nourishment.
- **Antioxidant:** A substance that helps protect the body's cells from damage.
- **Neutropenia:** A low count of neutrophils, the white blood cells that fight infection.
- **Smoke point:** The temperature at which an oil starts to smoke and break down.
- **Tocotrienols and tocopherols:** The two groups of compounds that make up vitamin E.
- **Trans fats:** Fats formed when oils are hydrogenated; best kept to a minimum.

Useful resources

- **Your treating oncologist and hospital dietitian:** Your first point of contact for diet questions
- **Healthcare Global Enterprises Ltd.**
- **Recipe videos:** Scan the QR code on each recipe page



Important Note and Credits

Important note

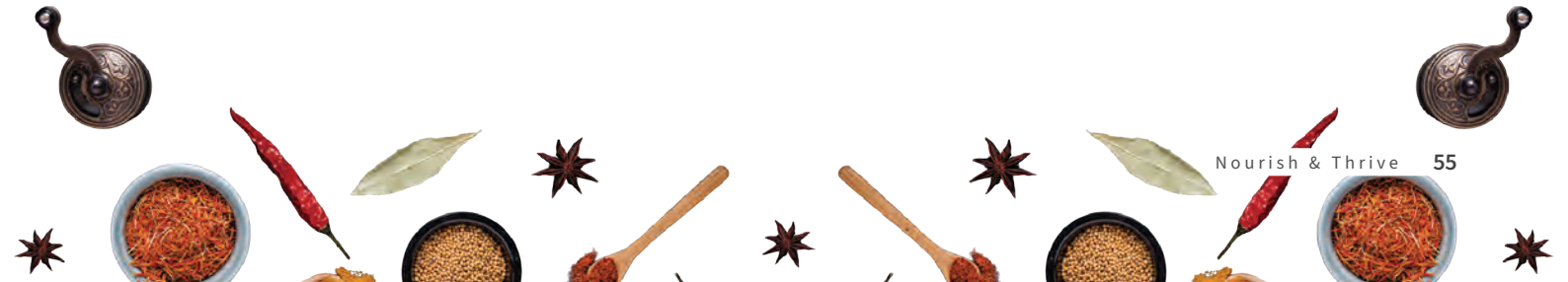
Nourish & Thrive is for general information only. It is not medical advice and is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease. Nutritional needs vary from person to person and change during treatment. Always consult your oncologist or a qualified dietitian before making changes to your diet, especially if you have allergies, diabetes, kidney or heart conditions, or other dietary restrictions. The recipes were reviewed for general suitability and do not replace personalised advice.

Credits

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- Concept, design and production: MPOC and Vibecraft Media Network
- An initiative of the Malaysian Palm Oil Council (MPOC)

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