



# CELEBRATING WOMEN'S HEALTH

Balanced nutrition can support women's unique nutritional needs at different stages of their lives

*Scan me to get tips from our Nutritionist Charlotte*



MENSTRUATION | PREGNANCY | BREASTFEEDING | MENOPAUSE



# A HEALTHY, BALANCED DIET IS FUNDAMENTAL FOR WOMEN'S HEALTH AT ALL LIFE STAGES

Women's dietary requirements change throughout the different stages of life such as menstruation, pregnancy, lactating, and later in life, menopause.

We need to adapt our diets to meet our changing nutritional needs. We also need to consider how our food preferences change. It is important to get the key nutrients we need by keeping meals varied and interesting.



## 'ONE-SIZE DOESN'T FIT ALL'

We are all unique and our lifestyles will vary from how physically active we are. Recommendations need to be adapted to meet individual's needs.

## WHAT DOES A HEALTHY PLATE LOOK LIKE?

There is so much nutritional information available that it can be confusing to understand what a 'healthy diet' is.

This is a rough guide to help you build a healthy balanced meal:

- A fistful (1/3-1/4 plate) of wholegrain or starchy vegetables i.e., Potatoes, wholemeal bread, brown rice, pasta, oats etc- great way to include fibre.
- Aim for 1/2 - 1/3 of your plate to be full of delicious and vibrant fruit and non-starchy carbohydrates.
- A palm size portion of lean proteins (1/3 - 1/4 plate) i.e., poultry, fish, beans, and pulses as well as low-fat dairy.
- A drizzle (thumb size) of unsaturated fats such as nuts, seeds, avocado and plant-based oils.
- Limit sweet and savoury snacks as these can be high in sugar, salt and fat. Therefore, these should be consumed occasionally.
- Remember to stay hydrated: aim for 6-8 glasses a day.





## 4 KEY NUTRIENTS FOR WOMEN'S HEALTH

### 1 CALCIUM

Important for the development of healthy bones and teeth.

Calcium is important during *pregnancy and breastfeeding* for the baby's development. It also helps protect the mother's bones, as their skeleton can be used as calcium reserve.

**Sources:** dairy products, nuts, and soya beans.



### 2 FOLIC ACID (FOLATE)

Important for the development of healthy bones and teeth.

Calcium is important during *pregnancy and breastfeeding* for the baby's development. It also helps protect the mother's bones, as their skeleton can be used as calcium reserve.

**Sources:** dairy products, nuts, and soya beans.



### 3 IRON

An important mineral in the production of red blood cells that carry oxygen in the body around the body as well as support our immune system and prevent tiredness.

Our requirements for Iron increase during *menstruation* as the body uses up Iron reserves. You can increase the amount of Iron available and absorbed by the body by also consuming foods high in Vitamin C.

Iron Absorption can be hindered by the consumption of some drinks we have with our meals such as alcohol, tea, and coffee!

**Top tip:** always opt for water or a vitamin-C-rich drink where possible.

**Sources:** red meat, poultry, fish, fortified cereals, nuts, and dark leafy green vegetables.

### 4 OMEGA 3 FATTY ACIDS

Important for brain, eye, and heart health.

Omega 3 helps with the development of the baby's brain and eyes during *pregnancy*, but studies have suggested that omega 3 can have a positive role in preventing *menstrual syndrome* and *post-menopausal* hot flashes.

**Sources:** oily fish (i.e., salmon, mackerel), nuts and seeds (i.e., walnuts, pumpkin seeds, chia seeds), vegetable oils (rapeseed oil), and fortified products.

# LIFE STAGE: PREGNANCY



This special time is one of immense change. Many women start to think about the importance of their diet and health. It impacts them and also affects the short and long-term health of their baby.

## CHARLOTTE'S TOP TIPS

- Eat regularly- ideally aim for 3 meals a day with 2 or 3 nutritious snacks)- helps sustain energy levels and prevent nausea.
- Try to eat a varied diet- use the Eat Well Guide to ensure your diet contains all the key five food groups.
- Include foods rich in folate, calcium, and iron.
- Check the NHS and British Nutrition Website for foods you need to avoid or limit i.e. alcohol, caffeine etc.

## STAY ACTIVE

Take part in regular light exercise. Always consult your doctor or midwife beforehand.

If exercise is not a part of your normal daily routine, gradually build up to 30 minutes a day.

If you like social and group exercises, check out your nearest antenatal classes.

## IMPORTANT NUTRIENTS FOR BREASTFEEDING MUMS

- Calcium
- Zinc
- Omega 3s
- Fluids- aim for 10-12 glasses a day.



## DID YOU KNOW? YOU DON'T NEED TO "EAT FOR 2"!

You may notice you will be more hungry than usual, however its only until the third trimester that you may need to consume an extra 200kcal per day.



# LIFE STAGE: MENOPAUSE

This natural part of the ageing process for women, tends to start around the early 50s.

Menopause is when a woman stops producing eggs and oestrogen which can lead to the most common symptoms including hot flushes and night sweats.



Studies have found that two portions of soya beans or other soya bean-based products can help ease the severity of hot flushes and their frequency when they are consumed within a healthy balanced diet.

Two portions of soya bean/ soya bean-based products could be:

- 100g Edamame Beans
- 200g Soya based yoghurt.



## CHARLOTTE'S TOP TIPS

Post-menopausal women are at higher risk of cardiovascular disease. It is important to eat a diet that includes your 5ADAY, foods rich in fibre, more fish, beans, and pulses where possible.

Menopause can accelerate the age-related decline in bone density, therefore, increasing the risk of osteoporosis.

- Aim to eat 2-3 portions of calcium-rich foods a day. (Remember, pair up with Vitamin D rich foods. This helps aid the absorption of calcium)
- Reduce your caffeine and alcohol consumption as these can exacerbate symptoms of menopause i.e., hot flushes.
- Exercise regularly- important for our health such as reducing the risk of cardiovascular disease but can also help our bone health.



# MIXED BERRY BIRCHER POT

Serves 5



Start your day with this healthy and delicious breakfast, packed full of fruit, low fat Greek yoghurt and linseeds

## INGREDIENTS

- 175g Porridge oats
- 42g Golden linseeds
- 100ml Boiling water
- 500g Bananas, ripe
- 350g Frozen berries
- 440g Low-fat Greek yoghurt
- 4g Lemon zest

## METHOD

1. Place the oats and seeds into a bowl and pour over 200ml boiling water and stir well.
2. Once cool, add the bananas and three-quarters of the berries (chill the remainder), mash together, add the lemon zest and yoghurt then cover and chill overnight.
3. The next day, add the berry oats into the containers and top them with the reserved berries and serve.

# SWEET POTATO & MISO SOUP

Serves 5



This comforting soup is a great way of adding more vegetables into your diet! A delicious way to add more fibre is to serve with the fibre seeded crackers

## INGREDIENTS

- 43g White miso paste
- 63ml Water
- 20ml Olive oil
- 625g Sweet potatoes – chopped into chunks
- 60g Spring onions– thinly slice and place in water they will curl up and use for garnish.
- 6g Garlic cloves– crushed
- 6g Ginger root– skin on, roughly sliced.
- 310g Carrots– skin on, roughly chopped.
- 1.25ltr Vegetable stock
- 1g Ground pepper

## METHOD

1. Preheat the oven to 180C Fan/ 200C/ Gas Mark 6.
2. In a bowl, mix the miso paste and water to form a paste. Stir in the olive oil.
3. In a large baking dish, lined with baking paper– Add the sweet potato, garlic, ginger, and carrot. Pour over the miso paste and stir to evenly coat vegetables and season with pepper.
4. Cook in the oven for 25–30 minutes– once the veg is golden and are good through, remove from oven.
5. Add to a food processor, and blend gradually adding the vegetable stock.
6. Serve and garnish with the spring onions.



# FIBRE SEEDED CRACKERS

Makes 10 crackers

## INGREDIENTS

- 65g Sunflower seeds
- 50g Pumpkin seeds
- 35g Chia seeds
- 35g Sesame seeds
- 20g Golden linseeds
- 2g Salt
- 180ml Water

## METHOD

1. Preheat the oven to 170C. Line a medium baking tray with baking paper.
2. Mix all the ingredients and leave for 15 minutes for the chia seeds to soak up the water. Once the mixture has thickened, spread thinly over the lined baking tray around half a cm.
3. Bake in the oven for 60-70 minutes (if the cracker isn't crispy return to the oven for a further 5-10minutes).
4. Remove from the oven and allow to cool before breaking into individual crackers.



Try these delicious crackers to add additional fibre and Omega 3 to your meals, these are fantastic to accompany soup or crumbled on top of salads.



# HARISSA SALMON

## WITH CHUNKY VEGETABLE GIANT COUSCOUS

Serves 4



This nutritious & delicious dish is a source of Omega 3 fatty acids and is packed full of colourful veggies.

*P.S. You can use any veggies in your fridge*

### INGREDIENTS

- 3 tbsp Rose Harissa
- 1 Lemon, juice and zest
- 2 tbsp Olive oil
- 4 Salmon fillets
- 2 Bell peppers (different colours), chopped
- 2 Courgettes, sliced
- 1 Red onion
- 4 Garlic cloves
- 150g Cherry tomatoes
- 250g Giant couscous
- 300ml Vegetable stock
- 40g Rocket
- 10g Parsley, roughly chopped
- 150g Pomegranate seeds.

### METHOD

1. Preheat the oven to 180C Fan/ Gas Mark 6.
2. Mix 2 tbsp of Harissa with lemon zest and olive oil. Rub the marinade over the salmon fillets and place them onto a baking tray- allow to marinate for at least 30 minutes or overnight in the fridge.
3. Add the peppers, courgette, red onion and garlic onto a separate baking tray. Drizzle with 1 tbsp of olive oil and remaining harissa, toss and roast in the oven for 30 minutes.
4. Add the cherry tomatoes for the final 10-15 minutes. Place the salmon in the oven at this time too.
5. Place the couscous into a large bowl, pour over the vegetable stock, cover and set aside for 10-15 minutes, and stir.
6. Squeeze the garlic pulp from the skin and mash with a fork. Add to the couscous along with the rocket and roasted vegetables.
7. Add the lemon juice over the couscous and stir in the parsley. Sprinkle the pomegranate seeds on top before serving with the salmon fillet.

# CREAMY ALFREDO

## WITH MUSHROOMS & TENDER-STEM BROCCOLI (VE)

Serves 4



A delicious plant based dish that is quick and easy providing you with key nutrients: calcium, iron and protein!

### INGREDIENTS

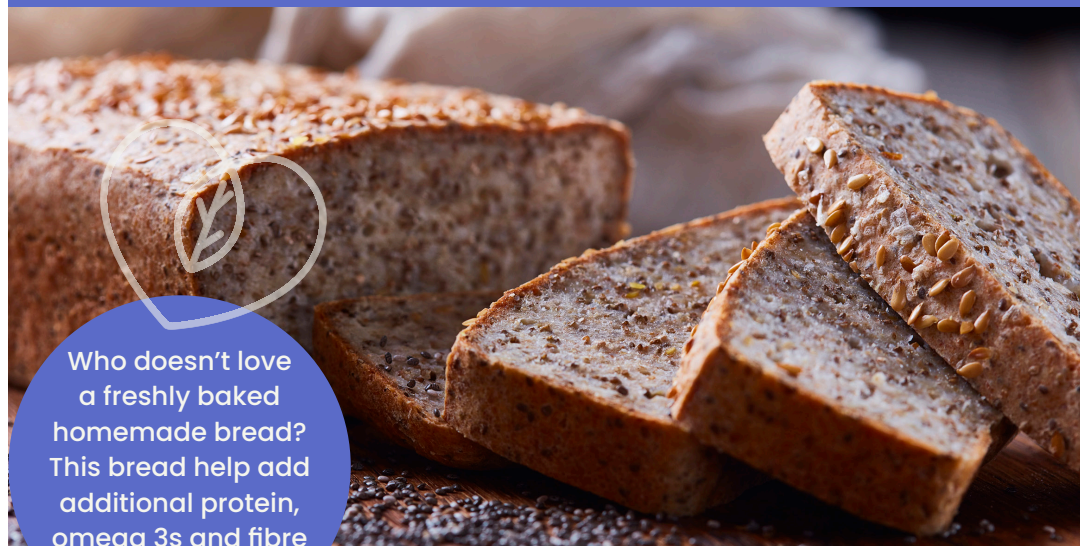
- 1 tbsp Olive oil
- 400g Mushrooms, sliced
- 2 Garlic cloves, peeled & crushed
- 150g Tender-stem Broccoli
- 200g Fettuccine
- 300g Silken tofu
- 1 Lemon, juiced
- 1tsp Salt
- 2 tbsp Nutritional yeast (optional)
- 15g Flat leaf parsley, chopped.

### METHOD

1. Heat the olive oil in a deep frying pan, add the mushroom and cook for 5 minutes.
2. Add the garlic and tender-stem broccoli and gently fry for a further 2 minutes.
3. In the meantime, cook the pasta as per the packet instructions. Drain and reserve the pasta water.
4. Add the tofu to 100ml pasta water, lemon juice and nutritional yeast into a blender and blend until smooth.
5. Add into the pan with the mushroom and tender-stem broccoli, and heat through for approx. 3-4 minutes, then add the pasta and finish with chopped

# BUCKWHEAT & CHIA SEED LOAF

Serves 8



Who doesn't love a freshly baked homemade bread? This bread help add additional protein, omega 3s and fibre into our diets!

## INGREDIENTS

- 300g Buckwheat
- 60g Chia seeds
- 125g Greek yoghurt
- 125ml Water
- 60ml Olive oil
- 4g Bicarbonate of soda
- 2g Sea Salt
- 20ml Lemon juice
- 45g Linseeds
- 4g Sea salt.

## METHOD

1. Soak the buckwheat in lots of cold water for 2 hours. Drain the buckwheat and rinse in cold water.
2. Soak the chia seeds in 125ml of cold water for 30 minutes, it will gelatinise.
3. Place the buckwheat and soaked chia, along with all the other remaining ingredients (except the linseed) into a food processor and blitz until a batter consistency with bits.
4. Add half of the linseed to the batter, reserving the rest for the crust.
5. Scrape all the mix into a greased and lined loaf tin, scatter over the remaining linseed with the sea salt and bake at 170°C for about an hour or until springy to the touch.
6. Allow to cool before slicing.

*You can pair this bread with a variety of delicious sweet and savoury topper such as cream cheese and figs or houmous and edamame beans.*

# BAKED CAVOLO NERO

## WITH APRICOT, PEARS, WALNUTS & BLUE CHEESE SALAD

Serves 5



### INGREDIENTS

- 150g Red onion-, halved and thinly sliced.
- 500g Cavolo nero, roughly sliced (chunky)
- 150g Pear, cored and sliced lengthways
- 50g Dried apricots, diced
- 50g Stilton cheese
- 10ml Rapeseed oil
- 1g Salt
- Pinch of ground pepper.

### METHOD

1. Toss all the ingredients together and place them into a large roasting tin.
2. Bake for 18-20 minutes until the chard has slightly crisped up, crumble over Stilton then serve.

Vibrant and nourishing salad, just pair up with a delicious protein! The extra crunch from the walnuts will provide your diet with healthy fats, protein, and fibre.

# SWEET POTATO, OAT AND RASPBERRY BROWNIES

Serves 8



Who doesn't love a sweet chocolatey treat? We have added some delicious fruits and vegetable to help improve the nutrient density of this brownie- guilt free!

## INGREDIENTS

- 150g Sweet potato
- 80g Oats
- 125g Dates, pitted
- x2 Free-range eggs
- 70g Raspberries
- 30g Reduced fat cocoa powder
- 30g Dark chocolate chips.

## METHOD

1. Preheat the oven to 180°C.
2. Steam the sweet potato (diced and peeled) and dates for approx. 12-15minutes.
3. Finely blend the oats.
4. Once steamed, add the steamed sweet potato to the dates and rapeseed oil.
5. Add the sweet potato mixture with the dates, oats, chocolate chips, eggs and cocoa powder into the food mixer and mix.
6. Place into a brownie tin and pop the raspberries into the brownie mixture.
7. Bake in the oven at 180C for approx. 15 minutes.

# ZESTY MANGO PUDDING

Serves 4



Creamy mango pudding, great to share with your family and friends. Great pudding to add additional calcium, protein, and fibre!

## INGREDIENTS

- 500g Natural yoghurt
- 1 tsp Vanilla extract
- 1 tbsp Dried fruit
- 70g Mango
- 25g Chopped nuts (walnuts, pistachios, cashews)
- 1 tsp Desiccated coconut.

## METHOD

1. Mix together the yoghurts and dried fruit in a bowl.
2. Line a baking tray with baking paper and pour over the yoghurt mixture. Spread it about 1 ½cm thick.
3. Sprinkle over the remaining fruit, nuts and desiccated coconut on the top and place into the freezer for approx. 1-2hours.
4. Once completely frozen- remove from the freezer and bake the bark into pieces.

# FROZEN FRUITY YOGHURT BARK

Serves 8



A refreshing snack, full of colourful fruit, nuts, and yoghurt—a delicious way to add some protein and calcium into your diet!



## INGREDIENTS

- 500g Natural yoghurt
- 1 tsp Vanilla extract
- 1 tbsp Dried fruit
- 70g Strawberries
- 25g Chopped nuts (walnuts, pistachios, cashews)
- 1 tsp Desiccated coconut

## METHOD

1. Mix together the yoghurts and dried fruit in a bowl.
2. Line a baking tray with baking paper and pour over the yoghurt mixture. Spread it about 1 ½cm thick.
3. Sprinkle over the remaining fruit, nuts and desiccated coconut on the top and place into the freezer for approx. 1-2 hours.
4. Once completely frozen—remove from the freezer and break the bark into pieces.

*You can swap the fruit and nuts to whatever you have, and maybe some additional seeds if you are feeling daring.*

