



Healthier Practices

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Get some practical tips on how to adjust your menu and dishes to make them healthier and more appealing to diners.

There are many ways to make your menu healthier. Here, we'll discuss some common practices to help you create healthier, tasty meals for your diners.

Understanding food labels

Food labels give information about the product, including its nutritional content. Knowing how to properly read food labels and communicating the nutritional content to your diners can help them make healthier choices. This can be done in a number of ways:

- Have nutrition information ready to share with diners when asked.
- Use nutritional information to create balanced, varied and healthier meals.
- Identify potential food allergens and highlight to diners.
- Plan special diets for specific concerns such as sodium, fat, cholesterol and calories.

Characteristics of healthy meals

Learn the characteristics of healthy meals and how to use them to create a better menu for your restaurant. A healthy menu should:

- Be packed with adequate nutrients.
- Have balanced nutrients.
- Have moderate quantities of recommended nutrients.
- Offer variety in food ingredients and nutrient sources.



Healthier cooking methods

Now that we know the characteristics of healthy meals, let's take a look at the healthier cooking methods you can adopt to prepare them:

- Steam – No oil required and it helps preserve nutrients.
- Boil – No oil required, thus adding no extra calories to the food.
- Poach – A no-fat method to cook naturally tender ingredients like eggs, fish and vegetables.
- Sauté or stir fry – Good alternatives to deep frying. Nutrients and the natural colour of ingredients are retained, making food more visually appealing.
- Grill – Low-fat way to prepare meat that allows fat from the ingredients to drip away during the cooking process. Take care not to over-char meats, as charring has been linked in increased cancer risks.



Healthier seasoning alternatives

Here's a list of healthier seasoning alternatives that you can use during the cooking process:

- Fruits, honey, and maple syrup – A more nutritious source of natural sugar.
- Aromatic ingredients (onions, garlic, ginger, etc.) – Helps add flavour without using too much salt.
- Toasted spices, nuts and seeds – Adds aroma and flavour to a dish.
- Flavoured oils – Healthier alternative to butter.
- Citrus and flavoured vinegar – Bright, sharp flavour that helps reduce the need for salt.



Healthy dish portioning.

Healthy eating is more than the vitamins and minerals you provide in your dishes – it's also about serving a balanced plate to your diners. Here are a few tips on how to portion components on a dish to promote a balanced diet:

- Ensure the plate has a balance of whole grains, healthy proteins and vegetables or fruits.
- Reduce portioning of starches on dishes and increase portioning of salads.
- Cut down on the amount of gravy and sauces served in a dish.

Other strategies

Aside from serving a balanced plate filled with nutrients, vitamins and minerals, here are some tips to help you promote healthy eating in your restaurant:

- Use fresher ingredients packed with nutrients.
- Explore the use of organic products.
- Depend on less food additives.
- Practise healthy menu combinations.
- Upsell and promote healthier meals.
- Present healthy food as premium options.

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