HEALTHIER OPTIONS

FRESH IDEAS FOR LINCOLNSHIRE

TIPS FOR LEISURE AND FITNESS CENTRES

MAKE GREAT TASTING, HEALTHIER FOOD AND SAVE MONEY!

Healthier eating is becoming more and more important to customers. Follow these tips to make sure you stay ahead of the market.

Achieve at least ten tips, including at least one from each section (Fats & Frying, Salt, Fruit, Vegetables & Fibre, Snacks & Drinks, Portion Size, Promotions & Displays, and Children's Menu). Tick the box when you have achieved a tip and aim to add a new tip every month.

FATS & FRYING – High-fat foods contain lots of calories, which can make us put on weight. This can lead to diabetes, heart disease and some cancers.

1. Use a healthier oil for frying like rapeseed or sunflower oil as these contain less saturated fat (make sure it contains less than 15g saturated fat per 100g). Drain excess oil on absorbent paper. ☐

2. Use lean mince or drain off the fat, trim excess fat from meat and remove skin from chicken whenever possible. ☐

3. Offer to grill or bake food instead of frying (e.g. grilled fish, bacon and sausages). Make this option clear on your menu. Some customers prefer it and it's healthier! ☐

4. Make sure you use lower fat varieties or smaller amounts of these products: ☐
   – Cheese (try a strong cheese or grated cheese – you'll use less overall!)
   – Cream (try single cream or half-fat crème fraîche instead of double cream)
   – Milk (use skimmed, 1% fat, or semi-skimmed as a default)
   – Butter/spreads (use light spreads or less butter, or ask if the customer would like spread – they may say no!)
   – Yoghurt (choose low-fat or fat-free natural yoghurts)
   – Mayonnaise (swap to light mayo – up to 60% less fat, and customer blind tests show they can't taste the difference!)
   – Dressings (choose light varieties such as vinegar or lemon, or use less oil in homemade dressings)

If you need to deep fat fry, for the best results:

5. Ensure the oil is heated to the correct temperature (175–190°C for chips). Too low and it will absorb too much fat; too high and it will spoil your oil. ☐

6. Shake, bang and hang the basket before serving to drain off excess fat. ☐

7. Sieve the oil after use, filter it regularly and change the oil before it foams or smokes. ☐

SALT – It's very important to watch your salt (or sodium) intake as too much can lead to high blood pressure and an increased risk of stroke and heart disease.

8. Remove salt from tables so customers don't just add it automatically; keep some on a separate table or behind the counter for customers who request it. ☐

9. Add less salt and salty ingredients to meals over time. Ingredients such as stock, ketchup, mustard, gravy, seasoning packets and soy sauce can contain a lot of salt so be careful how much you use. If you're concerned your customers won't like the taste, you can cut down in gradual steps, using less and less each week. ☐

10. Don't add salt when boiling rice, pasta, potatoes or vegetables. ☐

11. When you buy in food from a supplier, check the labels and choose options with less salt or ask your supplier for lower salt varieties. ☐

FRUIT, VEGETABLES & FIBRE – These are good sources of vitamins and minerals and eating plenty can help prevent heart disease, stroke and some cancers.

12. Always include at least one portion of vegetables as part of a meal. ☐

13. If you offer dessert, provide either fresh fruit without sugar or syrup, or desserts that are lower in fat and sugars and smaller portion sizes. ☐

14. If you offer meal deals or special offers, try including a salad, a piece of fruit or a fruit salad instead of promoting less healthy snacks like crisps, chocolate, chips etc. ☐

15. Add or increase the amount of vegetables, lentils or beans in dishes like soups, stews and rice. They are cheaper than meat and fish so could save you money. ☐

16. Make sure wholegrain carbohydrates (e.g. wholemeal bread, wholewheat pasta and brown rice) are available and promoted as the default option (customers can request white options if they wish). ☐

17. Aim to provide cereals that are higher in fibre (i.e. more than 6g/100g) and do not exceed 22.5g/100g total sugars. ☐

SNACKS & DRINKS – Providing a range with healthier options could give you the competitive edge!

18. Try providing a range of healthier snacks like fresh fruit, dried fruit, unsalted nuts, and baked crisps and snacks. ☐

19. Offer smaller-sized packets of crisps, chocolate bars and other snacks, and sugary drinks (i.e. max 30g/250kcal/330ml). ☐

20. Offer healthier drinks as the default option – such as water, lower fat milks, low-calorie or no-added-sugar drinks, or pure fruit juices (in a 150ml serving size or as close to this volume as possible), rather than sugary drinks. ☐

PORTION SIZE – Eating too much can lead to obesity, diabetes, heart disease and cancer.

21. Think about the size of your portions and if you're being too generous. Have a set size for each ingredient and make sure your staff stick to it (e.g. a certain size of scoop or a fixed number of slices). ☐

22. Make small portions or children's portions available to everyone (make sure this option is clearly advertised to customers). ☐

PROMOTIONS & DISPLAYS

23. Promote healthier options with more fruit and vegetables and sensible portions, and make sure the healthier items stand out and are good value. Don't offer discounts or special deals for food or drinks that are high in fat, salt or sugar. ☐

24. Make sure 'meal deals' include water/low-sugar drinks instead of sugary drinks. If you don't have meal deals, offer water/low-sugar drinks at a cheaper price. ☐

25. Display fruit and healthy snacks in prominent areas, and try putting healthier drinks like water and no-added-sugar drinks and juices at eye-level in fridges. ☐

CHILDREN'S MENU – Childhood obesity is on the rise and we all play a part. Think about your kids' menu: is it fun and healthy?

26. Only offer plain milk, water and pure fruit juice or a 'kids' cocktail' of half fruit juice and half soda water. Cola drinks contain caffeine and are not appropriate for children. ☐

27. Move beyond fried foods! Children love pasta, noodles, one egg and veg omelette, rainbow rice and bite-sized food such as grilled chicken strips. ☐

28. Make the default side on the children's set menu a vegetable side rather than chips. ☐

29. Kids only need small portions. Save money (and waste) by taking note of the child's age – for example, a meat serve should be roughly the size of the palm of the child's hand. Save money on puddings by serving one small scoop of ice cream rather than two, and always have fruit on the menu. If puddings are on the set menu, you could try charging for puddings as an extra. (But not for fruit!) ☐

30. You can support the Children's Health Fund by adding a 10p levy to the price of your sugary drinks. ☐

Your own pledge suggestions (agreed with the Healthier Options team)

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The initiative is delivered jointly by Lincolnshire County Council, Boston Borough Council, City of Lincoln Council, East Lindsey District Council, North Kesteven District Council, South Holland District Council, South Kesteven District Council, and West Lindsey District Council.