

The Freshwell **LOW CARB VEGETARIAN MEAL PLANNER**

— DR KIM ANDREWS —





Dr Kim Andrews is a General Practitioner and has worked at Freshwell Health Centre in Finchingfield, Essex since 2004.

She graduated from Liverpool University with an Honours degree in Medicine in 2000 and completed her medical training in Merseyside and Essex before settling into rural general practice and specialising in diabetes.

Dr Andrews and her colleague Dr David Oliver, discovered low carb lifestyle medicine in late 2018 and together they founded the Freshwell Low Carb Project in 2019. They have been promoting this method ever since.

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Introduction



Vegetarianism. The practice of abstaining from the consumption of meat – a term originating from the early 19th century, but a concept going back as far as the 9th century BC. This way of life may be adopted for many reasons, but may be motivated by animal welfare, health related, cultural, environmental or economic preferences. In the UK in 2021, approximately 10% of the population identified as vegetarian, with younger generations significantly more likely to follow a meat-free diet. A “Flexitarian” diet is also on the rise, with people avoiding meat on some days, but not others e.g. Meat Free Mondays. The UK market for meat substitutes is already worth nearly 500 million pounds, making it the **largest in Europe.**

My name is Dr Kim Andrews and I have been a GP in Essex since 2003 after medical training in Liverpool. I discovered low carb in 2019 after my dad managed to lose and maintain a 4 stone weight loss after a lifetime of obesity and yo-yo dieting. As well as weight loss, my father benefitted from putting his prediabetes into remission and coming off two blood pressure medications. At the age of 72 he is now cycling 50km twice a week and can cut his toenails without getting out of breath! It has been astonishing to watch and witnessing this has changed the way I manage my patients. I no longer want to stick plasters over ill-health with medication – I want people to fix themselves by fuelling their body correctly. I assure you it really does work and the benefits can be life changing.

You may find yourself here because of a recent health scare – a new diagnosis of diabetes or high blood pressure for example. You may just want to improve your diet moving forwards to gain the benefits of greater vitality and avoid the development of chronic disease. Or you may want to lose some weight - two thirds of the UK adult population are now overweight or obese - leading to greater risk of heart disease, type 2 diabetes, osteoarthritis, and some cancers. During the lockdowns of 2020 and 2021, more than 40% of adults in the UK gained weight, with the average gain being around half a stone (just over 3kg) – it appears snacking and comfort eating were the main culprits. Does this sound familiar?!

This planner aims to help those who are vegetarian to incorporate a low carbohydrate diet into their lifestyle. Essentially, starchy carbohydrates need to be considered a source of dietary sugar, as starch molecules are quickly broken down into sugar once they enter your body. This spike of sugar then causes your insulin level to rise, and insulin is a hormone that loves to store up excess glucose as fat. The more starch and sugar eaten, the higher the insulin level has to be to manage it, eventually leading to insulin resistance as the body's cells stop responding to the messaging. And it is this situation that leads to weight gain, metabolic dysfunction, and many other bad things we want to avoid! That's it for the science folks. If you are interested in learning more about why a low carb method works, then head over to our website at www.lowcarbfreshwell.co.uk, see our educational modules on our Freshwell app, or download the free Freshwell Low Carb Manual – which covers a low carb lifestyle in more detail.

There are many variations of the vegetarian diet. This planner is based around an ovo-lacto vegetarian diet, incorporating both eggs and dairy products. No fish is included. In my experience, many people avoiding meat do find that their diet is understandably centred around starchy carbohydrates such as cereal, rice, bread and pasta. With some thinking outside the box this can be changed to create a new way of eating that will give you more energy and vitality.

I must admit to not being a vegetarian myself, so this meal planner has been challenging to create. As a family, we eat plenty of vegetables and dairy, but these are often included as ingredients or sides to the main affair rather than the focal point. Did you know that on average, a human requires about 1.6g of protein per kg of bodyweight – that's actually a huge amount when you work it out and was an eye opener for myself and my own diet. In this meal planner, prioritising protein has been my objective, and in the main I have accomplished this using eggs, dairy, nuts, seeds and pulses. A glass of milk alone can contain 9g of protein! Pulses can be moderately high in carbohydrates, so if you are prediabetic or diabetic, you may need to reduce these slightly to prevent sugar spikes. Always look to get in extra protein whenever possible – seeds such as flaxseed, chia seeds, hemp seeds, pumpkin seeds and sunflower seeds are punchy powerhouses – I suppose this is to be expected really when you consider what a seed is capable of in nature. Sprinkle them on salads, yoghurt, soups and you can't go far wrong.

This planner is not a panacea or a holy grail, nor a complicated scientific document debating plant-based protein versus meat-based protein. It is merely a simple recipe book to help people get started on a vegetarian low carb lifestyle and show what can be done. There is no counting of calories, no weighing of portion sizes and no calculating of macros and micros. To me, food is to be enjoyed – and having to count anything takes some of that joy away. Some recipes give rough

estimates on number of portions, but this should not be taken as gospel. My advice is always “only eat when you are hungry, and eat until you are full”. Take into account we are creatures that sometimes eat for reasons other than hunger – so if you could be bored or thirsty make sure you address this first before hitting the cupboards....

Meat substitutes are food products made from vegetarian or vegan ingredients, which over the past few years have now become freely available in most supermarkets. I must admit to having my own concerns about these products, as in most (but not all) cases they tend to be highly processed containing numerous ingredients – flip the packet over and take a look. A low carb lifestyle actively encourages against the use of processed foods and advocates creating meals based on ingredients you would find in your food cupboards at home. A famous faux meat burger brand has 18 ingredients listed on the packet – take a moment to compare that to the ingredients found in a homemade beefburger – 2 – beef and salt. My feeling is that if you enjoy eating these products, then limit them to once or twice a week, and in general stick to clean, unprocessed meals cooked from scratch whenever possible. It is worth putting the time in for the benefits you will reap.

Many patients ask me if they should be supplementing their diets with vitamins or minerals, particularly those following a vegetarian lifestyle. I always encourage people to consume as many micronutrients as possible within their diet but for those with intolerances or a very narrow diet, supplementation is likely to play a part. It is important to remember that any diet can have nutritional gaps – if you eat meat but only hamburgers and chips at every meal, you won't be getting all your nutrients either! Many breads and cereals are fortified with additional vitamins, but as you will be avoiding these foods on a low carb diet, you will need to source them in alternative ways. For the most, I do suggest that vegetarians consider supplementation with Vitamin B12 and iron. I also recommend Vitamin D3 (at least from October to April) to everyone living in the UK, as it is hard to consume enough in our diets and it doesn't store well, so any Vitamin D gained from the British summer is quickly lost. If your diet consists of varied vegetables, nuts, seeds and pulses, you may well be meeting most of your mineral needs, but if not, you could also consider supplementing with calcium and zinc.

And what about protein powders? These have become more commonly used over the past few years and now appear on the shelves in most supermarkets. In general, I always suggest that people get all the nutrients they need by eating a good, varied diet. However, there are times when people are unable to get in the protein they need, so in some cases, protein powder may be a good choice as a convenient way to boost total protein intake. These powders are usually very low in carbohydrates but make sure you check the ingredients lists as some do have added sugars or other carbohydrate sources and should be avoided. Beware of protein bars and shakes

as these can often be highly processed containing a dearth of ingredients including sugar in one form or another – flip the packet over and check out the ingredients list before deciding whether or not to put it in your shopping basket. In most cases I would say it's a no on that front.

In designing this meal planner, I have been very fortunate to have had the support of some amazing low carb chefs, who have allowed me to use some of their fantastic recipes in this planner. Katie Caldesi helped her husband Giancarlo lose 3 stone and put his type 2 diabetes into remission, and has written multiple recipe books to help others achieve the same. Dr Jen Unwin (a clinical psychologist and wife of low carb pioneering GP Dr David Unwin) suffered her own journey with carb addiction and now spends her time supporting patients to give up sugar and carbohydrates to improve their health. Emma Porter has Type 1 Diabetes and was struggling with her control using standard NHS advice and is now a food writer developing recipe books and running online cooking sessions to help others in the same position. I am very grateful to them all. The Public Health Collaboration (PHC) is a UK charity dedicated to improving public health and saving the NHS money through better lifestyle information – and some of my fellow ambassadors of the charity have been kind enough to donate some of their favourite tried and tested recipes. And last, but certainly not least, I have also incorporated some recipes from inspiring members of the Colne Valley PCN Low Carb Group – an online group of over 600 local patients looking to improve their health and quality of life – if they can do it, so can you! The group has a very informative Facebook page with lots of enthusiasm and support as well as fabulous recipes – do feel free to join the group and get involved (please see the Recommended Reading and Resources list on how to join in).

Being or going vegetarian requires some planning, particularly with the combination of low carb - but with the right mix of protein-based foods, it can be done well to support a healthy body. I hope this meal planner gives you a starting point to base your new lifestyle around. As always, hearing stories of weight loss and improved health always bring me great joy so please do get in touch if you have a story to tell. Good Luck!

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As with any adjustment to your diet or exercise regime, consult your doctor before implementing significant changes, particularly if you take medication for diabetes or high blood pressure. This manual should not be considered personal medical advice - if you have a medical issue that you are concerned about, please consult with your GP.

With gratitude to NHS Mid and South Essex Integrated Care Board (ICB) – particularly Emily Fallon (Transformation and Engagement Manager) and her team - who believe in our Low Carb project and have been hugely supportive in getting this meal planner out there to benefit as many members of our local community as possible. Thank you!

It is really important to us that we work with local people to produce these meal planners and any future materials, as well as finding out whether you have enjoyed the content, and whether it has helped you work towards your health goals. We would love to hear from you. Please email any general feedback to mseicb-me.lowcarb.cvpcn@nhs.net, such as what recipes you have tried out, what you liked or disliked, and any improvements you may have seen with your health. If you have a little bit longer and would be so kind as to complete a quick survey for us - please follow the link: <https://forms.office.com/r/yWbVSh7hdG> or scan the QR code below. We can share this feedback with our project team and the NHS funders that supported the project.



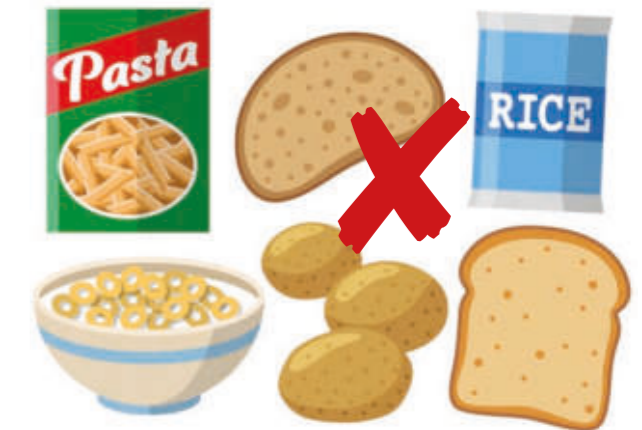
To thank you for taking the time to complete the survey, if you live in the Braintree District we have free gym passes (to be used in Fusion Leisure Centres) at the ready - one of the team will get in touch to distribute this to you if you kindly add your contact details at the end of the survey. Thanks for your time, we really look forward to hearing your feedback and continuing to improve our materials.

Low Carb Basics

In the most basic of forms, a low carb way of eating comprises of the following rules:

- 1 **No bread or wheat based bread products** such as wraps, pittas, crackers etc (and it doesn't matter if the bread is wholemeal, seeded, artisan sourdough – sorry, but all must be avoided!).
- 2 **No potatoes** (including sweet potatoes).
- 3 **No rice** (again this includes brown rice).
- 4 **No breakfast cereals including porridge oats** (I know - I thought it was good for me too!).
- 5 **No pasta** – other pasta options are now available in most supermarkets. Aldi stock a good soy spaghetti or mungbean fettucini. The larger supermarkets tend to stock pasta shapes made of pea or lentil – a better option for most as they have much higher protein levels – but are best avoided if you have pre-diabetes or diabetes, as they have a moderate carbohydrate content.
- 6 **Avoid Ultra Processed Foods (UPFs)** – I class this as any packaged food in the supermarket that has a list of 5 or more ingredients – particularly if you don't recognise the name of those ingredients or have them in your cupboard at home.
- 7 **Avoid sugar** (the food companies have over 100 names for sugar so don't let them trick you! – as well as standard white table sugar this would include brown sugar, coconut sugar, molasses, fructose, maltose, sucrose, maltodextrin, brown rice syrup – to name a few!). Also try to avoid most artificial sweeteners as evidence has shown some of these to cause levels of blood glucose to rise and to light up those addiction areas of the brain that can crave sweetness. If you want to add sweetness, then use sweeteners such as Stevia, Xylitol or Erythritol – these are more expensive but you won't need much so it will last.
- 8 **Eat above ground vegetables** – these are far less starchy than their “below ground” counterparts.
- 9 **Be careful with fruit** – we are told to eat fruit and obtain our “5 a day” but we believe fruit is nature's “dessert” and should be treated accordingly. When eating fruit, stick to fruit that grows in the UK – mainly berries and the occasional apple, pear or plum. Avoid any tropical fruits like mango, pineapple, bananas and grapes as these are packed full with natural sugars. Avoid fruit juice at all costs.
- 10 **Avoid vegetable and seed oils** including sunflower oil, rapeseed oil, corn oil, soybean oil etc.

These have been promoted to us as healthy but increasing evidence suggest they are very inflammatory within our bodies and are best avoided. Stick to natural saturated fats like olive oil, butter and coconut oil.
- 11 **When looking at food packaging, aim for products that contain 10g or less of total carbohydrate in 100g.** The food manufacturers will try and trick you with their “food traffic light” system- so ignore that!



My 10 Low Carb Mottos

- 1 **Only eat when hungry** - not when a mealtime dictates it.
- 2 **Breakfast is not the most important meal of the day** – only Mr Kellogg said this and I think he had an ulterior motive! If you are not hungry when you wake, it is ok to skip breakfast and try to have a brunch followed by an evening meal.
- 3 **Don't snack** – it's unnecessary and probably means you didn't eat enough fat and/or protein at your last meal.
- 4 **Prioritise protein** – I was shocked to recently find out that a man needs 1.8g protein per kg bodyweight per day, and women around 1.6g per kg – your body will keep telling you to eat until you hit these targets, so aim to do it in the most efficient way!
- 5 **When in doubt eat eggs, pulses or dairy** - to provide a protein hit and promote satiety.
- 6 **Eat larger meals less often** – you are aiming for approximately the same daily volume of food but split across two meals instead of three.
- 7 **If there are more than 5 ingredients on the packet and/or you don't recognise the chemical names, then don't eat it** (L-Cysteine hydrochloride or Glycerol Mono Stearate anyone??).
- 8 **Avoid low fat diet options whenever possible** – such as yoghurts, mayonnaise, cream cheese, cottage cheese etc. In general, low fat options contain more sugar and the reduction in fat means less control of hunger. If you are not diabetic and are more concerned about weight loss, then using low fat products may be an option if weight loss stalls.
- 9 **Avoid processed snack products claiming to be low carb such as protein bars, smoothies or shakes** – they have a ridiculously large ingredients list, are heavily processed and are often still quite high in “natural sugars”.
- 10 **Eat food that you buy as it was originally produced/as nature intended it** – and you can't go far wrong!

Eat. Real. Food.

Plant Based Protein Sources

“Prioritise Protein” is a favourite mantra of mine. There is mounting evidence that your body will continue to tell you to eat until you hit the amount of protein it requires to function. So, if you are not eating a diet with good levels of protein you firstly run the risk of being hungry. Too little protein will also compromise your lean muscle mass which becomes increasingly important as you age. Protein is needed for muscle repair and growth, maintaining healthy skin, hair and bones, and creating hormones and enzymes essential to bodily functions. The levels of protein needed are much higher than previously thought with humans needing around 1.5 - 2g per kg body weight per day – equating to approximately 110g for the average woman and 130g for the average man. If you can, aim for at least 30g of protein (typically the size of a fist!) at each meal to hit these targets – which is easier said than done!

Proteins consist of several different amino acids. These are the building blocks of all the cells in our bodies. Nine of these amino acids are termed ‘essential’ - this means that we need them and we have to get them from our diet as we cannot make them from other amino acids. There are also another eight amino acids that we need but our bodies can make them from other amino acids, as long as we are getting plenty of the essential ones!

Animal protein sources contain all 9 essential amino acids in consistently high amounts but plant proteins often have far lesser concentrations, making it

more important for you to spend a bit more time thinking about what you are eating to ensure you hit your protein targets. If not vegan, animal based products like eggs, cheese and other forms of dairy, are excellent sources of protein but if you don't eat much of these then concentrate on soy based products like tofu, and nuts and seeds. Fish is also high in protein and a good option if you are pescatarian.

Animal sourced proteins are deemed “complete” in that they contain the amino acids we need in the right proportions. Most sources of protein from plants are “incomplete”, meaning that some of the amino acids aren't provided in sufficient quantities to meet our requirements. When proteins are incomplete, our digestion doesn't absorb the proteins very well and the amino acid that is in limited supply restricts absorption of the rest. It's a bit like building a house - there is no point in having more slates than are needed if there aren't enough bricks to complete the walls.

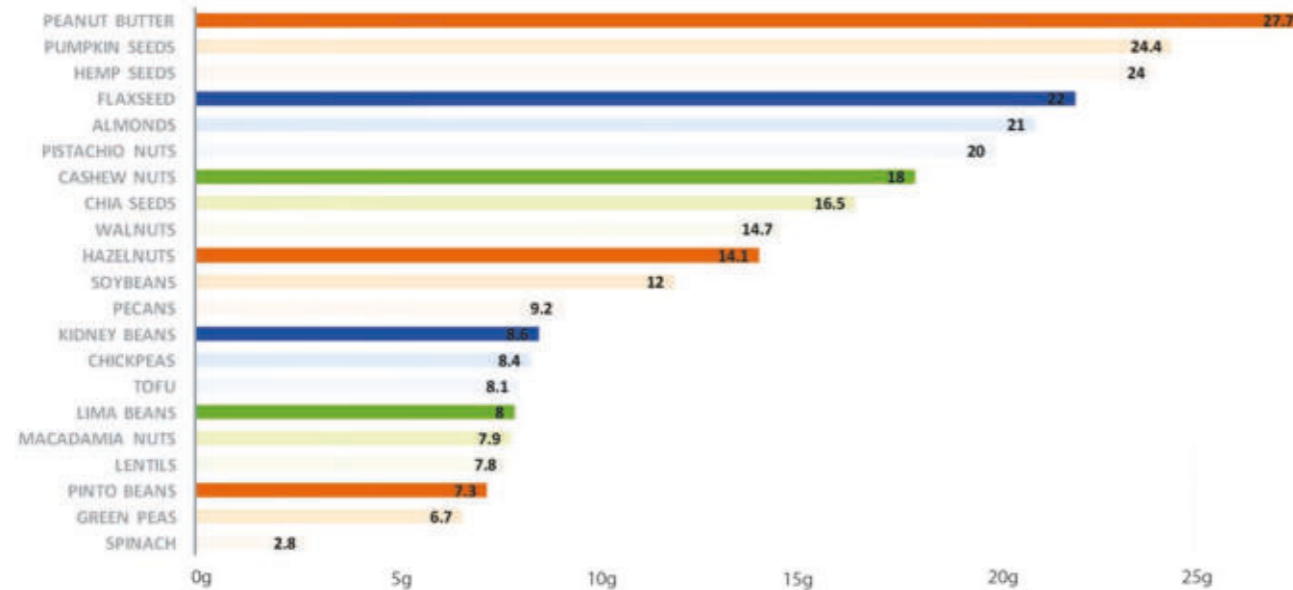
Luckily there is a simple way to combine foods to complete the proteins. Plan meals so that you are eating protein rich pulses (peas, beans, lentils, chickpeas) with protein rich seeds (flax, hemp, chia, sesame etc) or nuts. Soy beans (and products made from soy like tofu or tempeh), have almost complete proteins, but it's still a good idea to have some nuts or seeds as well. A classic combination of this kind is hummus, which is made with chickpeas and sesame seeds.

Adding in some complete proteins, even in small quantities, also helps. Complete proteins on a vegetarian diet include dairy (eg yoghurt, cheese), eggs and also mushrooms and mycoprotein.

The list below demonstrates some of the foods found in a vegetarian diet that have higher levels of protein. See if you can incorporate some into your diet if you don't already.



Plant based protein
PER 100G IN WEIGHT



Plant Based Iron Sources

Iron is an essential nutrient that plays an important role in many bodily functions. If you are deficient in iron, you may look pale, feel tired or breathless, or suffer dizzy spells. Men and post-menopausal women need around 8mg per day but this requirement is higher for premenopausal and pregnant women. It can be found in two forms in food – heme and non-heme. Heme forms are only found in animal products so will be lacking in a vegetarian diet. However, non-heme forms can be found in plants – the bad news is that it is less easily absorbed, so guidelines recommend the recommended daily intake to be 1.8 times higher for vegetarians (around 14mg per day). That's a lot of iron to try and pack in daily! However, the good news is that vitamin C maximises iron absorption, so try to pair your non-heme sources with vegetables high in vitamin C, such as onions, tomatoes, or peppers.

The diagram on this page gives some idea of foods that can be consumed as part of a vegetarian diet which are particularly high in iron and will help you hit your daily quota. Soybeans are a good source, and adding a tin of lentils or beans to stews or curries, sprinkling seeds on top of yoghurt or salads, snacking on olives and having nuts or nut butters – will all help.

Dark leafy veg such as spinach and kale pack a good iron punch and brassicas like brussels sprouts and broccoli also score quite highly. Surprisingly, canned coconut milk contains a good amount of iron and is delicious in soups and curries so why not give it a try?

½ Cup of Tofu
6.6mg iron



1 Cup of Tempeh
4.5mg iron



1 Cup of Cooked Lentils
6.6mg iron



1 Cup of Lima Beans
4.5mg iron



1 Cup of Spinach
6.4mg iron



1 Cup of Black Eyed Peas
4.3mg iron



1 Cup of Cooked Kidney Beans
5.2mg iron



1 Cup of Boiled Swiss Chard
3.9mg iron



1 Cup of Chickpeas
4.7mg iron



1 Cup of Black Beans
3.6mg iron



1 Cup of Soybeans
4.5mg iron



1 Cup of Cooked Kale
1.6mg iron



Gender/Age	Recommended daily intake
Men over 18	8.7mg
Women aged 19 to 50	14.8mg
Women over 50	8.7mg

Contributors

So many people have helped bring this book together. Firstly, it would not have come about without the kind support of Mid and South Essex Integrated Care Board (ICB) (a statutory body that brings the NHS together locally with partner organisations), who had faith in the Freshwell Low Carb Project, and wanted to help us roll it out throughout the wider area to help more people reap the health benefits of improving their diet.

Katie Caldesi and Octopus Books were kind enough to let me use some of their published low carb recipes. Dr Jen Unwin, a health psychologist, has also donated recipes from her book “Fork in the Road”. Emma Porter, a low carb recipe designer and blogger who herself has type 1 diabetes, has provided some lovely recipes including her super simple “2 Ingredient Chocolate Mousse” – an absolute must try!

Members of our low carb Facebook group have also kindly donated recipes, with Viv and Pam being two of our patient expert volunteers. If you would like to know a little more about their personal low carb stories, then do read on.

Our local foodbanks and groups working with them have also allowed us to tweak some of their recipes and include them here. I am very grateful to everyone that has worked with us and contributed to make this book happen. If you would like to know more about the contributors, please read on – you will also find more information on available books by these contributors in our Recommended Reading list.

Mid and South Essex Integrated Care Board

Dan Doherty, Mid Essex Alliance Director, has been the project sponsor of this work and first challenged us to produce additional meal planners that could be used and enjoyed by even more people across Essex. Dan was first told about the low carb diet and the science behind it by my colleague and fellow GP Partner Dr Oliver and was shocked as to the impact of certain foods on health, such as ultra-processed carbohydrates. Dan has enjoyed trying out low carb meals himself but recognised that some of the recipes and ingredients were expensive, so wondered what meals could be made with a lower budget and/or more ethnically diverse. He challenged colleague Emily Fallon, Mid Essex Alliance Transformation Manager, to work with us to develop this project and develop more low-carb materials. Emily has coordinated the project since, kept us on track, and supported us to map out the project plan, delivery plan, and evaluation. As a Registered Associate Nutritionist, Emily is passionate about good food and nutrition, and understands how vital nutrition is for good health, wellbeing, and disease management. Emily is an advocate for the low carb lifestyle, particularly for the purposes of weight management and Type 2 diabetes control; she has even shared the manuals with her Grandma, a Type 2 Diabetic, who has enjoyed cooking the new recipes with Emily, and feels much better for doing so. We have all received great support from Emily and Dan’s colleague

Megan Cornish, Mid Essex Alliance Administrator, who has helped with research and edited various documents within the planners, which we hope you will enjoy reading and learning from. Megan is new to the team and has loved being involved in this project and can't wait to try out some of the recipes – perfect for lunch at work!

Local Partners

Special thanks go to those who helped us right at the start of the project, when we were exploring what to focus on in the manuals and understand what matters most to people when it comes to eating good food.

Survey distribution

Thank you very much to the local organisations that helped us to gather views about the project. We wrote a survey to find out what people thought about 'healthy eating', and what might help them to eat well. We are so grateful to local Community Pharmacies, GP practices, churches, leisure centres, community fridges, plus parish and town Councils within the Braintree District for displaying our survey poster in their windows/noticeboards, and some on their social media. Special thanks also go to **BRAINTREE FOODBANK**, specifically Project Manager Lee Ranson, who not only helped us to write the survey to ensure that it made sense, but also with his team of volunteers who added copies of the survey to hundreds of food bank parcels, so that we could hear the views of as many local people as possible. We are pleased to have received very helpful feedback that we have directly used in the meal planners, such as how our recipes are written and formatted, as well as people's favourite recipes.

Focus group



We ran a focus group at **HEALTHWATCH ESSEX** and invited local people and organisations to attend to share their views. Healthwatch Essex really helped us to plan out our focus group, and Engagement Manager Dan Potts was particularly helpful, sharing his suggestions on specific questions to ask the participants. We were supported by **BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL** staff to deliver this focus group, specifically engagement officer Jo Norris and Health Improvement Officer Katie Bright. We were also supported by Colne Valley Primary Care Network Health and Wellbeing Coach, Sharon Withnell, who has been fundamental in delivering our low carb service for our registered patients, and helped to expand this work across the whole of Essex. Our team of facilitators are shown above, and our full group with attendees are shown below.



We are so pleased to have had great attendance and really useful suggestions shared, which we have used to shape the project. Attendees (shown above) included **ACTIVE ESSEX, PURPLE OLIVE CATERING, ESSEX WELLBEING SERVICE – PROVIDE CIC, and EASTLIGHT COMMUNITY HOMES**. We discussed what the barriers and facilitators are to eating well, as well as what we could add to our planners for them to be used and enjoyed as much as possible. The group gave us great ideas for the language, content, and format of our materials.

Soul Food

The Gateway Project is a Christian community in Halstead, grown out of St Andrew's Church, Halstead. The project has been running a food outreach programme in their local community since June 2021.



Soul Food provides a beautiful free weekly two course take away service and it's available to anyone who needs it. Since the project's launch it has served over 2,000 meals, some of which have been included in our meal planners- we selected the ones that Halstead residents loved the most!

The idea for Soul Food developed out of a door-step conversation between Rev Jo Parrot (St Andrew's Curate) and Rachael Simpson (Community Outreach Worker) about the impact that the Covid pandemic was having locally, and the church wanted to help meet the needs of the community.

Soul Food is supported by a team of volunteers who give their time and culinary skills to prepare meals for the local community and is led by Rachael Simpson the Community Outreach worker. In 2022, the team started an allotment to grow produce for the takeaway meals and regularly features produce in their meals.

Rachael explains more about the Soul Food project: "We set up Soul Food takeaway service to help people in our local community who needed support with meals after the first lockdown. If the last couple of years has taught us anything, it's the importance of community, Jesus was big in community and sharing life together. Soul Food is open to all in the local area, and everyone is welcome. Hospitality is key to our ministry and is at the centre of what do. We hope that Soul Food is more than a takeaway and that it helps build community. We are widening our services in November 2022 to offer sit down meals and hope this will help people connect and build friendships – watch this space!"

Contact: @GatewayHalstead on Facebook

The Salvation Army (Colchester)

Thank you to all our lovely colleagues at **THE SALVATION ARMY** in Colchester for sharing their "Cooking on a budget" resource which helped to influence some of the recipes we created. It encouraged us to explore how we can utilise our store cupboard staples to create nutritious options, which taste good and do good, on a budget.

Katie & Giancarlo Caldesi

Katie and Giancarlo Caldesi own London's Caffé Caldesi as well as Caldesi in Campagna in Bray. They co-authored *The Gentle Art of Preserving* and *Around The World in Salads* which was nominated for the André Simon Food Book Award and the Guild of Food Writers' Cookbook of the Year award. They have both appeared on Saturday Kitchen. Katie is also the author of *The Italian Cookery Course*.

Giancarlo was diagnosed with type 2 diabetes in 2012. Since then, he has lost nearly 4 stone and his diabetes is in remission after adopting a low carb diet.

Both Katie and Giancarlo are passionate in wanting to share their story and spread the word that type 2 diabetes should be taken seriously, but at the same time reinforce that you can help yourself back to health and away from this condition through diet, not drugs. They have loved creating recipes that satiate and are easy to produce. "Quality, quantity, movement" is Giancarlo's mantra, and I wholeheartedly agree!

Check out their wonderful, low carb cookbooks: *The Diabetes Weight-Loss Cookbook*, *The Reverse Your Diabetes Cookbook*, *The 30 Minute Diabetes Cookbook*, and *The Low Carb Weight-Loss Cookbook*.



Dr Jen Unwin

Dr Jen Unwin is a clinical psychologist. And a lifelong carbohydrate addict. Jen wrote "Fork in the Road" which guides you in a clear way to identifying if you have carbohydrate addiction, finding the motivation to change your life, understanding how to build the right daily eating plan, the strategies for long-term success, and where to go for more information and support. In this beautifully illustrated book, Jen teams up with top clinicians in the field and with creative low-carbers who share what they have learned about freeing yourself from the emotional and physical dangers of overeating sugars, flours, and processed foods.

Check out the book and Jen's website at <https://forkintheroad.co.uk>

Fork in the Road
by Dr Jen Unwin



Emma Porter

Emma lives in Cheltenham with her two daughters and husband. Just before her eighteenth birthday, Emma was diagnosed with type 1 diabetes and found it a very challenging disease to live with, with as many ups and downs as she has had high and low blood sugars. Emma came across Paleo low carb through her trainer and friend and within 10 months, she fell in love with this lifestyle. Her once erratically controlled diabetes was suddenly in the best shape of it's life and she wasn't having to calculate the amount of carbohydrate she was ingesting all the time – managing to cut her insulin intake by approximately 60%.

Emma is the co-author of *The Low Carb Diabetes Cookbook* and has a website *The Low Carb Kitchen*, which has a collection of delicious, nutritious recipes and blogs. Check it out at

<https://thelowcarbkitchen.co.uk>

The Low Carb Diabetes Cookbook – Dr David Cavan and Emma Porter



Our Low Carb Patient Experts

Viv and Pam are both members of our Low Carb PCN Facebook group and are true advocates for low carb after obtaining truly life changing results from this lifestyle. They are both vegetarian and have contributed some lovely recipes to this planner. You can read a little more about their own personal journeys here.....

Pam Moore

I started my low carb journey after years of feeling unwell. I had heard of low carb helping to put diabetes into remission, but I didn't think it would be easy to do. At 63 years old, I decided it was time to look after myself after spending all my adult life nursing and looking after my family.

I discovered the work of Dr David Unwin and found him to be so incredibly inspiring. A friend then discovered the Freshwell Low Carb Project locally to me and I went along to a meeting at the Guildhall in Finchingfield. I met Viv and Daryl (the group leaders) and thought that the work they were doing was incredible.

I got on the low carb journey straight away! I had bit of a clear out of my pantry so I was not tempted by eating high carb foods. Within a few days I noticed my arthritic joints were not as painful, and my sugar levels and blood pressure had dropped. I weaned off my medication under my GP's supervision and the saving for the NHS for my drugs alone was **£1,500 per year.**

I felt rejuvenated and my daily activities became enjoyable and so I decided after just five months to start running again. I hadn't been able to do that for a few decades due to the aches and pains. I also found I was not waking up to use the bathroom at night and felt more refreshed in the morning. I enjoy food very much and I dine out and still stick to the plan. When choosing a new restaurant, I look at the menu first to see what I can eat and if I need to make substitutions, I ring the restaurant and ask. I find that the smaller places will be more than happy to help if you make the request in advance.

As a grandmother I can enjoy my days with my grandson who is a very active toddler and still have enough energy to go to the gym for a Bounce Class and Pilates. I do about 8-10 gym sessions per week but I do mix the activities up every six weeks or so.

I am forever grateful to all the support and encouragement I have had from the Colne Valley Low Carb Group and I have definitely made some new friends too. Daryl is always there to give me some helpful advice and listen to me when I need someone. 2022 was a tough year and I couldn't have achieved what I have without everyone's help.

I have gone down from a size 18 to a size 10/12 now. I love the new figure I have and the feeling of being alive is incredible. Shopping for clothes has become so much easier too. My endocrinologist has told me that I have extended my life by about twenty years.

Thank you for reading a bit about me. Now, for your wellbeing - just do it, you have so much to gain!



Viv Hamilton

I have been a vegetarian for practically all my adult life. I started to slowly gain weight in my late twenties and had the usual experience of yo-yo dieting. I had been obese for about twenty years before finding out about low carb from the Freshwell surgery and my husband and I made the switch to a low carb lifestyle together. Initially we just cut back on starchy carbs - there didn't seem to be any guidance for how to be low carb AND vegetarian. Cutting out wholegrains went against the traditional advice for vegetarians who are told to combine pulses with wholegrains to obtain complete proteins from plants. I did some research and found out that small seeds (flax, hemp, sesame, chia etc) are not only low carb, they have a better nutritional profile than starchy grains and they are at least as good in complementing the profile of amino acids in pulses.

Low carb has been transformational for me. I have lost over 6 stone, feel a lot younger and am now in the healthy weight range. My IBS symptoms have disappeared, I have been deprescribed most of my blood pressure medicine and I no longer have arthritis pain in my knee. As my way of saying thank you, I now help others on their low carb journey.



Recommended Reading and Resources List

Books

- **The Obesity Code**, Dr Jason Fung
- **Why We Get Fat and What to Do About It**, Gary Taubes
- **Metabolical**, Robert Lustig
- **Why We Get Sick**, Benjamin Bikman
- **The Big Fat Surprise**, Nina Teicholz
- **Wheat Belly**, William Davis MD
- **Eat Rich, Live Long**, Ivor Cummins and Jeffry Gerber
- **The Complete Guide to Fasting**, Jason Fung and Jimmy Moore
- **The P:E Diet**, Ted Naiman
- **Fork In The Road**, Jen Unwin (food addiction)
- **The Diabetes Weight-Loss Cookbook**, Katie Caldesi and Giancarlo Caldesi
- **The Reverse Your Diabetes Cookbook**, Katie Caldesi and Giancarlo Caldesi
- **The 30 Minutes Diabetes Cookbook**, Katie Caldesi and Giancarlo Caldesi
- **The Low Carb Weight-Loss Cookbook**, Katie Caldesi and Giancarlo Caldesi

- **The Low Carb Diabetes Cookbook**, Dr David Cavan and Emma Porter
- **The Low Carb Baking Bible**, Emma Porter
- **Paleo Canteen Low Carb on a Budget**, John Meechan and Ally Houston

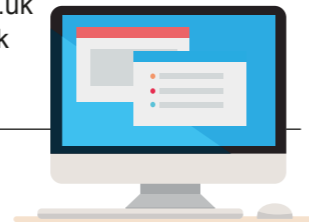
Local bookshop

Between the Lines, Vine Street, Great Bardfield, Essex, CM7 4SR (stocks a variety of the above suggested low carb books)



Websites

www.lowcarbfreshwell.co.uk
www.dietdoctor.com
www.sugarfreelondoner.com
www.wholesomeyum.com
www.lowcarbtogether.com
www.thelowcarbkitchen.co.uk
www.colnevalleypcn.nhs.uk
www.phcuk.org



Online peer support groups

- **Colne Valley PCN low carb support group** - Colne Valley Low Carb Support Group, Facebook <https://en-gb.facebook.com/groups/382235179606729/>
- **Low Carb Programme Essex Wellbeing Service** <https://www.facebook.com/groups/507672944551889/?ref=share>

Local restaurants and bakeries

As our low carb project has picked up pace, it has been amazing to get involved with our community via our local eateries and shops. Many of our local restaurants and pubs now offer low carb options to help support our project and the very many patients and members of our community who have chosen to embark upon a low carb lifestyle. Please support them!

- **The Fox Inn**
The Green, Finchingfield, Essex, CM7 4JX
- **Finchingfield Post Office**
(stocks all your low carb pantry essentials)
Bardfield Road, Finchingfield, Essex, CM7 4LS
- **Unikorn low carb Bakery Ltd**
(for bread, bread mixes and croissants)
5 The Links Business Centre, Bishops Stortford, Hertfordshire, CM23 5NZ

Also order online at www.lowcarb-bakery.com

- **Fox and Herb** – Deli and Gourmet Food Emporium
95-97 High Street, Halstead, Essex, CO9 2JQ

App

Freshwell – available on Android and iOS



There is support available for the use of technology and use of digital products, such as:

- help sessions in local libraries
- remote training and support for people who require help with essential IT skills, offered by we are digital - call 0114 551 2551 to get started
- <https://www.learnmyway.com/> - online training
- <https://aclessex.com/digital-skills> - can be delivered online with tutor support or at a centre
- To be directed to support contact Community360 on 01206 505250 or msp@community360.org.uk

Services

There are **free, local weight management services** to offer further support from trained staff, as follows.

- **Colne Valley PCN Freshwell Low Carb Programme** - for patients registered to either Coggeshall Surgery, Pump House, Kelvedon and Feering, Freshwell Health Centre, Elizabeth Courtauld, or Heddingham Medical Centre. The programme incorporates the easy-to-use Freshwell App, educational video modules, and a dedicated health and wellbeing coach offering 1-2-1 support in engaging with the educational materials, the setting of SMART goals reviewing successes and challenges, and moving forward towards desired outcomes over a 12-week period. A smart phone or laptop with access to the internet is required. The service incorporates modules for weight management, education for prediabetes and structured education for type 2 diabetes. More information can be found at <https://www.colnevalleypcn.nhs.uk/local-support-advice/colne-valley-low-carb-lifestyle/>
- **Essex Wellbeing Service (EWS) Low Carb Programme** - The Low Carb Programme is a self-guided programme that uses Freshwell resources. Participants can benefit from information, skills, tips and support to help them to adopt a low-carb approach and achieve their health goals. By signing up to the Low Carb Programme you will receive educational videos and get access to the Freshwell App where you can find additional information, tips and recipes. You will also be assigned a

Wellbeing Practitioner and have up to six telephone sessions. You will be invited to join the EWS Low Carb Facebook group and be part of the supportive online community of clients all on the Low Carb programme. Essex Wellbeing Service also supports with lots of other health and wellbeing related areas, such as smoking cessation, emotional health and wellbeing support, and much more. Information can be found at www.essexwellbeingservice.co.uk/services/weight-management

There are also many other free services available to support you with your overall health and wellbeing:

- **Eating disorder** - Beat offers a free helpline, open every day of the year from 9am to midnight during the week, and 4pm to midnight on weekends and bank holidays 0808 801 0677 or a 1-2-1 web chat via **One-to-One Web Chat - Beat** (beateatingdisorders.org.uk)
- **Citizens Advice** support with debt management, tackling fuel poverty, and many other areas. Each area has their own citizens advice, but their general contact number is 808 223 1133.
- **Talking therapy** - free and confidential talking therapy and practical support for adults with common mental health problems including anxiety and depression. For more information, visit: **Health in Mind - Mid Essex IAPT HPFT IAPT Services** (hpftiapt.nhs.uk)

4 week

ROTATING MEAL PLANNER

WEEK ONE

(see recipes in bold)

	BREAKFAST	LUNCH	DINNER
MONDAY	Greek yoghurt with blueberries	Cheese and mushroom omelette	Roasted Vegetable Quiche with a Cheddar Crust served with salad or swede
TUESDAY	Scrambled egg with fried mushrooms	Home Made Hummus served with Keto Crackers and salad	Veggie Mince Chilli served with cauliflower rice
WEDNESDAY	Berry and Cinnamon Breakfast Omelette	Cheese, antipasti and olives with Keto Crackers	Cauliflower and Butternut Squash Curry served with cauliflower rice or Keto Chapatis
THURSDAY	2-3 hard boiled eggs dipped in mayo and salt	Mrs P's Brown Bread sandwich with filling of your choice	Mushroom Stroganov served with swede mash
FRIDAY	Mrs P's Brown Bread with low carb topping of your choice (try peanut butter or cream cheese)	Guacamole with Keto Crackers	Jasons's Shakshuka with Keto Chapatis
SATURDAY	Grilled halloumi with fried eggs and mushrooms	2-3 veggie sausages with reduced sugar baked beans	Roasted Aubergines and Chickpeas with Coconut Milk served with cauliflower rice or Keto Chapatis
SUNDAY	TWO MEAL DAY – eat brunch and evening meal	Fry Up! Try eggs, veggie sausages, beans and mushrooms	Leek, Spinach and Feta Showstopper served with salad or roast vegetables

WEEK TWO

(see recipes in bold)

	BREAKFAST	LUNCH	DINNER
MONDAY	Greek yoghurt with raspberries	Cheese and spinach omelette	Veggie sausages with Dr Kim's Cauliflower Cheese
TUESDAY	Soft boiled eggs with Halloumi soldiers	Salad with boiled eggs or feta cheese	Smoked Tofu and Green Beans served with Baby Corn Rice
WEDNESDAY	Toasted Mrs P's Brown Bread with low carb topping of your choice	Cheese, antipasti and olives with Keto Crackers	Babs's Ful Medames served with Keto Chapati
THURSDAY	Berry and Cinnamon Breakfast Omelette	Mrs P's Brown Bread sandwich with filling of your choice	Anda Bhurgi
FRIDAY	Greek yoghurt sprinkled with flaked almonds and dessicated coconut	Grilled Halloumi with Indian Inspired Coleslaw	Veggie Mince Chilli served alone or with cauliflower rice
SATURDAY	Grilled halloumi with fried eggs and mushrooms	Charlotte's Simple Dahl with Keto Chapatis	Chinese Omelette and Chinese Fried Lettuce served with cauliflower rice
SUNDAY	TWO MEAL DAY – eat brunch and evening meal	Fry Up! Try eggs, veggie sausages, beans and mushrooms	Pumpkin, Pepper and Halloumi Traybake

WEEK THREE

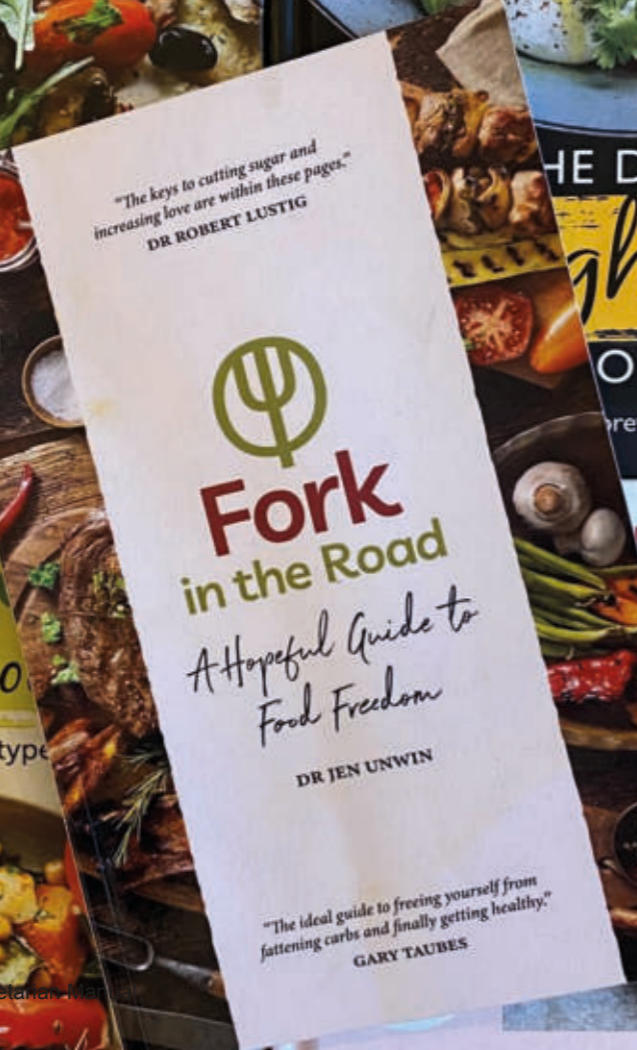
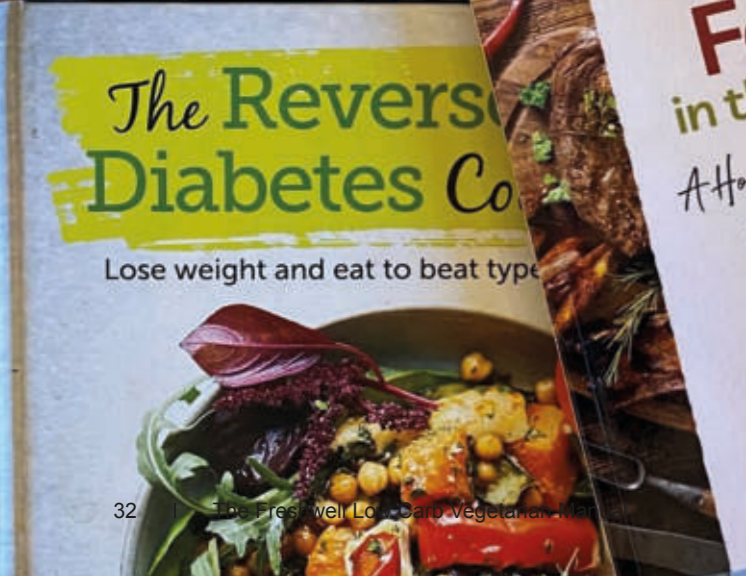
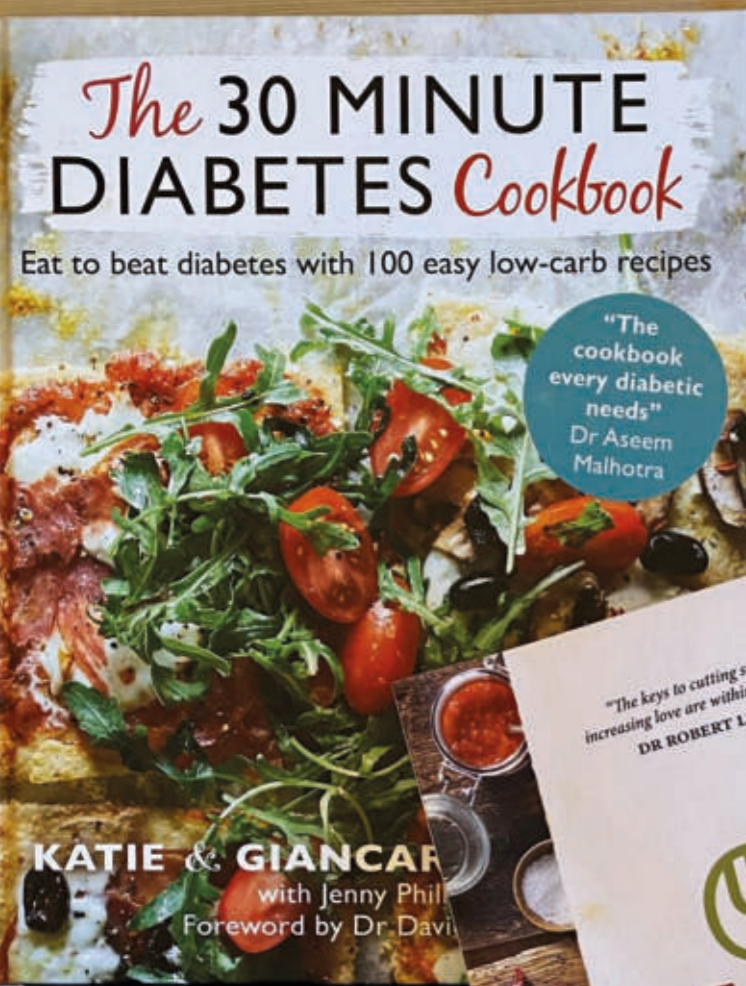
(see recipes in bold)

	BREAKFAST	LUNCH	DINNER
MONDAY	Greek yoghurt with pecans and blueberries	Sundried tomato and feta omelette	Mushroom Stroganov served with swede mash
TUESDAY	Scrambled egg with fried mushrooms	Vegetarian soup of your choice (home made or shop bought – aim for low carb with the least processed ingredients e.g. lentil, cream based)	Cauliflower and Butternut Squash Curry served with cauliflower rice or Keto Chapatis
WEDNESDAY	Toasted Mrs P's Brown Bread with low carb topping of your choice	Cheese, antipasti and olives with Keto Crackers	Smoked Tofu and Green Beans served with Baby Corn Rice
THURSDAY	Boiled eggs dipped in mayo and salt	Mrs P's Brown Bread served with filling of your choice	Veggie sausages with Dr Kim's Cauliflower Cheese
FRIDAY	Greek yoghurt with flaked almonds and/or desiccated coconut	Anda Bhurgi	Grandma's Cabbage and Egg served with cauliflower rice
SATURDAY	Berry and Cinnamon Breakfast Omelette	2-3 veggie sausages with reduced sugar baked beans	Cheese Fondue
SUNDAY	TWO MEAL DAY – eat brunch and evening meal	Fry Up! (Try eggs, veggie sausages, beans and mushrooms)	Roast Butternut Squash with Sage and Seeds served with portobello mushrooms topped with cheese

WEEK FOUR

(see recipes in bold)

	BREAKFAST	LUNCH	DINNER
MONDAY	Greek yoghurt with blueberries	Mozzarella and mushroom omelette	Roasted Aubergine and Chickpeas with Coconut Milk served with Salad Drawer Pakora
TUESDAY	Scrambled egg with fried mushrooms	Cheese, antipasti and olives with Keto Crackers	Veggie Mince Chilli served alone or with cauliflower rice
WEDNESDAY	Toasted Mrs P's Brown Bread with low carb topping of your choice	Grilled Halloumi with Indian Inspired Coleslaw	Jason's Shakshuka with Keto Chapatis Rice
THURSDAY	Soft boiled eggs with grilled halloumi Soldiers	Vegetarian soup of your choice (home made or shop bought – aim for low carb with the least processed ingredients e.g. lentil, cream based)	Roasted Vegetable Quiche with a Cheddar Crust served with side salad
FRIDAY	Greek yoghurt with flaked almonds and/or desiccated coconut	Left over Roasted Vegetable quiche with a Cheddar Crust	Anda Bhurgi
SATURDAY	Grilled halloumi with fried eggs and mushrooms	2-3 veggie sausages with reduced sugar baked beans	Pumpkin, Pepper and Halloumi Traybake
SUNDAY	TWO MEAL DAY – eat brunch and evening meal	Fry Up! Try eggs, veggie sausages, beans and mushrooms	Leek, Spinach and Feta Showstopper served with salad or roast vegetables



Vegetarian RECIPES



Berry and Cinnamon Breakfast Omelette

Serves 1

A lovely recipe kindly donated by Emma Porter of The Low Carb Kitchen. You may not usually think of eating berries and cinnamon with an omelette but it works surprisingly well and is packed full of protein – an excellent way to start the day!

This is a delicious protein-packed breakfast. A satisfying and speedy omelette with the delicious natural sweetness of blueberries and cinnamon. Perfect for those seeking a sweeter dish without all the carbs you find in a starchy cereal breakfast.

Prep time: 2 mins
Cook time: 7 mins

INGREDIENTS

- 3 large free range eggs
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 50g / 1oz. blueberries
- 1 teaspoon coconut oil
- Sprinkle of pumpkin seeds, optional

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1 Gently beat the 3 eggs together in a bowl.
- 2 Heat a deep-frying pan with one teaspoon of coconut oil.
- 3 Put half the blueberries in to the frying pan to soften for about 30 seconds.
- 4 Add in the egg mixture.
- 5 Move the uncooked egg around the pan with a spatula until all the egg starts to set and the whole pan is covered.
- 6 Cover omelette with cinnamon and remaining blueberries and turn to low heat.
- 7 Cook for a further 1-2 minutes until the cinnamon mostly melted in to the omelette.
- 8 Fold the omelette in half and cook for a further 30 seconds.
- 9 Serve immediately with a sprinkling of pumpkin seeds.

Nutritional information:

	Per serving
Energy	1093kJ / 262cal
Fat	15g
Of which Saturates	4.5g
Carbohydrate	5g
Of which sugars	4.5g
Protein	24.5g
Salt	0.6g

*Please note: If you add additional fruit or toppings you might have to calculate any extra carbs.

Indian Inspired Coleslaw

Serves 4

A recipe from Pam, a member of our Low Carb Facebook Group, and low carb convert. Quick, easy, and a lovely side course to complement delicious veggie curries.

INGREDIENTS

- 200 g cabbage (can be red, white or a combination of both) finely chopped or shredded
- 1 small red onion finely sliced
- 1 medium carrot grated (optional)
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1-2 teaspoons chaat masala
- 2-3 tablespoons apple cider vinegar
- 1 teaspoon sweetener – erythritol or xylitol (optional)
- 3 tablespoon fresh chopped coriander or other herb of your choice.

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1 Chop or shred the cabbage, onion and carrots (if using).
- 2 Place in a large bowl or container.
- 3 Add the salt, chaat masala, sweetener and vinegar and combine well.
- 4 Cover the mixture and allow to rest for a few hours to allow the flavours to develop.
- 5 Sprinkle fresh chopped herbs on the top and you are ready to serve.



Charlotte's Simple Dahl

Serves 4 as main (375g/13oz portions)
or 6 as a lighter meal (250g/9oz portions)

This is a lovely spicy lentil curry kindly donated by Katie Caldesi from her Diabetes Weight Loss Cookbook.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 small onion, finely chopped
- a thumb-length piece of fresh ginger, peeled and finely chopped or grated
- 1 garlic clove, finely chopped or grated
- 2 tablespoons ghee, butter or extra virgin olive oil
- 1 teaspoon smoked paprika
- 1 teaspoon ground turmeric
- 2 teaspoons ground cumin
- ½ teaspoon chilli flakes
- 320g (11 ½ oz) split red lentils, rinsed
- 400g (14oz) can cherry or plum tomatoes
- 400g (14oz) can coconut milk
- a handful of baby spinach
- salt and freshly ground black pepper
- a handful of chopped coriander, to serve (optional)

Per serving (375g/13oz portion)
11g net carbs, 13.9g fibre, 9.1g protein,
23.7g fat, 329kcal

Per serving (250g/9oz portion)
7.3g net carbs, 9.3g fibre, 6g protein,
15.8g fat, 219kcal

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1 Charlotte Soin was taught how to make dahl by her Indian grandmother but over the years has added her own twists to the original recipe. This dahl is simple comfort food, but you can also add the odds and ends of chopped vegetables, use it as a base for fried or poached eggs, top it with some crispy fried onions or serve it with a pile of steamed green vegetables doused in chilli oil. For a creamier texture, use a whisk to break up the lentils. I use split red lentils, which are quick to cook and full of insoluble fibre to keep the net carb count down. If you don't have these, use quick-cooking brown ones or cooked and drained green lentils instead.
- 2 Fry the onion, ginger and garlic in the ghee for 3 minutes in a medium saucepan. Add the spices, 1 teaspoon of salt and plenty of freshly ground black pepper and stir through, cooking for a minute before stirring in the lentils. Pour in the tomatoes and coconut milk, then fill one of the cans with warm water and add that too. Bring to the boil and as soon as it starts bubbling, reduce the heat and cook for 15–20 minutes or until the lentils are soft. Stir frequently and add a splash more water as necessary to stop the lentils from burning and to achieve a thick, spoonable consistency. Season to taste.
- 3 Stir in the spinach and allow it to wilt. Spoon the dahl into warm bowls and serve sprinkled with the coriander, if using.



The 30 Minute Diabetes Cookbook by Katie & Giancarlo Caldesi is published by Kyle Books (£20)





Guacamole

Serves 4 as a side

Essentially a low carb recipe in itself, fresh guacamole is so much better than shop bought and you can make a lot more for the same price!

INGREDIENTS

- 2 medium avocados – fresh or frozen
- 1 tablespoon lime juice – fresh or bottled
- ½ teaspoon salt or to taste
- 1 tablespoon fresh coriander (optional)
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- ½ teaspoon garlic powder
- Hot chilli powder, red pepper flakes or cayenne pepper to give a bit of heat (optional and to taste)

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1 Peel avocados and remove stones. Leave chopped frozen avocado out to defrost.
- 2 Mash up in a bowl with a fork or a spoon.
- 3 Add remaining ingredients and stir until well combined.
- 4 Serve as a side with veggie chilli con carne, or as a topping for nachos or seed crackers.
- 5 Can be stored in the fridge in a sealed container for up to 4 days.



Home-made Hummus

Serves 4

INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups drained canned chickpeas
- ½ cup tahini (sesame paste)
- ¼ cup olive oil
- 1-2 cloves garlic or more as to your preference
- 1 tablespoon ground cumin
- Juice of one lemon plus more to taste
- 1/3 cup water or as needed
- Salt and ground black pepper to taste

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1 Place everything except water in a food processor and process.
- 2 Add water as needed to make a smooth purée.
- 3 Taste and add more garlic, salt, lemon juice or cumin to your preference.
- 4 Serve drizzled with olive oil and sprinkled with a bit of cumin.
- 5 Serve with seed crackers as a snack, or with falafel and a tomato and cucumber chopped salad as a main meal.

You can buy falafel ready-made or most larger supermarkets stock a dried falafel mix which can be formed into balls and then deep fried.



Quick Red Onion Pickle

Serves 2-3

Another delicious recipe from our vegetarian expert patient Pam. A perfect little onion relish that can be enjoyed as a side with curry, as a chutney with cheese and seed crackers, or as a salad dressing. It can be stored in the fridge in a sealed jar for 2 weeks just in case you have any left over!

INGREDIENTS

- 1 large red onion
- 1 lime juiced
- Equal amount of apple cider vinegar (preferably with the mother)
- 1/2 teaspoon salt

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1 Slice the onion into thin slices or chop finely.
- 2 Put into a small plastic container or an old clean jam jar.
- 3 Sprinkle the salt on the onions.
- 4 Juice the lime and add to the onion mix (you could also use ready made lime juice).
- 5 Add the same amount of apple cider vinegar.
- 6 Put a lid on the container and shake well.
- 7 Rest for 15-30 minutes. Its ready to enjoy!



Keto Chapatis

Makes two chapatis

A must have for sopping up the last juices of a tasty veggie curry or to scoop up Ful Medames (see recipe). Would also work as flat tortillas for making sandwich wraps. It's important not to overcook these wraps as otherwise they lose their flexibility and will tend to crack when you bend them. The xantham gum is imperative to bind the ingredients together and avoid crumbling. This recipe was donated by a member of the Public Health Collaboration, whose sister is a nutritionist in Canada and came up with the recipe.

INGREDIENTS

- 95g almond flour
- 25g coconut flour
- 1 egg beaten
- 3 teaspoons water
- 2 teaspoons white vinegar
- 2 teaspoons xantham gum
- 1 teaspoon baking powder

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1 Combine all ingredients well until it forms a dough.
- 2 Wrap in cling film and rest in the fridge for a minimum of 10 minutes but up to an hour.
- 3 Remove the dough and divide into two balls.
- 4 Place a ball of dough between two sheets of greaseproof paper and roll out using a rolling pin into a thin, flat circle (it doesn't have to be a perfect shape!).
- 5 Repeat using the second portion.
- 6 Heat a non-stick frying pan.
- 7 Add a chapati and cook for 30 seconds on each side until lightly browned – consider using a timer here, as if you overcook the dough it will lose its elasticity.
- 8 When cooked, place the chapati between two kitchen tea towels to retain the moisture and keep it flexible and pliable.
- 9 The chapatis will be ready after around 10 minutes of resting.



Keto Crackers

Serves 2-3

An essential for any low carb cupboard – these crackers are better than high carb options (in my opinion!) and keep for a few weeks in an airtight tin – if they last that long.....

INGREDIENTS

- 45g ground almonds or almond flour
- 45g sunflower seeds
- 25g milled flaxseed
- 20g chia seeds
- 45g pumpkin seeds
- 45g sesame seeds
- 1 tablespoon psyllium husk powder
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 fluid ounces of coconut oil
- 8 fluid ounces of boiling water (approx. 1 cup)

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1 Mix all the dry ingredients together in a bowl and then add the boiling water and melted oil/butter.
- 2 Combine well with a fork until it thickens.
- 3 Line a baking sheet with greaseproof paper and put the mixture in the centre.
- 4 Place another piece of greaseproof paper on the top of the mixture and use a rolling pin to flatten it until thin and even – make sure you don't make it too thin – you shouldn't be able to see any greaseproof paper under it.
- 5 Remove the upper paper, and if you wish, use a pizza cutter or knife to score the flattened mixture into square cracker shapes.
- 6 Place in an oven preheated to 150C for 45 minutes – be careful not to burn.
- 7 Turn off the oven, but leave the crackers inside until it has cooled.
- 8 If you haven't pre-cut your crackers – then feel free to snap the sheet into shards.

Serve with hummus, guacamole or your favourite cheese.

Store in an airtight container for 3-4 weeks. If they do soften, I find placing them under a grill for a few minutes, crisps them up nicely.

Mrs P's Brown Bread

Serves: Approximately 18 slices

Here is a super easy low carb "brown bread" recipe kindly donated from Emma Porter of The Low Carb Kitchen. As with most low carb baked goods, the bread is more dense but still delicious. It will keep in your bread bin for 4 days or in the fridge for up to 8 days.

A quick, simple and nutritionally dense low carb, brown bread recipe. Free from grains and gluten, this recipe is delicious toasted or enjoyed as an open sandwich.

INGREDIENTS

- 300g / 10oz brown milled flaxseed
- 5 large eggs
- 2 tablespoons / 1 fl oz olive oil (suitable alternatives: coconut oil or avocado oil)
- 4 tablespoons / 2 fl oz water
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 teaspoon sea salt

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1 Preheat your oven to 180°C / 350°F.
- 2 Place the milled flaxseed in to a deep mixing bowl with the baking powder and sea salt. Combine the two ingredients and make a well in to the middle of the mixture.
- 3 In a separate bowl whisk eggs, oil and water, until well combined and smooth.
- 4 Pour the egg mix in to the well of the flour and using a wooden spoon combine the wet and dry ingredients together to form a thick batter.
- 5 Spoon the batter in to a greased loaf tin (we recommend a silicone tin but you can use greaseproof paper if necessary). Pop in the oven for 25 minutes until you have a solid crust and the bread has risen (this will be a small rise). If you do not have a fan assisted oven then this may take a little longer.
- 6 Carefully remove the bread and allow to cool on a wire rack.
- 7 Allow the bread to cool completely before storing in a tin. It will keep at room temperature for up to 4 days, or in the fridge (in a sealed container) for up to 8 days. Alternatively slice up and freeze for up to 3 months.

Prep time: 5 minutes

Cook time: 25 minutes

Notes

I suggest using a 2 lb loaf tin. This will create a perfect farmhouse tin loaf. However, if you would like to mould it in to a round or oval shape you can do. Just ensure that the dough isn't too wet.

The nutritional information is a guideline, please always note that different ingredients nutritional value can vary depending on brand. Please also always check the back of packaging for any added ingredients, salts and sugars and avoid where possible.

Nutritional information:

	Per 100g	Per slice (20g)
Energy	2200kj/534kcal	336kj/106kcal
Fat	45g	9g
Of which Saturates	4.3g	<1g
Carbohydrate	2.2g	<1g
Of which sugars	1.3g	trace
Protein	19g	3.8g
Salt	2.4g	trace

Veggie Mince Chilli

Serves 2-3

Chilli is an excellent option for a quick, filling meal. And there is no reason that a meat free version based around veggie mince shouldn't be just as tasty! Feel free to adjust the amount of chilli to suit yourself.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 onion chopped
- 400g veggie mince
- 1 small cauliflower chopped into small florets
- 1 red pepper chopped into thin strips or bite sized chunks
- 400g tin chopped tomatoes
- 1 heaped teaspoon ground cumin
- 1 heaped teaspoon ground coriander
- 1/2-1 teaspoon dried chilli flakes
- 1 tablespoon coconut oil or ghee
- 1 vegetable stock cube
- 500mls boiling water
- 2 squares dark chocolate (aim for 85% or above)
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh coriander
- Sour cream and grated cheddar cheese to serve

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1 Heat the oil in a large pan and fry the onions until softened.
- 2 Add the chilli, cumin and coriander and fry for few mins without burning.
- 3 Add the mince and fry for five minutes until coated well with the spices and the mince is separated.
- 4 Add the chopped cauliflower and coat with the spices.
- 5 Add the tin of chopped tomatoes.
- 6 Add 500ml boiling water to the vegetable stock cube, add to the pan and mix well.
- 7 Cover with a lid and cook on low heat for 15 mins.
- 8 Add the chopped pepper, coriander and 2 squares of dark chocolate and cook for a final 5 mins.
- 9 Add salt and pepper to taste.

Serve with a large dollop of sour cream and a generous sprinkle of cheddar cheese.





Cabbage and Egg

Serves 4

One from the family cookbook – my mum's Chinese Cabbage and Egg - is a staple from my childhood. So easy, but the eggs pack in some protein, and it's a delicious combination. Enjoy it with cauliflower rice and a vegetable curry.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 medium cabbage - either sweetheart (preferable) or savoy
- 1 medium carrot grated (optional)
- 4 eggs
- 2 medium finely chopped shallot onions
- 2 cloves of finely chopped garlic
- 1 teaspoon salt (more to taste)
- 1 tablespoon light soya sauce
- 1-2 tablespoons of olive or coconut oil
- 2 tablespoons of water

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1 Cut the cabbage into 1 cm strips (and grate the carrot if using).
- 2 Add the olive or coconut oil to a deep frying pan on medium heat.
- 3 Once melted, add the chopped shallots and fry until soft but not browned.
- 4 Add the chopped garlic and light soya sauce and stir well.
- 5 Break the eggs into the pan and scramble with the onions and garlic.
- 6 When the eggs are formed add the strips of cabbage (and grated carrot if using).
- 7 Stir well and add the water.
- 8 Cover and simmer for approx 10 minutes until the cabbage is soft.
- 9 Add the salt to taste and combine well.
- 10 Serve with cauliflower rice.



Pumpkin, Pepper & Halloumi Traybake with Lemon & Parsley Salsa Verde

Serves 2

Warm up the oven, raid the fridge and get supper on the table within 30 minutes with this fast, colourful and delicious traybake. Any vegetables will work here including broccoli, aubergine, green beans or cauliflower. Go for a variety of brightly coloured vegetables, add the chickpeas for crunch and the cheese for satiety. Try to find the small capers in brine or salt, which taste better than the large ones; a jar keeps in the fridge for months. Any remaining chickpeas, halloumi or pumpkin can be frozen.

INGREDIENTS

- 200g (7oz) pumpkin or butternut squash, cut into pieces about 1cm (½ in) thick
- 1 red onion, sliced or 6 spring onions
- 1 red or yellow pepper, sliced
- 1 courgette, cut diagonally into long slices
- 1 tablespoon chopped thyme leaves or a few whole sprigs
- 2 garlic cloves, unpeeled and lightly crushed
- 3 tablespoons of extra virgin olive oil
- 120g (4 ¼ oz) cooked or canned, drained chickpeas
- 110g (3 ¾ oz) halloumi, cut into fingers or cubes about 2cm (¾ in) wide
- salt and freshly ground black pepper

For the dressing

- a large handful of parsley
- 1 heaped teaspoon small capers, rinsed
- 1 small garlic clove
- finely grated zest and juice of ½ lemon
- 4 tablespoons of extra virgin olive oil
- ½ teaspoon dried oregano

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1 Preheat the oven to 240C/220C fan/475F/gas mark 9.
- 2 Put the vegetables, herbs and garlic into a large mixing bowl with the oil, salt and pepper and toss through. Spread in a single layer on a baking tray and roast for 20 minutes.
- 3 Remove the tray from the oven and add the chickpeas, tossing them into the vegetables and spreading them out in a single layer. Scatter the halloumi over the top and return the tray to the oven for 10 minutes or until the cheese has browned and the vegetables are cooked through and lightly charred.
- 4 To make the dressing, pile up the parsley, capers, garlic and lemon zest on a board and chop them finely together. Put this into a bowl and stir in the lemon juice, oil and oregano. Add salt and pepper to taste and set aside.
- 5 Serve the traybake on the tray with the dressing drizzled over the top or pile on two plates with the dressing in a jug on the side.

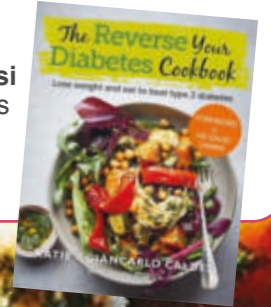
Per serving (using pumpkin)

25g carbs, 8.7g fibre, 22g protein, 53g fat, 677kcal

Per serving (using butternut squash)

31g carbs, 10g fibre, 22g protein, 53g fat, 705kcal

The Reverse Your Diabetes Cookbook by Katie & Giancarlo Caldesi is published by Kyle Books (£20)



Photography credit: Photography by Maja Smend

Roasted Aubergine and Chickpeas with Coconut Milk

Serves 2

A lovely warming vegetarian curry designed by Pam, a member of our Low Carb Facebook group. The recipe calls for 4-6 finger chillies, but feel free to use less or more depending on how spicy you enjoy your meals. If you don't have any fresh chillies to hand, you could also swap with dried crushed red pepper flakes.

INGREDIENTS

- 2 medium aubergines
- 1 can chickpeas
- 1 can full fat coconut milk
- 2 tablespoons of olive oil or ghee
- 1 medium onion chopped
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 4-6 fine finger chillies (red or green)
- 2 cloves garlic
- Ginger – a slice around an inch cube in size (or 1 tablespoon of “easy” or chopped frozen ginger)
- 2 medium tomatoes - chopped
- 1 teaspoon turmeric
- Fresh coriander - chopped

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1 Place the washed aubergines on a baking tray and roast at 200 C for 40-45 mins till soft.
- 2 Fry the onion in a large frying pan in your fat of choice, with the salt, until soft.
- 3 Add the chopped tomatoes and turmeric to the onion and cook on low heat.
- 4 Pound the chillies, ginger and garlic with a pestle and mortar till well crushed or finely chop. You could use a mini processor to help with this step.
- 5 Add your chilli paste to the pan and cook on low heat until the oil separates from the spices.
- 6 Remove the aubergines from the oven and when cooled enough to handle, chop into bite size cubes and add to the pan.
- 7 Cook for a further 10 minutes.
- 8 Add the drained chickpeas and the coconut milk.
- 9 Cook on low heat until the sauce thickens – approx. 10-15 mins.
- 10 Add chopped coriander with the stalks and mix well.

Serve with a side of cauliflower rice or with Keto Naan Bread from the Freshwell Low Carb Manual.





Butternut Squash and Red Lentil Dansak

Serves 4

Designed by Pam, our vegetarian expert patient. Delicious with a side of cauliflower rice and mopped up with a keto chapati (see recipe) or Naan bread (see recipe on app or in the Freshwell Low Carb Manual)

INGREDIENTS

- 1 medium onion chopped
- 1 tablespoon oil of your choice (coconut or ghee work well here)
- 2 large cloves garlic finely chopped or crushed
- 1 teaspoon chilli powder (or to taste)
- 2 teaspoons of cumin powder
- 2 teaspoons of coriander powder
- 2 tablespoons of tomato purée
- 50-80mls of water (to stop the spices burning)
- 400g chopped tin tomatoes
- 400g coconut milk (optional) OR 600mls vegetable stock
- 100-200mls extra boiled water if using coconut milk
- 200g dried red split lentils
- 400g butternut squash chopped into cubes
- Large handful of fresh chopped coriander
- Sea or Himalayan salt to taste
- 40 mls fresh lime juice or apple cider vinegar

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1 Soak the lentils in water for 20-30 mins and then rinse until the water is clear.
- 2 Add the oil to the pan and fry the chopped onions on medium heat till soft.
- 3 Add the garlic and cook for 3 mins.
- 4 Add tomato purée and the spices and combine
- 5 Cook on low heat and add a little bit of water if needed to stop the spices from burning.
- 6 Add the cubed butternut squash.
- 7 Add the soaked lentils and stir well.
- 8 Add the tin of tomatoes and coconut milk or vegetable stock if using.
- 9 Add the extra water if using coconut milk - bring to the boil and then simmer for 20-30 mins until lentils are fully cooked.
- 10 Add the lime juice, salt and chopped coriander to taste. It should have a spicy, tangy taste.
- 11 If the curry is too thick add more water.
- 12 Ready to serve when the butternut squash is soft and the lentils are cooked.

Smoked Tofu and Green Beans

Serves two as a main or more as a side.

Another Chinese recipe from my mum's repertoire. The smoked tofu ups the protein and adds a delicious smoky flavour. It can be purchased from most of the big supermarkets or Asian grocery stores.

INGREDIENTS

- 300g green beans
- 225g smoked tofu
- 1 small brown onion
- 2 cloves garlic finely chopped
- 1 tablespoon light soya sauce
- 1 level teaspoon salt
- 2 tablespoons of water
- 1 1/2 tablespoon olive oil

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1 Wash and top and tail the beans.
- 2 Snap the beans in to approx 5cm lengths.
- 3 Cube the tofu into 2cm squares.
- 4 Half the onion - dice one half and cut the other half into two pieces.
- 5 Put the oil into a fairly deep frying pan or wok on medium heat.
- 6 Add the large pieces of onion and stir for approx 2 minutes.
- 7 Then add the diced onion and stir for a further 2 minutes.
- 8 Add the finely diced garlic and stir for another minute.
- 9 Add the soya sauce.
- 10 Add the tofu.
- 11 Add the beans and combine well.
- 12 Add the water and stir.
- 13 Cover for 2-3 minutes on high heat.
- 14 Remove the lid and test the beans for the texture you desire (aim for al dente and not mushy).
- 15 Taste the sauce and add salt to your preference - up to a teaspoon.
- 16 Combine well and serve with cauliflower rice or soybean noodles.





Mushroom Stroganoff

Serves 2

A recipe donated by Viv – a vegetarian low carb convert, PHC Ambassador, and expert patient volunteer. Be generous with the paprika for that authentic stroganoff taste! If you don't have the other herbs, then a good tablespoon of Dijon mustard works well as an alternative. Tinned mushrooms will work well if you haven't got any fresh in your fridge.

INGREDIENTS

- 60g courgette chopped into small pieces
- Half a large onion finely chopped
- 1 red bell pepper chopped into small chunks
- 250g mushrooms (tinned or fresh – a variety of different mushrooms adds some interest) – leave smaller mushrooms whole and slice larger ones
- 1 teaspoon tomato puree
- 100ml double cream or sour cream
- 1 vegetable stock cube crumbled
- 1 teaspoon Salt (or to taste depending on how salty your stock cube is)
- 2 teaspoons Paprika
- 1 teaspoon Sage
- 1 teaspoon Parsley
- 1 teaspoon Thyme
- Butter or ghee for frying

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1 Add the butter or ghee to a saucepan and heat until melted.
- 2 Add the chopped onion and cook until soft and translucent.
- 3 Add the courgette and fry for 5 minutes.
- 4 Add all the remaining ingredients apart from the double cream and combine well.
- 5 Finally add the double cream and reduce the heat.
- 6 Allow to warm through, stirring regularly to stop the mixture sticking.
- 7 Cook for 5 – 10 minutes, until the mixture is an even colour and the cream is beginning to thicken.
- 8 Serve with cauliflower or baby corn rice, celeriac or cauliflower mash or some lentil or soy pasta.



Anda Bhurgi (Spicy Indian Scrambled Eggs)

Serves 2

Another recipe that comes well recommended from a Public Health Collaboration ambassador. Onions and spices transform scrambled eggs into a warming, tasty meal within minutes. It can be used as a side dish for curries or as the main event with a dollop of yoghurt.

INGREDIENTS

- 2 tablespoon olive oil, butter or ghee
- 1 medium onion (red or brown) – finely chopped
- 2 medium tomatoes – chopped
- 3 chilli peppers, cut into slits lengthwise
- 1 teaspoon ginger paste (either chopped yourself or use “easy ginger”)
- 1 teaspoon garlic paste (either chopped yourself or use “easy garlic”)
- 1 teaspoon red chilli powder
- ½ teaspoon turmeric
- 4 large eggs beaten
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 2 teaspoons of unsalted butter cut into small cubes
- Small handful of fresh coriander leaves – torn

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1 In a frying pan, heat the oil.
- 2 Add the chopped onion and stir until softened.
- 3 Add the chopped tomatoes and mix well – cook for a few minutes until any excess liquid has evaporated.
- 4 Add the chillies, ginger and garlic and combine.
- 5 Add the chilli powder and turmeric powder and stir until the oil separates – 30-60seconds.
- 6 Turn the heat down and add the beaten eggs and salt.
- 7 Roughly stir the mixture until the eggs are scrambled.
- 8 Add the butter and stir in until melted.
- 9 Stir in half the coriander and serve.
- 10 Garnish with the remaining coriander leaves and enjoy!



Cauliflower and Butternut Squash Curry

Serves 4

A curry that comes highly recommended by an ambassador of the Public Health Collaboration – a registered charity dedicated to informing and implementing public health.

INGREDIENTS

- 300g butternut squash, cubed
- 350g cauliflower, florets separated
- 2 tablespoons coconut oil
- 1 teaspoon cumin seeds
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 teaspoon ginger, grated
- 1 red onion, diced
- 1 x 400g tin chopped tomato
- 1/2 teaspoon turmeric
- 1/2 teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1/2 teaspoon ground coriander
- 2 teaspoons mild curry powder
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cardamom
- salt & pepper to taste
- 250ml water
- 400ml coconut milk
- Fresh coriander leaves

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1 Preheat the oven to fan forced 210°C/230°C /450°F/Gas mark 7.
- 2 Place cauliflower and butternut squash in a large baking tray. Drizzle with half the oil, salt and pepper and toss together. Transfer the tray to the oven and bake for 25-30 minutes, until the squash is soft and the cauliflower is crisping on the edges.
- 3 Heat remaining oil in a large pan on medium heat. Add cumin seeds and allow it to splutter.
- 4 Add onion, ginger, garlic and fry until the onion is translucent.
- 5 Add the tomatoes and the spices and mix to combine. Cook on medium heat for 8-10 minutes, stirring regularly until the onion tomato masala begins to reduce.
- 6 Using a hand blender, process until the masala is smooth.
- 7 Add water and coconut milk, and allow the mixture to boil for a further 10 minutes. Taste and season with salt and pepper as needed.
- 8 Add the roasted cauliflower, butternut squash and stir into the curry. Cook for 1 more minute and turn the flame off.
- 9 Top with coriander leaves.



Notes:

- Increase the protein of this dish by adding a veggie alternative
- Store leftovers in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 3 days. Reheat and serve.
- Batch cook and freeze in portions for up to 2 months. Defrost and reheat before serving.
- Cans of coconut milk are often found in the Asian or Mexican food aisle. These are typically not sweetened, and tend to include simply coconuts, water, and sometimes stabilisers such as guar gum.

Chinese Omelette

Serves 4

Another chinese recipe from my mum's repertoire. A delicious Asian inspired omelette packed with flavour. There's usually a bunfight in my house for extra helpings and if my son is around, I barely get a look in!

INGREDIENTS

- 6 eggs
- 1 large brown onion sliced
- 2 cloves garlic finely diced
- 1 finely sliced tomato
- 1/2 teaspoon toasted sesame oil (optional but makes the dish taste so much better!)
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon erythritol
- 2 tablespoons olive oil

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1 Place the olive oil in a frying pan on medium heat.
- 2 Add the onion and fry until softened.
- 3 Add the garlic and fry until golden brown.
- 4 Whilst the onions are cooking, break the 6 eggs into a bowl and add the salt and sesame oil.
- 5 Whisk the egg mixture.
- 6 Add the sliced tomato on to the onion and garlic mixture in a flat layer.
- 7 Pour the whisked eggs on to the mixture in the pan.
- 8 Add the erythritol.
- 9 Agitate the mixture slightly (do not disturb the tomatoes) and allow to flatten like a pancake.
- 10 Cook until the desired colour is reached and then turn over with a spatula (you may need to cut it in half to do this).
- 11 Remove from the frying pan and serve with cauliflower rice.



Roasted Vegetable Quiche with a Cheddar Crust

Serves 8

I love a good quiche (I have chickens so there are always some eggs hanging around waiting to be eaten!), but since going low carb I have tended to stick to frittatas or omelettes to avoid a carb laden base. Emma Porter of The Low Carb Kitchen has come up with this delicious cheddar crust which is perfect if you have a bit more time. Emma roasts the veg herself, but you can easily purchase bags of frozen Mediterranean roast vegetables which would work well defrosted.

Prep time: 10 mins

Cook time: 35 mins

INGREDIENTS

Base:

- 150g / 5oz ground/milled flaxseed (or any other ground seed)
- 70g / 2oz cheddar cheese, grated
- ½ teaspoon sea salt
- 2 tablespoons / 1 fl oz olive oil
- 5 tablespoons / 3 fl oz water (approximately)

Mixture:

- 6 large eggs
- 3 tablespoons / 1.5 fl oz tinned coconut milk
- Pinch of ground pepper
- 352g / 2 cups worth of roasted vegetables
- 50g / 2oz feta (more or less, depending on what you like)

A delicious and simple roasted vegetable quiche with a cheddar crust. Quiche is such a brilliant way to use up any leftover vegetables, especially at the end of the week when food provisions are looking a little depleted. It is filling and great for lunch or dinner. It can be sliced and enjoyed on the go, served at a picnic or a family lunch. You can choose whatever roasted vegetables you want.

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1 Preheat oven to 180°C / 350°F.
 - 2 Start by making sure your vegetables have been roasted. (read notes).
- Base:**
- 3 In to a mixing bowl, place ground linseed, cheddar, sea salt and olive oil. Combine ingredients together.
 - 4 Add water, little by little until you have a dough. I have put approximately 5 tablespoons of water, because you will need to judge how much you need to form a dough.
 - 5 Press the dough in to a quiche / pie dish.
 - 6 Prick it with a fork.
 - 7 Pop it in the oven for 10 minutes to blind bake.
 - 8 Remove from the oven.

Filling:

- 9 In to a bowl, place the eggs, coconut milk and pepper. Whisk together.
- 10 Pour the mixture in to the pastry crust. Add in the roasted vegetables and crumbled feta.
- 11 Place, carefully in to the oven for 20-25 minutes, until the mixture has turned solid.
- 12 Carefully remove from the oven and allow to cool.
- 13 Enjoy whilst warm or eat cold for lunch!

Notes:

It will keep in the fridge for up to 3 days.

You can replace the ground brown linseed with ground seeds.

Tips on roasting vegetables:

Roast some chunky chopped up veg (eg. red onion, courgette, pepper, broccoli etc) tossed in olive oil with a sprinkle of sea salt for 40 mins (flip the veggies 20 minutes in).

Nutritional information:

	Per slice
Energy	336kj / 106kcal
Fat	9g
Of which Saturates	<1g
Carbohydrate	<1g
Of which sugars	Trace
Protein	3.8g
Salt	Trace

Vegetable Fondue

Ingredients per person (multiply as needed)

Who doesn't love fondue! A Swiss throw back from the 70s served in a communal pot for sharing with friends. Apparently in Switzerland, fondue was marketed aggressively with slogans like "La fondue cree la bonne humeur" – "fondue creates a good mood" – it has got to be worth a try! The recipe uses gram flour instead of traditional cornflour to thicken. Our patient expert (and Public Health Collaboration Ambassador) Viv, recommends cooking up the veg and pouring the cheese sauce over the top but you could also keep it warming in a fondue pot and dip the veggies in – my kids love the fun of using little forks to dip their morsels of choice!

INGREDIENTS

- 50g shelled pistachios
- 150mls white wine
- 60g grated cheddar cheese, gruyere or gouda
- 1 tablespoon gram (besan) flour
- Pinch of salt
- Butter for frying
- Pinch of ground cloves (optional)
- Variety of vegetable of your choice e.g. mushrooms, aubergines, courgettes, French beans – chopped into half inch pieces

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1 Place the pistachios on a tray and grill until lightly roasted, or dry fry in a frying pan. Set aside.
- 2 Fry the chopped veg of your choice in the butter. Set aside.
- 3 Place the grated cheese in a bowl and add the gram flour – lightly tossing until the flour coats the cheese.
- 4 Warm the wine in a saucepan, then add the grated cheese and pinch of cloves (if using).
- 5 Keep stirring until the cheese melts to form a thick, creamy sauce.
- 6 Either place the cheese in a serving bowl or fondue pot and dip the veggies into it or place the vegetables in a bowl and pour the cheese sauce over the top, and sprinkle with the roasted pistachios.



Roast Butternut Squash with Sage and Seeds

Serves 4-6

A comforting squash side, that basically cooks itself. If you have the oven on already, pop in a halved butternut squash – and forget about it. When you are ready you can either remove the contents and mash with a fork or simply put on the plate as it is to scoop out. The sage and seeds give it a little flourish and add some protein. To make this a main meal in itself, you could sprinkle crumbled feta cheese on to the top or serve with a side of grilled halloumi cheese.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 medium butternut squash
- 50g salted butter
- 8-10 sage leaves (marjoram, basil or thyme would also work well)
- A handful of pumpkin seeds (or sunflower seeds, or a combination of both)
- Ground black pepper
- Feta or Halloumi cheese (optional)

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1 Preheat the oven to 200C.
- 2 Place the squash in a roasting tin and bake whole for 60-90 minutes until the skin starts to colour.
- 3 Heat the butter in a frying pan until it froths and smells nutty.
- 4 Add the sage leaves (can be left whole or shredded into smaller pieces) and seeds.
- 5 Fry for 1 minute until the leaves are crispy and the seeds are toasted.
- 6 Once cooked, cut the squash in half lengthways and scoop away the seeds.
- 7 Pour any juices from the roasting tin into the butter mixture.
- 8 Pour the butter mixture on to the squash and serve with a good few grinds of black pepper.



Babs's Ful Medames

Serves 3-4

I first experienced this Middle Eastern dish at University, when a friend with Sudanese roots introduced it to me. Ever since, it has become a staple meal in our house, tarted up with some sprinkled feta cheese. It is basically a simple savoury stew made with fava beans, chickpeas and spices. Fava beans aren't always the easiest to find but butter beans make a good alternative and can be found on most supermarket shelves. This is eaten for breakfast in the Sudan and Egypt but I prefer it as an evening meal. Some variations also include topping with chopped up boiled egg – again upping the protein. Make some keto chapatis (see recipe) or gram flour pancakes (see Budget recipe book) to scoop up the stodgy bean mix and enjoy the middle eastern vibe!

INGREDIENTS

- 3 tins of fava or butter beans
- 2 teaspoons cumin
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 100mls extra virgin olive oil
- ¼ cup lemon juice
- 2 garlic cloves finely chopped
- 2 large ripe tomatoes roughly chopped
- 1 medium red onion finely diced
- 1 tablespoon chopped jalapenos or 1 teaspoon chilli flakes (optional)
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Feta cheese crumbled or sliced boiled eggs (optional)
- Rocket or parsley to garnish (optional)

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1 Drain and rinse the tins of beans.
- 2 Place in a saucepan and add a can (use the tin from the beans) of cold water.
- 3 Add the cumin and salt.
- 4 Bring to the boil and then reduce to a simmer and leave uncovered for around 20 minutes until most of the water is absorbed. Add extra water if needed or drain any excess water away if too wet.
- 5 Squash and smash the beans up roughly using a fork or the back of a wooden spoon.
- 6 Add the olive oil, lemon juice, garlic, diced red onion, salt and pepper and chopped tomatoes to a bowl and combine well.
- 7 Add the jalapenos or chilli flakes if you are looking for a little kick of heat.
- 8 You can either add the tomato and oil mixture to the beans and stir in, or place the tomato mixture on top of the beans like a dressing.
- 9 If using feta cheese or boiled eggs, then sprinkle over the top.
- 10 Feel free to garnish with rocket or fresh parsley - I like an extra glug of olive oil across the dish to give it a beautiful sheen.



Jason's Shakshuka

Serves 2-3

Shakshuka is proper Middle Eastern comfort food - a North African dish of eggs poached in a sauce of tomatoes, peppers and spices. This was originally made for us by Jason - a vegetarian University friend who works with refugees in the Midlands and was shown how to cook this by a client. It is usually eaten for breakfast or lunch but I like it as an evening meal. It is a little similar to the Mexican dish of huevos rancheros with a few extra spices thrown in for good measure.

Shakshuka is best made in a wide, thick based pan if you have one. Make sure you do not turn the heat up too high. There are many variations of this recipe, some including garlic, so feel free to experiment.

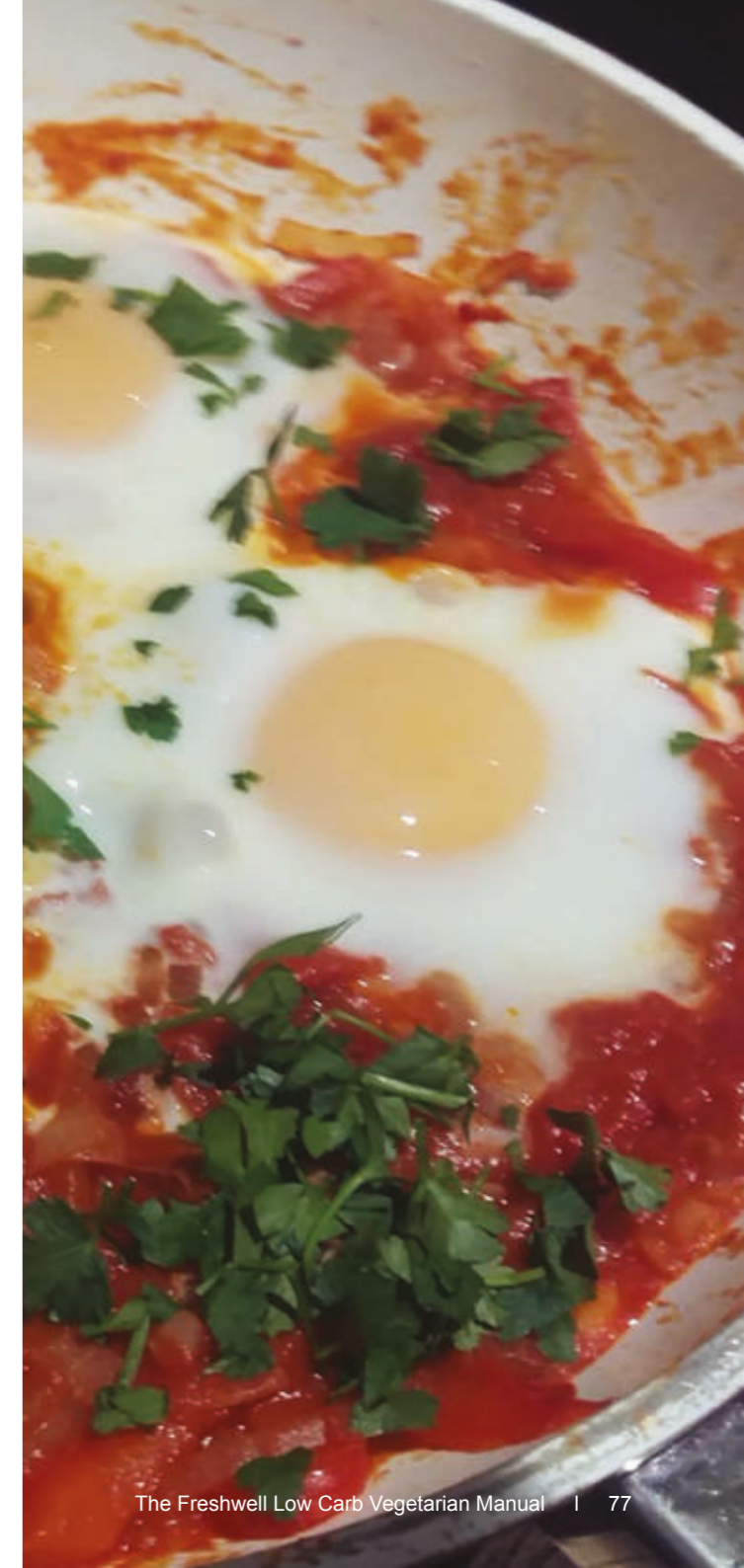
If you wish, you can also add a handful of spinach or top with sprinkled feta or cheddar cheese – yum!

INGREDIENTS

- 3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 1 large onion finely chopped
- 1 large or 2 medium bell peppers, any colour, thinly sliced
- 2 cloves garlic – finely chopped
- 1 tin chopped tomatoes or 2-3 large tomatoes roughly chopped
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin or cumin seeds
- 1 teaspoon paprika
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 teaspoon salt
- dried chilli flakes, or a pinch of cayenne pepper (optional)
- 4 large eggs
- Crumbled feta cheese (optional)
- 1 small bunch of fresh coriander, parsley or both roughly chopped (optional)

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1 Heat the olive oil in a frying pan. If using cumin seeds add them to a dry pan first and heat them for 1-2 minutes ensuring they do not burn.
- 2 Stir in the onions, bell peppers and garlic and cook until the veg is soft.
- 3 In a bowl mix the tomatoes, chilli, ground cumin, paprika, bay leaves, parsley, half the coriander and salt.
- 4 Stir the tomato mixture into the vegetables in the pan. Add the chilli or cayenne pepper if you are using.
- 5 Simmer uncovered for around 10 minutes, until the juices have reduced – approx. 10 minutes.
- 6 Make 4 deep wells into the tomato mixture, and crack an egg into each of the depressions.
- 7 Cover the pan and poach on a gentle heat until the eggs are firm – be careful not to overcook as the eggs will go dry (approximately 10 minutes).
- 8 Serve as is sprinkled with the remaining coriander and the feta cheese if using. Scoop up with low carb flatbreads/chapatis, or have with a side of swede mash or cauliflower rice.



Leek, Spinach & Feta Showstopper

Serves 10

A fabulous dish kindly donated by Katie Caldesi. I was first served this by Dr David Oliver – my low carb partner in crime – on a relaxed Sunday afternoon. Use frozen spinach and a jar of roasted red peppers in olive oil to save yourself some time. It certainly meets its namesake as it looks great and is super tasty to boot – well recommended!

INGREDIENTS

- 10g (¼ oz) butter, plus extra to grease
- 500g (18oz) leeks (trimmed weight)
- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 250g (9oz) ricotta
- 100g (3 ½ oz) feta, grated
- 3 eggs, beaten
- 900g–1kg (2–2 ¼ lb) frozen spinach, or 300g (10 ½ oz) cooked and squeezed spinach
- ¼ teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg
- 200g (7oz) roasted red peppers (drained weight)
- salt and freshly ground black pepper

For the crumble

- 25g (1oz) cold salted butter, diced
- 100g (3 ½ oz) ground almonds
- 50g (2oz) Parmesan, finely grated

Per serving 5.2g carbs, 18g protein, 24g fat, 4.6g fibre, 314kcal

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1 This is really an assembly of ingredients rather than complicated cooking, yet the result is a spectacular dish topped with an irresistible savoury crumble to impress vegetarian and meat-eating friends alike. To save time, buy frozen spinach and a jar of roasted red peppers.
- 2 Preheat the oven to 200°C/fan 180°C/gas mark 6. Generously grease a 20cm (8in) springform cake tin with some butter.
- 3 Prepare the leeks first using as much of the green end as you can, unless they are very tough. Cut them finely into half-moons. Put the leeks into a large frying pan with the butter, oil, ¼ teaspoon of salt and some black pepper and fry gently until tender – about 10 minutes.
- 4 Leave the leeks to cool and then mix with the ricotta, feta and two of the eggs. Season again to taste.
- 5 Squeeze the excess water from the spinach and whizz in a food-processor with the remaining egg, ¼ teaspoon of salt, some black pepper and the nutmeg. Make the crumble by rubbing the butter into the almonds and Parmesan in a mixing bowl.
- 6 Make the base of the cake by opening out the peppers and patting them dry with a kitchen paper. Lay them down to fit the base of the prepared tin, cutting them as necessary. They should come up the side by 1.5cm(5/8in) all around.
- 7 Next spoon half the leek mixture into the tin and press down lightly with the back of a spoon. Now do the same with the spinach mixture and then with the last of the leek mix. Sprinkle the crumble over the top in an even layer and place on a baking tray in case of any leaks.
- 8 Bake for 30 minutes or until the crumble is golden brown. Leave the crumble to cool for 10 minutes before transferring to a serving dish. Serve warm or at room temperature.



The Diabetes Weight-Loss Cookbook by Katie & Giancarlo Caldesi is published by Kyle Books (£20)



Photography by Susan Bell



Chinese Fried Lettuce - Yow Choy

Serves 2-4 as a side

Now this is a strange one I know. You wouldn't think fried lettuce would be that good but if my mum holds a dinner party – somebody always requests that this dish is made. There is minimal protein in this recipe, so it really needs to be considered a side and served with vegetarian bean curry or tofu.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 medium to large cos/romaine lettuce (or 4-5 bunches of bak choy)
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 heaped teaspoon salt
- 1 level teaspoon erythritol or xylitol
- 2 cloves finely diced garlic
- 3 teaspoons water

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1 Separate the lettuce leaves, wash and dry in a salad spinner.
- 2 Break the leaves into 3 inches pieces (if using bak choy - separate the leaves from the stalk).
- 3 Add the oil to a wok or deep frying pan on high heat.
- 4 Add the diced garlic and salt.
- 5 Once the garlic is golden brown, add the lettuce (if using bak choy add the stalks first and fry for 1 minute before adding the leaves).
- 6 Fry until the lettuce is softened but still al dente. Add the water as needed to allow the softening to occur.
- 7 Add the erythritol.
- 8 Combine well and serve with cauliflower rice and a protein source of your choice.





Dr Kim's Cauliflower Cheese

Serves 4 as a main meal, or 6 as a side

This is a recipe from my first meal planner – The Freshwell Low Carb Project 4 Week Rotating Meal Planner. I have included it here as I consider it to be an absolute staple – a perfect side dish to many meals or great as a snack all by itself. The egg, crème fraîche and cheese help to pack in the protein as well as being super tasty!

INGREDIENTS

- 1 large cauliflower, about 1kg
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 x 300ml tub full fat crème fraîche
- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- 1 large egg yolk
- 100g grated hard cheese – cheddar or Emmental, or vegetarian alternative
- 20g Parmesan or vegetarian alternative, grated finely

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1 Preheat the oven to 200°C. Discard the outer cauliflower leaves. Cut the cauliflower into reasonably chunky florets and toss these plus the inner leaves with the oil and some salt and pepper. Spread out in a large roasting tray, making sure the cauliflower isn't too crowded. Roast for 20 minutes or until tender and lightly browned.
- 2 Meanwhile, mix the crème fraîche, mustard and egg yolk together with a good amount of freshly ground black pepper and a little salt, then stir in the grated hard cheese.
- 3 When the cauliflower is ready, place it in a baking dish that will hold it more snugly. Spoon the creamy cheese sauce over the top then scatter with the Parmesan. Return to the oven and bake for 12-15 minutes or until golden brown and bubbling.

Over the years - when I want to make this but find no crème fraîche in the fridge – I have found that full fat Greek yoghurt, double cream and sour cream also do the job nicely!



Salad Drawer Pakora

Serves 4 as a side

An odd name I know, but essentially I find this a fantastic dish to make when we are left with the odds and sods at the bottom of our salad drawer! Basically, chop up any veg or onions lurking in the fridge (doesn't matter if they are a little past their best), coat in a gram flour batter and deep fry. Delicious, crunchy, little balls of delight will result in no time at all. Serve on the side with a curry (almost like a bhaji), or play about with the recipe to produce sides for other dishes – my hubby adds sage to make a side for a roast dinner instead of potatoes. You could even make these sweet by using apple and sesame seeds and sprinkling with some erythritol. Anything goes and it means you can use up all your sorry looking veg to make something super tasty – nobody would know it was made with scraps from the fridge!

INGREDIENTS

- Approx 275g of any bits of veg or onion found in the fridge – we have used onion, cauliflower, broccoli, bell pepper, mushrooms etc
- 100g gram/besan flour
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon caraway seeds
- 1 teaspoon dill seeds
- 100mls water

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1 Break or chop up the onion or veg into small thumb sized pieces.
- 2 In a bowl mix the flour, salt and spices, and water – whisk well to avoid any lumps.
- 3 Should form a wet pancake batter like consistency.
- 4 Add the veg to the bowl of batter, combine well and leave to sit.
- 5 Heat up your deep fat fryer or use a pan of oil but be careful! (refined olive oil probably works best in this situation).
- 6 Use a tablespoon to scoop a serving from the bowl of veg and batter and place in the hot oil.
- 7 Remove when the pakora is lightly browned and place on a piece of kitchen towel to absorb any excess oil.
- 8 Serve warm with a yoghurt dip or as a side to a main meal.



Baby Corn Rice

Serves 1

An excellent alternative to cauliflower rice for people who don't like, or are fed up with cauliflower! Designed by Viv, one of our own PCN Low Carb patient experts. I'm told baby corn is pretty easy to grow yourself, and is also often available in the discounted section of the supermarket when it's past its best and perfect for "rice". Unlike fully ripe sweetcorn – baby corn is high in fibre and low in carbs.

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1 Chop the baby corn into small grain like pieces.
- 2 In a frying pan, melt the butter.
- 3 Add the chopped baby corn and fry gently on a low heat until slightly softened - approximately 5-10 minutes depending on your preference.





Chocolate and Brandy Mousse

Makes 6-8 portions

A decadent, rich dessert perfect for a dinner party! It is super quick to make and can be done the day before leaving you more time to spend with your friends and family.

INGREDIENTS

- 150mls cream - double or single will work
- 200g dark chocolate – aim for at least 75% cocoa solids
- 250g Mascarpone (cream cheese could be used as an alternative)
- 2 tablespoons brandy

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1 Place the cream in a pan and heat gently – do not boil!
- 2 Break the chocolate into small pieces and add to the pan. Stir gently until the chocolate is melted.
- 3 Add brandy.
- 4 Add the Mascarpone.
- 5 Spoon into small shot glasses.
- 6 Chill for a minimum of 3 hrs or overnight.



Final Feedback

It is really important to us that we work with local people to produce these meal planners and any future materials, as well as finding out whether you have enjoyed the content, and whether it has helped you work towards your health goals. We would love to hear from you. Please email any general feedback to **mseicb-me.lowcarb.cvpcn@nhs.net**, such as what recipes you have tried out, what you liked or disliked, and any improvements you may have seen with your health. If you have a little bit longer and would be so kind as to complete a quick survey for us - please follow the link:

<https://forms.office.com/r/yWbVSh7hdG>
or scan the QR code below.



To thank you for taking the time to complete the survey, if you live in the Braintree District, we have free gym passes (to be used in Fusion Leisure Centres) at the ready - one of the team will get in touch to distribute this to you if you kindly add your contact details at the end of the survey. Thanks for your time, we really look forward to hearing your feedback and continuing to improve our materials.





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