



# Cancer Society of New Zealand Function Catering Guidelines



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These guidelines were developed by the Cancer Society of New Zealand and reviewed in 2010



# The Aim of Catering Guidelines

## Overall Goal

To provide nutritional advice regarding in house catering in order to reflect current nutrition and cancer evidence.

## Objectives

To provide a resource that may be provided to caterers outlining appropriate foods/ options for the following menus:

- Breakfasts including the specific event 'Relay for life' event held annually, providing a breakfast for up to 1200 people
- Morning and afternoon teas
- Finger food lunches
- Luncheons

## Typical numbers for catering

50 per function.

## Key references for the basis of function catering guidelines

- Cancer Society New Zealand fact sheets:
  - The nutrition – cancer link
  - Fruit and vegetables and cancer,
  - Breads and cereals and cancer,
  - Meat and cancer
  - Alcohol and cancer
  - Body weight, physical activity and cancer
  - Chemicals and cancer.
- Information on the website [www.livesmart.org.nz](http://www.livesmart.org.nz) providing key messages to the public on how to live to reduce risk of cancer
- World Cancer Research Fund / American Institute of Cancer Research 'Food nutrition, physical activity and the prevention of cancer- a global perspective'. Washington DC:ACIR,2007.



# Introduction

**The Cancer Society is a key provider of information on prevention of cancer. Key issues for the prevention of cancer include specific nutritional goals.**

The Cancer Society of New Zealand provides catering during a wide range of health promotion activities including meetings, public lectures and the annual 'Relay for Life' event.

Typically audience or delegate numbers may average 50 but on occasion rise to 1200 in the 'Relay for Life' event held annually in Christchurch.

Increasingly the public expect those promoting health to practice these messages i.e. to be seen to 'practice as is preached' or 'walk the talk'.

*By offering practical ideas on preparing food that is visually interesting and tempting, people are encouraged to taste and enjoy healthy foods.*

Importantly the food and drink provided at functions can be a vital teaching tool, offering a visual example of the messages on nutrition. By offering practical ideas or preparing food that is visually interesting and tempting, people are encouraged to taste and enjoy healthy foods. This helps inspire and empower people to incorporate these foods into their usual diet.

*One of the key recommendations of the Cancer Society is to limit consumption of energy dense foods i.e. consume energy dense foods sparingly.*

Energy dense foods are characteristically high in fat and / or sugar and nutrient poor. Common examples of energy dense foods and drinks are sugary drinks, fruit juice, sweet biscuits, cakes, slices, high sugar desserts such as chocolate cake and cream, ice cream, sausage rolls, pies, savouries, deep fried snacks such as crumbed fish, fish goujons or fish bites, chicken nuggets, wontons.

At present in New Zealand many of these foods are now consumed as part of the daily diet but ideally should be consumed sparingly and termed 'occasional' foods.

In New Zealand catered functions typically include a high proportion of energy dense, high fat and / or high sugar menu items.

One argument for their continued inclusion in the menus is the lower cost of these higher fat, higher sugar foods.

If the increased cost of healthier options on a menu is prohibitive then it is reasonable to at least increase the choice of healthier more expensive items alongside the cheaper 'occasional' foods.

Key recommendations for prevention of cancer are to eat less than 700g (uncooked weight) or 500g (cooked weight) of red meat per week, to avoid processed meats and to avoid overly browning foods.

These recommendations challenge many aspects of one of New Zealand's great past times, enjoying food cooked on the barbecue. Barbecued food will commonly result in a higher intake of red meats, processed meats and charred or browned food.



In New Zealand a recommended daily maximum serving

# Introduction

of red meat is 100g -120 g (uncooked weight) per adult. Alternative protein rich foods should be offered as well as or instead of red meat options; including chicken, fish, eggs, legumes and pulses (such as chick peas, falafels, kidney beans, tofu).

Processed meats should be limited. The term 'processed meat' refers to meats preserved by smoking, curing, salting or by the addition of chemical preservatives such as nitrites or nitrates.

Ham, bacon, pastrami and salami are processed meats. So are sausages, bratwursts, frankfurters and 'hot dogs' that contain nitrites and nitrates.

Meat, including minced meat preserved by refrigeration or freezing do not usually contain chemicals.

Nitrites and nitrates are used to preserve foods and so reduce the risk of bacterial contamination. Caution should be taken to ensure unprocessed meat is stored correctly, cooked correctly and consumed within the 'best by' or 'use by' date, to ensure risk of bacterial contamination remains low and the food is safe to eat.

Browning or charring of foods should be limited to reduce intake of aromatic hydrocarbons. A key source of browned food is from the barbecue.

In New Zealand the majority of available sausages, bacon and salamis are classified as high fat foods (usually exceeding the recommended guideline of less than 10g fat per 100g of product).

These recommendations may pose some dilemma in how to cater at certain events that rely on barbecued foods, such as the 'Relay for Life'. Barbecued sausages are enjoyed by the public, are relatively easy to cook, provide a hot breakfast alternative and are cheap to purchase.

Alternative hot options need to be explored in order to best cater for 1200 people and stay within the planned budget. The Cancer Society will need to make a decision on whether to make some changes -to acknowledge the recommendations by offering a choice of foods rather than totally stopping all barbecued foods, including sausages.

In the future the Cancer Society may prefer to take

a stronger stance on limiting or avoiding barbecued and processed meats. This may occur in response to a change in public expectations as they become better informed and motivated to make dietary changes, availability of cheaper alternative foods or an increased budget for catering.



*Alternative protein rich foods should be offered as well as or instead of red meat options; including chicken, fish, eggs, legumes and pulses (such as chick peas, falafels, kidney beans, tofu).*

# Key nutritional messages to reduce cancer risk

## Maintain a healthy body weight

- Balance food intake with physical activity.

## Consume energy- dense foods sparingly.

- Choose lower – fat and low-sugar or no-sugar Foods. Refer to *New Zealand National Heart Foundation Guidelines* for guides on low fat foods. A simple measure is to limit fat to less than 10g fat per 100g of product.
- Choose low-fat cooking methods such as boiling, grilling and microwaving and avoid adding fat.
- Consume ‘fast foods’ sparingly, if at all.
- Avoid sugary drinks.

## Eat mostly foods of plant origin

- Eat at least 5 servings (400g) of a variety of non starchy vegetables and fruit every day.
- Aim for 2 serves of fruit per day. Ideally this includes fresh fruit.
- Limit fruit juice or dried fruit to one serve per day. A serve is equal to one apple, pear, orange or banana or cup cooked fruit.
- Aim for at least 3 serves of vegetables per day. A serve is equal to approximately one medium potato or a palmful of the food i.e. cup.
- Increase intake of non starchy vegetables i.e. vegetables other than potato, yam, cassava, sweet potato.
- Lightly cook or steam vegetables to maintain nutrient content.
- Limit refined starchy foods.
- Eat more wholemeal and wholegrain breads and cereals, in preference to white breads and cereals.
- Avoid mouldy cereals (grains) or pulses (legumes)

## Limit intake of red meat and avoid processed meat

- Eat a maximum of 700 g (uncooked) or 500 g (cooked weight) red meat per week.
- Avoid processed meat including ham, bacon and sausages.
- Limit charred or browned food.

## Limit consumption of salt

- Avoid salt preserved, salted, or salty foods.
- Preserve foods without using salt.  
Limit consumption of processed foods with added salt to ensure an intake of less than 6g (2.4g sodium) a day.

## Limit alcoholic drinks

- Drink little or no alcohol.



## Useful guidelines on choosing foods and cooking methods lower in fat and sugar

NZ National Heart Foundation *Function Catering Guidelines* and *Recipe Development Guidelines*. Visit website [www.nhf.org.nz](http://www.nhf.org.nz)

Recipe books include:

‘*The Best of Food for the heart*’ by the New Zealand National Heart Foundation. Other books also available from [www.nhf.org.nz](http://www.nhf.org.nz)

‘*NOSH – delicious and responsible eating*’ by Julie Leeper. Available in bookshops and online [www.nosh.net.nz](http://www.nosh.net.nz)

# Breakfast

## Key nutritional goals

- Limit energy-dense foods.
- Choose lower fat cooking methods for cooked breakfasts.
- Offer low fat cereals; avoid toasted mueslis.
- Offer low sugar cereals; avoid sugar-coated cereals.
- Offer trim or low fat milk.
- Avoid sugary drinks.
- Avoid processed meats including ham, bacon, sausages, salami.
- Include unrefined or less refined wholemeal and wholegrain cereals and breads.
- Include a choice of fruits.

## Breakfast menu suggestions



### Cereals

- Mueslis containing wholegrains (wholegrain or rolled oats, nuts, seeds, dried and / or fresh fruit, no added sugar and untoasted e.g. Bircher style muesli, served with trim milk and low fat yoghurt.
- Porridge with low fat milk and optional cinnamon and dried fruit.
- Sprinkle of nuts and seeds (almonds, sunflower seeds and pumpkin seeds) for cereals.

### Dairy

- Trim and full cream milk, low fat yoghurt, low sugar yoghurt, optional bio/live yoghurt.

### Fruit

- Fresh fruit salad, fresh fruit platter, fruit compote, stewed fruit, canned fruit in natural juice.

### Breads

- Wholegrain breads, wholemeal breads, dark rye bread.
- Wholegrain toast with avocado, tomato and cottage cheese.
- Raisin bagel topped with cottage cheese and berries.

# Breakfast



*Browning or charring of foods should be limited to reduce intake of aromatic hydrocarbons. A key source of browned food is from the barbecue.*



## Cooked breakfasts

- Eggs poached, boiled or scrambled with toast.
- Eggs and salmon and / or spinach on wholegrain toast.
- Baked beans, tomatoes and grilled mushrooms with wholegrain toast.
- Grilled tomato, mushrooms and poached egg with wholegrain toast.
- Avoid or limit processed meats. If including processed meats such as bacon, ham, sausages, then ideally offer low fat ham, bacon and sausages and choose low fat cooking methods such as grilling, baking, dry frying. If unpreserved options available then ensure correctly stored and cooked to reduce any risk of bacterial contamination.
- Buckwheat pancakes with cooked apple, cinnamon, raisins, and topped with slivered almonds. Served with yoghurt.
- Corn fritters made with half or all wholemeal flour and served with roasted chilli jam.

## Spreads

- Margarine, low fat spread, cottage cheese, avocado, nut butters including almond and cashew nut butter.

## Drinks

- Water, Fruit tea, herbal tea, coffee, trim milk, full cream milk.

## Barbecued hot breakfast options. Useful for large events such as 'Relay for Life'.

**Option one;** avoid all processed meats. Offer a low fat, non processed alternative such as unprocessed lean Meat patties, Falafels (chick pea fritters), Chicken kebabs, Fish cakes, Tofu based vegetarian sausages.

Serve in wholemeal bread with lettuce, tomato, beetroot and cucumber with yoghurt mint sauce optional or tomato sauce.

**Option 2;** Continue to offer processed meats but choose low fat sausages, bacon and meat patties, reduce browning of the meats and serve in wholemeal bread with the option of lettuce and fresh tomato.

# Morning and Afternoon tea suggestions

## Key nutritional goals

- Limit energy-dense items high in fat and sugar.
- Choose low fat pastry such as filo pastry.
- Use low fat cooking methods for any cooked items.
- Avoid sugary drinks.
- Offer unrefined grains such as wholegrain or wholemeal bread.
- Avoid processed meats including ham, salami, bacon, sausages.

## Additional suggestions

- If only one item is offered then prioritise fruit.
- Include vegetables if possible or appropriate.
- Avoid fruit juice.
- Offer water and hot drinks.
- Avoid danish pastries, savoury muffins and sweet biscuits, chocolate, pastry (except filo) or cream based cake or slice, all of which are usually high sugar and / or fat and nutrient poor options.
- If you are budgeting for a second item, choose a low fat and low sugar fruit based cake or loaf.

## Morning and afternoon tea suggestions

- Fresh fruit as fruit platter, fruit kebabs, fruit bowl.
- Low fat low sugar fruit muffins.
- Fruit loaf.
- Zucchini and carrot cake.
- Wholemeal sandwiches e.g. as a club sandwich and can include a moist topping such as hummus or cottage cheese to limit the need for fat spread. Include a vegetable filling such as cucumber, grated carrot, lettuce, tomato, cucumber, alfalfa sprouts.
- Salmon and quark tartlet in filo pastry.
- Mini calzone – pizza pocket filled with chicken, artichoke and mushrooms.

## Drinks

- Water, Fruit and herbal teas, tea, coffee.

# Finger Food Lunches

## Key nutritional goals

- Limit energy dense high fat high sugar options.
- Avoid or limit deep fried foods (fish bites, chicken nuggets, wontons)
- Avoid or limit foods made short crust, flaky and puff pastry (pies, savouries, quiches, tarts)
- Limit mayonnaise and cream cheese in fillings or salads.
- Limit red meat options. Offer alternatives including chicken, fish, legumes, tofu, low fat cheese or egg options.
- Avoid processed meats including ham, bacon, sausages, salami.
- Include a variety of non starchy vegetable dishes i.e. as separate dishes or within the items.
- Choose wholegrain breads or wholemeal breads.
- Limit salt- preserved foods.

## Additional suggestions

- Usually around 7-8 items are chosen per person including the dessert item. Include at least 3 separate vegetable dishes, 2 vegetarian options, consider fish options, offer maximum 1 red meat option and limit all pastry options.
- Utilise lower fat alternative proteins such as fish and legumes such as chickpeas.
- If possible, provide a small plate and fork and offer 2 or more salads to complement the finger food e.g. green salad, greek salad, coleslaw with a yoghurt and low fat dressing, rocket pear and walnut salad.
- Offer low fat salad dressings such as yoghurt and mint or tzatziki dressing made with low fat yoghurt.
- Choose tinned fish canned in spring water rather than brine.
- Avoid over salting food with use of commercial stock powders, soy sauce and salt.



# Finger Food Lunches



*Sushi, meatballs, Asparagus and Prawns are just a few easy Finger food options.*



## Finger food lunch suggestions

- Seared peppered fresh tuna served on cocktail sticks.
- Sushi.
- Salmon sashimi with wasabi and soy sauce
- Salmon and ginger fritters topped with crème fraiche and sweet chilli sauce.
- Salmon, avocado and coriander salsa and prawns on crispbread
- Vietnamese glass noodle rolls (chicken optional, lettuce, onion, carrot, coriander, rice noodles in rice papers) with dipping sauce.
- Thai fish cakes (grilled or baked) and sweet thai chilli dipping sauce.
- Spinach and feta filo pastries (greek spanokopita)
- Dolmades (greek rice filled vine leaves)
- Lamb kofta kebabs and yoghurt and mint dressing
- Artichoke, tapenade and tomato on roast kumara
- Caramelised red onion and goat cheese filo pastries.
- Chicken kebabs
- Falafel and chicken kebab
- Falafels in mini pita breads with lettuce and tahini
- Spinach tortilla served with salad and shredded chicken
- Pumpkin and spinach frittata
- Rolled omelette filled with fresh tomato and avocado, sliced into rounds.
- Meatballs made with lean mince.
- Prawns and corn salsa served in baby cos lettuce leaves
- Prawns wrapped in filo and baked served in a dipping sauce
- Grilled asparagus spears served with fresh herbs and yoghurt
- Open sandwiches using wholegrain bread
- Fresh fruit, Fruit platter or Fruit kebabs
- Fruit slice or Fruit friand

## Drinks

- Water, Fruit and herbal teas, tea, coffee.

# Luncheons

## Key nutritional goals

- Limit energy dense high fat high sugar options.
- Avoid or limit deep fried foods (fish bites, chicken nuggets, wontons)
- Avoid or limit foods made short crust, flaky and puff pastry (pies, savouries, quiches, tarts) Offer healthier low fat style dishes such as thai beef salad, braised meat, casseroles.
- Limit mayonnaise and cream cheese in fillings or salads.
- Limit red meat options Offer a maximum of one red meat dish (120g red meat uncooked weight per adult).
- Avoid processed meats including ham, bacon, sausages, salami.
- Limit salt- preserved foods.
- Avoid unprocessed meats (ham, bacon, salami, sausages), fish tinned in brine, vegetables tinned in brine, soy sauce, commercial stock powders.
- Offer 1-2 protein dishes at a main meal (meat, fish or chicken plus vegetarian).
- Offer alternatives including chicken, fish, legumes, tofu, low fat cheese or egg options.
- Offer 1-2 carbohydrate dishes such as potatoes or pasta, bread or rice dish; Try to incorporate other colourful vegetables and herbs, nuts, seeds into the dish. Use low fat dressings.
- Offer 2-3 other non-starchy vegetable dishes; use raw vegetables, steamed, lightly cooked, stir fried in little oil or fat, dry or low fat roasted.
- Offer wholegrain breads or wholemeal breads.

## Additional Suggestions

Try to incorporate some legumes into the meat or fish dishes for additional healthy nutrients e.g. lentils, chickpeas, white beans, kidney beans.

### Luncheon Suggestions

- Winter lentil soup
- Lamb, barley and vegetable soup
- Black bean soup
- Braised lamb with cumin and lentils
- Salmon fillet with lemon and thyme risotto
- Steak served on potato rosti with stir fried vegetables
- Monk fish baked in coconut with bok choy and baked fennel
- Thai beef salad
- Thai chicken curry
- Red cabbage, white cabbage and carrot salad
- Grated beetroot, carrot salad sprinkled with almonds and sesame seeds
- Baked beetroot with balsamic vinegar, roasted hazlenuts and rocket salad
- Pear, stilton, walnut and rocket salad
- Roasted vegetables
- Tabbouleh salad
- Greek Salad

### Desserts

- Berries, shortbread, yoghurt mixed with cream
- Berries, meringue, yoghurt mixed with cream
- Roasted pears with yoghurt
- Trio of fruit sorbet with biscotti
- Fresh fruit salad
- Fruit platter
- Fruit bowl

### Drinks

- Water, Herbal and Fruit teas, Tea and Coffee