

Suggestions and tips for catering

Drinks

- Water – Tap water is the preferred option. Other suitable choices are sparkling, mineral and soda water. Avoid flavored mineral water and soft drinks. *Tip:* serve chilled.
- Fruit Juice – Unsweetened fruit juices (containing greater than 99 percent fruit juice).
- *Tip:* allow for small servings only.
- Milk – Offer reduced-fat or skim milk in preference to full-fat milk.
- Tea and Coffee – Options include regular tea, herbal tea, regular and decaffeinated coffee. Serve with reduced-fat milk. Provide sugar and artificial sweetener in small amounts.

Breakfast foods

- Breakfast cereals – Wholegrain varieties such as wheat biscuits, cereal flakes, bran, untoasted mueslis or porridge. Serve with reduced-fat milk, low fat yogurt, or fresh fruit.
- Bread and toast – Multigrain, whole grain, rye, or hi-fiber.
- Fruit– Fresh or canned in natural juice e.g. fresh fruit salad, grapefruit, kiwifruit, apple, oranges, pineapple, berries, mango in season. Serve as whole fruit, fruit salad or fruit pieces.
- Yoghurt – Plain or flavored, low fat or no-fat varieties. *Tip:* serve in bulk or individual containers.
- Hot egg dishes – Scrambled, boiled, poached or omelet. Serve with toast, grilled vegetables, parsley and cracked pepper.
- Vegetables – Cooked vegetables and lentils. Grilled, char-grilled or baked tomato, spinach, mushrooms, corn or baked beans (salt-reduced).



Platters, nibbles and finger foods

- Dip platters – low fat vegetable-based salsas and relishes such as tomato, bean or corn. Reduced-fat dips such as tzatziki, hummus, and vegetable-based varieties. Low fat cream cheese, ricotta or cottage cheese based dips. *Tip:* avoid aioli, sour cream and cream-based sauces.

Serve with:

- vegetables including carrot, celery, cucumber sticks, snow peas, broccoli, cauliflower pieces, mushrooms or tomato
- mini toasts, crispbreads and crackers (use reduced-fat and reduced-salt varieties if available)
- roasted or grilled vegetables (drained of oil)
- plain, unsalted nuts (no nuts coated in candy or chocolate)

- dried fruits (no glazed or crystallized fruit).
- Fruit platter – Fresh seasonal fruits, whole or in pieces. Fruit kebabs with sweet dipping sauces such as low fat vanilla yoghurt or berry puree.
- Vegetable platter – Vegetable kebabs with savory dipping sauces such as tomato salsa, mango chutney, chili and ginger sauce.
- Salad platters – Garden, mixed, tabouleh, lentil, couscous. Add lentils, red kidney beans and cannellini beans and roasted pumpkin, sweet potato and eggplant to salads. Serve with low-oil or no-oil salad dressings. Combine lean beef, chicken or fish to salads to produce a complete meal.
- Cheese platter – Include some low fat or reduced-fat options such as ricotta, feta, or reduced-fat tasty cheese in the platter. Include fruit/salad on the platters. *Tip:* serve cheese in small wedges in preference to large blocks.
- Sandwiches and rolls – Breads: Offer mostly whole grain or multigrain breads and rolls. For variety use wraps, pita, foccacia, and small bagels.

Filling suggestions:

- Meats: lean skinless chicken, lean ham off the bone, sliced roast beef or turkey breast. Avoid processed meats such as salami, chicken loaf, and bacon
- Fish: tuna or salmon canned in water in preference to brine or oil (drain oil before using) or smoked salmon
- Egg: boiled
- Cheese: thinly sliced and reduced-fat varieties if available
- Salad and vegetables: avocado, bean sprouts, beetroot, lettuce, tomato, carrot, red onion, chives, cucumber, roasted eggplant, roasted peppers or mushroom
- Condiments: chutney, pickles, mustard, capers, low fat mayonnaise, or hummus.



Snacks and finger foods (also refer to 'Platters' section for additional ideas)

- Muffins – offer un-iced plain or fruit (sultana, banana) or vegetable (grated carrot) muffins. Avoid muffins containing frosting or choc bits. Halve large muffins or serve mini muffins.
- Scones – Offer small sized plain, fruit or vegetable scones. Offer whole grain scones if available and serve with low fat yogurt or ricotta cheese and fruit purée. Serve spreads (such as jam and margarine) separately and avoid cream.
- Spreads – Polyunsaturated or mono-unsaturated varieties such as canola, sunflower, olive, soybean or peanut. Use spreads sparingly. Serve spreads separately.
- Sauces and condiments – Tomato, sweet chili, BBQ, soy, chutney, mayonnaise, mustard, relishes or gravy. Serve separately with food where



appropriate. Use salt-reduced, low fat and low sugar varieties. Use sparingly.

- Salad dressing – Use low oil or no oil salad dressings.

Hot dishes

- Soups – Select vegetable or legume base soups. Choose clear based soups over creamy soup. If using canned or packet soups, choose the salt-reduced varieties. *Tip:* use pepper, herbs or curry powder to enhance the flavor.
- Vegetables – All vegetable types. Steam, microwave, grill, roast, or stir fry with minimal oil. Keep skin on vegetables if edible and possible. *Tip:* If baking, line trays with baking paper or lightly coat vegetables in polyunsaturated or mono-unsaturated oil spray.
- Pasta – Select tomato or vegetable based sauces or white sauces made with low fat milk or ricotta when available. If serving cheese separately, use low fat cheese and limit the amount. Serve with a variety of salads. *Tips:* limit to entrée sized serves and avoid creamy based dishes or those with lots of cheese and processed meat.
- Rice – Steamed is the healthiest option. Serve savory, stir-fried, risotto containing lots of vegetables. Choose reduced-salt, low fat options and wholegrain varieties if available.
- Noodles – Vermicelli, clear noodles or thin egg noodles. Stir fried noodle based dishes using reduced-salt varieties and flavorings. Combine with lean meats, poultry, fish, or tofu and a wide variety of vegetables. *Tip:* avoid packets of fried noodles.
- Beef, veal, lamb, pork, chicken, poultry – Select lean cuts (topside, lean mince, rump, lean chops, breast meat or skinless drumsticks) with fat trimmed prior to cooking. Use low fat reduced-salt varieties of sausages. Choose low fat cooking methods such as grilling, barbecuing, roasting, steaming or stir-frying. No need to add fat when cooking. If marinating, choose reduced-salt and low fat ingredients. Serve with salads, baked potato, corn on the cob, roast vegetables, lentils and whole grain bread. *Tips:* use non-stick cookware and avoid crumbed meat.
- Fish – All fish types including shellfish. For canned varieties, choose those packed in spring water in preference to oil.
- Meat dishes – Stews, casseroles curries, savory mince, meat balls, hamburgers (made from lean mince), burritos or tacos (meat can be replaced by legumes). Choose lean cuts of meat, poultry or fish and use reduced-salt sauces in dishes. Select dishes that include lots of vegetables and serve with extra vegetables or salad and steamed rice. Always serve barbecued foods with a variety of salads or vegetables. Use salt-reduced sauces in dishes. Where possible serve sauces and dressings separately. Season with herbs when possible.

