

FOOD *for* SPORT





INCORPORATING A BALANCED DIET AND EXERCISE INTO OUR DAILY ROUTINE HELPS US FEEL GOOD AND STAY HEALTHY.

Whether we play sport for fun or competitively, we need food for energy to keep us going. As athletes, we know how important the right food choices are for our performance, like choosing to include lean beef and lamb in our diet for protein and energy.

'Food for Sport' contains useful information with tips and ideas on food and nutrition to help you achieve your individual goals.

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FOOD FOR SPORT

Nutrition, along with your genetic make-up and training, is an important component in reaching your personal best.

GENES + TRAINING + NUTRITION = OPTIMUM PERFORMANCE

The right type, quantity and quality of foods help you cope with the increased nutritional requirements of a rigorous training schedule.

When you put so much time and effort into training, it makes sense to put the same into your nutrition plan.

EXERCISE INTENSITY

Your nutritional needs vary depending on your training volume, frequency and intensity.

HOW CAN YOU MEASURE INTENSITY?

If you can hold a conversation while exercising it is probably low intensity. If breathing is an effort and you take a sharp breath to speak, it is moderate intensity exercise. If you can hardly speak and are panting quite heavily, it is high intensity exercise.

LOW INTENSITY

Walking on the flat
Cycling on the flat
Gardening
Lawn bowls
Water Walking
Golf

MODERATE INTENSITY

Jogging (7km/hr)
Walking uphill
Netball, Tennis
Weight training
Aerobics
Skiing

HIGH INTENSITY

Running (10-15km/hr)
Competitive sports
Cycling (race pace)
Swimming (race pace)
Rowing (race pace)
Squash

ENERGY

The three main sources of energy are carbohydrate, protein, and fat. The micronutrient, iron, is also involved with energy production. All are important for good sports performance.

Energy is measured in kilojoules (kJ) or kilocalories (kcal). Both are found in the nutritional panel on food packaging.

To convert kJ to kcal, divide by 4.2,
eg $1200\text{kJ} / 4.2 = 286 \text{ kcal}$

To convert kcal to kJ, multiply by 4.2,
eg $200\text{kcal} \times 4.2 = 840\text{kJ}$

ENERGY AVAILABILITY

This is a new concept defined as being the energy available to the body after the energy cost of physical activity has been deducted from daily energy intake. This is therefore the amount of energy which can be used for the body's daily needs (e.g. hormonal functions, growth, repair).

Energy availability = Energy Intake –
Energy cost of training/competition

The body can cope with a small drop in energy availability, but if too little is eaten for the amount of training being done, the body's ability to undertake the processes required for optimum health and function will be compromised.

Many health and performance problems commonly seen in athletes are associated with energy availability, such as menstrual disturbances, poor hormonal function, compromised immunity and impaired bone density. The threshold below which the consequences are particularly harmful is 30Kcal/Kg Fat Free Mass. Fat Free Mass comprises bone, muscle and water. A qualified dietitian/nutritionist can assess whether energy intake is adequate for your body composition and amount of exercise being undertaken.



CARBOHYDRATES

Carbohydrates are the major energy source for everyone, but especially athletes. As a general rule, dietitians and nutritionists recommend carbohydrates, such as wholegrain breads, cereals, fruits, vegetables and pulses, provide more than half our energy.

The specific amount of carbohydrate your body needs depends on your body weight and level of training. The table on page 7 gives the recommended amounts of carbohydrate required by most athletes. For example, someone who weighs 60kg doing low intensity exercise requires $4 \times 60 = 240\text{g}$ carbohydrate each day.

CARBOHYDRATES SHOULD BE EATEN THROUGHOUT THE DAY, BASED ON 20G PORTIONS. EXAMPLES OF 20G CARBOHYDRATE PORTIONS:

- 2 thin slices bread
- 2 plain crackers
- 1 cup cooked porridge
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup cooked pasta/rice
- 1 medium potato/kumara
- 2 cereal wheat biscuits
- 1 cup pumpkin
- 1 medium banana
- 1 large apple/orange
- 150g fruit yoghurt
- 300ml sports drink
- 1 Tbsp jam/honey/sugar

TRAINING LOAD

EXERCISE INTENSITY

CARBOHYDRATE (G)/KG BODY WEIGHT/DAY

Light	Low intensity or skill-based activities	3 – 5g/kg/day
Moderate	Moderate exercise programme (1 hour/day)	5 – 7g/kg/day
High	Endurance programme (1-3 hours/day of moderate/high intensity)	6 – 10g/kg/day
Very High	Extreme commitment (4+ hours/day of moderate/high intensity)	8 – 12g/kg/day

Reference: Nutrition for Athletes IOC Nutrition Working Group, April 2012

Carbohydrates are stored as glycogen, the main source of energy for muscles during exercise. The body can only store a limited amount of glycogen, so it's essential to eat carbohydrates every day. The sample meal plan on pages 12 - 13 shows how carbohydrate foods can fit into your daily eating pattern.

GLYCAEMIC INDEX

The Glycaemic Index (GI) ranks carbohydrates based on how they influence blood glucose levels.

Low GI foods (see table below) in a pre-exercise meal can be particularly useful when a sustained release of energy is needed. If exercising for longer than 90 minutes, an additional 30-60g high GI foods/hour may be useful.

Eating moderate to high GI carbohydrates after exercise raises blood glucose levels quickly and enhances recovery.

LOW (55 OR UNDER)

Wholegrain breads
Rolled oats/porridge
Muesli
Baked beans
Chickpeas
Pasta
Milk
Yoghurt
Most fruit
Dried apples/dried
apricots/ prunes
Corn/taro/green
banana

MODERATE (56 TO 69)

Pita bread
Cereal wheat biscuits
Couscous
Risotto/basmati rice
Ripe banana
Pineapple/mango/
pawpaw
Raisins/sultanas
New potatoes
Dates

HIGH (70 OR ABOVE)

Bagels
Scones
White bread
Instant porridge
Cornflakes
Jasmine/brown rice
Sushi rice
Watermelon
Kumara/potatoes
Glucose
Sports drinks and gels
Jellybeans and gummy
lollies

Reference: Sydney University, www.glycemicindex.com, accessed October 2012

FAT

Some fat in our food is essential as it insulates the body from the cold and helps the absorption and transportation of the fat-soluble vitamins (A, D, E and K). It is also a rich source of energy, providing 9 kcal (38kJ)/g compared to roughly 4kcal (17kJ)/g from carbohydrate or protein.

Too much fat can contribute to weight gain, heart disease and other health problems. A high intake of saturated fat specifically, found in foods such as high fat dairy products, cakes and pies, is associated with increased blood cholesterol. Foods containing mono and polyunsaturated fats should be chosen wherever possible, e.g. lean red meat, oily fish, nuts.

TIPS FOR REDUCING SATURATED FAT INTAKE:

- Choose low fat dairy products, e.g. milk, yoghurt, cheese
- Limit high fat snacks, e.g. chips, chocolate, fried foods
- Buy lean meat and trim any visible fat
- Use low fat cooking methods, e.g. bake, grill, steam, microwave
- Use vegetable oils, e.g. olive or canola, high in mono and polyunsaturated fat

FAT CONTENT OF EVERYDAY FOODS

G FAT/SERVING

2 slices lean roast beef	4g
½ cup lean stewed beef mince	5g
1 boiled egg	5g
1 lean grilled lamb leg steak	5g
2 chocolate biscuits	6g
1 fruit and nut bar	7g
1 slice pizza	9g
1 blueberry muffin	11g
1 croissant	17g
1 50g packet potato chips	18g
½ cup grated Cheddar cheese	21g

PROTEIN

Protein also provides energy if glycogen stores are low, but low energy availability (see page 5) impairs muscle growth, repair and recovery. For this reason, carbohydrate foods should remain the main source of energy (50-60%), leaving protein to be used more appropriately.

Athletes have slightly higher protein needs due to extra wear and tear on the body. Protein requirements for both strength and endurance exercise are 1.2 – 1.7g/kg body weight/day. The recommended amounts of protein can be met each day without the need for protein supplements. It's important to eat protein throughout the day, not just at one or two meals.

High quality protein foods, such as lean red meat, contain all the essential amino acids needed. These foods also provide a good source of iron, zinc and vitamin B₁₂. Plant foods such as bread, pasta, rice, breakfast cereal, legumes, lentils and nuts also contribute some protein. Recipes containing high quality protein are given on pages 20 – 23.

High quality protein foods, such as dairy foods, meat or eggs, improve recovery and adaptation post-exercise. Muscle growth is stimulated only in the presence of enough amino acids, so eating small amounts of protein throughout the day helps make more amino acids available. The amount of protein needed to maximise this response is 20 – 25g.

EXAMPLES OF 10G PROTEIN PORTIONS

- 35-50g lean cooked beef or lamb
- 1 small hamburger patty
- ½ cup casserole meat or stew
- 2 small eggs
- 40g fish or canned tuna
- 20g skim milk powder
- 4 slices of bread
- 400ml soy milk
- 300ml trim milk
- 2 small pottles low fat unsweetened yoghurt
- 200g baked beans
- 150g legumes or lentils
- ½ cup hummus
- 90g breakfast cereal
- 3 cups cooked rice or 2 cups cooked pasta
- 60g nuts or seeds
- 30g cheese



PROTEIN BEFORE EXERCISE

The meal one to four hours before exercise should be high in carbohydrates and moderate in protein, and familiar. New foods should only be tried at a time least likely to impact an event or competition. For example a piece of wholemeal toast thinly spread with peanut butter, or cereal with low fat milk and fruit would be suitable.

PROTEIN AFTER EXERCISE

Muscle and body protein is shifting constantly between breakdown and rebuilding. During exercise the balance shifts towards protein breakdown, tipping towards rebuilding during recovery. After exercise the recovery process includes refuelling, rehydrating and repairing. Evidence shows consuming 20-25g protein immediately after exercise promotes a more positive protein balance.

High quality protein foods are best for the maintenance, repair and rebuilding of muscle protein in response to training. It is most effective combined with carbohydrate, which stimulates the hormone insulin. Insulin, in turn, stimulates muscles to take up the amino acids.

EXAMPLES OF 'RECOVERY' SNACKS CONTAINING PROTEIN AND CARBOHYDRATE:

- Sandwiches with meat, cheese or peanut butter
- Yoghurt
- Flavoured milk drinks
- Fruit smoothies
- Breakfast cereal and milk

SAMPLE EATING PLAN

This sample eating plan contains enough carbohydrate and protein for either a 55kg long distance runner training 1-2 hours per day, a 68kg soccer player training at least an hour a day or an 85kg person who walks an hour a day.

BREAKFAST: 7AM

- 6 carbohydrate portions
- 1½ protein portions

2 thick slices toast/bread with 2 Tbsp jam, honey or peanut butter

1 cup cereal with ½ cup milk, and a banana

1 glass fruit juice

1 glass water

MID-MORNING: 10.30AM

- 3 carbohydrate portions
- 1 protein portion

1 scone with thinly spread margarine and jam

1 glass milk

LUNCH: 12 NOON

- 5 carbohydrate portions
- 1½ protein portions

2 pita breads with lettuce, tomato, cold meat

1 apple

1 glass water

MID-AFTERNOON: 3PM (PRE-TRAINING MEAL)

- 3 carbohydrate portions
- 1 protein portion

1 sandwich with peanut butter or a yoghurt

1 glass water

BEFORE TRAINING

1 glass water



TRAINING: 5PM

Water

AFTER TRAINING (POST TRAINING SNACK)

- 3 carbohydrate portions

1 banana

1 cereal bar

200ml sports drink

DINNER: 7.30PM (POST TRAINING MEAL)

- 5 carbohydrate portions
- 3 protein portions

125g lean red meat

1½ cups cooked rice

Stir-fried vegetables, eg broccoli, capsicum, beans, carrots

3 Tbsp raisins

1 apple

1 glass water

SUPPER: 10PM

- 1½ carbohydrate portions

1 cup hot chocolate made with low fat milk

IRON

Iron helps carry oxygen to the brain and muscles. A lack of iron can decrease performance through less oxygen being delivered to tissues, and muscles becoming less able to use oxygen to produce energy, causing fatigue. Athletes need extra iron, as do women and girls to replace monthly blood loss. Having enough iron-rich foods is therefore vital for everyone involved in sports and exercise. There are two types of iron:

HAEM IRON

Haem iron is only found in red meat, seafood, fish and poultry. It is easily absorbed and used by the body. About 25% of haem iron is absorbed, depending on iron stores - more is absorbed if iron stores are low. Generally the redder the meat, the higher the iron content. Beef and lamb are two of the richest sources of haem iron.

HAEM IRON FOODS (COOKED) IRON (MG)

120g lean beef (average all cuts)	4.6
½ cup green mussels	4.6
40g slice lamb liver	4.0
120g lean lamb (average all cuts)	3.0
2 chicken thighs	1.8
120g tarakihi fillet	0.6
90g can tuna in brine	0.5

NON-HAEM IRON

Non-haem iron is found in bread, cereals, nuts, beans and lentils, plus some fruit and vegetables. Only about 5% is absorbed. Eating meat, fish or poultry, and foods containing vitamin C, such as fruit juice, helps increase the use of non-haem iron. For example, eating red meat and vegetables together in a meal can increase iron absorption by up to four times. Tannins in tea, phytates in wholegrain cereals, oxalates in some vegetables (e.g. spinach) and some types of fibre inhibit absorption of non-haem iron. Avoid tea and coffee for 1-2 hours around meal times.

NON-HAEM IRON FOODS IRON (MG)

¾ cup baked beans	2.0
½ cup cooked red lentils	1.8
1 boiled egg	1.1
1 cup boiled brown rice	1.0
½ cup porridge (no milk)	0.7
½ cup boiled spinach	0.6
1 slice wholemeal bread	0.5

The recommended dietary iron intake is 18mg a day for women and 8mg a day for men.

IRON-RICH MEAL IDEAS

Here are some examples of everyday foods and meal ideas, which include both iron-rich foods, such as meat and fish, and those which help us use non-haem iron more effectively, e.g. vitamin C-filled fruit juice with toast.

BREAKFAST

- Bowl of iron-fortified cereal, such as cornflakes, and milk, topped with vitamin C-rich fruit, e.g. kiwi fruit - **3.2mg**
- 2 slices wholemeal toast with peanut butter and a glass of fruit juice - **2.2mg**

LUNCH:

- Pita filled with lean lamb, lettuce, tomato and avocado - **4.8mg**
- Jacket potato filled with chilli con carne (or baked beans), topped with cheese and served with salad - **4.9mg**

DINNER:

- Meatballs in a tomato-based sauce with pasta - **6.0mg**
- Lean lamb stir-fry with broccoli, capsicum and noodles, topped with sesame seeds - **5.0mg**

SNACKS:

- 1 slice of wholemeal bread and yeast spread, eg Marmite® - **2.8mg**
- Large handful/¼ cup raw nuts, such as: Pistachios **2.2mg**, Cashews **1.9mg**, Almonds **1.6mg**, Brazils **1.1mg**, Walnuts - **1.0mg**

Iron supplements should only be taken under medical supervision. In the long term, food is the safest and healthiest way to maintain iron levels. Frequent use of iron supplements may reduce the absorption of zinc, copper and calcium, increasing the risk of deficiencies.

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SODIUM (SALT)

Salt is made up of sodium and chloride, of which about 40% is sodium. Sodium plays a vital role in keeping body fluids, such as blood and sweat, in balance. But too much can result in high blood pressure and disturb the body's calcium levels, so while some is good, more is not better.

About 75% of the salt we eat comes from manufactured foods. You'll see sodium listed in the nutritional information panel, not salt, so to convert the numbers:

Salt to sodium, divide by 2.5, so
1g salt = 0.4g (400mg) sodium

Sodium to salt, multiply by 2.5, so
1g sodium = 2.5g (2500mg) salt

If you are competing in endurance sports, such as triathlons or long distance running, salt is important to replace sodium lost during sweating. This can be provided by sodium-containing drinks such as sports drinks or by adding a little extra iodised salt to your meals.

FLUIDS

Having enough fluid is particularly important for athletes.

Dehydration impairs performance - a fluid loss of 2% body weight can impair performance by up to 20%. Water prevents this and helps cool the body while exercising.

It is important to drink before you feel thirsty. By the time you are thirsty, you have started to become dehydrated.

See a Sports Nutritionist or Dietitian to work out how much fluid you need.

SUPPLEMENTS & PERFORMANCE ENHANCERS

A dietary supplement containing similar amounts of nutrients to those available in food, such as sports drinks, sports bars, carbohydrate powders or liquids, can be convenient and practical for athletes.

'Nutritional ergogenic aids' usually contain nutrients in higher amounts than food. They are generally not recommended as there is little evidence to show they provide benefits and may cause unwanted side-effects. Some supplements, such as creatine and caffeine, offer the prospect of improved performance for some athletes in specific events, but should only be used under guidance. See a Sports Nutritionist or Dietitian for advice.

CALCIUM

Calcium is needed for building and maintaining strong bones and teeth, blood clotting and muscle and nerve function. Too little calcium can contribute to stress fractures (broken bones) in the short term or osteoporosis (thinning of the bones) later in life, especially in women.

Athletes should aim to eat at least 3 servings of low fat dairy foods, e.g. calcium-enriched or low fat milk, yoghurt or lower fat cheeses (Edam or cottage), every day. Calcium-fortified foods, such as calcium-fortified soy milk, are useful if you are unable to eat dairy foods.

FIBRE

Fibre helps keep bowels healthy and reduce cholesterol levels.

Sources of fibre include fruit, vegetables, wholegrain cereals and pulses such as beans. These foods can also help you feel full for longer, which can make weight control easier.

Too much fibre can cause some athletes gut discomfort, especially runners. If this happens, choose foods lower in fibre before exercise, e.g. white bread and peeled fruit and vegetables.

ALCOHOL

Alcohol can impair performance in several ways:

- Decrease reaction time
- Impair movement, balance, coordination, concentration and effective decision-making
- Change attitude and decrease motivation
- Cause dehydration and fatigue
- Delay healing of soft tissue injuries, e.g. sprained ankle
- Cause weight gain

TIPS ABOUT ALCOHOL:

- Rehydrate with water, sports drinks or juice after exercise before drinking alcohol
- Avoid alcohol for 2 days before a competition or important event
- Avoid alcohol if injured as healing can be prolonged

COMPETITION NUTRITION

PRE-COMPETITION NUTRITION

- To ensure you perform at your best, choose low GI carbohydrate foods (see page 8) before an event, such as a small bowl of low GI cereal with milk and a fruit salad or wholegrain bread with lean meat and a banana. Always try new foods in training first.
- A pre-competition meal is especially important for events over 90 minutes.
- Aim to eat 1 to 4 hours before an event.
- If you find high fibre foods difficult to tolerate, or experience flatulence and diarrhoea, see a Sports Nutritionist or Dietitian for a low fibre/low residue diet.
- Be well hydrated by drinking according to thirst prior to the event, e.g water, sports drinks or diluted fruit drinks.

NUTRITION DURING COMPETITION

- Familiarise yourself with the food and drinks to be available on competition day or take your own.
- In high intensity and long duration events such as tournaments, plan to eat carbohydrate-containing foods and fluids at regular intervals (every 20 minutes if practical).

POST-COMPETITION NUTRITION

The main goals of post-competition nutrition are:

- To replace fluids and electrolytes (salts)
- To replenish depleted glycogen stores
- To provide nutrients to help repair muscle damage
- To eat snacks rich in carbohydrate and a small amount of protein to help recovery



PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS:

- Rehydrate with water, sports drinks or juice before having drinks containing caffeine or alcohol.
- Water is best if training for less than an hour at low intensity.
- Include some protein in the recovery meal post exercise to help replenish muscle glycogen stores. See page 11.
- Sports drinks and salty foods can replace salt lost from sweating. A sports drink with 4-8% carbohydrate and 500-700mg/L sodium is generally recommended. See panel. Diluted fruit juices and cordials don't contain any sodium to replace losses from sweating.

LAMB QUINOA SALAD

SERVES 4 PREPARATION TIME 25 MINS COOKING TIME 12 MINS

Lamb

- 2-3 Quality Mark lamb rumps, trimmed of any silver skin
- 2-3 teaspoons ground cumin

Dressing

- 1 lemon
- 1 clove garlic, crushed
- 6 tablespoons olive oil, extra virgin olive oil is good here

Quinoa salad

- 1 cup white quinoa, well washed
- 1 small red onion, finely sliced and soaked in cold water for 10 minutes
- 1 teaspoon sumac
- 2 Lebanese cucumber, finely sliced
- 4 small radishes, cut in half
- 1 red capsicum, cored, seeded and finely sliced
- 2 handfuls watercress or baby spinach
- 1 small handful mint leaves, torn
- 1 tablespoon pomegranate molasses, optional

Preheat the oven to 190°C. Heat a roasting dish in the oven.

Lamb: Heat a frying pan over medium-high heat. Rub lamb rumps with a little oil and the cumin. Season and place in the hot pan and brown on both sides. Transfer lamb to the hot roasting dish in the oven and cook for 10 minutes for pink lamb. Remove from the oven, sprinkle with salt and cover loosely with foil and a clean tea towel and leave to rest for 10 minutes.

Dressing: Finely grate the zest of the lemon, cover and set aside. Juice the lemon and place in a screw top jar with the garlic and olive oil. Season and shake well.

Quinoa salad: Place the quinoa in a heavy-based saucepan and pour in 2 cups cold water. Place on the heat, cover and bring to the boil. Reduce the heat and simmer for 18-20 minutes until all the liquid is absorbed and the quinoa is light and fluffy.

To serve: Drain the red onion and pat dry with kitchen paper. Place in a large bowl and stir through the sumac. Add the quinoa and drizzle in the dressing. Mix with a fork, to keep the quinoa light and fluffy and add the cucumber, radishes, capsicum, watercress or spinach and mint leaves. Place quinoa salad in 4 shallow serving bowls. Slice the lamb across the grain into thin slices and divide between the bowls. Drizzle with pomegranate molasses, if using and sprinkle over reserved lemon zest.



FAMILY LAMB STIR-FRY

SERVES 4 PREPARATION TIME 10 MINS COOKING TIME 10 MINS

Lamb

- 400g Quality Mark lamb rump

Vegetables

- 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- 2 carrots, peeled and thinly sliced
- 250g broccoli, cut into small florets, stalks lightly peeled and cut into short lengths
- 1 cup green peas
- 2 spring onions, trimmed and finely chopped
- ½ cup beef or chicken stock
- 2 tablespoons Chinese light soy sauce (see tips)

To serve

- Cooked noodles or rice

Lamb: Cut lamb into strips (about 3cm x 1cm).

Heat a wok over a high heat. Add half of the lamb strips and stir-fry for 1-2 minutes until browned, then transfer to a plate. Add remaining lamb strips and repeat.

Vegetables: Add another dash of oil to the wok and add the garlic, carrots and broccoli and stir-fry for 2 minutes. Add the peas and spring onion and stir-fry for a further minute. Add the lamb strips and pour in the stock and soy sauce. Stir-fry until all is heated through and the lamb is tender, no longer than 2 minutes.

To serve: Serve lamb stir-fry immediately with noodles or rice.



BEEF SKEWERS WITH ASIAN SLAW

SERVES 3-4 PREPARATION TIME 20 MINS COOKING TIME 5 MINS

Beef

500g Quality Mark beef rump

6 metal or wooden skewers

12 kaffir lime leaves

¼ cup olive oil

1 small handful mint leaves, chopped, plus a few extra to garnish

1 small handful coriander leaves, chopped, plus a few extra to garnish

Asian slaw

¼ green cabbage, very finely sliced

2 carrots, grated

4 spring onions, trimmed and very finely sliced

3 handfuls mung bean sprouts

2 tablespoons sesame seeds, toasted

1 teaspoon black sesame seeds or nigella seeds, optional

2 tablespoons light soy sauce

1 tablespoon lime juice

2 teaspoons soft brown sugar

2 teaspoons sesame oil

1 teaspoon wasabi paste

Beef: Soak wooden skewers in cold water for at least 20 minutes to help prevent burning during barbecuing. Preheat a barbecue until hot.

Cut the beef into about 2.5cm pieces. Thread 3 pieces of beef onto the soaked skewers with the lime leaves. Mix together the oil and fresh herbs and season with salt and freshly ground black pepper. Brush liberally over the beef skewers. Place on the hot plate and cook for 5 minutes until the beef is cooked to medium-rare.

Asian slaw: Place the cabbage, carrots, spring onions, mung bean sprouts and sesame seeds in a large bowl.

Combine the soy sauce, lime juice, brown sugar, sesame oil and wasabi in a small screw top jar and shake well. Drizzle over enough dressing to moisten the salad and toss well. Sprinkle over the black sesame or nigella seeds, if using.

To serve: Place the Asian slaw on a large serving platter and top with the beef skewers. Scatter over the coriander and mint leaves.



ON TOP OF SPAGHETTI

SERVES 4 PREPARATION TIME 15 MINS COOKING TIME 20 MINS

Beef

500g Quality Mark beef mince

1 small red onion, very finely chopped

2 cloves garlic, crushed

1 teaspoon ground coriander

1 teaspoon ground cumin

1 red chilli, deseeded and finely chopped

2 tablespoons finely chopped flat leaf parsley leaves

½ cup fresh white breadcrumbs

¼ cup seasoned flour

1 cup vegetable stock

400g can cherry tomatoes in juice, drained

To serve

400g dried spaghetti, cooked until al dente

4 good handfuls spinach, wilted

Beef: In a large bowl combine the beef mince, onion, garlic, coriander, cumin, chilli, chopped parsley and the breadcrumbs. Season with a little salt. (It is a good idea to fry off a small piece of the beef mince mixture and taste for seasoning).

Roll the beef mince mixture into about 24 small balls. Place the seasoned flour on a large flat plate. Roll beef mince balls in the seasoned flour.

Heat a dash of oil in a large frying pan and brown the meatballs, in batches, transferring to a plate as you go.

Wipe out the frying pan with kitchen paper and return the meatballs. Pour in the stock and cherry tomatoes and cover with a lid. Place over low heat and simmer for 10 minutes.

To serve: Serve hot meatballs with cooked spaghetti and wilted spinach.



For more information contact:

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