



## World No Tobacco Day: 31<sup>st</sup> May

### Fast facts

- ▶ Smoking rates in Australia have steadily been declining in recent years. The current smoking rate for adults aged 18 years and over sits at 14.5% (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2015).
- ▶ Smoking just 10 per cigarettes per day doubles your risk of dying and smoking more than 25 cigarettes per day increases your risk of dying four-fold compared to those who have never smoked.
- ▶ Smoking causes an estimated 20% of the nation's cancer disease burden each year.
- ▶ The Australian government has committed to reduce the number of adults smoking on a daily basis to 10% by 2018.

There are many free support services available for people wanting to quit smoking, including:

- ▶ **Quitline** - a confidential telephone support and information service that helps people who want to quit or cut down their tobacco use. Contact Quitline on 13 QUIT (137848).
- ▶ **QuitCoach** - an online tool that provides smokers with a personalised quitting plan based on responses to questions about motivation, confidence and past attempts. Go to [www.quitcoach.org.au](http://www.quitcoach.org.au).
- ▶ **My QuitBuddy** - a personalised app to help smokers on their journey to becoming smoke-free. Free download on Apple and Android.



## Stuffed sweet potato

Serves 2

### Ingredients:

- ▶ 400g sweet potato
- ▶ 1 spray olive or canola oil
- ▶ 1/2 onion, finely chopped
- ▶ 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- ▶ 1/2 cup quinoa
- ▶ 1/2 tsp reduced-salt vegetable stock powder
- ▶ 1/2 cup frozen spinach
- ▶ 1/4 cup almonds
- ▶ 1 tbs sultanas
- ▶ 1/4 cup reduced-fat feta cheese
- ▶ Pepper, to taste

### Method:

1. Preheat oven to 200°C (180°C fan forced) and line an oven tray with baking paper.
2. Scrub sweet potato, slice in half lengthways and prick all over with a fork. Microwave for 6 minutes on high, flipping the sweet potato over half way through. Put sweet potato in the oven and bake for 20 minutes, flipping it over half way through.
3. While the sweet potato is cooking, heat oil in a frypan over a medium heat. Add onion and cook for about 5 minutes, till soft. Add garlic and cook for another 2 minutes. Add the frozen spinach and cook till soft.
4. Cook quinoa according to the packet instructions, adding the vegetable stock powder to the quinoa and water.
5. Add cooked quinoa, almonds, feta and sultanas to the onion mixture, stir and season with pepper.
6. Use a fork to scratch and mash the top of the sweet potato, then top each one with half the quinoa filling.



# Heart Week 2017: spotlight on blood pressure



## What is blood pressure?

Blood pressure is the pressure of your blood on the walls of your arteries as your heart pumps it around your body. It is a vital part of how your heart and circulation works.

## What do the numbers mean?

A blood pressure reading under 120/80mmHg is considered optimal. Readings over 120/80mmHg and up to 139/89mmHg are in the normal to high-normal range.

- ▶ The higher pressure (120) represents the pressure in the arteries when the heart beats, pumping blood into the arteries. This pressure is called systolic pressure.
- ▶ The lower pressure (80) represents the pressure in the arteries when the heart is relaxed between beats. This pressure is called diastolic pressure.



## What is high blood pressure?

Your blood pressure naturally goes up and down all the time, adjusting to your heart's needs depending on what you are doing. High blood pressure, or hypertension is when your blood pressure is persistently higher than normal and it means the blood is pumping with more force than normal through your arteries. Hypertension is a risk factor in many diseases, such as heart attack, kidney failure and stroke.

Hypertension affects around one in seven adult Australians and becomes more common with age. Older people may experience a change in their blood pressure pattern due to their arteries becoming more rigid (less elastic).

## How do I know if I have high blood pressure?

There are no warning signs or symptoms for high blood pressure, so you can have it and not know. It is very important to get your blood pressure checked regularly, and if it is persistently high it needs to be controlled.



## What causes high blood pressure?

The exact causes of high blood pressure are often not clear. Some factors which can contribute to high blood pressure include:

- ▶ Family history
- ▶ Eating patterns, including salty foods
- ▶ Heavy drinking
- ▶ Obesity
- ▶ Lack of physical activity
- ▶ Kidney disease



The effect of high blood pressure on the arteries may be worsened by:

- ▶ Cigarette smoking
- ▶ High levels of saturated fats in the diet
- ▶ High blood cholesterol
- ▶ Diabetes

## How can I lower the risk of developing high blood pressure?

A healthy lifestyle and a sensible diet are key. One of the most important things is to keep your weight under control. Less weight means lower blood pressure, and it also means lower risk of diabetes and less stress on muscles, joints and the heart.



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Lvl 3 170 Railway Parade,  
West Leederville WA 6007

 (08) 9483 8888  [lgiswa.com.au](http://lgiswa.com.au)

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Renee Rohde is a specialist health and wellbeing professional and Program Manager at LGIS.

**Contact Renee on 9483 8888 for more information regarding these programs.**