



18 March 2022 was World Sleep Day, which focused on “Quality Sleep, Sound Mind, Happy World”.

Questions raised in 2022 are:

What are the components of quality sleep?

- ▶ Sleep quality is the measurement of how well you are sleeping, is your night restful and restorative? Simple changes to your night routine such as making your room entirely dark, keeping the temperature comfortable for you, and reducing alcohol intake, will help to improve your sleep quality.

How does sleep affect mental health, mood, and decision-making?

- ▶ Have you ever heard the phrase “woke up on the wrong side of the bed”? Sleep and mental health are closely connected, with demonstrated links to depression, anxiety and mental health disorders. Poor sleep may affect your mood, lead to fatigue, and adversely affect your overall wellbeing – including focus, productivity, and happiness.

What are the impacts of sleep in the global context?

- ▶ Insufficient and poor-quality sleep is prevalent across various age groups, and is considered to be a public health epidemic that is often unrecognised and under-reported. The increased incidence of cardiovascular disease, type II diabetes, obesity, and workplace accidents can all be linked to insufficient sleep.

World Sleep Day

Newborn babies find it easy. Toddlers sometimes find it challenging. Teenagers are convinced they don’t need it. Adults want it but frequently don’t have the time for it. Seniors have time for it but often can’t achieve it. The fact is that no matter your age, a good night’s sleep is one of the best ways of staying healthy and happy.

Aim to improve four key components of your sleep experience -



1. Your sleep schedule

- ▶ The body’s internal clock works best if there is a regular sleep pattern.



2. Your bedroom

- ▶ Invest the time and energy into this space and you will reap the rewards. Make your bedroom a place to look forward to, a retreat for rest and rejuvenation.



3. Your lifestyle

- ▶ Everyday lifestyle habits will have a big impact on sleep as they directly affect energy levels and our ability to wind down and get to sleep.



4. Your thoughts

- ▶ Poor sleep is often the outcome of persistent negative thoughts. Such thoughts create stress and anxiety which result in continued trouble getting to or staying asleep. Negative sleep patterns may develop and continue for years if not treated.



The great debate – white rice vs brown rice

You have probably heard over the years that white rice, although fluffy and delicious, is not great for you.

The truth is white rice is very processed, and in the process of becoming this familiar grain we love so much, the bran (outer skin), and the germ (the core) are removed. This leaves the endosperm, which contains mostly carbohydrates, protein, and some vitamins and minerals. This process removes the antioxidants, fibre, protein and healthy fats, leaving a highly processed carbohydrate “grain”, which isn’t very nutritious. You can get vitamin enriched rice, but isn’t the original whole grain better to begin with?

This leads us to brown rice. Brown rice is the whole grain, including the bran, germ, and endosperm, and contains protein, fibre, potassium, selenium, choline, phosphorus, and magnesium. This range of vitamins and minerals, along with higher amounts of fibre, keep you fuller for longer, potentially reducing your overall calorie intake due to “snacks” in between meals.

The verdict – Generally whole foods are the way to go, so brown rice wins. Although sometimes that curry just needs fluffy basmati rice, so always remember everything in moderation.

As with any diet advice, if you are introducing new foods into your diet, or if you are unsure if these foods are suitable for you, please speak to your GP or specialised health practitioner.

Roasted eggplant with spiced yoghurt dressing

Total - 45 minutes
Prep time 5 minutes
Serves 2

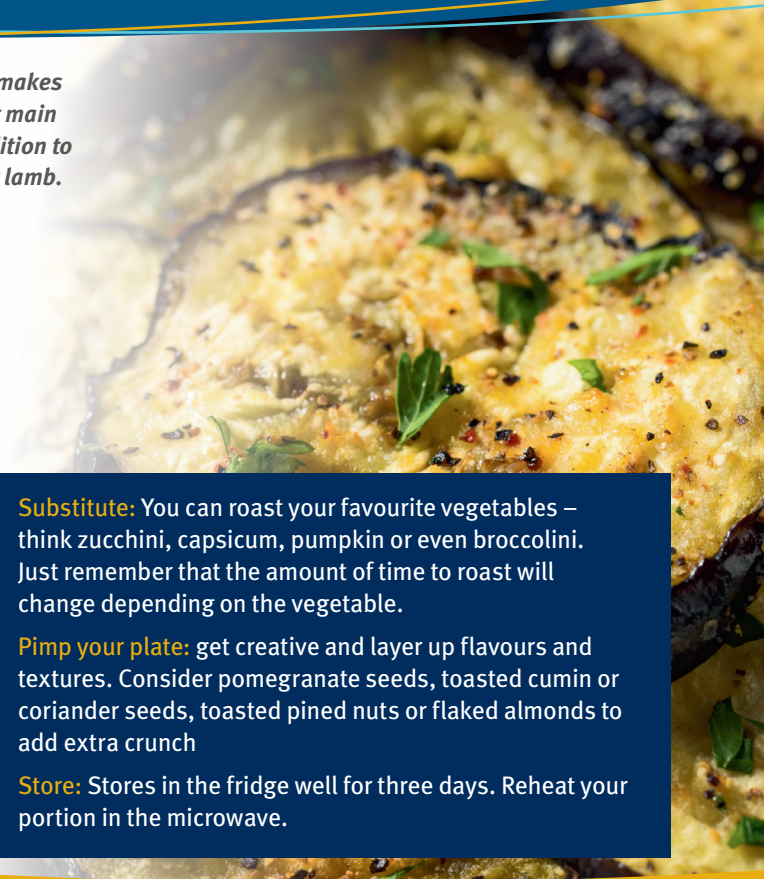
Ingredients

- ▶ 3 eggplants (sliced into 2cm thick rounds)
- ▶ ¼ cup natural or Greek yoghurt
- ▶ ½ tsp Curry powder
- ▶ ¼ tsp turmeric
- ▶ Handful of coriander leaves
- ▶ Juice of half a lemon

Method

- ▶ Pre heat oven to 220 degrees. Lay eggplant out in a large roasting tray. Aim to have as much of the eggplant touching the tray base as possible. This will ensure a golden roast.
- ▶ Place tray of eggplant in oven to 40 minutes or until golden.
- ▶ Mix yoghurt, turmeric, curry powder and lemon juice to make dressing. Season to taste and add a little water if you want it to be runnier.
- ▶ Remove eggplant from the oven and arrange on a servicing dish. Drizzle with yoghurt and scatter with coriander leaves.

This simple dish makes a delightful, light main or a welcome addition to grilled chicken or lamb.



Substitute: You can roast your favourite vegetables – think zucchini, capsicum, pumpkin or even broccolini. Just remember that the amount of time to roast will change depending on the vegetable.

Pimp your plate: get creative and layer up flavours and textures. Consider pomegranate seeds, toasted cumin or coriander seeds, toasted pined nuts or flaked almonds to add extra crunch

Store: Stores in the fridge well for three days. Reheat your portion in the microwave.

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