

# PREFACE: PORTIONS/NUTRITION

## HOW TO MANAGE PORTIONS FOR WEIGHT CONTROL

One of the **biggest** challenges in South Asian diets is portion control.

Many traditional meals are *high in carbohydrates and low in fiber and protein*, which can contribute to weight gain and poor blood sugar control.

This section will guide you on how to balance your plate for better health without sacrificing flavor.

### 1 How much rice/vegetable/protein should be in my plate?

- Aim for:
  - 50% Non-Starchy Vegetables (*High in Fiber, Keeps you Full Longer*)
  - 25% Protein (*Essential for Health, Keeps you Full Longer*)
  - 25% Carbs/Starch (*Provides Energy, Ideally from Whole Grains*)

### 2 What are good protein sources?

- 🐔 Animal-Based: Chicken, Fish, Eggs, Lean Beef, Greek Yogurt
- 🌱 Plant-Based: Lentils (*Daal*), Chickpeas, Tofu, Paneer, Nuts & Seeds

### 3 How can I make my meals more filling without overeating?

- Add more fiber! (*Vegetables, beans, lentils, whole grains*)
- Include protein in every meal to stay full longer
- Drink water before meals to prevent overeating
- Use smaller plates to manage portions without feeling deprived

### 4 What's the best way to portion rice?

- Stick to ½ cup cooked rice per meal (*about the size of a fist*)
- Balance it with protein and fiber so your meal keeps you full longer

💡 Tip: Mixing rice with lentils (*Khichdi*) adds protein & fiber, making it more diabetic-friendly!

# POPULAR BREAKFAST MEAL

## EGG BHURGI (SPICED SCRAMBLED EGGS)



✓ High-protein, quick to make, and perfect for breakfast or dinner!

✓ Packed with fiber from vegetables & spices to help with digestion and blood sugar control.

◆ Bonus Tips:

- Add a handful of chopped spinach for extra fiber and nutrients!
- Use half egg white and half whole eggs for higher protein + lower calorie

**Serves: 2**

**Prep Time: 5 minutes**

**Cook Time: 10 minutes**

### Ingredients:

- 4 eggs, beaten (or 2 eggs and 2 egg whites for more protein)
- ½ onion, finely chopped
- 1 tomato, chopped
- ½ bell pepper, chopped (or any veggie you like)
- 1 green chili (optional, for spice)
- 1 tsp cumin seeds
- ½ tsp turmeric
- ½ tsp red chili powder
- ½ tsp salt
- 1 tbsp ghee or olive oil

### Instructions:

1

#### Prepare the Dish:

- 1. Heat ghee in a pan, add cumin seeds, and let them sizzle for 30 seconds.
- 2. Add onions, bell pepper, and chili. Sauté until soft (~2-3 minutes).
- 3. Stir in tomatoes, turmeric, chili powder, and salt. Cook for 2 more minutes.
- 4. Pour in beaten eggs and scramble gently over low-medium heat.
- 5. Cook for another 3-4 minutes, stirring occasionally until eggs are fluffy.
- 6. Serve with whole wheat roti or a side of plain yogurt.

# DAL BHAT

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: NEPAL



**Serves: 2**

**Prep Time: 10-15 minutes**

**Cook Time: 25-30 minutes**

## Ingredients:

Dal:

- 1 cup lentils (yellow, black, or red)
- 4 cups water
- 1 tsp turmeric
- 2 tbsp oil or ghee
- 1 tsp cumin seeds
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 1 small tomato, diced
- Salt to taste
- Cilantro for garnish

Bhat (rice)

- 2 cups of brown rice
- 4 cups of water
- Pinch of salt

## Instructions:

**1** Prepare the Dish:

Cook the Rice:

- Wash the rice thoroughly.
- Boil 4 cups of water, add rice, cover, and cook on low heat for about 15 minutes or until the water is absorbed.

Cook the Dal (Lentil Soup):

- Rinse lentils and boil them with turmeric and salt until soft.
- In a separate pan, heat ghee, add cumin seeds, garlic, onion, and tomato.
- Fry until aromatic, then mix into the cooked lentils.
- Simmer for 5 minutes and garnish with cilantro

Serve hot with a side salad and pickled vegetables (optional)

## Nutritional Information

**~400 kcal**

**~15g protein**

# MACCHA KO JOHL

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: NEPAL



## Nutritional Information

**Calories:**

**Serves: 2**

**Prep Time: ? minutes**

**Cook Time: ? minutes**

## Ingredients:

- 4 small fish fillets (tilapia, salmon, or trout)
- 1 tbsp olive oil or mustard oil
- 1 medium onion, finely chopped
- 1 small tomato, pureed
- 1 tbsp ginger-garlic paste
- 1 tsp turmeric powder
- 1 tsp coriander powder
- ½ tsp cumin powder
- ½ tsp red chili powder (optional)
- 1 tsp fenugreek seeds (methi dana)
- 2 cups water
- 1 tbsp chopped cilantro for garnish
- ½ tsp salt



# 1

## Cook the Rice:

- Boil water with salt, bay leaf, cloves, cinnamon, and cardamom.
- Add soaked rice or quinoa and cook until 70% done. Drain and set aside.

# 2

## Prepare the Fish Curry:

### 1. Lightly Sear the Fish

- Heat ½ tbsp oil in a pan over medium heat.
- Sprinkle turmeric & a pinch of salt on both sides of the fish.
- Lightly sear for 2 minutes per side, then set aside.

### 2. Prepare the Aromatic Base

- In the same pan, heat ½ tbsp oil, add fenugreek seeds & sauté until golden brown (~30 sec).
- Stir in chopped onions, cooking until lightly browned (~5 min).
- Add ginger-garlic paste, cooking for another 30 seconds.

### 3. Make the Curry Broth

- Stir in pureed tomatoes, turmeric, coriander, cumin, and chili powder.
- Cook until the masala thickens (~5 minutes).
- Add 2 cups fish broth or water, stirring well.

### 4. Simmer & Finish the Dish

- Gently place the seared fish fillets into the broth.
- Cover and simmer for 10 minutes until fish is cooked through.
- Garnish with fresh cilantro and serve hot!

# EMA DATSHI

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: BHUTAN



**Serves: 2**

**Prep Time: 10 minutes**

**Cook Time: 20-25 minutes**

**Nutritional Information**

**~210-250 kcal**

**~8-10g protein**

## Ingredients:

- 6-8 fresh green or red chilies (or bell peppers for a milder version)
- 1 cup water
- 1 medium onion, sliced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tbsp butter or oil
- ½ cup Datshi (Bhutanese cheese) and ½ cup of either blended tofu or cashew cream
- Salt to taste
- Optional: Tomatoes or potatoes for variation

## Instructions:

1

### Prepare the Dish:

#### 1. Prepare the Chilies:

- Slice the chilies lengthwise and remove seeds if you prefer less heat.

#### 2. Cook the Base:

- Heat butter or oil in a pan.
- Add onions and garlic, sauté until soft.

#### 3. Add Chilies & Water:

- Add chilies and water, letting it simmer for about 5 minutes until softened.

#### 4. Melt the Cheese:

- Lower the heat and add Datshi and cheese substitute.
- Stir gently and let it melt into a creamy consistency.

#### 5. Serve Hot: with brown rice or optional whole grain

# SHAKAM PAA

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: BHUTAN



## Ingredients:

- $\frac{3}{4}$  lb lean beef, thinly sliced (or dried beef soaked in warm water 1–2 hrs)
- 1 tbsp olive oil or ghee
- 1 cup daikon radish, sliced thin
- 2–3 dried red chilies (or to taste)
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 
- $1\frac{1}{2}$  cups water or broth
- $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp salt (skip if beef is already salted)
- 1 cup spinach or mustard greens (optional but recommended)

## Instructions:

### 1 Prepare the Dish:

#### 1. Sear the Beef

- In a pot, heat olive oil on medium heat.
- Add beef slices, and sauté until lightly browned (~5 min).
- If using dried beef, simmer instead of searing — it will soften more slowly.

#### 2. Add Veggies & Chilies

- Add onion, garlic, and dried chilies, and stir until fragrant.
- Toss in sliced radish and greens (if using).

#### 3. Simmer Until Tender

- Pour in water or broth, cover, and simmer on low for 20 minutes, until the radish and beef are tender and the liquid is slightly reduced.
- Adjust salt as needed.

# KUKUL MAS KARI

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: SRI LANKA



**Serves: 2**

**Prep Time: 10-15 minutes**

**Cook Time: 40-45 minutes**

**Nutritional Information**

**~300-350 kcal**

**~30g protein**

## Ingredients:

- 500g chicken (skinless for lower fat) or substitute plant based meat
- 1 tbsp oil (coconut oil preferred)
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1-inch ginger, grated
- 2 tomatoes, chopped
- 1 tsp turmeric powder
- 2 tsp red chili powder (adjust for spice level)
- 1 tbsp roasted Sri Lankan curry powder
- 1/2 tsp cinnamon
- 1 cup low-fat coconut milk
- 1 sprig curry leaves
- Salt to taste
- For additional health benefits: vegetables like zucchini, carrots, and/or spinach

## Instructions:

### 1 Prepare the Dish:

#### 1. Marinate the Chicken:

- Mix chicken with turmeric, salt, and chili powder. Let it sit for at least 30 minutes.

#### 2. Cook the Base:

- Heat oil in a pan and sauté onions until golden brown.
- Add garlic, ginger, and curry leaves. Cook until fragrant.

#### 3. Add Tomatoes & Spices:

- Add chopped tomatoes, curry powder, and cinnamon. Stir well and cook until tomatoes break down.

#### 4. Add Chicken, Vegetables & Simmer:

- Add marinated chicken and vegetables, mix well, and let it sear for a few minutes.
- Pour in coconut milk, cover, and let it simmer for 20-30 minutes until the chicken is tender.

#### 5. Serve Hot:

- Enjoy with steamed brown rice and a mix of raw and cooked vegetables or whole wheat roti

# CHICKEN BIRYANI

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: PAKISTAN



## Nutritional Information:

**420-480 kcal**

**28-32 g protein**

**Serves: 2**

**Prep Time: 25 minutes**

**Cook Time: 45 minutes**

## Ingredients:

For the Chicken Masala:

- 500g chicken, cut into pieces
- 1 large onion, sliced
- 2 tomatoes, chopped
- 2 tbsp yogurt
- 1 tbsp ghee
- 1 tbsp ginger-garlic paste
- 1 tsp turmeric powder
- 1 tbsp red chili powder (adjust to taste)
- 1 tbsp garam masala
- 1 tsp cumin seeds
- 1 cup water
- Salt to taste
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- Fresh coriander and mint leaves (for garnish)
- 1-2 saffron strands (optional, soaked in warm milk)

For the Rice:

- 2 cups brown rice or quinoa (soaked for 30 minutes)
- 4 cups water
- 1 bay leaf
- 2-3 cloves
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 2-3 cardamom pods
- Salt to taste



1

### Cook the Rice:

- Boil water with salt, bay leaf, cloves, cinnamon, and cardamom.
- Add soaked rice or quinoa and cook until 70% done. Drain and set aside.

2

### Prepare the Chicken Masala:

- Heat oil in a pan, add onions, and sauté until golden brown.
- Add ginger-garlic paste and cook until fragrant.
- Add tomatoes, turmeric, chili powder, garam masala, cumin seeds, and salt.
- Stir well and cook until tomatoes are soft.
- Add yogurt and chicken pieces, mix well, and let it cook for 15 minutes.

3

### Layering the Biryani:

- In a large pot, spread a layer of rice, followed by the chicken masala.
- Sprinkle coriander, mint, and saffron milk. Repeat layers.
- Cover with a tight lid and cook on low heat (dum) for 20 minutes.

Serve Hot: Mix gently before serving. Enjoy with probiotic yogurt



# SHORSHE ILISH

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: BANGLADESH



**Serves: 2**

**Prep Time: 20 minutes**

**Cook Time: 25 minutes**

## **Nutritional Information**

**220-250 kcal**

**22-25 g protein**

## Ingredients:

- 4-6 pieces of fish (substitute Hilsa fish for lower fat Cod or Tilapia)
- 2 tbsp mustard seeds (yellow or black)
- 2 tbsp mustard oil
- 1 tsp turmeric powder
- 2-3 green chilies, slit
- 1 tsp red chili powder (adjust to taste)
- 1 cup water
- Salt to taste

## Instructions:

1

### Prepare the Dish:

#### 1. Prepare the Mustard Paste:

- Soak mustard seeds in warm water for 10-15 minutes, then grind into a fine paste.

#### 2. Marinate the Fish:

- Rub the Hilsa fish with turmeric and salt. Let it sit for 10 minutes.

#### 3. Fry the Fish (Optional):

- Heat mustard oil in a pan and lightly fry the fish pieces for 1-2 minutes on each side.

#### 4. Prepare the Mustard Gravy:

- In the same pan, add the mustard paste, turmeric, salt, and red chili powder.
- Pour in water and bring the gravy to a boil.

#### 5. Cook the Fish:

- Add the fish pieces to the simmering gravy.
- Cover and cook for 5-7 minutes until the fish is tender.

#### 6. Finish with Green Chilies & Mustard Oil:

- Add slit green chilies and drizzle some raw mustard oil on top for extra flavor.
- Let it rest for a few minutes before serving.

#### 7. Serve Hot with Steamed Brown Rice, quinoa, or greens

# MAS HUNI

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: MALDIVES



**Serves: 2**

**Cook Time: 10 minutes**

## **Nutritional Information**

**180-220 kcal**

**20-22 g protein**

## Ingredients:

- 1 cup canned or fresh tuna (drained and flaked) - preferably lean tuna in water
- ½ cup grated coconut (fresh or desiccated)
- 1 small red onion, finely chopped
- 1-2 green chilies, finely chopped
- Juice of 1 lime
- Salt to taste
- Fresh curry leaves or coriander for garnish (optional)

## Instructions:

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Prepare the Dish:

### **1. Prepare the Ingredients:**

- Drain and flake the tuna into a mixing bowl.
- Finely chop the onion and green chilies.

### **2. Mix Everything Together:**

- Combine tuna, grated coconut, chopped onion, and chilies.
- Add lime juice and mix well.

### **3. Serve with Roshi (Flatbread):** Serve fresh with warm **roshi/roti** made of whole wheat if possible



# SAMBAR IDLI

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: INDIA (SOUTH)



## Nutritional Information

**250-280 kcal**

**10-12 g protein**

**Serves: 2**

**Prep Time: 6.5 hours**

**Fermentation: 8-12 hours  
overnight**

**Cook Time: 30-35 minutes**

## Ingredients:

For sambar:

- ½ cup moong dal (or use ½ cup toor dal)
- ½ tsp turmeric powder
- 1 tsp oil (mustard oil, olive oil)
- 1 tsp mustard seeds
- 1 tsp cumin seeds
- 1-2 dried red chilies
- 1 sprig curry leaves
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 1 small tomato, chopped
- 1 ½ cups mixed vegetables (carrots, drumsticks, pumpkin, brinjal, etc.)
- 1 tbsp tamarind pulp (or ½ tsp tamarind paste diluted in water)
- 1 tbsp sambar powder
- 3-4 cups water
- Salt to taste
- Fresh coriander leaves for garnish

For idli:

- ½ cup idli rice and ½ cup brown rice
- 1 cup urad dal (split black gram)
- ¼ cup oats or quinoa (optional, for extra fiber)
- 1 tsp fenugreek seeds
- 1 ½ tsp salt
- Water (as needed)

# 1 Prepare the Idli

Soak the Ingredients:

- Soak idli rice, quinoa/oats, and fenugreek seeds in water for 6 hours.
- Soak urad dal separately for 4 hours.

Grind & Ferment:

- Blend the urad dal into a smooth, fluffy batter.
- Grind the rice and oats/quinoa into a slightly coarse batter.
- Mix both, add salt, and ferment overnight (8-12 hours) until bubbly.

Steam the Idlis:

- Pour the batter into idli molds and steam for 10-12 minutes.
- Serve hot with low-calorie sambar.

# 2 Prepare the Sambar

Cook the Dal:

- Rinse moong dal and boil with turmeric powder and water until soft.
- Mash the dal and set aside.

Prepare the Sambar Base:

- Heat 1 tsp oil in a pan, add mustard seeds, cumin, dried chilies, and curry leaves.
- Add onions and sauté until translucent.
- Add tomatoes, sambar powder, and chopped vegetables. Stir well.

Simmer with Dal:

- Pour 3-4 cups of water and add mashed dal.
- Add tamarind pulp and let it simmer for 10-15 minutes.
- Adjust salt and garnish with fresh coriander leaves.



# CHICKEN SUKKA

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: INDIA (SOUTH)



## Nutritional Information

**Calories:**

**Serves: 4**

**Prep Time: 15 minutes**

**Cook Time: 30 minutes**

## Ingredients:

- 1 lb boneless chicken, cut into cubes
- 1 tbsp olive oil or ghee
- 1 medium onion, finely chopped
- 2 tomatoes, finely chopped
- 1 tbsp ginger-garlic paste
- 1 tsp turmeric powder
- 1 tsp coriander powder
- ½ tsp red chili powder (optional)
- ½ tsp black pepper powder
- 1 tsp garam masala
- 1 tsp mustard seeds
- 10-12 curry leaves
- ¼ cup grated coconut (lightly roasted)
- ½ tsp salt
- ½ cup water or low-sodium broth
- Fresh coriander leaves for garnish

# 1 Prepare the Dish

## 1. Prepare the Base

- Heat 1 tbsp olive oil or ghee in a pan over medium heat.
- Add mustard seeds and let them splutter.
- Stir in chopped onions and curry leaves, sautéing until golden brown (~5 minutes).

## 2. Build the Flavor

- Add ginger-garlic paste, cooking for 30 seconds until fragrant.
- Stir in chopped tomatoes, turmeric, coriander, red chili powder, and black pepper.
- Cook for 5 minutes until tomatoes soften into a thick masala.

## 3. Cook the Chicken

- Add chicken pieces, stirring to coat with the spice mixture.
- Pour in ½ cup water or broth, cover, and cook for 15 minutes until the chicken is tender.
- Uncover and cook for another 5 minutes, letting the excess liquid evaporate.

## 4. Finish with Roasted Coconut & Garnish

- Sprinkle in lightly roasted grated coconut, mixing well.
- Add garam masala and stir for 1-2 minutes to blend flavors.
- Garnish with fresh coriander leaves and serve hot.

### Healthy Pairing Suggestions



With Brown Rice or Quinoa → More fiber & better blood sugar control



With Millet Roti or Whole Wheat Chapati → A high-fiber alternative to white rice

# CHOLE BHATURE

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: INDIA (NORTH)



## Nutritional Information

**Calories: 350-400 kcal**

**14-18 g protein**

**Serves: 2**

**Prep Time: 30-45 minutes**

**Cook Time: 30 minutes**

## Ingredients:

For chole:

- 1 cup chickpeas (soaked overnight, or 1 can drained)
- 1 tsp oil (olive oil, mustard oil, or ghee)
- 1 medium onion, finely chopped
- 2 tomatoes, pureed
- 1 tsp ginger-garlic paste
- ½ tsp turmeric powder
- 1 tsp cumin seeds
- 1 tbsp chole masala (or garam masala + coriander powder)
- ½ tsp red chili powder (optional)
- 1 cup spinach or bell peppers (optional)
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- Salt to taste
- Fresh coriander leaves for garnish
- Optional add paneer or tofu for extra protein

For bhature

- 1 cup whole wheat flour
- ¼ cup Greek yogurt or low-fat curd
- ¼ tsp salt
- ½ tsp baking powder
- 1 tbsp oil
- Water (as needed for kneading)

# 1 Instructions for Chole:

## 1. **Cook the Chickpeas:**

- Pressure cook or boil soaked chickpeas until soft (or use canned, drained chickpeas).

## 2. **Prepare the Base:**

- Heat 1 tsp oil in a pan, add cumin seeds and let them splutter.
- Sauté onions until golden brown, then add ginger-garlic paste.
- Add pureed tomatoes and cook until the oil slightly separates.

## 3. **Add Spices & Chickpeas:**

- Stir in turmeric, chole masala, salt, and red chili powder.
- Add cooked chickpeas and 1 cup water; simmer for 10-15 minutes.
- Mash a few chickpeas for a thicker gravy.

## 4. **Finish & Serve:**

- Add lemon juice and garnish with coriander leaves.

# 2 Instructions for Bhature:

## **Make the Dough:**

- Mix flour, salt, baking powder, and sugar in a bowl.
- Add yogurt and 1 tbsp oil, kneading into a soft dough.
- Cover and rest for 30-45 minutes.

## **For Pan-Cooked Bhature (Less Oil Version):**

- Roll dough into small round discs.
- Heat a non-stick pan, lightly brush with oil, and cook on medium heat like a parauntha.

## **For Baked Bhature (Oil-Free Version):**

- Preheat oven to 375°F (190°C).
- Roll the dough into thin discs, place on a baking tray, and bake for 8-10 minutes until puffed.

## **Serve with Chole**

- And a side salad with cucumber, carrots, beet root, onion and probiotic-rich yogurt



# CHICKEN KORMA

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: INDIA (NORTH)



## Nutritional Information

**Calories:**

**Serves: 4**

**Prep Time: 15 minutes**

**Cook Time: 30 minutes**

## Ingredients:

- 1 lb boneless chicken, sliced into cubes (breast or thigh)
- 1 medium onion, sliced
- 2 tbsp Greek yogurt (instead of cream)
- 1 tbsp ginger-garlic paste
- 1 tsp cumin seeds
- ½ tsp turmeric
- 1 tsp coriander powder
- ½ tsp garam masala
- ½ tsp red chili powder (optional)
- 1 small cinnamon stick
- 1 tbsp olive oil or ghee
- ½ cup water or low-sodium broth

### For bhature

- 1 cup whole wheat flour
- ¼ cup Greek yogurt or low-fat curd
- ¼ tsp salt
- ½ tsp baking powder
- 1 tbsp oil
- Water (as needed for kneading)



# 1 Instructions for Chicken Korma:

## 1. Prepare the Spices & Aromatics

- Heat 1 tbsp olive oil or ghee in a pan over medium heat.
- Add cumin seeds and a cinnamon stick, letting them sizzle for 30 seconds until fragrant.

## 2. Caramelize the Onions

- Add thinly sliced onions, stirring occasionally.
- Cook for 5-7 minutes, or until golden brown.
- If needed, add a splash of water to prevent sticking instead of extra oil.

## 3. Build the Base Flavor

- Stir in ginger-garlic paste, cooking for 30 seconds until fragrant.
- Add turmeric, coriander powder, and chili powder, stirring well.
- Cook for 1-2 minutes until the spices toast slightly.

## 4. Add the Chicken

- Add cubed chicken, coating it well with the spice mixture.
- Sauté for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally, until chicken starts to brown.


## 5. Create the Korma Sauce


- Lower the heat and stir in Greek yogurt, mixing quickly to prevent curdling.
- Add ½ cup water or low-sodium broth, then cover the pan.
- Let it simmer for 15 minutes until the chicken is tender and the sauce thickens.

## 6. Final Touches & Garnish

- Sprinkle in garam masala, stirring to combine.
- Garnish with fresh cilantro, and serve hot.

### Healthy Pairing Suggestions

 With Brown Rice or Quinoa → More fiber & better blood sugar control

 With Millet Roti or Whole Wheat Chapati → A high-fiber alternative to white rice