

COMFORT EATING

When food becomes emotional first-aid
(and how to break the cycle)



A mini workbook to help you gain insight into your emotional relationship with food so you can gain control of your eating habits despite life's challenges.



COMFORT EATING

UNDERSTAND YOUR EMOTIONS & DEVELOP A HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP WITH FOOD

WHAT IS COMFORT EATING?

Comfort eating = using food to change how you feel rather than to satisfy physical hunger.

It often looks like:

- eating when stressed, lonely, angry, overwhelmed, bored, or numb
- craving very specific foods (sweet/salty/creamy/crunchy)
- temporary relief → guilt/regret/bloating/fatigue → cravings again
- feeling “out of control” around certain foods

It is not a moral failure. It's a coping strategy that got reinforced because it worked briefly.

Why it happens: the “perfect storm”

Social learning

Many of us learned early: big feelings → food → relief

In childhood, sweets are rewards, we celebrate with cake, and we are soothed with treats. This reinforces the association between food and emotions.

Psychological drivers

Food can temporarily provide:

- distraction
- comfort when unsupported
- control when life feels chaotic
- a “treat” when deprived/unappreciated
- numbing when emotions feel too big

Biology (nervous system + reward)

Highly palatable foods can trigger:

- dopamine (which encourages us to repeat the behaviour)
- soothing systems (comfort/pain-dulling)
- stress hormones that drive cravings
- blood sugar swings that create “I need more”



Environment

Ultra-processed foods are designed for maximum reward + minimum fullness. Food marketing is engineered to trigger emotions that promote over-consumption.

This combination of social conditioning + psychology + biology + environment is extremely powerful. In order to break the cycle of emotional eating, we often need multiple strategies to tackle these four factors.

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PHYSICAL HUNGER VERSUS EMOTIONAL 'HUNGER'

Many people have difficulty knowing when they are actually physically hungry.

Physical hunger

- builds gradually
- many foods sound appealing (including vegetables!)
- you can wait a bit - physical hunger is often easier to resist than emotional hunger
- you feel satisfied after eating

Emotional hunger

- sudden and urgent
- very specific cravings
- "I need it now"
- often followed by guilt, not satisfaction

Both are real – but they need different solutions.

Here are several practical tools you can use to help you break free from comfort eating...

TOOL 1: REMOVE SHAME + ADD CURIOSITY

When you feel the sudden urge to dive into that packet of crisps (despite having eaten a decent supper less than an hour before), take a moment to reflect on what's happening.

Say to yourself:

"This is my nervous system looking for relief. How can I find relief that truly helps?"

Ask this question without guilt or shame. Shame adds stress. Stress fuels the cycle.

If you can disconnect the craving from the impulse to eat something and reflect on what's making you feel the craving in the first place... you create an opportunity to discover more about your emotions and stressors.



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TOOL 2: HALT + 2

When you find yourself staring into the open fridge... ask yourself:

- Am I **H**ungry?
- **A**ngry/irritated?
- **L**onely?
- **T**ired?
- Overwhelmed?
- Unappreciated?

If it's not hunger, you don't need to eat something.
You don't need discipline.
You need care.

TOOL 3: NAME THE EMOTION

If the microwave popcorn is beckoning to you. Take a minute. Grab a piece of paper or napkin and write one sentence:

"Right now I feel _____ because _____."

Identifying and naming the feeling (and underlying cause) often reduces emotional intensity and helps you respond wisely and more appropriately.



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TOOL 4: REGULATE YOUR BODY

Biology is a powerful way to reduce emotional eating.

If you're under-eating protein, sleeping poorly, dehydrated, or living on caffeine, cravings are louder. You can improve your energy and appetite regulation, which can help you reduce the intensity of cravings.

Appetite-stability basics:

- Protein should be a dominant component of every meal
- Fibre first (veg, chia/flax, legumes if tolerated)
- Healthy fats for satisfaction
- Hydration + minerals
- Sleep (hugely impacts cravings and self-control)

Practical rule:

If cravings hit daily, don't start with "discipline." Start with protein + sleep.

Build your meals like this:

Step 1: 50% of your plate should be vegetables/fruit

Step 2: 25% of your plate should be protein-based foods

Step 3: 10-15% of your plate should be healthy fats

Step 4: 10-15% of your plate should be un-processed / un-refined carbs (optional)



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TOOL 5: CREATE YOUR COMFORT MENU

Most people try to stop comfort eating without replacing the comfort it provides. You need to find alternative healthy options that offer you the same (but better) emotional results without causing you harm.

Your **Comfort Menu** is there as an easy-access list of alternatives to comfort eating.

Fast comfort (2–5 minutes)

- tea + 2 minutes outside
- 10 slow breaths (longer exhale)
- wash face / quick shower
- short stretch
- one-song dance break
- message a friend: "Rough day. Can I have a voice note hug?"

Nervous system comfort (10–20 minutes)

- outdoor walk
- short home workout
- brain-dump journaling
- guided meditation/prayer
- cuddle a pet
- creative hobby (colouring, gardening, crochet, healthy baking)

Deep comfort (ongoing)

- therapy (CBT/DBT/trauma-informed)
- caregiver support group
- boundaries/assertiveness coaching
- protected recovery time scheduled in your diary with the same priority as important meetings



Build your Top 10 (write your top-10 default non-food comfort options):

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____
- 6) _____
- 7) _____
- 8) _____
- 9) _____
- 10) _____

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TOOL 6: CHANGE YOUR ENVIRONMENT

Environment design beats willpower every time! You can change your surroundings to support your lifestyle goals.

Choose 1–2 changes this week:

- move trigger foods out of sight + make them hard to access
- portion snacks into single servings (and get rid of unhealthy snacks)
- create a “kitchen closed” routine (tea → brush teeth → lights dim/off), so your brain learns when there will be no more eating for the day
- replace default snacks with nourishing options that are easy to access
- remove visual cues that promote eating... put your toaster inside the cupboard (out of sight, out of mind)



TOOL 7: RIDE THE CRAVINGS WAVE

Cravings rise, peak, and fall like a wave – often within 20–25 minutes. If you can ride the wave, and not succumb to the craving... it will disappear.

The 20-minute delay

- Tell yourself: “I can have it in 20 minutes if I still want it.”
- set a timer for 20 minutes
- during the timer: drink water/tea + walk + breathing/stretch
- if you still want it: have it without guilt (often you'll want less)

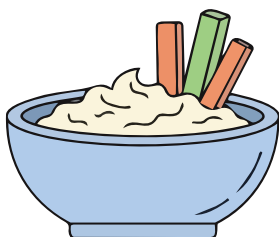


Urge surfing

- Ask yourself where you feel the craving (mouth/chest/stomach/mind)?
- rate it out of 10
- watch it shift and fade without feeding it

Veg + protein first

- eat crunchy vegetables /salad +/- yoghurt/eggs/tuna/biltong/protein shake
- then decide if you still want the comfort food (cravings often quieten once fed)



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TOOL 8: BREATHWORK (BREATHE FIRST + DECIDE AFTER)

These simple breathwork exercises give you the power to activate your para-sympathetic (calming) nervous system in minutes. That is often enough to break the cycle between urge and impulsive eating.

Try one of these exercises when you feel a craving coming on:

4-7-8 breathing (when you need to feel grounded and calm):

Inhale for 4 slow counts... hold 7... exhale 8...
Repeat 3-5 cycles.

Transition breath / Physiological sigh (excellent for acute stress situations):

Shoulders down... take 2 quick inhalations followed by a long deep exhalation...
Repeat 3 times

Box breathing (great when you anticipate temptation):

Inhale 4 slow counts - Hold 4 slow counts - Exhale 4 slow counts - Hold 4 slow counts
Repeat this 3-4 times

Usually, the urge to eat something will have faded by the time you have completed a cycle of one of these breathwork techniques. Breathwork is not only useful to curb cravings, but it is also extremely powerful as a daily practice to regulate your nervous system and is useful to lower cortisol (excellent for appetite control).

Why not commit to implementing breathwork in your day-to-day life? Write your plan:

My best time to practise breathwork is:



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TOOL 9: YOUR NIGHT-TIME COMFORT EATING RESET STRATEGY

Many people find evenings most challenging. When there's not much distraction because the days' work is done. Often our minds start spinning and emotions can surface that trigger comfort eating.

Use this approach if evenings are your danger zone:

1. Pause, and say to yourself: "This is a craving wave. It will peak and pass."
2. Hydrate + minerals: drink water/tea (electrolytes, if appropriate)
3. Protein snack options: yoghurt/eggs/tuna/protein drink
4. Comfort action: shower OR stretch OR 10-min walk
5. Kitchen closed routine: brush teeth, dim the lights, lock the fridge, go to another room
6. If you still choose to have a treat: plate it, sit down, no phone, no TV, no guilt

My evening routine (write yours):

- Trigger time: _____
- First action: _____
- Protein option: _____
- "Kitchen closed" cue: _____

Start implementing your evening routine tonight!



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TOOL 10: INTERMITTENT FASTING

Fasting can help some people reduce grazing and practise urge tolerance, You learn self-control through practise. But, fasting should never be used as a punishment. And, it's important to apply fasting scientifically for best results.

Gentle approach:

- start with 12 hours / an overnight fast (e.g., 7pm–7am)
- build to 14 hours after 1-2 weeks, then increase your fasting window to 16 or 18 hours
- prioritise protein + fibre + healthy fats in your eating window
- avoid processed foods and sugar
- break your fast with a nourishing protein-forward meal
- remember to hydrate well while fasting



TOOL 11: UNCOVER AND ADDRESS THE ROOT CAUSE

If your comfort eating happens because:

- you're emotionally exhausted
- you feel unsupported
- you have no breaks
- there are no boundaries
- you are living in fight-or-flight mode

...food isn't the "problem." It's the symptom.

Power question:

"What am I truly needing right now – and how else can I meet that need?"



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NOURISHING COMFORT FOODS

When you feel the urge to munch something sweet, or crunchy or creamy... don't go for the cookies, ice-cream or chips... have some nutritious guilt-free snacks easily accessible so that your default snack options are healthy options.

Creamy treat: Protein hot chocolate

- 250–300 ml warm milk of choice (or hot water + splash of milk)
- 1 scoop chocolate protein (or collagen + cocoa + sweetener, like stevia)
- 1 tsp cacao + pinch salt + cinnamon
- Whisk. Optional: Add a dollop of Greek yoghurt on top.

Sweet comfort: Greek yoghurt dessert bowl

- $\frac{3}{4}$ –1 cup Greek yoghurt
- Handful berries / chopped apple or other fruit of your choice
- Cinnamon + vanilla + chopped nuts + flaked coconut
- Optional: 1 square dark chocolate shaved on top.

Crunchy/salty: Spiced roasted chickpeas

- Rinse chickpeas, dry well
- Toss with olive oil + salt + black pepper + paprika/cumin
- Roast at 200°C for ~25–35 mins (shake halfway during roasting for even crispness)

Savoury comfort snack: Tuna/egg mayo lettuce cups

- Tuna or boiled eggs
- Mix with Greek yoghurt + mustard + salt/pepper
- Scoop into lettuce leaves, add cucumber/pickles.

Fibre-packed: Veggies + hummus or cream cheese dip

- Keep carrot sticks, celery sticks, cucumber batons, baby tomatoes + baby corn in containers in your fridge
- Serve with hummus or dip made from cream cheese + crumbled feta



The next pages contain recipes for snacks and sweet treats that are either super-quick to prepare or excellent to prepare ahead and keep on hand for when a craving strikes...

Remember to make the healthy choice the easy or automatic choice!

RECIPES FOR COMFORT

ROASTED NUTS



+/- 2 cups



25-30 minutes

Nuts and Seeds are high in fat... good, healthy fat. Monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats in nuts and seeds reduce the risk of heart attack and stroke because of their beneficial effects on cholesterol. Nuts and seeds are also high in plant protein, Vitamin E and important minerals like selenium, magnesium, calcium and zinc. Try to eat a small handful of nuts every day.



BASIC ROASTED NUTS

INGREDIENTS

500g mixed nuts (You can choose whichever nuts you like best: Almonds, cashews and brasil nuts go particularly well together)
1 egg white
1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon finely ground black pepper

INSTRUCTIONS

- Preheat your oven to 150°C. Line a baking tray with parchment paper.
- Spread the nuts in a single layer on the baking tray and roast for 10 minutes.
- Whisk the egg white until frothy. Toss in nuts and seasonings.
- Spread the nuts again onto the baking paper and return to the oven for a further 10-15 minutes.
- Allow to cool.



NOTES

These are always handy. Store them in an airtight container, and you have a tasty and wholesome snack available.

RECIPES FOR COMFORT

ROASTED NUTS VARIATIONS



TRY THESE DELICIOUS FLAVOUR VARIATIONS

CURRIED NUTS

Curried Nuts: When tossing the nuts and seasonings together with the egg white, add 2 teaspoons curry powder and 1 teaspoon ground cumin.

LEMON & HERB NUTS

Instead of using ground black pepper, use lemon-pepper. Add 1 teaspoon of finely grated lemon rind and 1 teaspoon dried mixed herbs when tossing the nuts with the egg white.

CAJUN SPICE NUTS

Replace normal salt with garlic salt, and add: 1/2 teaspoon paprika, 1/2 teaspoon cayenne pepper, 1/2 teaspoon dried onion flakes, 1 teaspoon dry oregano and toss in egg white until nuts are thoroughly and evenly coated in all the flavourings.



RECIPES FOR COMFORT

CAULIFLOWER & CHEESE SOUP



6-8 servings



25-30 minutes

This is a luxurious rich soup that works well as either a starter or main meal. Cauliflower is a fabulous low-carbohydrate vegetable that goes so well with cheese.

Try roasted seeds or nuts as a topping for a delicious crunch in place of croutons.



INGREDIENTS

2 tablespoons (about 30ml) extra virgin olive oil
 2 large onions, finely chopped
 1 large cauliflower, divided into florets (should yield about 4 cups)
 1 tin white / haricot beans, drained
 3 cloves garlic, crushed
 4 cups (1 litre) chicken stock
 1 bay leaf
 1/4 cup (about 60ml) grated parmesan cheese
 1 tin evaporated milk (be sure this is unsweetened)
 1/2 teaspoon salt
 1/2 teaspoon paprika
 1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper



INSTRUCTIONS

- In a deep, heavy-bottomed pot, saute the onion in olive oil on medium-low heat until golden and soft. Add the cauliflower florets, beans and garlic. Stir for 3 minutes or so. Add the stock and bay leaf. Bring to the boil. Cover the pot and simmer on low heat for about 30 minutes.
- Take the pot off the heat. Remove the bay leaf and allow the soup base to cool slightly. If you have a handheld blender, this is wonderful: Process the soup in the pot until smooth. If you use a tabletop blender, then ensure the soup is cool enough not to be a hazard and blend it in batches until nice and smooth.
- Add the evaporated milk, cheese and seasoning to taste and reheat until the cheese is melted and the soup is creamy and glossy.
- To serve: Sprinkle with extra grated cheese, paprika and black pepper.

VARIATION

You can replace half or all of the cauliflower in this recipe with broccoli (or even a packet of frozen spinach). You can use parmesan cheese, or change the cheese to cheddar or even a strong blue cheese for a more sophisticated flavour. Just check your seasoning before serving as parmesan is quite salty: If you change the cheese, you may need to add a little more salt.

RECIPES FOR COMFORT

SAVOURY DO-AHEAD EGG CUPS



8-10
servings



45
minutes

Start your day the right way with a couple of these delicious egg cups... Protein, healthy fats, vitamins and minerals from fresh vegetables. You will feel energized for the day, your brain will be well-nourished and you won't struggle with hunger or cravings later on. These make tasty, convenient snacks to keep on hand if you feel peckish anytime.



INGREDIENTS

2 tablespoons olive oil
2 garlic cloves, crushed
2 onions, finely chopped
3 cups fresh vegetables of your choice: steamed broccoli, chopped spinach, roasted peppers, cherry tomatoes, grated carrots, sliced mushrooms all work well
1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1 block (120-150g) feta cheese
1 handful grated mozzarella cheese
6 large eggs
Fresh herbs of your choice: Basil, rosemary, thyme, parsley
Extra salt and pepper to taste

NOTES

These egg cups are great as a do-ahead breakfast. And, they make fantastic lunch-box fare.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Sauté the onion and garlic in olive oil in a large casserole dish until the onion is soft and starting to take on a golden colour.
2. Add the vegetables of your choice and allow them to cook for a few minutes until they are soft and there's no excess moisture in the pan. Season with salt and pepper.
3. Remove the vegetables from the heat and allow to cool.
4. In the meantime, mix the eggs, feta and mozzarella, fresh herbs and additional seasoning.
5. Preheat your oven to 180 C. Grease muffin tins (preferably silicone because they tend to release the egg cups better) with a little olive oil. Spoon the vegetable mix into each muffin tin. Then pour the egg mixture over.
6. Bake for 20-25 minutes until bubbly and golden on top.
7. Allow the egg cups to cool to room temperature before turning them out of the muffin tins.
8. Store in the refrigerator.

RECIPES FOR COMFORT

SEED CRACKERS



+/- 20
crackers



15 minutes
+ baking

It's always a good idea to have something wholesome, delicious and crunchy on hand. These crackers are packed with fibre and good fats, and you can serve them with hummus, cheese, cold meats, avo... The options are endless.

You will not miss shop-bought unhealthy crispbread or high-carb convenience snacks!



INGREDIENTS

3 cups (750ml) of mixed seeds
(pumpkin seeds, sesame
seeds, sunflower seeds, chia
seeds, flax seeds etc)
3 Tablespoons (45ml) Psyllium
husk
2 cups (500ml) water
1 teaspoon (5ml) salt
Additional seasonings of your
choice (see variations)

NOTES

These crackers are fantastic
because they keep for
months in an airtight
container.

INSTRUCTIONS

- Preheat your oven to 160°C. Line 2 large baking sheets with parchment paper and brush these lightly with olive oil.
- Combine all ingredients in a mixing bowl, and allow to stand for 10-15 minutes. In that time, the seeds will swell. The mixture will thicken and become gelatinous and pliable.
- Divide the mixture between your baking sheets and spread it out as thinly as possible, without allowing any gaps in the mixture.
- Bake for about 65-70 minutes. Rotate the trays after 35-40 minutes to facilitate even browning and crisping.
- Once evenly browned and really crispy, remove from the oven and allow to cool completely before handling.
- Once cool, you can break the crackers into any size and shape that takes your fancy. Store in airtight containers.

If you prefer evenly shaped rectangular crackers, then score the wet mix with a butter knife before putting the crackers in the oven. It will make snapping them apart super-easy once they are done :)

RECIPES FOR COMFORT

SEED CRACKER VARIATIONS

The basic recipe makes delicious wholesome crackers, but here are a few flavour varieties for you too try.

Of course, you can experiment with your favourite spice or flavour combinations.



SEED CRACKER FLAVOUR VARIATIONS

You can add almost any herb or spice of your liking to this versatile recipe.

Here are some favourite flavour options:

- **BLACK PEPPER & PARMESAN:** Add 1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper as well as 50g finely grated parmesan cheese to the mix. You can reduce the amount of salt you add, because the cheese contributes a nice saltiness.
- **GARLIC & ROSEMARY:** Use garlic salt instead of plain salt, and add 1 teaspoon of finely chopped fresh or dried rosemary.
- **CHILLI & OREGANO:** Finely chop 1 small red chilli and add this with 1/2 teaspoon dried oregano.

NOTES

Serve seed crackers with any cheese, spread, charcuterie or dip. They are a fabulous substitute for high-carb snacks.



RECIPES FOR COMFORT HUMMUS



6-8 servings



5 minutes

One of the most famous Mediterranean dips and spreads, hummus has a thick, creamy, luscious texture and a hearty, nutty flavour.

It is very versatile: You can spread it on seed crackers, use it as a dip for vegetables, serve it as an accompaniment to almost any dish.



INGREDIENTS

400g can chickpeas, undrained
4 generous tablespoons (60-70ml) Tahini/ground roasted sesame paste
1 teaspoon (2-3 cloves) crushed garlic
Juice of 1 large lemon
Salt & freshly ground black pepper
1/2 - 1 teaspoon ground cumin (optional)
Olive oil
Ground paprika, for sprinkling on top

NOTES

This hummus will keep well in a sealed container in the fridge for up to 7 days.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Reserve a handful of chickpeas to garnish the hummus.
2. In a food processor, pulse the chickpeas, garlic, tahini, lemon juice, cumin (if using) salt and pepper until you reach a smoothness that meets with your approval (some people prefer a very smooth paste, while others like a chunkier consistency).
3. Add a little olive oil if you find the mixture too thick.
4. Decant your hummus into your chosen serving bowl, top with your reserved chickpeas, drizzle with olive oil and sprinkle over some paprika.



HUMMUS VARIATIONS



INTERESTING FLAVOUR VARIATIONS

ROASTED RED-PEPPER HUMMUS

Roast 2 large red bell peppers in a preheated oven at 200°C for about 25-30 minutes, until they are soft and sweet. Take them out of the oven and place them in a plastic bag to steam. When they are cool, remove the tough skin from the flesh, and add the flesh to your chickpeas before you start up the food processor. Garnish your hummus with toasted pine nuts.

BEETROOT AND FETA HUMMUS

Preheat your oven to 180°C. Place unpeeled, but thoroughly scrubbed beetroot in a roasting tray along with some quartered red onions and whole unpeeled garlic cloves. Season with salt, pepper and thyme. Drizzle generously with olive oil and roast uncovered for about 85-90 minutes until the beets are soft. You will need 2-3 beetroot for your hummus (the rest you can happily serve as they are, or use them in salads. Roasted beetroot keep very well in the fridge.

To make the hummus: Simply toss your beets in with your chickpeas and other ingredients and process to a beautiful pink paste. Garnish with chunks of feta cheese and olive oil.



RECIPES FOR COMFORT

SALMON AND CREAM CHEESE DIP



6-8 servings



10 minutes

One of my favourite dips made with tinned salmon and cream cheese. It is super-quick, super-easy, great for entertaining and very popular... People always ask me for the recipe!

It is bursting with healthy fats including omega-3 fatty acids, minerals and of course, flavour. Serve it with celery or carrot sticks, cucumber batons or on seed crackers crackers.



INGREDIENTS

1 large tin of salmon, flaked and large bones removed
1 tub (200-250g) cream cheese, allowed to come to room temperature
3 generous tablespoons natural full cream Greek yoghurt
2 tablespoons mayonnaise
Juice of 1 lemon, freshly squeezed
½ teaspoon Tabasco hot sauce (or more if preferred)
½ teaspoon salt (or to taste)
1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1 tablespoon fresh parsley, finely chopped (plus extra for garnish)



INSTRUCTIONS

- Place salmon and cream cheese in a bowl and use a fork to mash the two ingredients together to achieve a fairly fine and homogenous texture.
- Mix in yoghurt, mayonnaise, lemon juice, tabasco sauce, salt and pepper as well as chopped parsley.
- Decant into a serving bowl, garnish with extra fresh parsley and a thin slice of lemon.

NOTES

There is concern around eating fish, and particularly canned fish because of the potential exposure to mercury and toxins from the lining of the can.

If you choose high-quality, wild salmon from a reputable company... the benefits of eating this delicious and nutritious fish far outweigh any risks.

RECIPES FOR COMFORT

WALNUT SEED BREAD



10-12
servings



75
minutes

This walnut seed bread is carb-free. It is made with raw walnuts, almond flour, and a wide variety of seeds. Psyllium husk binds it together and gives it a chewy and delicious texture.

It will stay fresh in the fridge for more than a week. It is high in protein and good fats and 1 slice will fill you up for hours.



INGREDIENTS

2 1/2 cups raw walnuts
3 cups mixed seeds
(pumpkin, sunflower, flax,
sesame, chia, poppy etc)
5 tablespoons psyllium husk
1 1/2 teaspoons salt
1 teaspoon freshly ground
black pepper
2 tablespoons extra virgin
olive oil
3 tablespoons fresh herbs
(rosemary, thyme, oregano,
parsley etc)
2 cups of water

NOTES

You can use other nuts like
pecan nuts, almonds and
hazel nuts depending on
flavour preferences and
availability.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat your oven to 180 C. Brush the sides of your loaf tin with olive oil and line the base with greaseproof paper.
2. Place the walnuts in the bowl of your food processor and pulse until the walnuts are finely chopped but not quite a flour consistency.
3. Decant the walnuts into a large mixing bowl and add all the other ingredients.
4. Mix until the water is absorbed by the psyllium husk and the mixture comes together as a fairly gelatinous dough.
5. Place the mixture into your loaf tin. Press it down firmly and smooth the top. You can sprinkle the top with more seeds if you like.
6. Bake for about 50-55 minutes until the top is crispy and dark, and the sides of the loaf have pulled slightly inwards from the loaf tin.
7. Allow to rest in the tin for at least 15 minutes, and then turn it out and allow to cool on a cooling rack before wrapping in a kitchen towel.
8. Store in the fridge.

RECIPES FOR COMFORT

CHIA SEED PUDDING



single
serving



5 minutes

This do-ahead breakfast option can also be enjoyed as a dessert. There are so many flavour and texture varieties you can try out. It only takes 5 minutes to assemble, and if you make it in a sealed container or jar... it's perfect as a grab-and-go nutritious meal!



BASIC CHIA SEED PUDDING

INGREDIENTS

3-4 tablespoons chia seeds
(use more if you prefer a thicker result)
1 cup milk of your choice
(coconut / almond / cashew / oat / soy all work well)
1-2 teaspoons stevia, honey or maple syrup for sweetness

NOTES

Scale this basic recipe to make as many portions as you like. The pudding will last for up to 1 week in a sealed jar in the fridge, so you can make it ahead and decant as needed.

INSTRUCTIONS

- Place all ingredients in a bowl or mason jar. Stir and allow to sit for 15 minutes.
- Stir once more to break up any clumps of seeds that may have formed.
- Cover and refrigerate overnight.
- Add your topping of choice and enjoy as a no-fuss breakfast or sweet treat after your meal.



RECIPES FOR COMFORT

CHIA SEED PUDDING VARIATIONS

SOME FAVOURITE FLAVOUR COMBINATIONS

- **CHOCOLATE:** Add 1 tablespoon cocoa powder and serve with dark chocolate chips.
- **PUMPKIN PIE:** Add 1/2 cup cooked pumpkin or butternut puree with 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon and 1/4 teaspoon mixed spice. Add a few chopped dates for extra sweetness! You can substitute cooked chopped apple for the pumpkin and you have an apple pie version.
- **COCONUT:** Use coconut milk, add 1 tablespoon coconut cream and 2 tablespoons shredded / desiccated coconut. Sprinkle shredded toasted coconut on top before serving.
- **MINT-CHOCOLATE:** Blend a handful of baby spinach leaves with your milk of choice. Add a few drops of peppermint extract and stir in a handful of dark chocolate chips or raw cacao nibs.
- **MATCHA-MINT:** Add 1 teaspoon matcha powder and 2-3 finely chopped fresh mint leaves. You may need a little more sweetness, so add stevia, honey or maple syrup to your desired taste.
- **ZESTY ORANGE:** Add 1/2 teaspoon finely grated orange zest + 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract. Serve with fresh orange chunks or homemade marmalade.
- **BERRY:** Blend a handful of fresh or frozen berries of your choice with the milk. Serve with fresh or frozen berries. (Blueberries, raspberries and strawberries work particularly well)



RECIPES FOR COMFORT

LOW-CARB GRANOLA



10-12 servings



65-75 minutes

If you enjoy granola or muesli for breakfast, this is a fantastic low-carb version that will help you sustain your energy throughout the day. You feel the classic cravings or sudden hunger that happens 2-3 hours after eating normal high-carb breakfast cereals because this version is packed with protein, fibre and healthy fat to keep you feeling fuller for longer.



INGREDIENTS

1 1/2 cups raw almonds
1 1/2 cups unsweetened coconut flakes
3/4 cup almond flour
1 cup sunflower seeds
1/2 cup sesame seeds
1 cup raw hazelnuts
2 heaped teaspoons good quality instant coffee
5 tablespoons coconut oil
2 tablespoons honey
3 tablespoons stevia
2 teaspoons vanilla extract
1/2 teaspoon dried rosemary
Pinch of salt



INSTRUCTIONS

- Preheat oven to 150 degrees Celsius.
- Line a large baking sheet with parchment paper or non-stick baking Teflon
- Mix almonds, coconut flakes, almond flakes, sunflower seeds and sesame seeds.
- In a pestle and mortar, combine all remaining ingredients and crush until the hazelnuts are all broken into smaller chunks.
- Combine the hazelnut and coconut oil mixture with the dry ingredients until homogenous.
- Lay the granola on your prepared baking sheet and bake for 15 minutes.
- Remove from the oven, stir and return to the oven for 10 minutes.
- Remove and stir again. Return to the oven for a further 10 minutes or until uniformly golden and crispy.
- Allow to cool completely before storing in an airtight container.

You can enjoy this as a trail mix - it makes a fabulous anytime snack!

RECIPES FOR COMFORT

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DATE AND PEANUT BUTTER BALLS



25-30
date balls



30
minutes

These delicious and nutritious date balls are high in protein, healthy fats and fibre. They are easy-to-make, require no cooking and the whole family will love them. They make great snacks, and can also be a good on-the-run breakfast option.



INGREDIENTS

1 1/2 cups raw hazelnuts or walnuts
1 1/2 cups pitted dates
1 cup peanut butter
1/2 cup almond flour
1/2 cup desiccated coconut (plus extra for rolling)
3 tablespoons chia seeds
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
4 tablespoons cacao powder

NOTES

Store these date balls in an airtight container in the fridge. They will stay fresh for weeks, but they will be demolished before then!

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Place the hazelnuts or walnuts in your food processor and blend until you have a fine powder / flour consistency.
2. Add the dates and blend until smooth. You might need to add a little water if the dates are very dry.
3. Add the remaining ingredients and pulse until you achieve a homogenous mixture that comes together.
4. Form the mixture into bite-sized balls and roll them in coconut.
5. Store in an airtight container in the refrigerator.



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RECIPES FOR COMFORT

5-MINUTE VANILLA ICE-CREAM



3-4 servings



5 minutes

Do you ever have over-ripe bananas? Peel them, cut into chunks and freeze them. You will have the base ingredient for this 'instant' ice-cream anytime. It is delicious and totally guilt-free because it is packed with fibre, and healthful minerals. The consistency just after preparation is like a thick mousse. If you prefer a more solid result, then just pop it in the freezer for 10-15 minutes and it will harden to ice-cream consistency.



INGREDIENTS

3 large bananas, peeled, cut into chunks and frozen
1 avocado, peeled, stoned and cut into cubes
10 dates, pitted
3 tablespoons nut butter of your choice
1 tablespoon chia seeds
1 teaspoon vanilla essence
Milk or plain yoghurt as needed

NOTES

You can use different nut butters for different flavour variations (peanut, almond, macadamia...).
Add instant coffee powder, matcha powder, rum essence or cacao to change it up

INSTRUCTIONS

- Put all ingredients into a blender and pulse until you have a smooth creamy consistency. Add milk or yoghurt as needed to achieve a smooth result.
- Serve immediately, or place in a freezer-proof container and freeze until required.
- Remove from the freezer 15 minutes before serving to allow time for the ice-cream to soften.

