

Beating Diabetes with FIRE

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...and a cooking pot! All decked out in aprons and hair caps, members of Diabetic Society of Singapore (DSS) enjoyed a hands-on experience cooking several easy recipes that can help manage blood sugar levels:

Tom Yam Goong Macaroni Soup

Using wholemeal pasta, this dish boasts flavour and good old comfort.

Baked Quinoa

Featuring the popular quinoa grain that is rich in protein and fibre; this can easily become any family's new nutritious meal.

Kidney Bean Burritos

Quite flavourful and filling, this snack was a favourite recipe among the group.

Vegan Lasagne

Meeting daily requirements for vegetable intake is easy when this dish is served.

Brown Basmati Pilaf

Featuring basmati and barley, this dish is surely a better choice than traditional fried rice.

The workshop was co-organised by students of Applied Food Science and Nutrition at Temasek Polytechnic who also assisted the groups during the workshop. Apart from filling the room with the tantalising aroma of food, participants also learned about Glycaemic Index (GI) from DSS' master trainer and dietitian, Ms Kalpana Bhaskaran.

Low GI ingredients make better meals

Glycaemic Index (GI) is a number assigned to a particular food or ingredient that measures the way it will impact one's blood sugar levels upon eating. Using at least one low GI food at every meal may lead to more stable blood sugar levels, an easier to control appetite and more stable weight. Moreover, when combined with high GI food, the glycaemic value of the total meal may become lower.

Low GI ingredients featured in the recipes worth switching to:

- Brown Basmati Rice
- Legumes and beans
- Wholemeal grains and pasta
- Most fruits and vegetables

Controlling food portions

While GI values serve as a guide in choosing the food to eat, Ms Bhaskaran also reminded the participants to watch how much they eat. Portion control is another way to help manage blood sugar (and waistlines). The amount and type of food to eat can be worked out best with a dietitian to suit individual requirements, eating style and medication prescribed.

Perhaps the greatest take-away lesson from this workshop is that healthier food options

can be best prepared at home. By doing so, you can use healthier ingredient alternatives that may not available in traditional hawker food. So, instead of eating out frequently (which is common in Singapore), play with fire and cook up a storm!

