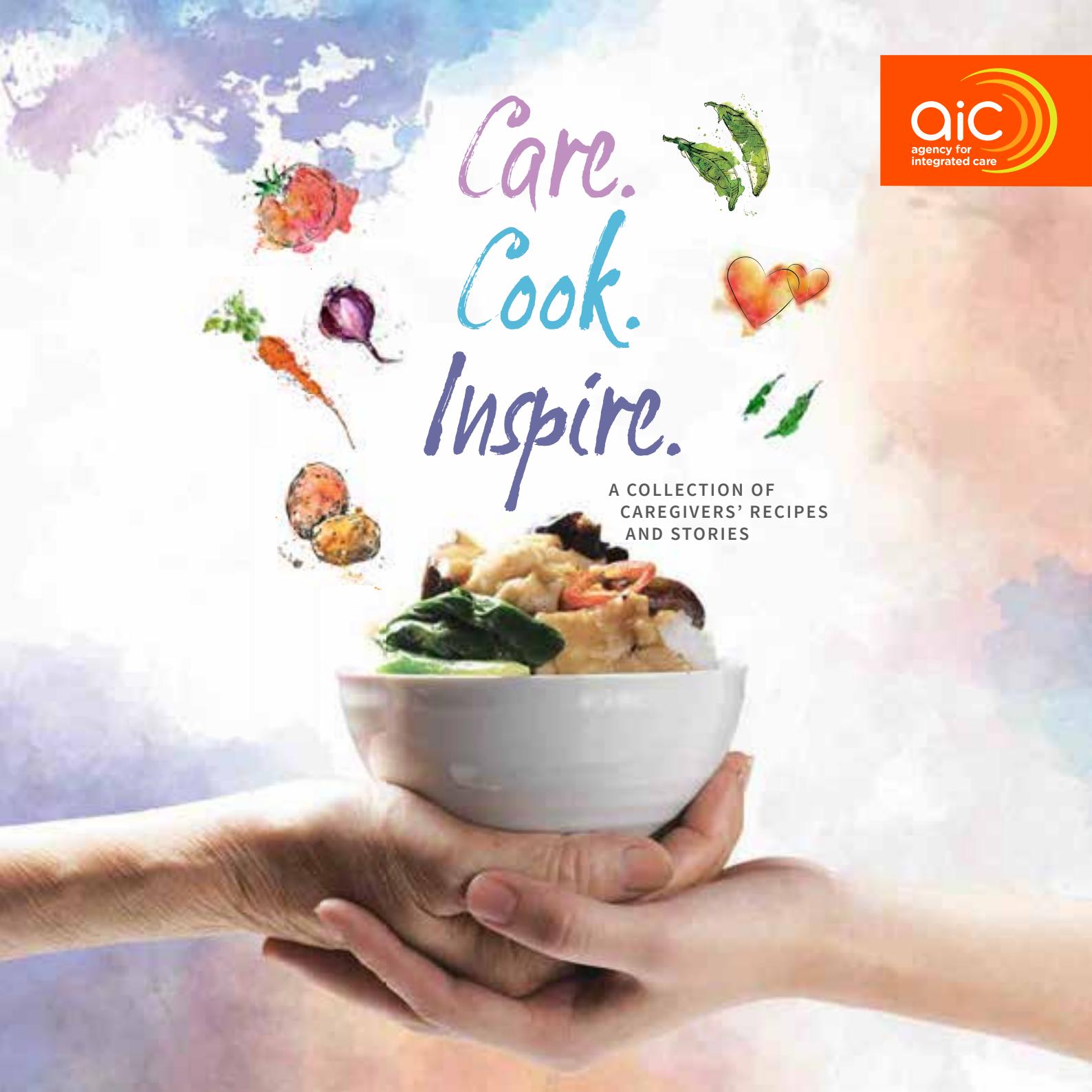




Care. Cook. Inspire.

A COLLECTION OF
CAREGIVERS' RECIPES
AND STORIES





Care.
Cook.
Inspire.

A COLLECTION OF CAREGIVERS'
RECIPES AND STORIES

Contents

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Foreword

"... We're very fortunate to have very filial children... My husband and I are thankful to my daughter (Tracy) and her husband (Kenny) for caring and preparing home-cooked meals for us."

- 77-year-old Madam Kwan, who has diabetes and a kidney condition, speaking about her daughter.

Care. Cook. Inspire. is the Agency for Integrated Care's first recipe book for caregivers. The idea for it was borne out of our interactions with caregivers who shared that despite their busy schedule, they still wish to prepare wholesome meals for their loved ones. Also, many shared that while caregiving can be challenging, they found strength through love and support from their family and friends.

Thus in this book, we present recipes from real caregivers that are not only simple to prepare, but are also delicious and healthy. These recipes have also been refined by a dietitian to ensure they are suitable for your loved ones with diabetes, high blood pressure or who cannot swallow easily.

Additionally, we have infused this book with inspirational caregiver stories to nourish the spirit and offer support in gaining greater confidence in your own caregiving journey.

Finally, we would like to express our heartfelt thanks to all the caregivers who shared their home-cooked recipes and stories. We hope that this book will help you explore new flavours with your loved ones and find the right mix of ingredients for a satisfying and meaningful caregiving journey.

Kelvin Lim

Chief, Senior Support and Carer Services Development Division,
Agency for Integrated Care

Special Thanks!

Choy Ah Choon

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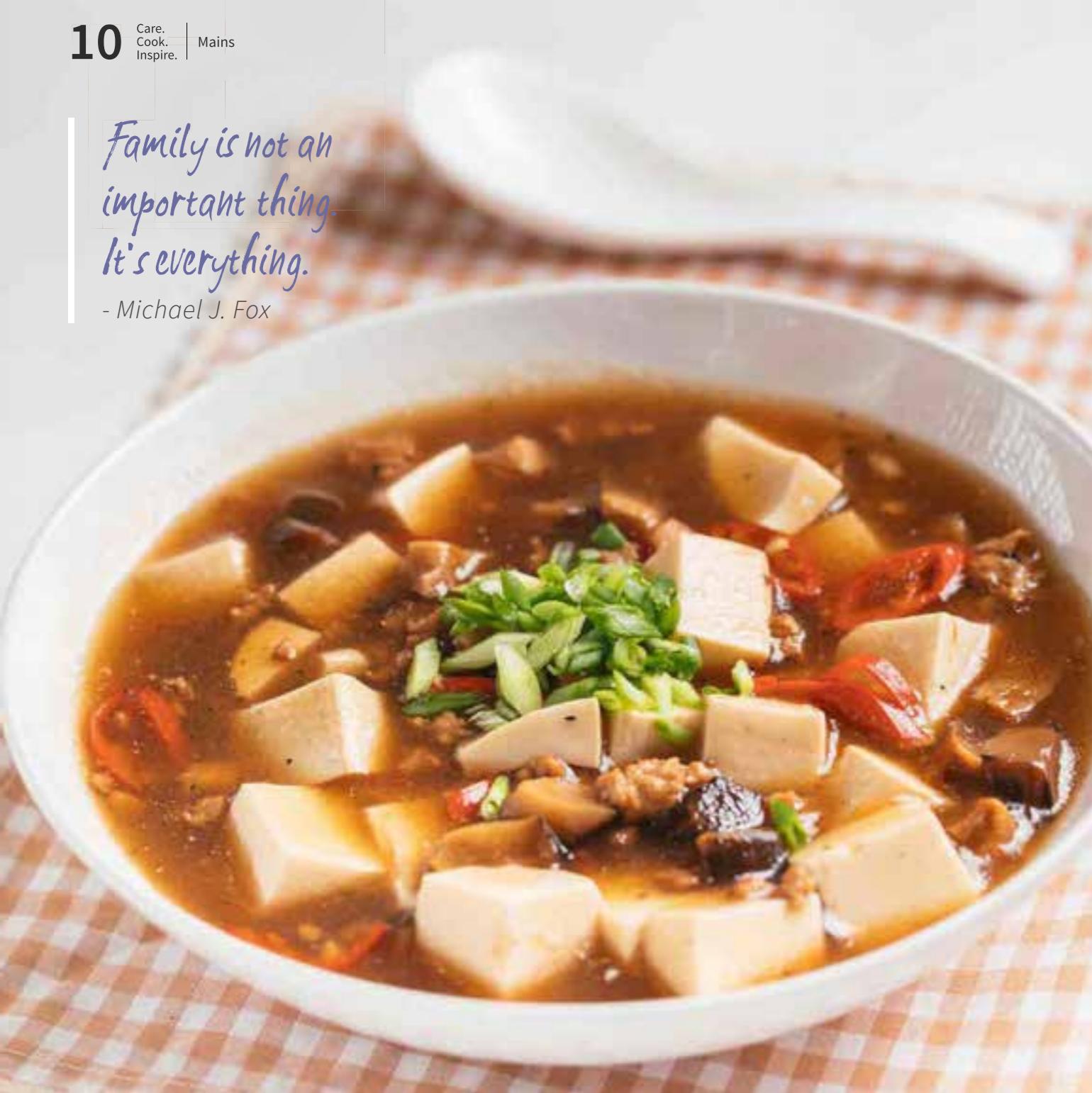


Mains



Family is not an
important thing.
It's everything.

- Michael J. Fox



Mapo Tofu

4 portions | Preparation time: 15 minutes

INGREDIENTS

2 tbsps	Chinese black vinegar
3 tbsps	Cooking oil
2 tbsps	Cornstarch (mixed with 3 to 4 tbsps water)
20 gm	Dried mushroom (soaked, stem trimmed and sliced)
100 gm	Minced chicken
1 pc	Red chilli (de-seeded and cut into 1 cm slices)
3 tbsps	Reduced salt light soya sauce Healthier Option
1 block	Silken tofu (cut into cubes)
400 ml	Water



Mapo Tofu



1

Heat oil in wok. Stir fry sliced mushrooms and minced chicken until fragrant.



2

Add the sliced chilli, soya sauce, vinegar and water. Bring to boil for 2 to 3 minutes.



3

Add cornstarch solution and mix well.

Nutritional Values

Energy (kcal)	197	Dietary Fibre (g)	2
Protein (g)	11	Sodium (mg)	597
Total Fat (g)	16	Folate (µg)	3
Saturated Fat (g)	6	Calcium (mg)	28
Cholesterol (mg)	14	Iron (mg)	1
Carbohydrate (g)	9		



4

Add tofu and simmer for 2 to 3 minutes.



5

Transfer to serving dish and serve with hot steamed rice.

Tips



- Tofu is a good source of protein and it is also low in fat. Cut down on soy sauce and choose reduced salt soy sauce with the "Healthier Choice Symbol" to reduce the amount of sodium in this dish.

- Diabetes: To replace white rice, serve braised tofu with sweet potato noodles or shirataki noodles.

- Dysphagia: Replace dried mushrooms with 60g fresh shiitake mushrooms for a softer texture that allows for easy swallowing.



Cooking is like love. It should be entered into with abandon or not at all.

- Harriet Van Horne



Miso Grilled Saba Fish

2 portions | Preparation time: 45 minutes

INGREDIENTS

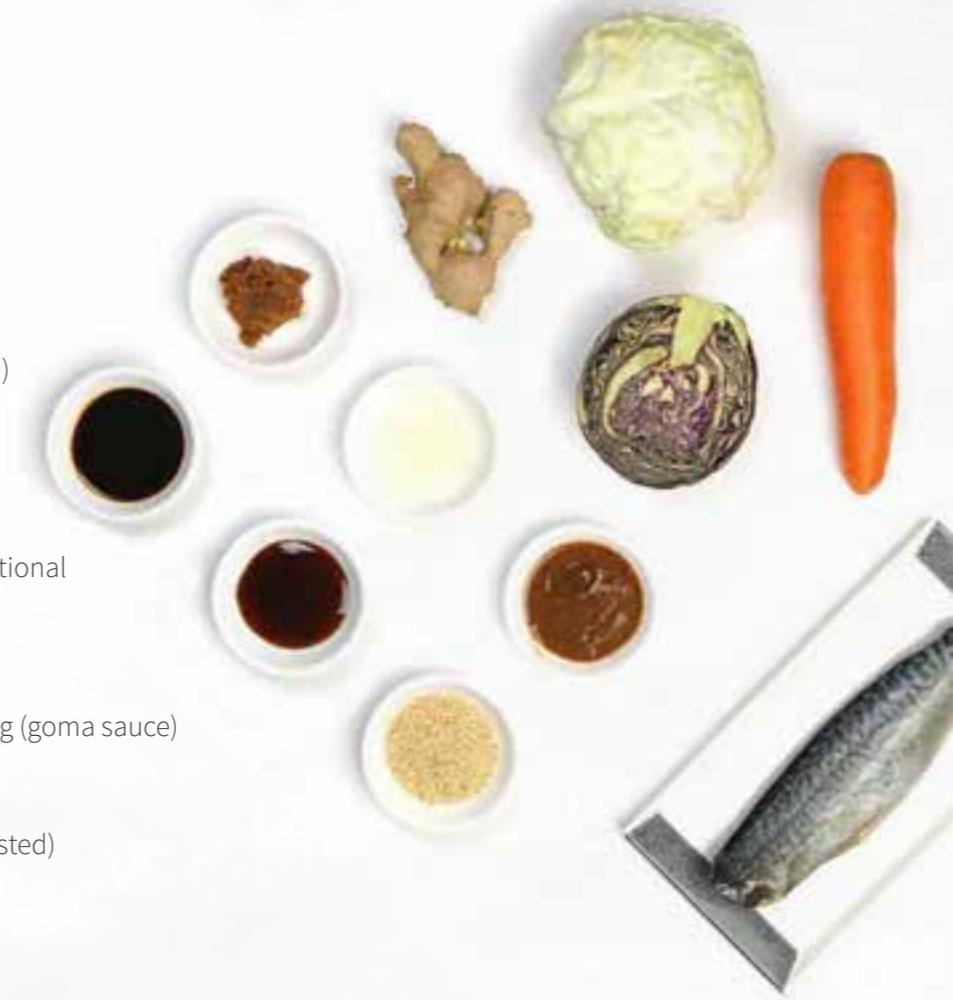
2 pcs Saba fish (fillet)

MARINADE

1 tbsp	Grated fresh ginger (10 to 12 gm)
2 tbsps	Rice vinegar
1 tbsp	Soya sauce
30 gm	White miso
To taste	White pepper powder
40 ml	Japanese rice wine (mirin) – Optional

SALAD

100 gm	Carrot (finely sliced)
50 ml	Japanese sesame salad dressing (goma sauce)
80 gm	Red cabbage (finely sliced)
80 gm	White cabbage (finely sliced)
2 gm	White sesame seeds (lightly toasted)



Miso Grilled Saba Fish

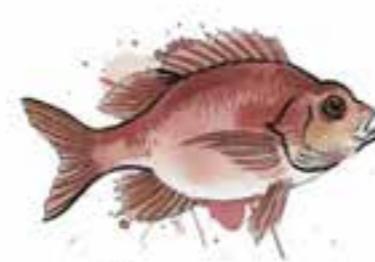


Whisk miso, rice wine, rice vinegar, soy sauce, ginger and white pepper powder (to taste) together in a small bowl. Rice wine can also be added (optional). Place saba fillets in a ziploc bag, pour marinade into the bag until fillets are well-coated. Seal bag and refrigerate for 30 minutes.



Finely slice and wash the carrots, red and white cabbages. Remove excess water.

Place washed vegetables in a salad bowl, add Japanese sesame salad dressing and toss salad with sesame seeds. Set aside.



Nutritional Values

Energy (kcal)	164	Dietary Fibre (g)	2
Protein (g)	16	Sodium (mg)	478
Total Fat (g)	6	Folate (µg)	28
Saturated Fat (g)	2	Calcium (mg)	48
Cholesterol (mg)	57	Iron (mg)	1
Carbohydrate (g)	6		



Remove fillets from the bag after 30 minutes and pat lightly with kitchen towels. Discard marinade. Heat non-stick frying pan. Grill saba on medium heat, skin side down, until golden brown with a crust. Turn it over and continue cooking until thoroughly cooked.



Serve saba fillets with a portion of salad.

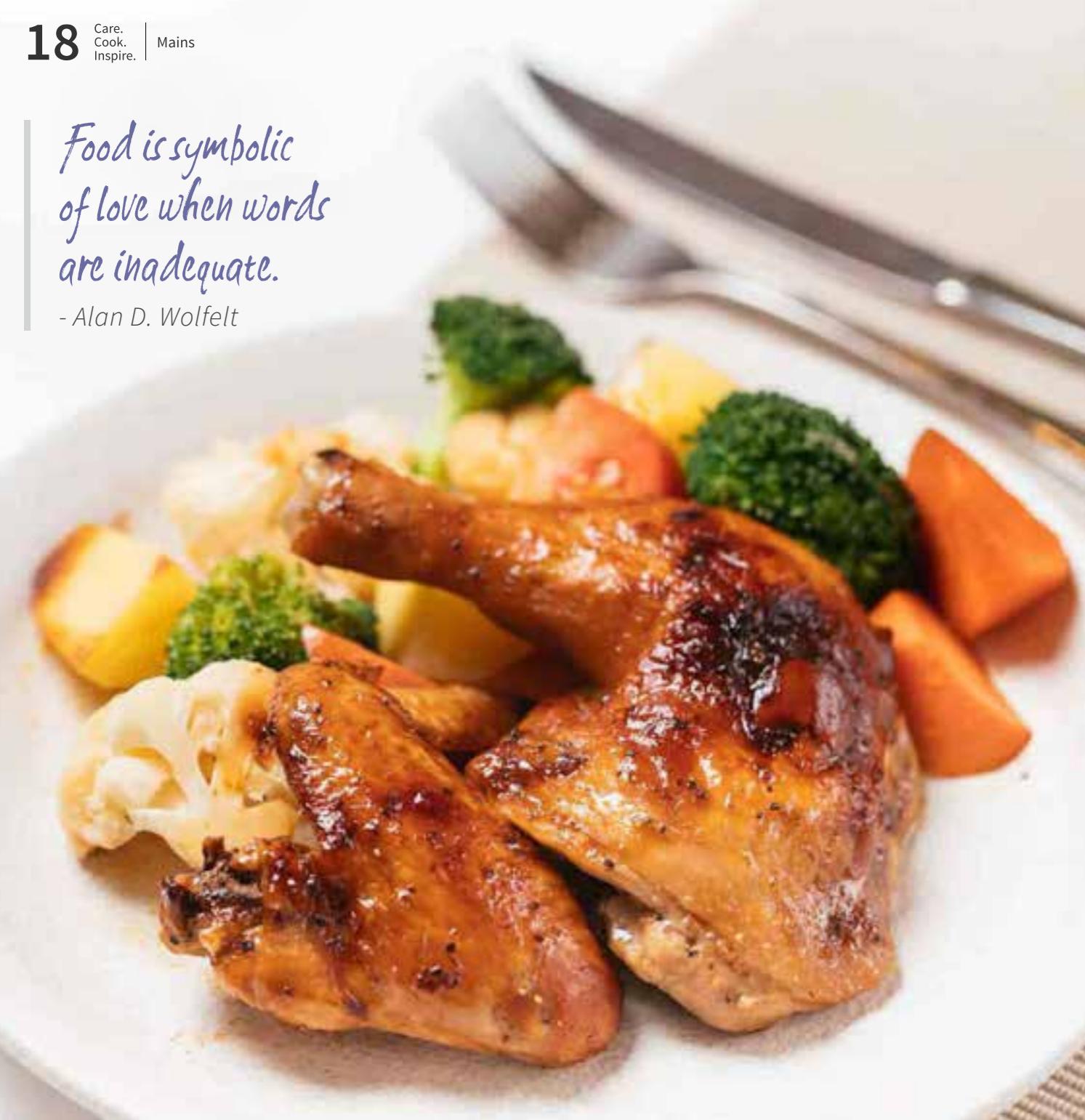
Tips

- As a type of cold-water fish, Saba fish is also known as Norwegian Mackerel. It contains a high amount of Omega 3 fatty acids, which can help prevent heart disease and improve brain health.
- Diabetes: Avoid serving fish with shortgrain rice. Use buckwheat soba noodles instead.
- Dysphagia: Substitute saba fish with softer textured options like tilapia, snapper or garoupa.



Food is symbolic
of love when words
are inadequate.

- Alan D. Wolfelt



Roasted Chicken with Boiled Vegetables

4 portions | Preparation time: 60 minutes

INGREDIENTS

1 whole Spring chicken (about 1.5.kg), cut into 4 pieces

MARINADE FOR CHICKEN

½ tsp	Black pepper (coarse or fine)
2 tsps	Honey
40 ml	Indonesian sweet black soya sauce (kecap manis)
3 tsbps	Mustard sauce
2 tsbps	Oyster sauce <small>Healthier Option</small>
3 tsbps	Sesame oil (white)

VEGETABLES

200 gm	Broccoli (trimmed and cut into bite size pieces)
200 gm	Carrot (peeled and cut into cubes)
200 gm	Cauliflower (trimmed and cut into bite size pieces)
320 gm	Potato (peeled and cut into cubes)
200 gm	Tomato (garnish)

SAUCE (OPTIONAL)

Cornstarch solution (2 tsbps of cornflour mixed with 3 to 4 tsbps water)



Roasted Chicken with Boiled Vegetables



Mix the ingredients for the marinade well. Marinate chicken for at least an hour. Sear chicken pieces before roasting.



Preheat oven to 180°C. Place chicken pieces on an oven-baking tray or an oven-safe frying pan and bake for 15 minutes.



Bring a large pot of water to a boil. Blanch the potatoes and carrots first. Add the remaining vegetables into the pot and boil until cooked. Drain and set aside.

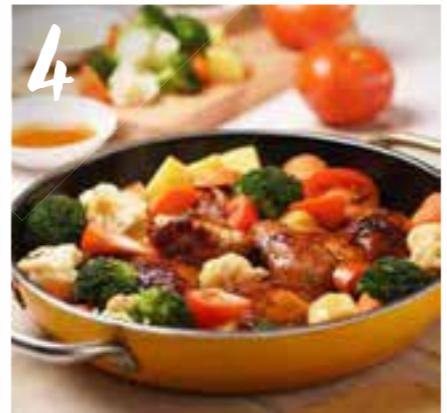


Take out the baking tray / frying pan from the oven. Add the cooked vegetables around the chicken pieces and bake for another 5 to 10 minutes.



Nutritional Values

Energy (kcal)	405	Dietary Fibre (g)	7
Protein (g)	27	Sodium (mg)	1282
Total Fat (g)	18	Folate (µg)	75
Saturated Fat (g)	4	Calcium (mg)	102
Cholesterol (mg)	60	Iron (mg)	9
Carbohydrate (g)	33		



Transfer the chicken pieces and vegetables to a large serving plate. For the sauce, retain the juices from the roasted chicken in the baking tray / frying pan. Place tray / frying pan over a small flame and thicken juices slightly with a bit of the cornstarch solution.



Garnish the roasted chicken platter with tomatoes. Serve roasted chicken with the sauce, soft rolls or homemade garlic bread (optional).



Tips

- As a healthier cooking method, roasting reduces calorie and fat levels since no butter or cooking oil is used, allowing people to better manage their cholesterol. Vegetables that can be roasted include celery, pumpkin and sweet potato for a boost in fibre content.
- Diabetes: Lower the GI* level by using sweet potato or pumpkin instead of the starchy potato. Alternatively, serve wholemeal crusty bread slices together with the dish.
- Dysphagia: Add 500ml water to the chicken when roasting. Next, cover with aluminium foil and bake for an hour till soften. Replace pumpkin with carrot as it has a softer texture when cooked.

Do you know?

*The Glycaemic Index (GI) is a measure of how fast our body breaks down the food's carbohydrate to glucose. The higher the GI, the faster it is being converted to glucose. To support seniors with diabetes in managing their blood sugar levels better, use foods low in GI and high in fibre, such as vegetables and wholemeal products.



My Pillar of Support

CAREGIVER

Loh Yew Kim,
76-year-old

CARING FOR

Ng Gun Yok,
77-year-old (spouse)

*"Do not give up.
Help is available if
you seek it."*

My wife and I have been married for 32 years. In 2012, she had a fall and her mobility was affected. Three years later she had another severe fall, but this time it left her wheelchair-bound. It was this time, in October 2015, that I became her sole caregiver. With this situation, I realised more has to be done, especially in making our home more accessible for her. For instance, there was a step at the entrance of the toilet that made it challenging for me to push the wheelchair into the toilet. Likewise, with the steps at the entrance of our home. I also faced some difficulty moving the wheelchair due to a permanent leg injury.

At the beginning of my caregiving journey, I had no idea where to start. I have to take care of my wife, manage the housework, finances and medical appointments as well as buy our meals. When I discovered there was a COMmunity NETwork Family Service Centre

(COMNET FSC) located just a block away, I was relieved as I knew I was not alone and could seek help with providing care to my wife.

COMNET FSC referred me to TOUCH Caregivers Support and they helped to replace the existing chrome wheelchair with a lightweight and durable one. They also made my home more wheelchair-friendly.

These improvements made it easier for me to assist my wife with activities like showering and toileting. It also freed up some time and with this handbook, I feel more confident to try to cook for her, whenever possible.

I feel well-supported in caring for her and I see this as another part of our marriage. This is a journey we have to walk through together, to support each other through thick and thin.

A Gift of Motivation

CAREGIVER

Elvin Tan,
53-year-old

CARED FOR

Khor Chwee Pong,
91-year-old (mother,
passed away)

*"My advice to other
caregivers is not to wait
until tomorrow to do what
you can do today."*

I cared for my mother who had dementia and a history of stroke, with support from my sister and brother-in-law living next door. She was also wheelchair-bound then. Besides the usual household duties, a typical day at home includes helping her with showering, cooking and feeding. Due to her declining memory, I had to ensure that she took her medications on time and also closely monitor her blood pressure.

In preparing her meals, I wanted to provide her with a well-balanced diet that suited her needs. But I wanted something healthy and varied to keep things interesting too. One of her favourite dishes that I have come up with is a blended porridge with vegetables and meat, using brown rice as a healthier substitute. I would also mix together a number of ingredients to make it more colourful and appetising, like sweet potato, carrot, Chinese yam and minced pork.

It is not easy to always maintain her health in optimal condition but I am able to do so by keeping myself motivated and continuously looking for new ways to provide better care. One of the things I did to upgrade myself was to tap on the Caregiving Training Grant by the Agency for Integrated Care. Using the Grant, I took up two home-based courses where I learnt both soft and hard skills like how to communicate with a senior better, carry out cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), first aid and home care. With these skills, I was able to read my mother's facial and body language better and provide care tailored to her needs and wishes. As a result, I was more confident in bringing her out for more walks to get some fresh air and sunshine which definitely uplifted her spirit.

"To other caregivers, I would like to say: Do it wholeheartedly and always motivate yourself."

It is not how much you do, but how much love you put in the doing.

- Mother Theresa



Steamed Chicken with Black Fungus and Mushroom

4 portions | Preparation time: 30 minutes

INGREDIENTS

400 gm Boneless chicken leg (cut into chunks)

MARINADE FOR CHICKEN

½ tsp	Coarse ground black pepper
1 tbsp	Corn or potato starch
12 slices	Ginger (finely sliced)
2 tbsps	Light soya sauce

ASSEMBLY

30 gm	Black fungus (soaked and cut into bite sized pieces)
12 pcs	Dried Chinese mushroom (soaked and stalks trimmed)

GARNISH

120 gm	Baby kailan (blanched)
3 slices	Red chilli (sliced)



Steamed Chicken with Black Fungus and Mushroom



1 Mix the ingredients for the marinade well. Marinate chicken for at least an hour.



2 Arrange chicken on a plate for steaming. Alternate each piece of chicken with black fungus and mushroom.



3 Bring a large pot of water to a boil. Place the plate of ingredients on a steaming tray in the pot and steam for 20 minutes.



Nutritional Values

Energy (kcal)	181	Dietary Fibre (g)	5
Protein (g)	22	Sodium (mg)	518
Total Fat (g)	6	Folate (µg)	14
Saturated Fat (g)	2	Calcium (mg)	41
Cholesterol (mg)	79	Iron (mg)	1
Carbohydrate (g)	10		



4 Blanch baby kailan for 1 to 2 minutes.



5 Serve chicken with baby kailan and rice.



Tips



- Steaming is the easiest and healthiest method to cook the chicken because no oil is used and the meat is softer in texture. The use of green vegetables and mushrooms add healthy nutrients, such as selenium and vitamins B and C. These nutrients are considered antioxidants as they may reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease and cancer.

- Diabetes: Serve steamed chicken with wholemeal mantou instead of white rice. The mantou can be enjoyed as a side dish as it absorbs the sauce and complements the taste of the moist steamed chicken.

- Dysphagia: Use fresh mushrooms and add 2-3 tbsps of ginger juice to the marinade instead of finely sliced ginger. The ginger juice contains enzymes that help to soften the texture of the chicken, making it easier to swallow. Prepare ginger juice by grating or pounding the ginger and squeezing the pulp to extract the juice. Steaming the chicken for a longer period of time (1 hour) can help to soften it too.

The happiest people I know
are those who lose themselves
in the service of others.

- Gordon B. Hinckley



Steamed Egg with Minced Meat and Mushroom

4 portions | Preparation time: 20 minutes

INGREDIENTS

3 pcs	Egg (medium size)
100 gm	Fresh shitake mushrooms (diced)
2 tbsps	Light soya sauce
120 gm	Minced chicken
¼ tsp	White pepper powder
2 stalks	Spring onion for garnish (diced) – Optional
100 gm	Winter bamboo shoot (diced) – Optional



Steamed Egg with Minced Meat and Mushroom



1



2



3



Beat eggs until slight bubbles appear.

Add minced chicken.

Season egg and minced meat mixture with light soya sauce and white pepper. Add diced mushrooms and bamboo shoots (optional) and mix well.



Nutritional Values

Energy (kcal)	145	Dietary Fibre (g)	1
Protein (g)	12	Sodium (mg)	689
Total Fat (g)	9	Folate (µg)	34
Saturated Fat (g)	2	Calcium (mg)	27
Cholesterol (mg)	169	Iron (mg)	1
Carbohydrate (g)	4		



4



5

Transfer egg mixture to tray for steaming. Cover tightly with cling wrap and steam on low heat for 8 to 10 minutes.

Garnish with chopped spring onions and serve hot.

Tips

- Shitake mushrooms, like most mushrooms, are high in Vitamin B and may be related to weight loss. This is because they blend well with meat dishes and helps to add flavour and volume, making us feel full without adding calories, cholesterol, fat and sodium.

- Tips for buying minced meat: Avoid pork and beef that are mainly white because this shows that the meat contains a lot of fat.

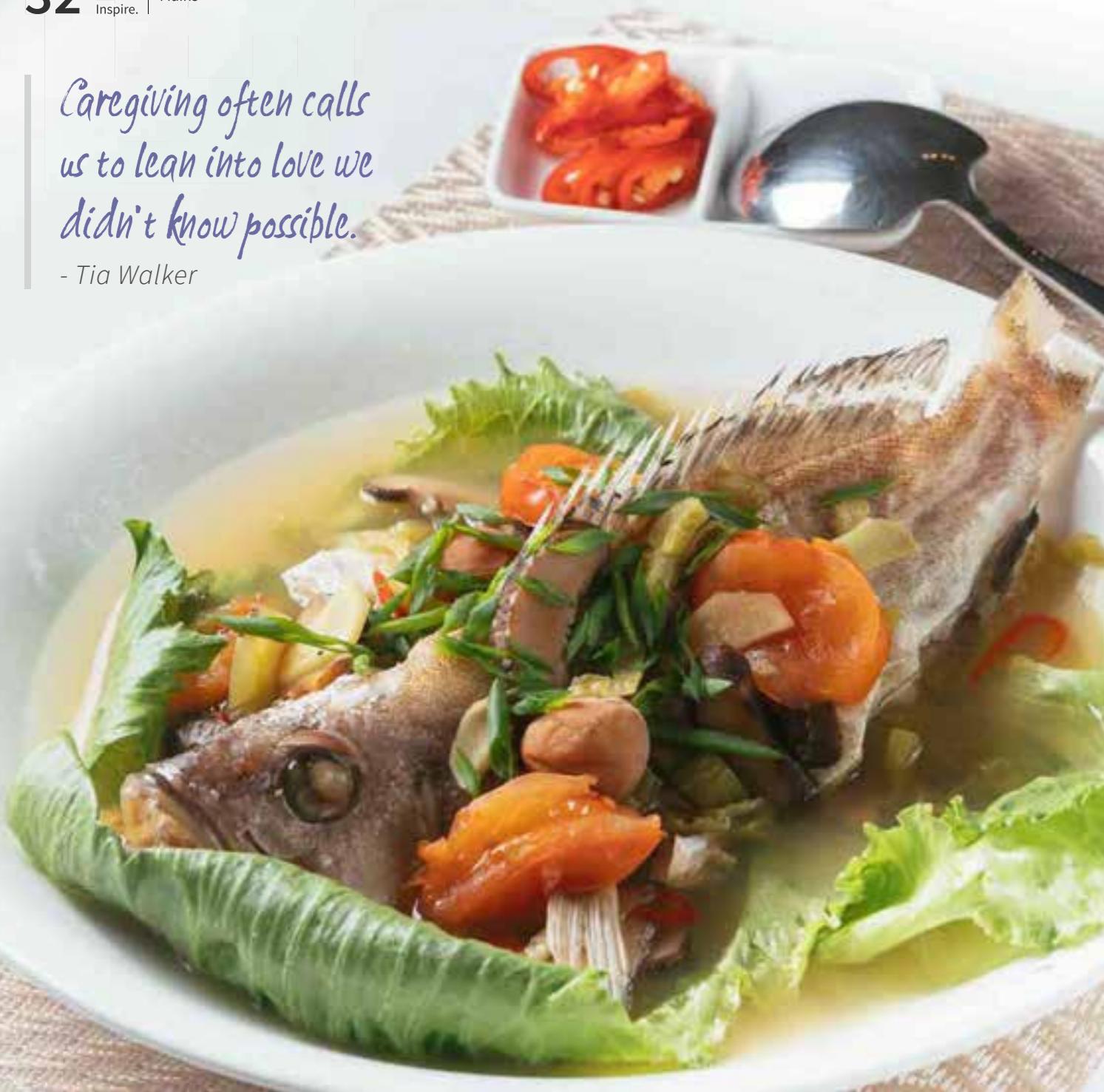
- Diabetes: Pumpkin is one of the recommended foods that can be used to serve in place of white rice. Add diced pumpkin to minced pork mixture for additional nutritional benefits too.

- Dysphagia: Blend meat for a finer texture instead of having it minced. Add 200ml water to egg mixture to get a softer texture.



Caregiving often calls us to lean into love we didn't know possible.

- Tia Walker



Teochew-styled Steamed Fish

4 portions | Preparation time: 20 minutes

INGREDIENTS

1 whole Fish of preferred choice (about 600 – 700 gm)

FOR STEAMING FISH

2 pcs	Bottled salted plum – Suan Mei
40 gm	Chaozhou salted mustard green – Xian Cai (soaked, rinsed and sliced)
15 gm	Dried shitake mushrooms (soaked, stalk trimmed, and sliced)
1 tsp	Fish sauce
20 gm	Old ginger (sliced)
1 pc	Red chilli (sliced)
½ tsp	Salt
2 stalks	Spring onion (diced)
1 pc	Tomato (cut into wedges)
300 mL	Unseasoned chicken broth

GARNISH

100 gm	Lettuce leaves
20 gm	Spring onion (chopped)
To taste	White pepper powder



Teochew-style Steamed Fish



1



2



3



4



5



Season fish with salt and fish sauce. After seasoning, place fish on steaming tray.

Add all ingredients and spread evenly over fish.

Add unseasoned chicken broth over fish.

Bring a large pot of water to a boil. Place the plate of fish on a steaming tray and steam for 7 minutes under high heat.

Serve on deep serving dish lined with lettuce leaves. Add white pepper powder to taste and garnish with spring onions before serving.



Nutritional Values

Energy (kcal)	138	Dietary Fibre (g)	1
Protein (g)	18	Sodium (mg)	534
Total Fat (g)	5	Folate (µg)	3
Saturated Fat (g)	2	Calcium (mg)	26
Cholesterol (mg)	30	Iron (mg)	1
Carbohydrate (g)	3		

Tips

- Steamed fish is a good source of protein that is lower in calories and saturated fats than red meat. Try to prepare it with little or no oil, at least three times a week. If required, the fishmonger can help in descaling and cleaning the fish.

- Diabetes: To replace white rice, add more broth and pre-softened sweet potato noodles to the fish before steaming. Serve it thereafter.

- Dysphagia: Choose fishes with finer texture like ikan kembong, ikan kurau and parrot fish. Peel and flake the fish for easier swallowing before serving.



The Strength of Love

CAREGIVER

Diana Lim,
35-year-old

CARING FOR

Kenneth Ng,
35-year-old (spouse)

"Caregiving is not about the number of hours of accomplishment, but defined by true love and patience."

My husband Kenneth was diagnosed with lymphoma cancer in early 2014, a few months after our first child was born. Shortly after, he contracted a rare virus and slipped into coma. To my shock, we were asked by the doctor to prepare for the worst. Even if he did recover, it was likely he would not be able to live independently. Our daughter was just nine months old and I was at a complete loss. What was I going to do?

Fortunately Kenneth regained consciousness after a few months and was discharged to Bright Vision Hospital (BVH) for rehab therapy. However, he was assessed to be mentally and physically incapacitated, and has to be fed through tube. His speech was also affected.

After his first discharge from BVH, my helper and I had to adjust and adapt our daily routine around his needs. We had to be patient and calm to understand his limitations and frustrations when he was easily agitated and aggressive back then.

He also had incidents of pulling his feeding tube. Thus after his second discharge from BVH in 2015 and as advised by the doctor, we decided to try feeding him blended food. We tried different dishes and settled on some main menus e.g breakfast as porridge with eggs or oats with fruits, lunch and dinner as porridge or brown rice with vegetables and fish or chicken, coupled with fruits. To liven up his mealtimes and engage him with different tastes, we often made the effort to try different ingredients and blended recipes too.

It is definitely a long journey as was advised earlier and along the way, people have encouraged me saying I have shown strength in my character in managing my situation. There may be people who do not fully understand what we caregivers are going through but just trusting yourself and knowing that you are already doing your best for your loved one is enough. I do feel overwhelmed at times, but as long as I persist, I know I can go on further.



Staples



To care for those who once
cared for us is one of the
highest honors.

- Tia Walker



Blended Porridge with Vegetables and Meat

2 portions | Preparation time: 45 minutes

INGREDIENTS

60 gm	Chinese yam (diced)
2 slices	Ginger (sliced)
40 gm	Red carrot (diced)
100 gm	Rice (optional – Brown rice)
2 gm	Salt or sea salt
1 tsp	Sesame oil
60 gm	Sliced fish / choice of ikan batang, ikan kurau, snapper, garoupa or freshwater carp or minced meat
60 gm	Sweet potato (diced)
500 ml	Water
10 gm	Spring onions (diced) – Optional



Blended Porridge with Vegetables and Meat



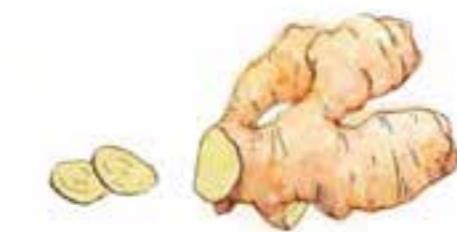
1



2



3



Add water, washed rice and sliced ginger into slow cooker on the highest temperature. (NOTE: Cooking time takes about 3 hours. For faster cooking time, use a stove instead.)



Add diced sweet potatoes, yam, carrots and cook for 30 minutes. Add extra water as necessary for desired consistency.



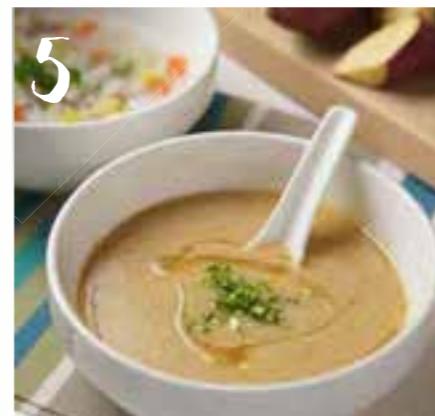
Add sliced fish and cook for 5 minutes.

Nutritional Values

Energy (kcal)	159	Dietary Fibre (g)	2
Protein (g)	5	Sodium (mg)	218
Total Fat (g)	4	Folate (µg)	16
Saturated Fat (g)	1	Calcium (mg)	15
Cholesterol (mg)	8	Iron (mg)	1
Carbohydrate (g)	27		



4



5

Allow porridge to cool slightly before transferring porridge to blender. Blend porridge until smooth.

Season with salt and sesame oil. Garnish with spring onions (optional) before serving.

Tips



- Brown rice is considered a wholegrain and is higher in dietary fiber because it has not lost the hull and bran layers in the milling process. Brown rice helps to maintain a healthy weight and better manage blood sugar level.
- Diabetes: Use multigrains like red rice and brown rice to cook the porridge.
- Dysphagia: Replace carrot with sweet potato or pumpkin and avoid spring onions.



The closest thing to being cared for is to care for someone else.

- Carson McCullers



Shrimp Pasta

4 portions | Preparation time: 30 minutes

INGREDIENTS

8 tbsps	Cooking oil
4 cloves	Garlic (chopped)
200 gm	Kailan (shredded)
16 pcs	Medium size prawn (diced)
1 packet	Pasta (about 400 g)
1 tsp	Pepper
1 pc	Red chilli (de-seeded and finely chopped)
2 gm	Salt (pinch)
1 pc	Yellow onion (chopped)
200 ml	Pot of water



Shrimp Pasta



Bring large pot of water to boil and cook pasta according to instructions on the pasta package. Do not discard pasta water yet.



Heat cooking oil in a large frying pan. Add chopped garlic and onions, and stir fry until fragrant.



Add shredded kailan, chilli and prawns. Stir fry for 2 to 3 minutes until the prawns are cooked.



Nutritional Values

Energy (kcal)	460
Protein (g)	27
Total Fat (g)	17
Saturated Fat (g)	7
Cholesterol (mg)	119
Carbohydrate (g)	48

Dietary Fibre (g)	5
Sodium (mg)	491
Folate (µg)	15
Calcium (mg)	181
Iron (mg)	2



Add pasta to pan. Mix well with salt and pepper.



Moisten pasta with pasta water (Step 1) if it gets too dry. Serve hot.

Tips

- Enjoy prawns and other seafood such as crabs and squids not more than twice a week, especially if you are watching your cholesterol levels.
- Diabetes: Use low GI noodles like sweet potato noodles and wholewheat spaghetti pasta.
- Dysphagia: Use small short pasta to replace long pasta. Cook the pasta longer than the recommended time until softer texture.



United in Care

CAREGIVER

Tracy Lim,
48-year-old

CARING FOR

Kwan Soh Lan,
77-year-old (mother)

"Never give up! It may be tiring, but at the same time, it's also fun and happy to see the family bond together. The greatest fulfilment is to see our parents happy and their health conditions under control."

As the proverb "It takes a village to raise a child" goes, it is important to have both family and community work hand in hand to encourage ageing gracefully.

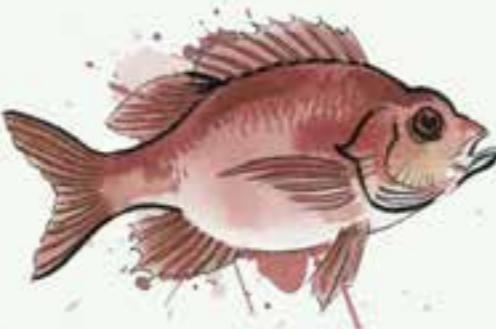
I fully realised this when I was entrusted with the duties of being a caregiver to both my parents, on top of working full-time and caring for my own family's needs. My mother was diagnosed with diabetes and kidney failure, while my father has many chronic conditions including diabetes, cholesterol and high blood pressure. My daily responsibilities include ensuring they take their medications, receive their insulin jabs, monitor their blood sugar levels and see to their personal care needs. When my siblings are busy, I also accompany my parents for their respective medical and dialysis treatments.

In view of their medical conditions, I am conscious of certain dietary needs and prepare dishes that are both nutritious and tasty. Alternatively, I try to substitute with healthier ingredients. For instance,

to manage their cholesterol levels, I specially remove the yolk from their favourite hard boiled eggs.

Even though I have my hands full, I am blessed to have strong support from my family, friends and colleagues. Both my immediate and extended family pitch in financially to the "Grandparents' Caregiving Fund" which helps to offset the financial costs for their medications and treatments. My siblings also take turns to accompany my parents for their medical appointments, while the children would help in other ways when required. I have a helper named Grace who has been supporting us in taking care of my parents. As she is hard working and caring, I am able to leave my family in her capable hands while I go to work daily without worry.

From my own experience, a network of care must be complemented by conscientious support from those around you. I am assured that this support will be a driving force to keep me going on my caregiving journey.



Soups



Being deeply loved by someone gives you strength, while loving someone deeply gives you courage.

- Laozi



Fillet Fish Soup (Lauk Singgang)

4 portions | Preparation time: 15 minutes

INGREDIENTS

2 tbsps	Cooking oil
320 gm	Fish fillet / sea bass (sliced)
2 sprigs	Fresh coriander leaves
2 cloves	Garlic (peeled and finely sliced)
20 gm	Ginger (peeled and finely sliced)
1 pc	Green chilli (de-seeded and diced)
1 pc	Red chilli (de-seeded and diced)
½ tsp	Salt
20 gm	Spicy shrimp paste / belachan
40 gm	Tamarind paste / assam
140 gm	Yellow onion (peeled and sliced)
500 ml	Water



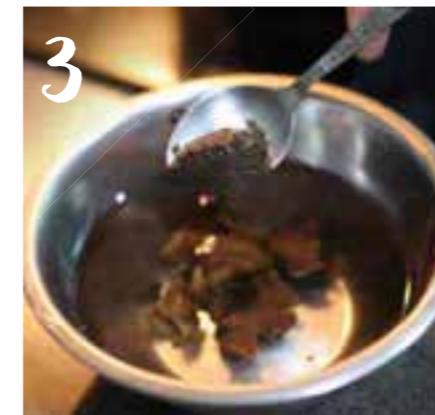
Fillet Fish Soup (Lauk Singgang)



Heat oil in a soup pot. Add sliced garlic, onion and ginger and fry until fragrant.



Add diced chilli and cook for 2 to 3 minutes. Set aside.



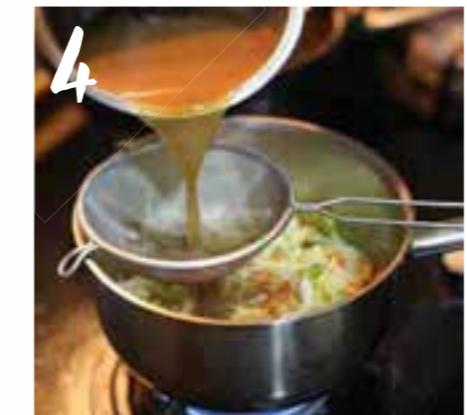
Mix the shrimp and tamarind pastes with water in a separate bowl.



Nutritional Values

Energy (kcal)	257
Protein (g)	9
Total Fat (g)	18
Saturated Fat (g)	5
Cholesterol (mg)	24
Carbohydrate (g)	27

Dietary Fibre (g)	2
Sodium (mg)	967
Folate (µg)	2
Calcium (mg)	42
Iron (mg)	2



Strain mixture (Step 3) into the soup pot and bring to a boil.



Add the fish slices to broth, bring to a boil and add salt. Garnish with fresh coriander leaves and serve with rice. (Optional: Serve with sambal chilli).

Tips

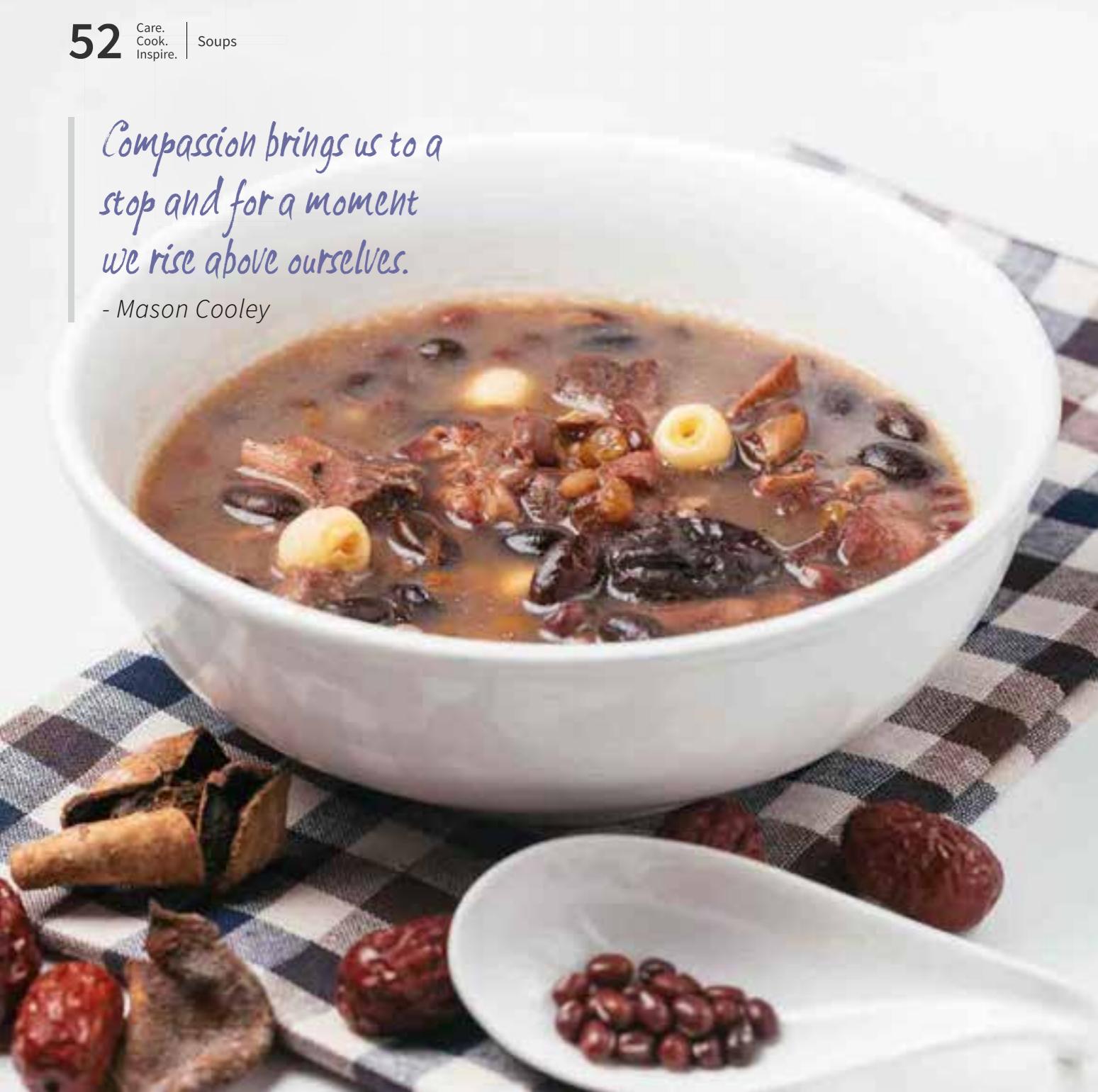


- Fresh and natural seasonings such as garlic, onion and coriander add flavour without excessive use of sauces and salt. Use more of these natural ingredients to keep the dish healthy.
- Diabetes: Serve soup with low GI noodles instead of white rice.
- Dysphagia: After the soup is cooked and cooled a little, blend it into a puree and serve.



Compassion brings us to a stop and for a moment we rise above ourselves.

- Mason Cooley



Mixed Savoury Bean Soup

2 portions | Preparation time: 90 minutes

INGREDIENTS

50 gm	Black bean (pre-soaked for 4 hours)
250 gm	Chicken bone
1 pc	Dried tangerine skin (about 2 gm)
50 gm	Fresh cooked lotus seed
50 gm	Green bean (pre-soaked for 4 hours)
50 gm	Red bean (pre-soaked for 4 hours)
2 to 3 pcs	Red date
½ tsp	Salt
1 ℥	Water or unseasoned chicken stock



Mixed Savoury Bean Soup



Boil bones in a pot of water until cooked and discard water.



In a separate large pot, add the water or unseasoned stock, bones, red, green and black beans and red dates.



Bring to a boil and let it simmer for an hour over medium heat.



Nutritional Values

Energy (kcal)	346	Dietary Fibre (g)	7
Protein (g)	25	Sodium (mg)	342
Total Fat (g)	17	Folate (µg)	145
Saturated Fat (g)	6	Calcium (mg)	71
Cholesterol (mg)	57	Iron (mg)	4
Carbohydrate (g)	18		



Add lotus seeds and boil for another 20 to 30 minutes.



Add salt to taste. Serve hot.



Tips



- Beans are a great way to add low fat, high fiber and protein to our diet. Black, red and green beans are high in antioxidants and packed with vitamins like folate, magnesium and B vitamins.

- Diabetes: For better blood sugar control, add green leafy vegetables like bak choy or watercress. They add more volume and increase feeling of fullness due to the additional fibre on top of the beans.

- Dysphagia: Use 300g blended raw minced meat instead of rib bones for easier swallowing. Leave out lotus seeds from the recipe. Blend beans separately if need to for easier swallowing.

Be determined to handle any challenge in a way that will make you grow.

- Les Brown



Spinach Soup in Rempah Titek

2 portions | Preparation time: 20 minutes

INGREDIENTS

SPICE PASTE

2 pcs	Candle nut (buah keras)
20 gm	Fresh belachan
2 pcs	Fresh red chilli
6 to 7 pcs	Shallot (peeled)

SOUP

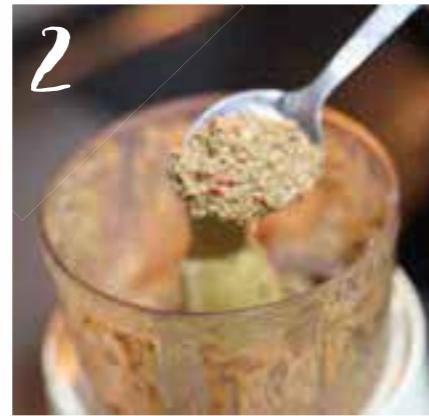
30 gm	Dried shrimp
120 gm	Fish ball / sliced fish cake
¼ cube	Ikan bilis bouillon cube (no added MSG)
80 gm	Minced chicken
100 gm	Spinach (trimmed and cut)
500 ml	Water



Spinach Soup in Rempah Titek



Blend ingredients for the spice paste. (NOTE: If you do not have a blender, use a pestle and mortar to pound the ingredients together.)



Blend (or pound) ingredients for spice paste well and set aside.



Fill soup pot with 500 ml water and bring to a boil.



Nutritional Values

Energy (kcal)	117	Dietary Fibre (g)	1
Protein (g)	14	Sodium (mg)	479
Total Fat (g)	3	Folate (µg)	3
Saturated Fat (g)	1	Calcium (mg)	55
Cholesterol (mg)	21	Iron (mg)	4
Carbohydrate (g)	7		



Add the spice paste (Step 2) and the rest of the soup ingredients into the pot.



Bring to a boil and simmer until meat is cooked. Serve hot.



Tips

- Spinach helps to maintain good eyesight and prevents *Age Related Macular Degeneration (AMD). Besides being low in fat and even lower in cholesterol, it contains a wealth of antioxidants including beta carotene, lutein and xanthene, all which are beneficial to the eye.
- Diabetes: Add brown rice vermicelli to the soup to replace the white rice.
- Dysphagia: Blend the soup and cooked ingredients into a puree before serving.

Do you know?

*Age-Related Macular Degeneration (AMD) is a chronic eye condition that mainly affects people aged 50 and older. A leading cause of vision loss, it causes damage to the macula, a small spot near the center of the retina and the part of the eye needed for sharp vision.

AMD by itself does not lead to complete blindness, but the loss of central vision can interfere with simple everyday activities, such as the ability to drive, read, write, cook or do household chores.



Tenderness in Love & Soup

CAREGIVER

Choy Ah Choon,
60-year-old

CARED FOR

Woon Boon Meng,
61-year-old (spouse,
passed away)

"What goes around comes around. We're the role models for our children and grandchildren because they'll learn from us on how to care for their seniors in the future. That's why we must persevere and not give up on our loved ones when we face difficulties in our caregiving journey."

When I first started taking care of my late husband, I became frustrated and often wondered "Why am I the only one taking care of him?" Another challenge was providing for his medications and other essential items like adult diapers on a long-term basis. Thankfully, Metta Welfare Association assisted in providing financial support. My close friends also encouraged me on my caregiving journey.

At home, our day would begin with a cup of coffee for my husband and then breakfast at the nearby hawker centre. After that, I would give him a shower and

prepare lunch for him. He loved spicy foods, but over time as his condition progressed, I had to cook foods that were easier for him to eat and digest. He especially loved the bubor cha cha and the mixed savoury bean soup.

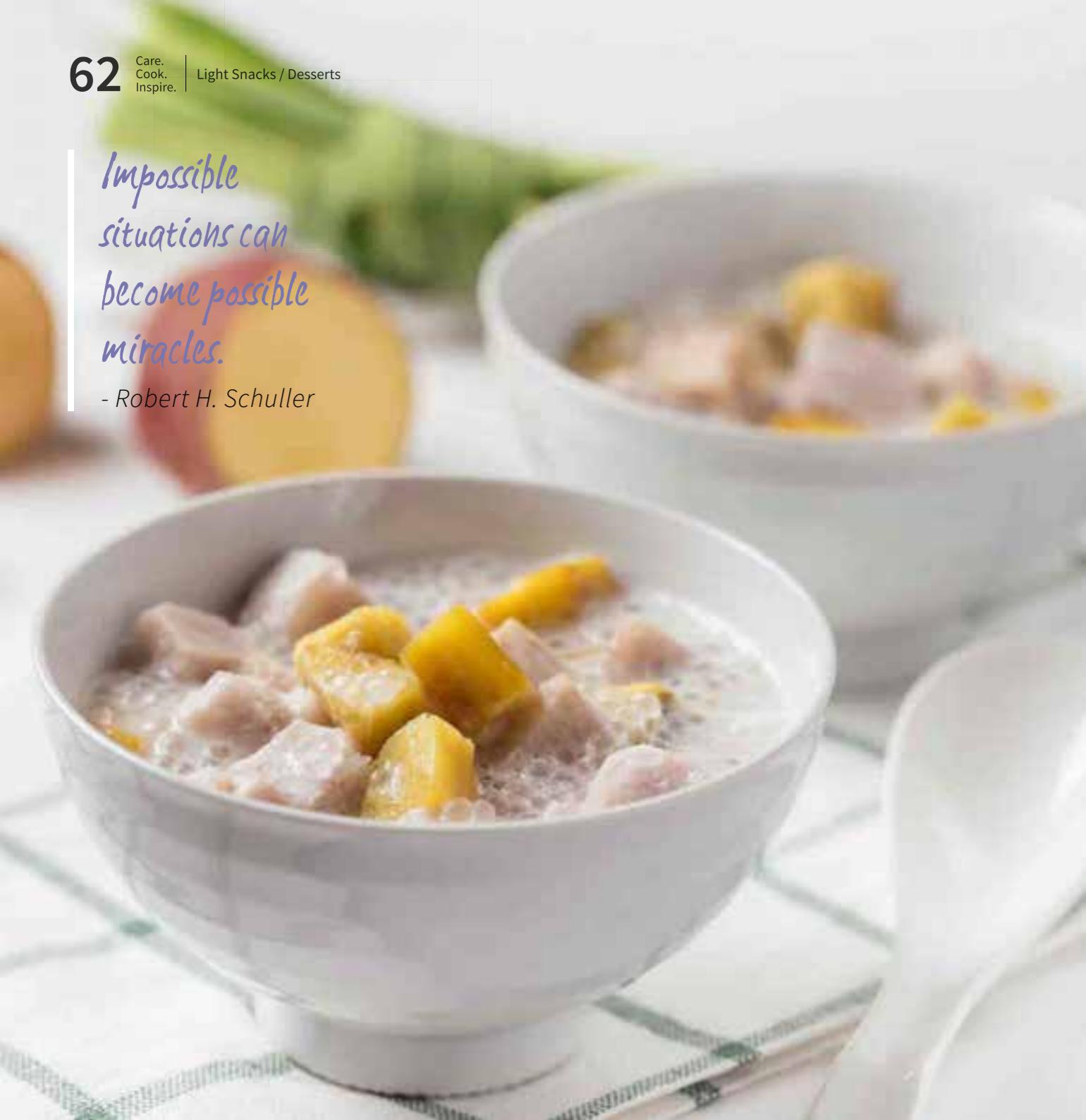
To enhance his appetite, I try to be creative with the mixed savoury bean soup by adding pork ribs or chicken bones to enrich the flavour. Other ingredients like fresh cooked lotus seeds and dried tangerine peels were added to aid digestion.



Light Snacks/ Desserts

Impossible
situations can
become possible
miracles.

- Robert H. Schuller



Bubor Cha Cha

4 portions | Preparation time: 60 minutes

INGREDIENTS

100 ml	Coconut milk
2 pcs	Pandan leaves
20 gm	Sago / tapioca pearl
40 gm	Sugar
200 gm	Sweet potato – purple or orange (peeled and cut into cubes)
200 gm	Yam (peeled and cut into cubes)
500 ml	Water



Bubor Cha Cha



Cook the sago in boiling water until transparent. Strain pearls and run under running tap water to wash away the excess starch. Drain well and set aside.



Bring a pot of water to a boil and place the diced sweet potato and yam cubes in a plate. Place plate on top of a steaming tray and steam for 20 to 30 minutes until soft and set aside.



Add the water and coconut milk into a pot and bring the mixture to a boil.

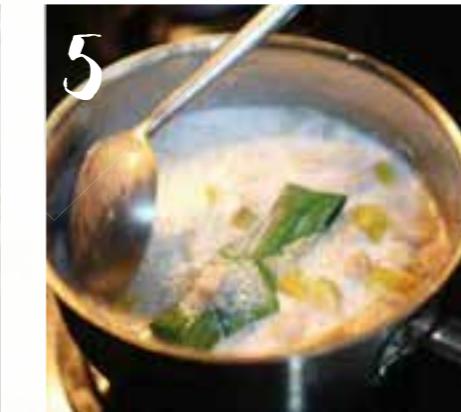


Nutritional Values

Energy (kcal)	335	Dietary Fibre (g)	3
Protein (g)	1	Sodium (mg)	29
Total Fat (g)	18	Folate (µg)	9
Saturated Fat (g)	15	Calcium (mg)	27
Cholesterol (mg)	0	Iron (mg)	1
Carbohydrate (g)	44		



Add the pandan leaves and sugar to the coconut milk and water mixture while stirring gently.



Rinse and strain the cooked sago with tap water again before adding to the coconut milk and water mixture. Add the steamed sweet potato and yam cubes.

Discard the pandan leaves, divide into 4 portions and serve.



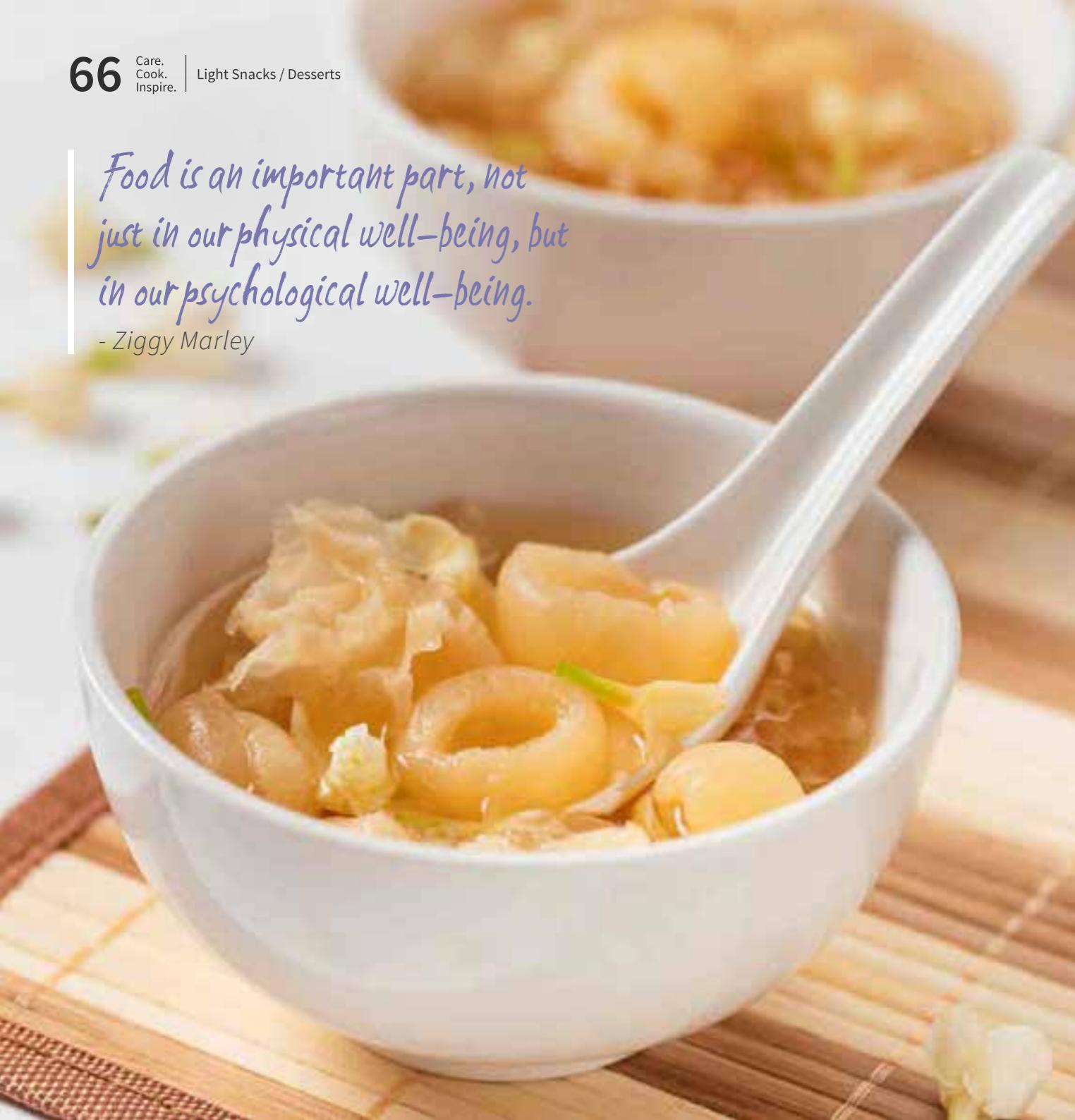
Tips

- Sweet potato and yam are some good sources of soluble fibre, which can also help to regulate blood sugar levels. Cut down the sugar by replacing part of the coconut milk with evaporated milk or water to reduce both sugar and saturated fats.
- Diabetes: Limit to one starch intensive ingredient instead of two, with sweet potato as the preferred option.
- Dysphagia: Dice sweet potatoes into small pieces or mash for easier swallowing.



Food is an important part, not just in our physical well-being, but in our psychological well-being.

- Ziggy Marley

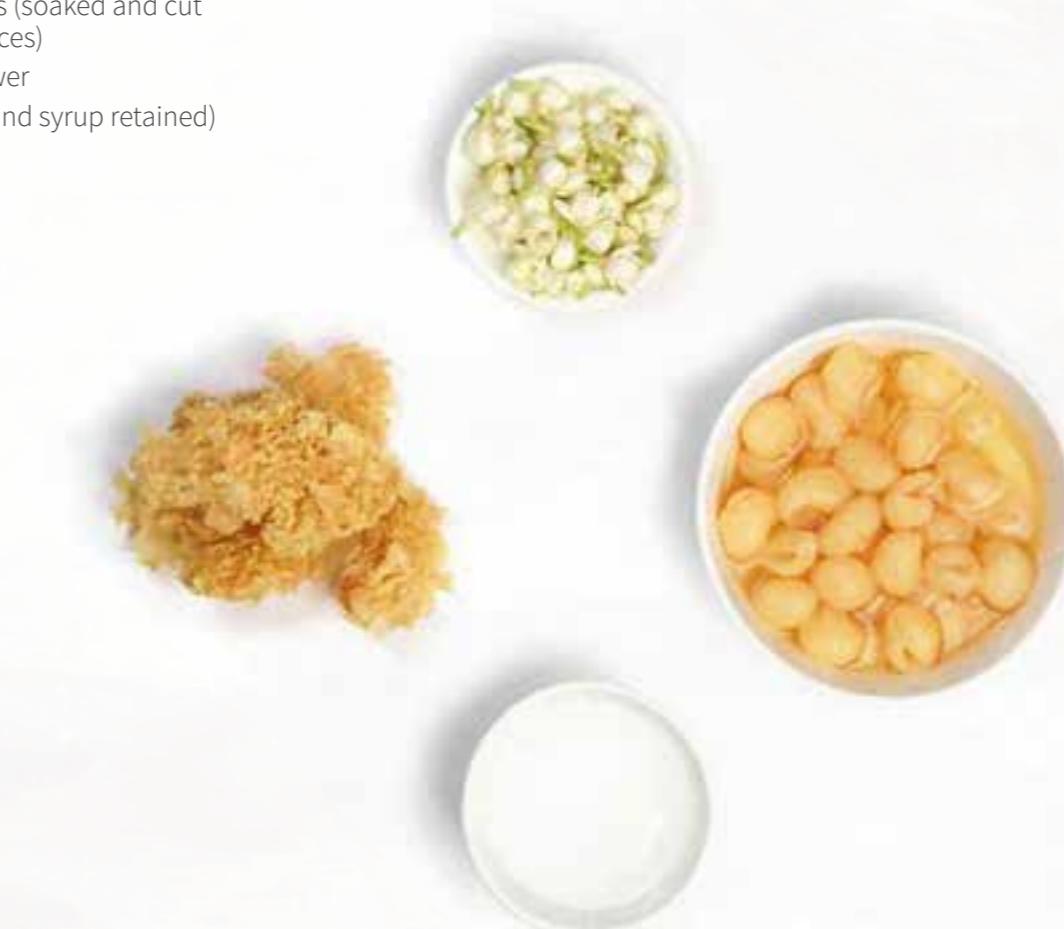


Chilled Longan with White Fungus and Jasmine Flowers

4 portions | Preparation time: 20 minutes

INGREDIENTS

30 gm	Dried white fungus (soaked and cut into bite-sized pieces)
30 gm	Fresh jasmine flower
1 can	Longan (drained and syrup retained)
200 ml	Water



Chilled Longan with White Fungus and Jasmine Flowers



Add water and syrup from canned longans into soup pot and bring to a boil.



Add white fungus and simmer for 5 minutes.



Place jasmine flowers in a mixing bowl. Using a sieve, pour the syrup mixture over the flowers. Retain the white fungus.

Carefully stir the hot syrup and jasmine flower mixture.



Nutritional Values

Energy (kcal)	111	Dietary Fibre (g)	3
Protein (g)	1	Sodium (mg)	15
Total Fat (g)	0	Folate (µg)	0
Saturated Fat (g)	0	Calcium (mg)	0
Cholesterol (mg)	0	Iron (mg)	0
Carbohydrate (g)	27		



Return the white fungus to the pot and add the longans straight from the can. Drain the syrup and flower mixture through a sieve into the soup pot and bring to a boil.

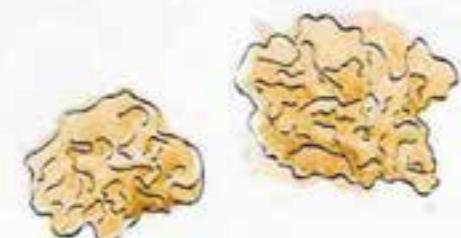


Divide dessert into 4 portions and serve either hot or chilled.

Tips



- As part of the mushroom family, white fungus is commonly used in Chinese medicine to improve lung function and nourish the skin. Although white fungus is usually cooked with sweet soup, avoid using too much sugar in this dessert as the canned longan already contains sugar.
- Diabetes: Replace fresh longans with 80g dried longans and do not add any sugar.
- Dysphagia: Replace white fungus with Chinese wild yam (huai shan) and cook for another 15-20 minutes for a softer texture.



Overcoming the Odds

CAREGIVER

Janie Wong,
68-year-old

CARING FOR

Tan Khne Neo,
86-year-old (mother)

"My mother underwent a right hip and knee replacement due to a fall last year. I see taking care of my mother as a natural thing for me to do although she can be bossy at times."

In the beginning, my mother was not receptive towards the home physiotherapy sessions. Thankfully, the St Luke Hospital staff allowed me to learn her physiotherapy exercises so that I or my other family members can carry it out with her at home.

I was also quite busy with the new helper because I had to teach her how to prepare meals for my mother and care for her overall well-being. Besides being pre-diabetic, my mother has denture issues as well. As a result, she does not eat enough meat and therefore lacks iron. So we had

to find ways to incorporate it in her meals. Additionally, she often changes her mind with the food I had prepared and is unwilling to eat them.

To make it easier for my mother, I have to cook dishes that are easier for her to swallow, but is still as tasty. One of her favourite dishes is the spinach soup with rempah titek which is high in iron. The rempah titek is a type of Peranakan spice paste and it is quite easy to make. Another dish is the fish porridge which she enjoys eating as it is easier to swallow.

Stronger in Family Bond

CAREGIVER

Maisuri D/O Keshore,
45-year-old

CARED FOR

Rajnikant Manilal Kamdar,
79-year-old (father,
passed away)

"Keep trying. Never give up."

My father's mobility on the left side of his body was affected due to a stroke. Coupled with his dementia, it took some time for me and my mother to adjust to his needs. Although I do not live with my parents and their helper, I visit them regularly as I stay in the same estate.

During the earlier days, my father had mood swings and sometimes refused to eat. We played games with him to make him feel better and also took him out for walks before dinner. Right from the start, we were at a loss as to what help we can tap on to manage his condition. To our relief, Changi General Hospital stepped in and provided assistance. With the wheelchair, it was more convenient to bring him around.

The shower chair also made it easier to shower him. Lastly, with the roller bed, we were better able to turn or move him about when he was having a nap or sleeping.

Although my father's condition was better managed, he lost a lot of weight and tended to get urine infections or pneumonia easily. To boost his weak immune system, my mother started cooking more nutritious for him. However, his favourite food was still the dahi vada.

Through this caregiving journey, I found myself learning to be more patient and it gave me an opportunity to build a stronger bond with my family, especially with my late father.

Food for the body is
not enough. There must
be food for the soul.

- Dorothy Day



Chilled Strawberry with Sago and Vanilla Ice Cream

4 portions | Preparation time: 15 minutes

INGREDIENTS

2 pcs	Banana (cut into chunks)
50 gm	Sago / tapioca pearl
250 gm	Strawberry (leaves trimmed)
20 gm	Strawberry jam
200 gm	Vanilla ice cream



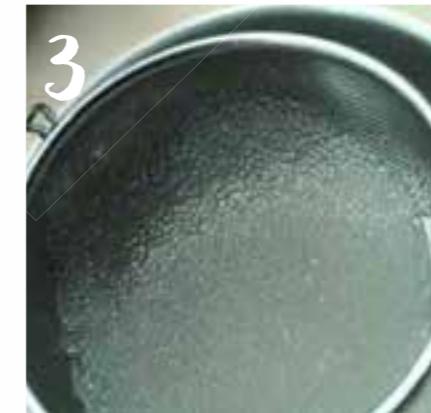
Chilled Strawberry with Sago and Vanilla Ice Cream



Blend strawberries into a puree. Strain and chill puree for at least 60 minutes (NOTE: If you do not have time, continue with the next step after straining the puree).



Add sago to a large pot of boiling water. Cook the sago until transparent.



Strain pearls under running tap water to wash away the excess starch. Drain well and set aside.



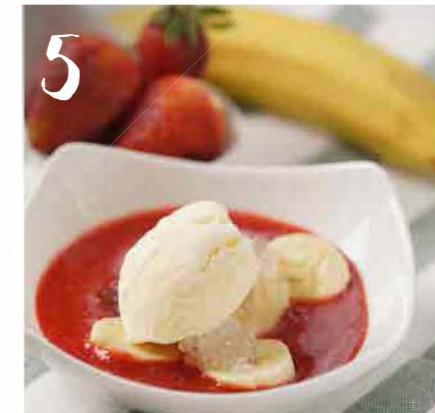
Nutritional Values

Energy (kcal)	227
Protein (g)	4
Total Fat (g)	7
Saturated Fat (g)	4
Cholesterol (mg)	28
Carbohydrate (g)	38

Dietary Fibre (g)	2
Sodium (mg)	38
Folate (µg)	3
Calcium (mg)	42
Iron (mg)	0



To serve, divide strawberry puree, bananas and sago into 4 portions.



Add one scoop of vanilla ice cream to each bowl and serve.

Tips



- Adding fruits is a healthy way to enjoy our desserts. Bright coloured fruits such as strawberry are nutritious and packed with antioxidants like Vitamin C that can boost immunity and may prevent diseases such as cancer and heart disease.

- Diabetes: Lower the GI level by replacing the sago with cubed unsweetened chin chow jelly as it has a higher GI.

- Dysphagia: Grate chin chow jelly instead of cutting into cubes for easier digestion.



It is not the load that breaks you down. It's the way you carry it.

- Lena Horne



Dahi Vada / Dahi Bhalla

4 portions | Preparation time: 60 minutes

INGREDIENTS

800 ml to 1 l	Cooking oil
20 gm	Green chilli (sliced)
10 gm	Ginger (sliced)
150 ml	Milk
100 gm	Plain yogurt (curd - $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ cup)
$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp	Salt
100 gm	Urad dal / ulundhu / whole white lentil beans (soaked for 3 to 4 hours)
100 ml	Water

SAUCE

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp	Chat masala (indian mixed spices found in supermarkets)
1 tbsp	Fresh coriander leaves (chopped)
2 tbsps	Mango chutney
$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp	Red chilli powder



Dahi Vada / Dahi Bhalla



1



2



3



Blend the soaked dhal with salt, ginger and green chilli using only very little water until smooth and fluffy.

Heat wok with cooking oil. Oil is hot enough when gentle bubbles form. Bring flame down to medium fire.

Drop dollops of the mixture (dough) and deep fry until golden colour on all sides. Flip dough every 2 to 3 minutes for even cooking. Drain on kitchen towels.

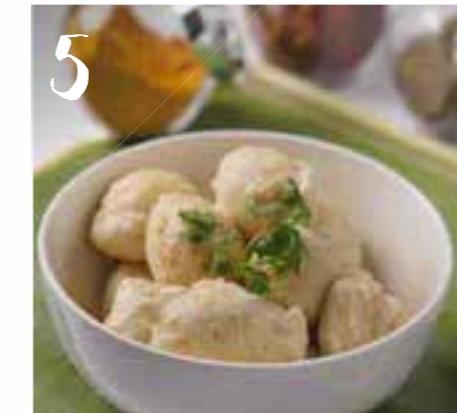


Nutritional Values

Energy (kcal)	126	Dietary Fibre (g)	4
Protein (g)	9	Sodium (mg)	371
Total Fat (g)	3	Folate (µg)	35
Saturated Fat (g)	2	Calcium (mg)	113
Cholesterol (mg)	9	Iron (mg)	2
Carbohydrate (g)	14		



4



5

While the fried vadas are soaking, beat curd until smooth and add chopped coriander leaves, chilli powder and chat masala. Mix well.

Remove the soaked vadas and mix a small amount of the milk into the curd till you get a slightly runny consistency. Add curd to pre-soaked vadas and mix well. Allow to set for half an hour at room temperature. Serve with chutney.



Tips

- Besides being rich in nutrients like protein and folate, lentil beans also reduces cholesterol and lower the risk of heart disease due to their high levels of soluble fibre. Remember to drain the excess oil from frying with a kitchen towel or use an air fryer as a healthier alternative.
- Diabetes: Eat in moderation and substitute half of the dhal with wholemeal flour.
- Dysphagia: Add 200ml more milk to soak the vadas until it is much softer in texture before serving.



Angels to the Rescue

CAREGIVER

Tan Siew Chng,
52-year-old

CARING FOR

Tan Bak Seng,
89-year-old (father)

"He's my father. I'll look after him no matter how tired I am. The help I've received has given me the confidence to care for him."

Since young, I have always enjoyed a close relationship with my father. He used to take us out for family movies and even accompanied me on my job interviews. However, ten years ago, he started showing signs of dementia. My sleep was affected because I would wake up several times at night to attend to his toileting needs. With a frail mother to care for too, I felt emotionally drained and could not manage my caregiving and work responsibilities. Things got more challenging when he was hospitalised in 2012. I just felt totally helpless. At this point, I suddenly recalled my past volunteer stint.

I was referred to TOUCH Home Care (THC) and their staff quickly responded to my request and did an assessment of my father's condition. They designed mental

activities to engage him, while a commode was recommended to be used for his showering needs. With their regular visits to attend to his personal hygiene, he became more responsive and even shared life stories with them. I am naturally small-built and often have difficulties in transferring him to the commode chair for showering. With their help, I can better care for my father too. As for his daily meals, my mother helps me in the preparation, with a strong emphasis on nutritious and well-balanced dishes for him.

Recently, my father's condition worsened and I decided to be a full-time caregiver. THC continued their assistance and even discussed with me the long-term care management plan for him. I'm really grateful for their support all this while.

Reliving the Memories of Love

CAREGIVER

Stephanie Loke,
48-year-old

CARING FOR

Chen Lee Yuh Lily,
81-year-old (mother)

"See the positive side of any situation. Focus on the silver lining in your caregiving journey."

Besides having Alzheimer's, my mother, now 81 years old, has both poor vision and hearing. Because she is unable to see clearly, this makes her prone to falls. At the same time, her poor hearing contributes to her inability to properly gauge road conditions when she is out walking, so she is wearing a hearing aid for her own safety.

Fortunately we have a helper to assist me in caring for her. My helper monitors my mum's blood sugar levels, ensures she wears the hearing aid and brings her out for walks. One of the challenges I face is having to constantly look out for her while juggling my other responsibilities, sometimes at the expense of my own well-being. But the journey has been made easier with the support of my helper whom I appreciate very much.

When she was younger, my mother was a worrier and prone

to anxiety. But she has now become more humorous and easygoing and is willing to try new things and cuisines. One of her favourite meals is now the miso grilled saba fish.

One tip I would like to share with other caregivers is to create new memories with your loved ones and take photos as a keepsake to reminisce about the good times. I still travel around with my mother, whether it is visiting places of interest here in Singapore or overseas, like our recent Mediterranean cruise in 2014. In creating these shared memories, we will have something to remember each other by and also put a smile on the faces of our parents.

"It is important to have personal time and learn from others who have gone through similar caregiving challenges who can empathise with us."

Glossary

TYPES OF COOKING METHODS

Blanch	Lightly boil
De-seed	Remove seed
Dice	1 cm cube
Grill	Pan fry if using frying pan
Peel	Remove layer
Pound	Lightly flatten
Sear	To cook the surface of meat with high heat



TYPES OF PORTIONS

Chunk	About 4 cm
Clove	A segment of a bulb of garlic
Cube	About 2 cm
Sprig	A small bunch
Thin slice	Not more than 3 mm thick
Wedge	Bite size

OTHERS

<small>Healthier Option</small>	Healthier Option Symbol
Pestle & mortar	A kitchen equipment consisting of a blunt heavy object (pestle) and ceramic bowl (mortar)



For more information on Community Care services:



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