

FYI

BE A CONSCIOUS EATER



Nutrition labels on food packages debuted in the food industry in 2005. Although they may have gone unnoticed, the food labels have become more accurate and elaborate throughout their evolution. The nutrition facts stickers, now more than ever, show the exact percentage of the components in the food items.

Dr Masuma Akter, an accomplished expert, is behind the diet regime that can help you lose 10 kilograms in just six weeks. And she believes that cannot stress enough on the importance of knowing your food when it comes to maintaining good health.

"To know your food, you must first find the most basic information, like its source and the validity date. Second, one has to consider their own health before consuming anything. A diabetic person has to be extra cautious when it comes to manufactured food. Knowing the level of sodium, sugar and fat in the items will help you choose your food wisely. Given the country we live in, we must also check for formalin additives, and raise awareness on local food products that lack elaborate nutrition facts.

For foreign products, we must go the extra mile and find out the meanings of the words we see on imported products. When you see the term 'fortified' it means 'added'; thus, fortified with iron means added iron. And you can definitely get your iron supplement from there. Lastly, some essential facts to remember when purchasing food are that, saturated fats and trans fats are the lipids that damage healthy skin and body. And poly unsaturated fats are always a good sign on the product."

Dr Akter concludes that in order for people to take initiatives to be conscious consumers, they need to pick up the habit of caring about what is on the packet. People respond to the media well. Therefore, if information on 'how to read food labels' floats on people's newsfeeds online, they will pick up a thing or two about nutrition facts and this will help everyone become conscious eaters.

By Sanumkia Siddiqui



RECIPES FROM SIAM
BY SHAHEDA YESMIN

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SPICY GLASS NOODLES SALAD

Ingredients

40gm of dried glass noodles (soaked in water for 15 min)
10 shrimps
50gm minced chicken
50gm squid
5 to 6 Thai chillies
3 garlic cloves
2 tbsp fish sauce
2 tbsp lime juice
1 tbsp sugar
½ cup Chinese celery, chopped
½ cup sliced tomatoes
½ cup sliced onions or spring onion
¼ cup salted peanuts (optional)

Method



Crush the chillies and garlic in a mortar into a fine mix. Cook noodles in boiling water for 20 seconds. Use a strainer to take it out and transfer to a mixing bowl. Cook shrimps in the same boiling water. Transfer to the same mixing bowl. Add chillies, garlic, lime juice, sugar, fish sauce to the mixing bowl. Mix everything together, add all the vegetables and sprinkle in the peanuts.

THAI STEAM PRAWN WITH SOYA SAUCE

Ingredients

15 giant fresh water prawns (100gm each)
1 tbsp spring onions, finely chopped
1 tbsp coriander roots, finely pounded
2 tbsp garlic, finely pounded

¼ tsp white pepper powder
2 tbsp light soy sauce
1 tbsp oyster sauce
Spring onion tips (about 3"-4" long) to garnish

Method

Wash, shell and de-vein the prawns, cut off the head tips but keep the tails intact. Split the prawns across half their length and fold the tails back through the cut. Transfer to a dish; arrange nicely and set aside. Mix the coriander roots, garlic, soy sauce and oyster sauce and pour over the prawns. Steam the prawns over boiling water on high heat for 5 minutes or until done. Remove from the steamer; sprinkle with pepper and spring onions. Garnish



with the spring onion tips and serve hot.

STIR FRIED CRISPY CATFISH WITH RED CURRY PASTE

Ingredients

1 medium sized catfish, cut into thin slices (500g)
½ cup all-purpose flour
2 tbsp red curry paste
½ cup water
¼ cup wild ginger (grachai)
1 tbsp fish sauce
2 tbsp palm sugar
½ cup holy basil leaves
1 cup vegetable oil for frying the catfish
1 spur red chilli, sliced for garnish

Method

Pour oil in a wok, enough to deep fry the

catfish, bring the heat to high. Coat the fish with a thin layer of flour. Fry the fish until it becomes crispy and set aside. In the same oil, fry the holy basil leaves until crispy; keep aside. Add 3 tablespoons of vegetable oil and 3 tablespoons of red curry paste in a clean wok and fry on medium heat for 1 minute. Add water. When the water comes to a boil, add the fish sauce and palm sugar, and simmer for 5 minutes or until the sauce becomes sticky. Return the fish to the wok; add wild ginger and fry with the sauce. Turn off the heat. Arrange the fish on a serving plate, decorate with fried basil.

THAI FRIED RICE WITH BEEF AND BASIL

Ingredients

1 cup chicken, minced
2 cups vegetable oil
2 cups basil leaves
3 tbsp garlic, minced
¼ cup onion, minced
2 tbsp red and green chillies, chopped
¼ cup carrot, sliced
3 tbsp fish sauce
1 tbsp sugar
1 tbsp dark soy sauce
3½ cup cooked rice
1 tsp white pepper
Cucumber, tomato, lemon and spring onions to garnish

Method

In a pan, heat the oil over medium heat. Fry 1 cup of basil leaves; stir continuously until some of them turn glossy. Remove and drain off the excess oil. Put aside.

Drain away the oil and leave only ¼ cup in the pan. Stir in the garlic and hot chilli until fragrant. Add the chicken, cooking until it is just done. Season with fish sauce, sugar and dark soy sauce and toss to combine. Add the remaining holy basil leaves and cooked rice, tossing again. Turn off the heat. Transfer to a serving dish. Sprinkle crisp-fried holy basil leaves and pepper on top. Garnish with hot chillies and serve with condiments.

Photo: Shaheda Yesmin

A taste of Thailand