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A healthy child is a happy child

A fasting individual requires good, nutri-ent-rich food that provides the energy nec-essary to sustain life on a day to day basis. In this sacred month, we must try our best to work hard towards improving ourselves spiritually. We should focus on our prayers, and spreading joy and making the most out of it by fasting and worrying less on what to prepare for iftar!

This week's article is dedicated to chil-dren fasting for the first time. The article aims to guide mothers in preparing healthy meals and, cutting down hours spent in the kitchen.

Ramadan brings a great opportunity for families to get together; be it iftar, sehri, or taraweeh prayers. The month brings extra joy and excitement, especially for children, who are, at times, too eager to participate with the family, often at the expense of their own well-being. But fasting can some-times cause fatigue and dehydration. How-ever, with a well-planned diet and some dietary changes, things can go smooth.

TIPS FOR HEALTHY EATING**Sehri —**

The pre-dawn meal should be a whole-some, moderate meal, that is filling and provides enough energy for many hours. Fibre rich foods like oats, whole wheat roti, and eggs are excellent choices, along with some banana, and milk.

Iftar —

Start by drinking a glass of water, fol-lowed by two dates; this will help stabilise the low blood sugar levels fast.

Present a bowl of homemade soup of their choice in front of them, an indis-pensable dish in the Ramadan meal, as it prepares the stomach to receive the rest of the meal and helps replenish some of the fluids lost during the day.

A fruit salad or fruit custard is rich in vitamins, minerals, and fibre. The more co-lourful your salad, the more health benefits it holds.

The main dish should contain 40-50 percent protein, like chicken, fish, or plant based protein like beans, chickpeas etc. and the rest as complex carbs, be it from vegeta-ble or whole-wheat pasta.

Make sure your children drink sufficient water (strictly no soda), lots of homemade soups, healthy juices or yoghurt before they start eating the main meal.

This will prevent dehydration and pro-vide the body with essential fluids.

CAJUN CHICKEN BRUSCHETTA**Ingredients**

1 whole baguette, sliced diagonally (hot dog buns work too)
2 tbsp olive oil
1 tsp butter
250g boneless skinless chicken breasts, sliced into ½-inch cubes
1 tbsp paprika powder
1 tbsp dried oregano
1 tbsp dried parsley
1 small onion, diced
1 tbsp chopped garlic
½ capsicum, sliced
3-4 mushrooms, sliced



1 slice lemon juice
1 tbsp mustard sauce
1 tbsp BBQ sauce
Salt and pepper, to taste

Method

In a pan, put 1 teaspoon of butter; place the baguette slices and dry toast, Toast the ba-guette slices for a few minutes until golden brown. Remove and set aside.

In another pan, on medium-high heat, add the olive oil, chopped onion, chopped garlic, and the chicken breasts. Cook the chicken until it is no longer pink, or about five minutes, then add the paprika powder, oregano, parsley, mustard and BBQ sauce and a little water.

Cover with lid for 2 minutes, then add the sliced mushrooms and capsicum, salt

and black pepper and cook for additional 5 minutes.

Remove skillet from the heat and place the chicken mix on the bread. You can also add some fresh parsley or shredded mozza-rella on top.

STRAWBERRY CHOCO YOGHURT MOUSSE**Ingredients**

200g canned/frozen strawberries
10ml lemon juice
2 tbsp granulated sugar
1 strawberry jelly, 1 cup plain yoghurt
2 tbsp chocolate sauce
Fresh strawberries and choco chips/Choco-late wafer for decorating

Method

In a pot, take the strawberries, add 1

cup water, sugar and stir until soft and squashed. Add the lemon juice and stir. Add the gelatine and stir until dissolved and runny.

In a separate bowl, add the yoghurt, chocolate sauce and mix, add the cooled jelly strawberry mix and stir until every-thing is mixed together. Arrange it in a custard glass with the mixture. Keep in the refrigerator to cool, serve cold with fresh strawberries and chocolate chips, and wafers on top.

BEETS PANCAKE**Ingredients**

½ medium beet, peeled and blended to a pulp
2-3 cup milk
1 large egg
1 tbsp melted butter
1 tsp vanilla extract
2 cup flour
1/3 cup quick oats
1 tsp baking powder
2 tbsp white sugar
Pinch of salt

Method

Extract the juice from the beet pulp in a bowl. Blend 1 egg with the beet juice, add milk, butter, vanilla extract, salt and white sugar, and mix well. Now, add the dry ingredients such as flour, baking powder and fold it in.

Keep side for 15 minutes for the mixture to rise up. Now, in a non-stick pan, brush up some butter, add the pancakes scoop on the pan and make medium sized pancakes.

On low heat, cook them by covering the lid until they turn a little brown on the bot-tom of both sides. Serve with maple syrup or chocolate sauce.

Photo: Sazzad Ibne Sayed**Food prepared and styled by Simra Khan**