

Delicious desserts from around the world

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Transfer the mochi with parchment paper onto a large baking sheet. Refrigerate for 15 minutes (no more than that) until the mochi is set.

Take out the mochi from the refrigerator and cut 7-8 mochi wrapper circles with a 3½-inch (9 cm) cookie cutter.

Dust off the excess potato starch from these wrappers with a pastry brush. If you find any sticky spots, cover the area with potato starch, then dust it off. Next, stack the wrappers: Place a piece of plastic wrap on a plate and put a mochi circle on top. Then, layer another piece of plastic wrap on top, and add another wrapper. Repeat for all the wrappers. Roll the leftover mochi dough into a ball, roll it out into a thin layer, and cut out more wrapper circles (I could make about 12 mochi wrappers total).

Now, we are ready to put fillings. On the work surface, place one sheet of plastic wrap with a mochi wrapper on top. Using a medium sized scoop, place a scoop of filling: ice-cream or cream or fruit chunks on top of the mochi wrapper. Pinch the four opposite points of the mochi circle together to enclose the filling. Then pinch the remaining edges together. Put some potato starch on the sealed area and set aside, seam side down. Continue making the rest of the mocha balls.

KHAJOOR BARFI (India)

Ingredients

1 cup soft khajoor or dates, deseeded
¼ cup almonds, dry roasted and chopped
¼ cup cashew nuts, dry roasted and

chopped

¼ cup pistachio, dry roasted and chopped
1 tsp cardamom powder
2 tsp ghee or clarified butter
4 tbsp coconut powder

Method

In a mixer grinder, take a very soft variety of dates after deseeding them and blend into a thick smooth paste.

In a mixing bowl, add cardamom powder and all nuts to the dates paste and ghee.



Mix everything really well.

On a flat plate or tray, spread parchment paper or aluminium foil and flatten the mixture using hands or rolling pin and make a rectangular shape of about 5 mm thickness.

Let it cool in a refrigerator for about 2-4 hours and then use a sharp knife cut into square-shaped barfis. Garnish with sliced nuts and coconut powder.

SOUTHERN COCONUT CAKE (United States)

Ingredients

For cake —

¼ cup softened butter
¼ cup vegetable oil
1 cup sugar
2 tsp coconut extract, 4 eggs
1 cup warm coconut milk
1½ cup flour
1½ cup tsp baking powder
½ tsp salt

For frosting —

1 cup butter, softened
1 cup powder sugar



¼ cup cold coconut milk
1 tbsp coconut extract
1 cup of fresh or dried coconut flake

Method

In a large mixing bowl, use a hand mixer to cream the butter, oil and sugar together until smooth. Beat in coconut extract and eggs 5-8 minutes until fluffy.

In a separate bowl, combine flour, baking powder and salt. Add a little amount of flour mixer and a little amount of warm coconut milk at a time into the egg mixer and mix gently. Repeat the process with remaining flour and milk.

Transfer into a greased cake tin and bake in a preheated oven at 175° C for 25-30 minutes.

Make the frosting by using a hand beater to beat butter until fluffy. Add little by little powder sugar and mix together. Add cold coconut cream and extract and beat until everything is well-combined.

Frost the cake and garnish with coconut flakes.

Food and Photo: Chiangmi Lena Talukder

A NOTE ON NUTRITION

**CHOWDHURY
TASNEEM HASIN**
Chief Dietician, United Hospital Ltd.
Associate General Secretary
Bangladesh Nutrition and Dietetics Forum
tasneemhasin@gmail.com



Diet and nutrition for Hepatitis: Foods to eat and avoid when you have a liver problem

There are many confusions and misconceptions surrounding the ideal diet of a person suffering from liver diseases. The diet of a person effected by liver disease like hepatitis and liver cirrhosis must be balanced yet nutritious as it is a part of treatment therapy.

Importance of the liver

Liver is the seat of metabolism in the body. The large size of the liver is matched by its functional complexity and diversified involvement of regulatory mechanism. Whatever food we eat, after digestion passes through liver and it processes the food into various components.

A healthy liver makes glycogen from carbohydrate. The glycogen is then broken down when the body needs energy. A damaged liver cannot do this. Without glycogen, more carbohydrate is needed from the diet to make sure the body has enough energy.

About 85-90 percent of the blood that leaves the stomach and intestines carries important nutrients to the liver where the proteins are processed and broken down into amino acids, the carbohydrates into glucose molecules and the fats into fatty acids.

The vitamins and minerals are utilised in various enzymatic chemical reactions to break down and convert the food into utilisable form. The hepatocytes (liver cells)

use various enzymes to perform these functions. Also, they prevent the entry of bacteria and viruses into our body.

Dietary need of a diseased liver

According to the National Health Service, UK (NHS) hepatitis is the term referring to inflammation of the liver. It is usually the result of a viral infection or liver damage caused by drinking alcohol. There are several different types of hepatitis — some types will pass without any serious problems, while others can be long-lasting (chronic) and cause scarring of the liver (cirrhosis), loss of liver function and, in some cases, even liver cancer.

Liver diseases such as hepatitis and cirrhosis may change the way our body uses nutrients from food. A high protein, high carbohydrate, moderate fat diet divided in to six to eight meals is advised for quick recovery.

A high protein diet is essential for the tissue repair. Intake of fat should be restricted as its mobilisation in liver is affected. MCT (medium-chain triglycerides) oil therapy is advised in such cases (edible coconut oil is considered a good source).

Most of the patients of cirrhosis of liver (replacement of damaged liver cells by fibrous scar tissue) are severely malnourished and require a high calorie and high protein diet. Too much protein will

result in an increased amount of ammonia in the blood; too little protein can reduce healing of the liver. Amount of protein to be given to the patient depends on the liver's ability to metabolise.

A diet containing approximately 2000 kcal, which can be provided by 20-25g of healthy fat, 80-90g proteins and 400g carbohydrate is suitable.

Ascites is the terminal stages of cirrhosis where fluid accumulates in the abdominal cavity due to failure of the liver to synthesise plasma albumin, a protein in the blood. For such patients, a high protein diet, which is low in sodium would be most suitable.

When the liver fails the condition is known as hepatic encephalopathy. They should be given 20g of protein in the diet. This should mainly be derived from skimmed milk.

Coconut water is excellent for patients with liver cirrhosis. Bitter tasting vegetables are - all gourds, long gourd, bottle gourd, round gourds, bitter gourds and turnips, radish, carrots, and potatoes are good in liver failure.

Foods that strengthen the liver

Methionine and cysteine (egg yolks, red peppers, garlic, onions, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, sesame seeds, whole grains and beans) are sulfur-containing proteins that are known to protect the liver and aid in

converting fat-soluble toxins to water-soluble substances that can be eliminated through the urine.

Choline (soybeans, egg yolks, nutritional yeast, fish, peanuts, cauliflower, lettuce, cabbage, lentils, chick peas and brown rice) is required to metabolise fats in the body. B-complex (nutritional yeast, sunflower seeds, almonds, peanuts, sesame seeds, and brown rice) is very important for liver as well.

Foods that contain vitamin C (mustard greens, cauliflower, red cabbage, strawberries, papaya, spinach, mangos, peppers, broccoli, and Brussels sprouts, kale) and vitamin E (almonds, sunflower seeds, walnuts, tomatoes, whole grains, and green leafy vegetables) are important as antioxidants to protect and treat a damaged liver.

Simple tips for maintaining a healthy liver —

Small meals served separately are better than three large meals.

Junk food, preservatives, alcohol, and carbonated drinks should be avoided.

Drinking a lot of water helps the liver to clean the toxins more effectively (drinking water is very important if there is no water retention or ascites).

Avoid sour fruits at all cost. Lemons, oranges are not recommended if you have a liver condition.