



WHY CHANGE UP THE MENU?

Creating healthy spaces helps kids be at their best. Providing healthy and delicious food and drink options in places where children and families spend their time can help make sure kids have the fuel they need to grow, play and learn throughout the day.

Providing healthier foods and drinks and reducing the availability of unhealthy alternatives can also help meet the recommendations in the Victorian Department of Health's [Healthy Choices guidelines](#). We need to surround our kids with delicious, healthy foods and drinks, wherever they spend their time. It's time to change up the menu, so let's get started today!

Making changes to your community facility kiosk or vending machine might seem overwhelming but there are small changes you can do to get started. You can 'Change up the menu' with the following 'bite' sized actions:

- **Boost veggies and salad** – half of hot and cold main meal options contain salad/vegetables.
- **Offer healthier pies and pastries** – offer healthier versions of pies, sausage rolls, and other savoury pastries and reduce the amount of unhealthy versions.
- **Minimise fried foods** – use healthier cooking methods for potato cakes, hot chips, dim sims, etc. where possible, such as oven baking or steaming, and/or provide smaller serve sizes, and/or reduce varieties of fried foods.

The process is the same for each of the bites. You can try one 'bite' at a time or do them all at once. It's up to you. Whichever approach you take, this guide will support you through each step of the way.

MINIMISE FRIED FOODS – WHAT'S INVOLVED?

The 'Minimise fried foods' bite involves using healthier cooking methods for fried foods where possible, such as oven baking or steaming, and/or providing smaller serve sizes, and/or reducing varieties of fried foods.

Fried foods you might currently have on the menu could include:

- hot chips
- wedges
- hash browns, tater tots/potato gems, potato cakes
- dim sims, spring rolls, Chiko rolls
- crumbed or battered meat products, such as chicken tenders or nuggets, fish fillets, chicken schnitzel and falafel.

Healthier cooking methods for these foods include:

- stir-fry
- steam
- boil
- grill and toast
- air-frying
- microwave
- roast or bake with minimal oil (e.g. using oil spray or brushing on oil).

Providing smaller serving sizes could include:

- provide smaller dim sims and chicken schnitzels
- offer items for sale individually only and not in multiples (e.g. two dim sims in a serve)
- use a small container/bucket for chips and wedges instead of large containers/bags
- offer only one small size of an item, not multiple serve sizes (e.g. small and large).

To **minimise fried foods**, follow our three simple steps:



STEP ONE: REVIEW

Start by reviewing the hot food options available at the facility, and how they are currently being cooked.

This will help identify which options you may want to swap. If you currently deep-fry any food items note this down.





STEP TWO: PLAN

Now you know what you have, decide how you will make your changes.

List the equipment the facility has for cooking the current fried food items in a healthier way.

This may include an:

- oven and stovetop
- steamer
- air fryer
- microwave.

Depending on the equipment the facility has, there are plenty of ways to change how the current deep-fried food items are cooked such as:

- bake or air-fry crumbed and coated foods such as chicken tenders, wedges or hot chips
- bake spring rolls
- steam dim sims and wontons
- toast or grill falafel.



Also consider any time implications the difference in cooking method may have. For example, staff may need to start cooking earlier than normal or certain methods may no longer be practical in certain circumstances.

If you wish to continue providing deep fried foods, consider providing smaller portion sizes of these foods.

You could even consider removing any items which are not high sellers from the menu altogether. Pick the two or three options that are your best sellers and continue to provide these and phase out the remaining options.

LARGE PORTION



SWAP TO

SMALL PORTION



You also need to learn how the hot food items are purchased. Find out where the facility purchases its hot food items from for the café or kiosk. It could be:

- a local distributor or wholesaler
- a local supermarket.

Once you know where the facility purchases its hot food items from, contact the supplier to discuss and determine healthier options the facility can purchase.



PREPARING FOR CHANGE

There are different ways to introduce changes and make improvements to the hot food options in a facility. You can make changes all at once or use a gradual approach:

All at once: an ideal time to do this is at the beginning of a new year or term, however it can be done at any time. This is a quick way to drastically improve the healthiness of the hot food offerings and works best if there are only a few changes to make.

A gradual approach: this option gives customers more time to get used to the changes and an opportunity to try alternative options before other hot food items are removed. It is often the more readily accepted option if you need to make lots of changes to the hot food options available.



STEP THREE: ACT

Now you've done all the groundwork, it's time to put it into action.

SUPPORTING SUCCESS

You might find that you need to get some new equipment to make this change. If this is the case start by speaking to facility management to get their support and consider how you will get the money for this.

Perhaps you can fundraise with the community to get new equipment if there is no budget available from the facility currently (refer to [‘Put the fun in fundraising and marketing’](#) for healthy fundraising options).

Remember, this is just one of the ‘bites’ you can do to change up the menu. Check out [‘Boost veggies and salad’](#) or [‘Offer healthier pies and pastries’](#) for how to provide and promote more healthy menu options in the facility.





CELEBRATE

Great job! You've finished the 'Minimise fried foods' bite for Vic Kids Eat Well. Make sure to share the good news with the facility, and plan how you will continue your great work in the other action areas of Vic Kids Eat Well.

FOR FURTHER HELP

Vic Kids Eat Well tech team

For advice or assistance regarding program support and delivery, setting engagement and website database issues

- 1300 185 725
- vickidseatwell@cancervic.org.au

Your local Health Promotion Officer

For on the ground support

Full name: _____

Job title: _____

Organisation: _____

Contact no. _____

Email: _____



If you are having trouble accessing this document, please email vickidseatwell@cancervic.org.au or call **1300 185 725**

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