

# CHANGE UP THE MENU IN SPORT AND RECREATION FACILITIES

- **Minimise fried foods**



## WHY CHANGE UP THE MENU?

Healthy and delicious food and drinks give children the fuel, nutrition and hydration they need to perform, play, concentrate and be at their best.

Providing healthier meals and reducing the availability of unhealthy alternatives such as fried foods is also a recommendation in the Victorian Department of Health's **Healthy Choices guidelines**. We need to surround our kids with delicious, healthy food 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 sport and recreation 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 or cold main meal options contain salad/vegetables.
- **Offer healthy pies and pastries** – offer healthier (**AMBER**) versions of pies, sausage rolls and other savoury pastries and reduce the amount of unhealthy (**RED**) 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.

The Healthy Choices guidelines use a traffic light system to classify foods and drinks based on their nutritional value as **GREEN** (best choice), **AMBER** (choose carefully) and **RED** (limit).

Achieving all bites, as well as those from the other action areas, should get you close to or fully achieving the Healthy Choices targets of at least 50% **GREEN** foods and drinks and no more than 20% **RED** foods and drinks.

## 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 currently 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.

Use **FoodChecker** to review the hot food items currently available in the facility and determine which ones are the healthier **AMBER** options and which are the less healthy **RED** options.

Note: any item that is deep-fried is considered **RED**, even if it is listed in its uncooked version on FoodChecker as **AMBER**.





## 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 and samosas
- steam dumplings, 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.



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.

Note: some hot food items that are smaller in portion size and prepared with a healthier cooking method are still considered **RED**, due to their saturated fat and sodium content. Use FoodChecker to find healthier **AMBER** hot food items to replace some of the **RED** versions you currently stock.

# PLANNING 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:** this is a quick way to drastically improve the healthiness of the hot food offering 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 options are removed. It is often the more readily accepted option if you need to make lots of changes to the hot food options available.

## TIP:

If there is a contract or agreement in place, discuss with the supplier what flexibility there is and how healthier options could be included in the existing contract.

If the contract is set, you might need to wait to influence the contract when it comes time for renewal. Or consider using a different supplier that can offer the healthier foods you want.

## TIP:

There are three ways you can take a gradual approach:

1. Remove the least popular deep-fried foods first, then work on replacing the best sellers second.
2. Sell down your stock of hot foods in large portion sizes and don't order more once you sell out. As they sell out replace with smaller sized products or options.
3. Start to use some healthier cooking methods as a first step, then negotiate with suppliers about ordering smaller versions of hot foods (or vice versa).



## 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 into 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 other healthier menu options in the facility.





## CELEBRATE

Great job! You've finished the 'Minimise fried food' bite for Vic Kids Eat Well. You're also one step closer to meeting the Healthy Choices guidelines. 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](mailto: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](mailto:vickidseatwell@cancervic.org.au) or call **1300 185 725**

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