



Balanced
LUNCHES
FOR
PCOS

Jodie Relf



Jodie Relf



@jodie_relf

Hello, my name is Jodie, I'm a registered Dietitian and PCOS expert. I was diagnosed with PCOS in my early twenties and spent years experimenting or learning through trial and error what foods supported my PCOS. I cut out certain food groups, restricted my calories, and deprived myself of the foods I love. However, I soon realised this lifestyle wasn't for me, I wanted to live a life free of 'food rules'. From personal experience and research I learnt I could enjoy the foods I love whilst managing my PCOS. And this is one of the main motivations I do what I do, I want all those with PCOS to know that there is a way to 'have your cake and eat it'.

www.thepcosdietitian.co.uk

Introduction

Knowing what to eat with PCOS can be incredibly confusing. There is so much conflicting advice out there and a huge focus on weight loss. Here's a secret - weight loss is not the solution to managing your PCOS, you can learn more about why in my PCOS ReBalance Programme. The key to managing your PCOS is through correcting hormonal imbalances, improving insulin sensitivity and reducing inflammation. All of these things can be done by improving your diet.

In this eBook I have compiled a selection of my favourite lunch recipes. Lunch can be so tricky, we often need something quick and easy that tastes good AND that isn't going to leave us feeling sluggish or hungry later on in the day.

My clients often ask me for inspiration for lunch ideas, and whilst I'm happy to present them with a range of recipes to inspire them, it's really important that they understand WHY these are recipes I've chosen. So here's a brief overview of what I'm looking for when choosing balanced meals:

Anti-oxidants - We all know that we should be consuming at least 5 portions of fruits and vegetables a day. But the reality of putting this in to practice can be a little tricky. For this reason I always try and include at least 2 different types of fruit and veg with lunch.

Anti-oxidants help protect us from oxidative stress, a natural process in response to environmental toxins such as pollution, smoke inhalation, alcohol etc. Anti-oxidants help reduce inflammation which is common in those with PCOS.

Introduction

Fibre - Our digestive health is so important and we want to ensure that we are maintaining a healthy environment for our gut bacteria as these play a role in maintaining a strong immune system and maintaining hormonal balance. Most adults don't consume the recommended daily fibre intake of 35grams per day. IBS type symptoms are really common in those with PCOS and regulating our digestive system and restoring good gut health can improve this.

Protein - Around 70% of those with PCOS have some degree of insulin resistance. This is a huge driver of many PCOS symptoms (it impacts the functioning of our ovaries and increases testosterone levels) and increases our risk for developing type 2 diabetes. One way we can improve insulin sensitivity is to include a good amount of protein with all meals. We should be aiming for between 10-20grams of protein with each main meal so this is a big factor when choosing recipes. And we want to ensure we're getting a good mix of proteins, if fertility is something you're focusing on then it's beneficial to include plant sources of proteins too.

Carbohydrates - Let's start off by saying that NO, you don't need to cut out or drastically reduce your carbohydrate intake to manage your PCOS. These are an important source of energy, fibre and other micronutrients. Quality is really important when it comes to carbs - we want to focus on carbohydrates that provide a slow, steady release of energy. This usually includes brown/wholemeal varieties. This doesn't mean that you may never eat white bread or pasta again - remember, there is room for all the foods you love.

Introduction

It's more about choosing the foods that nourish you as often as you can, and when the desire for a big chunk of white bread or bowl of white pasta strikes then have it, knowing that the majority of the time you're choosing balanced meals so the odd slice of white etc. really isn't going to do a chunk of damage. I enjoy spending time in the kitchen testing and creating new recipes and adapting recipes, I love to make them more 'balanced'.

Healthy fats - Fats in general have got a really bad rap over the years. But as a building block of hormones and an aid in the absorption of fat soluble vitamins they are an important part of a healthy balanced diet. The key is in choosing a variety of healthy fats, that maintain heart health and reduce inflammation (omega 3's play a role here).

Enjoyment - It's so important that we enjoy the foods that we eat. When we eat meals/foods that we feel we 'should' be eating because they're good for us but get little enjoyment from them then they're more likely to leave us feeling unsatisfied and craving other foods later.

INTRODUCTION

The recipes in this book are a combination of recipes I've tried, tested and loved, some which I've found and adapted slightly to make more balanced and others which I've created from scratch whilst experimenting in the kitchen.

I hope you'll enjoy trying these recipes and notice how they help you maintain more consistent energy levels throughout the day.

Remember to share and tag me when you recreate them, it brings me so much joy to see you trying them.

Yours in Health & Happiness

Jodie

Table of Content

00	Cover
02	Hello from me!
03	Introduction
08	Buffalo, Tofu & Black Bean Fajita Bowl
09	Caprese Toastie
10	Chicken & Avocado Roll
11	Chickpea Salad Sandwich
12	Crunchy Peanut Salad
13	Fattoush Falafel Pita
14	Lentil, Carrot & Feta Salad
15	Crunchy Tuna Wrap
16	Smoked Salmon & Orzo Salad
17	Smoked Salmon & Feta Omlette



Buffalo, Tofu & Black Bean Fajita Bowl

Ingredients

For the Buffalo tofu

- 1 x 396g pack tofu
- 1 tbsp soft dark brown sugar
- ¾ tsp smoked paprika
- ½ tsp ground cumin
- 20g butter
- 2 tbsp hot sauce
- 1 lemon, juiced

For the fajita bowl

- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 red onion, sliced
- 2 red peppers, thinly sliced
- 2 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- 2 x 400g tins black beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 small avocado, thinly sliced
- 2 little gem lettuce, leaves pulled apart and washed

SERVINGS: 4



25g fiber
per serving



22g
protein

Per serving

Directions

1. Drain the tofu and pat dry with kitchen paper. Wrap the tofu in a clean tea towel and place a heavy pan on top. Set aside for 10 mins to remove excess moisture OR use pre-pressed tofu like "The Tofoo Company".
2. Meanwhile, put the sugar, spices, butter, hot sauce, half of the lemon juice and a pinch of salt in a small saucepan and heat gently until the butter melts. Mix well, increase the heat to medium and bring to the boil. Cook, stirring, for 30 secs, then remove from the heat and set aside.
3. To make the fajita mix, heat the oil in a large frying pan over a high heat. Add the onion and peppers and stir-fry for 6-7 mins until lightly charred. Reduce the heat to medium and cook for 3-4 mins until softened, adding the garlic for the last 30 secs.
4. Stir in the beans and heat through.
5. Add the remaining lemon juice, season to taste, then remove from the heat.
6. Cut the tofu into 12 slices. Brush a large, non-stick frying pan with a little oil and warm over a medium heat. Fry the tofu in batches for 1 min each side until golden, brushing the pan with more oil as needed.
7. Put all the tofu back in the pan and reduce the heat to low. Mix 2 tbsp water into the sauce, then pour over the tofu and stir gently to coat.
8. To serve, divide the black bean mixture between 4 bowls. Top with the tofu, lettuce and avocado, and drizzle over any extra sauce. Serve immediately.



Caprese Toastie

SERVINGS: 2

Ingredients

- 1 x slices of sourdough bread (or bread of choice)
- 2-3 x turkey slices
- 50g x mozzarella, sliced
- 2 x tbsp green pesto
- 1 x large tomato, sliced



Directions

1. Toast 1 side of each slice of bread on a hot, dry non-stick pan. Remove once toasted
2. Spread 1 tbsp of pesto on the toasted side of each slice
3. Layer the mozzarella, turkey and tomatoes over the pesto. Sandwich the other slice of toasted bread on top
4. Place the sandwich back on to the pan and toast each remaining side until golden and the mozzarella has melted
5. Cut in half and enjoy!



Chicken & Avocado Roll

SERVINGS: 2

Ingredients

- 1 cooked chicken breast
- 2 Whole meal rolls
- 1 Avocado
- Juice from 1/2 lime
- Salt & Pepper to taste
- Tomato slices
- 1 handful rocket



11g fiber
per serving



20g
protein

Per serving

Directions

1. Slice the chicken breast
2. Mash the avocado in a bowl with the lime juice and season with salt and pepper
3. Spread 3/4 of the mashed avocado on to the roll, top with chicken slices, rocket and tomato
4. Spread the remaining avocado on the second half of the roll
5. Close and enjoy!

NOTE: This is a great way to use leftover chicken
The whole meal roll can be replaced by whole meal bread, a bagel or wrap



Crunchy Thai Peanut Salad

Ingredients

¾ cup uncooked quinoa
2 cups shredded purple cabbage
1 cup grated carrot
1 cup edamame beans
¼ cup thinly sliced spring onions
¼ cup chopped roasted and salted peanuts, for garnish

Dressing:
¼ cup smooth peanut butter
3 tablespoons reduced-sodium tamari or soy sauce
1 tablespoon honey
1 tablespoon rice vinegar
1 teaspoon toasted sesame oil
1 teaspoon grated fresh ginger
½ lime, juiced

SERVINGS: 4



Directions

1. Cook the Quinoa according to packet instructions
2. Mix all the dressing ingredients together until smooth
3. In a large salad bowl mix all the ingredients, including the cooked and cooled quinoa. Keep the peanuts to one side
4. Pour the dressing over the salad and mix well.
5. Serve and sprinkle with peanuts



10g fiber
per serving



Per serving



Fattoush Falafel Pita

Ingredients

SERVINGS: 2

Fattoush inspired salad:

- 2 x tomatoes, chopped into chunks
- ¼ x cucumber, deseeded and sliced
- ½x red onion, sliced
- 1 x small head romaine lettuce, shredded
- handful mint leaves, roughly chopped
- handful parsley leaves, roughly chopped
- 1 tsp lemon juice

Falafel and 'fattoush' pita

- 2 x large or 2 x small wholemeal pita breads, toasted
- 8 falafel (store bought or homemade)
- 4 tbsp hummus (my fave is beetroot!)
- 2 tbsp red sauerkraut



Per serving



10g fiber per serving

Directions

1. Chop the veg and herbs.
2. Toss together all the salad ingredients except for the lemon juice.
3. Add the lemon juice when serving (adding in advance may cause the lettuce to wilt)
4. Toast the pita bread, slice open and allow to cool slightly
5. Heat falafels as per packet instructions
6. Spread a layer of hummus on each side of the pita, layer the salad, sauerkraut and falafel. Press together to squeeze it all in!



Lentil, Carrot & Feta Salad

Ingredients

- | | |
|--|--|
| 2 tbsp olive oil | 1 red onion, finely sliced |
| 1 tbsp cumin powder | ½ lemon, juiced |
| 500g carrots, peeled, halved and cut into batons | large handful mint leaves, roughly chopped |
| 1 tbsp clear honey | 100g lettuce |
| 250g cooked Puy lentils (or 1 can, drained and rinsed) | 85g feta cheese, crumbled |

SERVINGS: 3



9g fiber
per serving



Per serving

Directions

1. Heat the oven to 200C/180C fan. In a shallow roasting tin, toss together half the oil, the cumin, carrots and some seasoning. Roast for 25 mins, turning halfway through cooking. Drizzle over the honey, stir and roast for 5 mins more.
2. Meanwhile, gently heat the lentils with the onion, lemon juice, remaining oil and some salt and pepper. Allow to cool slightly while the carrots finish cooking.
3. Toss the dressed lentils with mint and lamb's lettuce. Lay warm spiced carrots on top and scatter with feta.



Crunchy Tuna Wrap

SERVINGS: 2

Ingredients

- 1 Can tuna in water
- 1 celery stalk
- 2 Tbsp Greek yoghurt
- 1 tsp Dijon mustard
- 1 avocado
- 1.5 cups baby spinach
- 2 Whole meal wraps



10g fiber
per serving



Per serving

Directions

1. Drain the tuna if needed
2. Mix the tuna, Greek yoghurt and mustard well
3. Chop the celery stalk finely and add to the tuna mix
4. Place your filling inside your wrap, top with sliced avocado and spinach and roll

NOTE: If you are making this ahead to take to the office then I'd recommend making the filling and keeping it in a separate container until you are ready to eat your wrap as it may make your wrap soggy.

This filling can be enjoyed in a whole meal pita/roll or bread.



Smoked Salmon & Orzo Salad

Ingredients

1 cup uncooked orzo
1/2 cucumber chopped
2 tablespoons red onion chopped
2 tablespoons capers drained
6 ounces sliced smoked salmon
(tear into bite-size pieces)

Dressing:

2 heaped tablespoons reduced fat salad cream
1 heaped tablespoon plain Greek yogurt
1/2 teaspoon Dijon mustard
1/2 tablespoon olive oil
1 tablespoon lemon juice + zest of 1 lemon
1/8 teaspoon garlic powder
1 tablespoon fresh dill chopped
Salt & Pepper

SERVINGS: 4



2g fiber
per serving



Per serving

Directions

1. Boil a salted pot of water for the orzo and cook it al dente according to package instructions. When it's done, rinse it with cool water and drain it thoroughly, then add it to a large bowl.
2. Meanwhile, combine the dressing ingredients in a small bowl.
3. Prep your other salad ingredients and add them to the large bowl.
4. Toss the ingredients together and season with salt & pepper.
5. You can serve the salad right away or chill it for a while first.

***Personally, I'm not a fan of raw onion but it does add great crunch to the salad. I placed the raw onion in a colander and poured the boiling water from the orzo over to remove the strong onion flavour. Although this recipe is not high in fibre, orzo, when cooked al dente is a low GI carbohydrate providing a slower release of energy. Pair with a bowl of berries to increase the fibre content.**



Smoked Salmon & Feta Omelette

SERVINGS: 1

Ingredients

- | | |
|---|------------------------------|
| 2 eggs | Spring onion, finely chopped |
| 1 egg white | Black pepper |
| 50g / 2-3 slices of smoked salmon, torn | Milk (a splash) |
| 30g feta cheese, crumbled | 1 tbsp olive oil |



18g fiber
per serving



25g
protein

Per serving

Directions

1. Season the beaten eggs well with pepper and add a dash of milk.
2. Heat the olive oil in a non-stick frying pan over a medium-low heat.
3. Pour the eggs into the pan, tilt the pan slightly from one side to another to allow the eggs to cover the surface of the pan completely.
4. Scatter the feta, smoked salmon and spring onion over the top of the omelette
5. Fold gently in half with a spatula, and flip your omelette
6. Slide onto a plate to serve and sprinkle with extra black pepper and spring onion

NOTE: To make this a balanced meal pair it with a source of carbohydrates, such as wholemeal toast and fresh fruit.



Chickpea Salad Sandwich

SERVINGS: 2

Ingredients

- | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| 4 Slices whole meal bread | Salt & Pepper to taste |
| 1 Can chickpeas, drained | 1 Tbsp water |
| 2.5 Tbsp Greek yoghurt | 1.5 Tbsp capers, drained |
| 2.5 Tbsp cottage cheese | Handful baby spinach |
| | 4 Radishes, sliced |



18g fiber
per serving



Per serving

Directions

1. Place chickpeas, water, cottage cheese, yoghurt, capers and salt and pepper in a blender. Blend until mostly smooth
2. Spread chickpea filling on to one slice of bread
3. Top with spinach and sliced radish
4. Place second slice of bread on top and enjoy!

NOTE: To hold the sandwich together place a bit of the spread on the top slice of bread as well as the bottom. This can be used on a whole meal bagel or wrap instead of bread.

A note on portion sizes

You'll notice that the recipes contain a serving size, this is only there to guide you. I'd really encourage you to eat intuitively you, paying close attention to your natural hunger and satiety signals and allowing those to guide the size of your portions.

If you don't feel confident in using these skills to guide your decision around portions then I'd highly encourage you to take a look at my [PCOS ReBalance Programme](#), we discuss intuitive eating and I guide you through how to identify and respond to these natural hunger and satiety cues.

I hope you've enjoyed these recipes as much as I have!

For more recipes, Pilates workouts and access to my monthly live Q&A check out PCOS ReBalance, and remember there's a [7 day free trial](#) to get you started.