

Cooking Foodstuffs Wisely

THE foodstuffs that you have chosen well and stored properly, will give more in nutritive value if cooked wisely. Good cooking methods retain the maximum possible protective, body-building, and energy-giving powers of food. Further, food so cooked has more flavour and looks better. The family, therefore, finds it appetising, wastes less, eats more, and ends up by being better nourished than in households where slapdash cooking methods prevail. Here are a few tips from expert nutritionists:

When you take your meat out of the refrigerator don't defrost it before cooking. Go straight ahead, let it defrost during cooking, and you'll have better flavour and texture. Store meat so that it doesn't lie in its own drip. It keeps twice as long if the drip is drained away and the meat surface left dry. Don't cook chops and steaks with so much fat that it is left on the plate. Trim before cooking and render to dripping. As meat bakes, roasts, grills or fries, it shrinks and soluble salts are left on the surface. That's the reason it tastes good, and those who ask for the outside of the roast are wiser than they realise. In the cooking liquids of meat are valuable salts and up to one-fifth of the vitamin B group content. Use these for gravy or soups. When baking and roasting meat don't have too high a temperature for too long, or

This is the text of a talk—the last of three on "Health from the Kitchen"—broadcast recently from ZB, YA and YZ Stations of the NZBS by DR. H. B. TURBOTT, Deputy-Director-General of Health

you'll dry it and harden the protein, so losing some digestibility and nutritive value.

Frying in deep fat—and olive oil is very suited to fish—preserves flavour best in white fish. Fish hasn't a great deal of flavour. To serve cheese sauces with fish enhances flavour and gets more cheese into the diet. Coating the fish in batter or egg-and-crumbs before dropping into the boiling fat cuts cooking losses of nutrients. Baking or grilling fish comes next to deep fat frying. You lose about half of the vitamin B, but other losses are far less serious than with boiling or steaming. If you are going to boil or steam fish, the liquid in which fish is cooked should be used for making the sauce to go with it.

Eggs are not a cooking problem. Hard boiling makes them indigestible to a few people, otherwise you can pretty well do what you like with them, apart

from over-frying, without impairing their food value. Curdling your baked or boiled custards costs you no nutritive loss, but the family won't like the looks so well, and won't eat as much as if you avoid the curdling. You don't have to worry about milk or cheese, except to avoid curdling your milk dishes for appetite's and appearance's sake. Cook milk and cheese any way you like. They don't lose much food value in cooking processes.

Vegetables are a different kettle of fish. In the boiling of vegetables vitamin B leaches out into the cooking water. Spinach, for example, loses about half its vitamin B into the water in fifteen minutes' boiling. Vitamin C also diffuses out into the cooking water, and the more water used the more loss. Cover your cabbage with water and you lose twice as much vitamin C as if you but quarter-covered that good old standby green. The rate of boiling has an effect, quietly being best, rapid jostling boiling, leaching out more vitamin. Con-

trary to everyday opinion, steaming is worse than boiling for causing loss of vitamin C from greens. Adding soda to keep the green colour is bad. The greens end up with less protective value.

Vegetable leaves should be washed before cutting. Water should be salted and already boiling before greens are added. Shredding greens, or separating and breaking up a cauliflower head, allows the smaller pieces to cook quicker and therefore conserves more food value. Use the tiniest amount of water possible and keep the cooking time as short as you can. This method will give you a twenty per cent increase in the protective value of greens. Potatoes

should always be started to cook in boiling water and served when done, if you want good flavour and no loss of protective elements. The mineral salts are close to a potato's skin, so forget to peel them frequently, and boil or bake them in their skins.

Enough of these cooking tips—but heeding them makes a wise cook!



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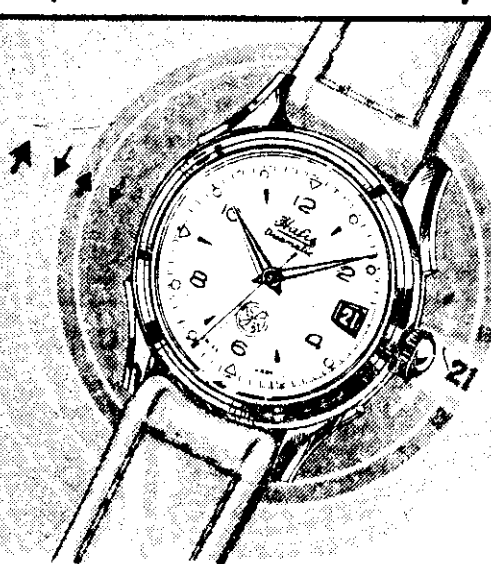
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