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# 'Save with simple home-cooking'



## COMPARISON BETWEEN COOKING AT HOME AND EATING OUT

Couple		Family of five	
HOME COOKED MEAL			
Menu	RM	Menu	RM
1. Rice (100gm)	0.25	1. Rice (200gm)	0.50
2. Soya sauce chicken (300gm)	1.80	2. Ayam masak merah (500gm)	3.00
3. Stir-fried broccoli (300gm)	2.50	3. Stir-fried spinach (500gm)	2.50
4. Papaya (small)	1.80	4. Papaya (medium)	3.00
5. Other ingredients (incl. cooking oil, onions, chilli)	0.60	5. Other ingredients (incl. cooking oil, onions, chilli)	1.20
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>6.95</b>	<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>10.20</b>
EATING OUT (Restaurants)			
Malay		Chinese	
Menu	RM	Menu	RM
1. Chicken fried rice	4.50 x 1	1. Wan-tan mee (big)	4.50 x 4
2. Stir-fried kangkong	2.50 x 1	2. Wan-tan mee (small)	3.80 x 1
3. Grilled tofu	2.50 x 1	3. Drinks (Chinese tea)	0.50 x 2
4. Drinks (canned/juiced)	1.80 x 2	4. Drinks (canned/juiced)	1.80 x 3
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>11.30</b>	<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>31.50</b>
Indian		Chinese	
Menu	RM	Menu	RM
1. Rice	1.00 x 2	1. Wan-tan mee (big)	4.50 x 4
2. Sweet and sour pork	6.00 x 1	2. Wan-tan mee (small)	3.80 x 1
3. Stir-fried lettuce	5.00 x 1	3. Drinks (Chinese tea)	0.50 x 2
4. Drinks (Chinese tea)	0.50 x 2	4. Drinks (canned/juiced)	1.80 x 3
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>14.00</b>	<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>28.20</b>
Indian		Indian	
Menu	RM	Menu	RM
1. Banana leaf meal	7.00 x 2	1. Banana leaf meal	7.00 x 2
2. Drinks (canned/juiced)	1.80 x 2	2. Tosai	1.20 x 2
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>17.60</b>	3. Chapatti	1.20 x 2
		4. Drinks (hot)	1.20 x 2
		5. Drinks (canned/juiced)	1.80 x 3
		<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>26.60</b>

Note: Price surveys done at restaurants in Pantar Dalam (Malay), SS2, Petaling Jaya (Chinese) and Brickfields (Indian)

■ **By Jennifer Gomez and Joseph Sipalan**  
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SERDANG: Kasmiah Mansor has to rush home from her RM1,000 paying administrative job to cook dinner for her lorry driver husband and three school-going children.

She has no other choice. Eating out or food catering is too expensive.

While prices of food items such as fish and vegetables have gone up, she has to make do with cheaper alternatives such as chicken and kangkong and cucumber as opposed to cauliflower and choy sum.

"It's tiring, but we can only afford eating at home," she said.

Joan Yap used to eat out four times a week with her family of four, but she has since reduced this to only weekends.

"With prices going up like this, I'm just concerned that the quality of food at restaurants is going down. And the places we used to frequent have raised prices by at least 30 per cent," the marketing executive said.

Universiti Putra Malaysia associate professor Dr Mirnalini Kandiah said eating at home has added benefits, even if it was a simple meal.

"Instead of eating nasi lemak and nasi minyak which has added fats, Malaysians

should opt for simpler meals prepared at home, even if it is just rice, sambal ikan bilis and stir-fried kangkong."

Mirnalini said energy-dense foods like nasi lemak and roti canai were generally unhealthy as they lack the necessary nutrients. She also stressed the fact that food at eateries can be high in fat.

"As such, I would recommend that families eat out less and instead prepare meals at home with the right nutrient content," she added.

And given the talk about the tight rice supply situation, Mirnalini suggested that Malaysians cut down their intake by reducing the number of rice meals.

To sustain energy levels, she suggested that Malaysians increase their intake of vegetables and fruits and cheaper sources of protein such as soy-based food and beans, such as dhal to meet their energy needs.

"We should cut down on rice meals because prices (of rice) will increase given all this talk

about shortage. And this will have serious implications for the nutritional status of the poor and undeserved population, whose main source of energy comes from rice," she added.

Mirnalini stressed that while rice consumption was not linked to being overweight, reducing one's rice intake would help a person lose weight.

"You are reducing the main source of energy in your diet, so there is less to store.

Mirnalini said it was important for people to make the right choices as obesity in Malaysia was on an uptrend, similar to what was happening in the rest of the world, including in less developed economies.

According to the Malaysian Adults Nutrition Survey done five years ago, obesity prevalence among adults was between 12 to 13 per cent.

Subsequent reports by the Health Ministry have shown similar results. This figure is an increase by eight per cent from 20 years ago, she said.

She said that one of the main causes of obesity was the lack of physical activity, caused by mechanisation and urbanisation. She suggested that families walk around their neighbourhood after a nutritious meal instead of sitting in front of their TV sets.