

# Drop in with Dirk

03

COMMUNITY  
NETWORK



*Dirk Lakeman*

Welcome back to Drop in with Dirk!

This blog was created by a Choice tenant, for Choice tenants, a space for everyone. In this edition, I'm sharing some quick, simple and healthy recipes to help us kick off the new year. I also included some easy tips for staying healthy and feeling your best in 2026!

***So grab a cuppa, and feel free to drop in anytime.***



HEALTHY  
2026



## Small & Simple Tips to Stay Healthy in 2026

### FUEL YOUR BODY

- + Reduce caffeine where you can. All too often we overindulge in caffeine without even realising it. Caffeine can be found not only in coffee but also in tea, soft drinks and some medications. Having a little less may make you feel calmer and sleep better. You can try swapping to decaf in the afternoon, setting yourself a daily limit or enjoying some herbal teas such as chamomile, peppermint or fruit teas instead.

### MOVE YOUR BODY

- + Moving your body regularly helps you stay comfortable and mobile. Gentle movement supports flexibility, balance and confidence with everyday activities. Our Armchair Aerobics classes by Choice are great for keeping you active in a safe, supported and enjoyable way. So set yourself a challenge to partake in these simple movements at least once a day!

### PRIORITISE YOUR MIND AND WELLBEING

- + Dedicate time for fresh air. Nothing beats a little natural air! Not only does it benefit you physically, the mental benefits are huge. Spending even 10-15 minutes outside each day can help boost your mood, improve sleep and increase your vitamin D levels. This could be as simple as a gentle walk around the garden, sitting outside with a cup of tea or even opening the window to let in some fresh air.
- + Keeping your brain active is extremely important for your mental wellbeing. Simple mental activities can help keep your mind engaged and support memory and concentration. Try completing a crossword puzzle each week, dedicate time for reading and try out new hobbies such as arts and crafts.

## Overnight Oats

### Ingredients

- 350ml of almond milk (or alternative)
- 4 Tablespoons honey (or maple syrup)
- 2 Tablespoons cocoa powder
- 150g of oats

### Optional toppings

- ¼ teaspoon of cinnamon
- ¼ teaspoon of turmeric
- Teaspoon of chopped fresh ginger
- Tablespoon of sultanas
- Sliced banana

In a large bowl, whisk together almond milk, honey, cocoa powder and a pinch of salt.

Pour mixture into containers. Secure the lids.

Place into the refrigerator overnight and enjoy the next day for breakfast topped with your favourite toppings.

**Filling, wholesome and tasty – enjoy!**



## Spaghetti Aglio e Olio

Aglio e olio is a super easy recipe that you can cook in under 30 minutes!

- Boil a large pot of water, don't forget to salt the water well (1 tablespoon of salt). Peel and thinly slice 8 garlic cloves.
- Once the water is boiling, add the spaghetti and cook according to package instructions. Before you drain the pasta, don't forget to keep 1 1/2 cups of the pasta's cooking water.
- Whilst you are cooking the pasta, warm 1/2 cup of olive oil in a large pan over medium heat. Add the garlic and stir until it's just beginning to turn golden brown. Turn the heat down if necessary so that the garlic does not burn.
- When the garlic has just started to brown, add 1/2 teaspoon of red pepper flakes and toss.
- Whisk the reserved pasta water into the oil and bring to a simmer until the liquid reduces by about 1/3.
- Add the cooked pasta and stir until it's nicely coated in the sauce and cooked to your liking. Turn the heat off.
- Add grated parmesan and a handful of chopped herbs and toss.

**Simple, healthy and flavourful – enjoy!**

