

HOW TO FIGHT A FOOD HANGOVER

BURGER BENDER BLUES

FOOD HANGOVER CULPRITS

• SPICY, CREAMY CURRY DISHES

Rich, spicy food can cause heartburn and gastric reflux

• BHAJIS AND SAMOSAS

This much fat is not a good idea – you are meant to be resting the body while asleep

• CHINESE SWEET AND SOUR MEAT WITH FRIED RICE

The meat is battered, the sauce is rich and the rice is fried. Watch for MSG

• BATTERED FISH AND CHIPS

Heavy on the carbs and saturated fat. Too much salt can lead to dehydration the next morning

• LARGE PASTA PORTIONS

The recommended serving size for pasta is one cup, but restaurants frequently serve three times that amount. Heavy meals can cause indigestion, making it hard to sleep



Feeling nauseous even after a booze-free night? That dreaded morning-after sensation could be down to what you ate, says **Joanne Christie**

THE words fry-up and hangover go together like, well, fried bread and baked beans. We often hope that a bit of “hangover food” will fix the nasty after-effects of last night’s bender. But sometimes our culinary habits can be the cause of, rather than the cure for, our morning-after woes.

Ever had one of those mornings when you wake up with a hangover even though you didn’t drink that much, or at all?

You curse your luck at feeling rough without any of the pleasing memories of last night’s drunkenness to ease the pain.

The other week, an Indian takeaway left me massaging my temples the next morning.

And if the tikka masala was anything like the ones tested for a recent *Which?* report on the nutritional content of takeaway food, no wonder. It seems I’d consumed more saturated fat in

one meal than I should in an entire day.

According to dietician Jacqui Lowdon, an excess of food can be just as hard for the body to break down overnight as an excess of alcohol.

“Fat stays in your stomach for longer and can be hard to digest, especially if you are lying down,” she explains.

“If you eat a meal that is high in fat at night, you may find yourself having digestive problems and not getting a good night’s rest. You could also wake up feeling nauseous.”

The *Which?* report also found that some Chinese dishes contained more than a day’s recommended amount of sugar and fat.

Tummy-expanding potential aside, Chinese food can also cause headaches, as it usually contains monosodium glutamate (MSG).

Found in many types of junk food, MSG is associated with migraines, nausea,

“ You can get the hangover effect by processing the excess of food from the previous day”

palpitations and excessive sweating.

Michal Joven, restaurant manager of MSG-free China Tang at the Dorchester, says: “We get asked everyday if our food is MSG-free. It’s a flavour stimulant but we prefer the flavours of our ingredients to speak for themselves. I find that takeaway noodles with a glossy shine can give me a headache the next day.”

Nutrition consultant and author of *The Food Doctor* Diet Ian Marber points out that restaurant meals laden with rice are heavy on carbs. “If you eat too many carbohydrates and not enough pro-

tein then your glycogen stores are going to swell,” he says. Carbohydrates break down into glucose, an excess of which is converted to glycogen and stored in the liver and muscles. Marber says pushing these stores above their usual limits can lead to “a puffy or swollen feeling, as if you are retaining too much water.”

But it isn’t just carbs in excess that are a problem – it’s overload in general.

Photographer Jennika Argent, 30, blames summer barbecues for her food hangovers.

“I always seem to overdo it on the meat,” she explains, “and then wake up the next day with bad skin and feeling tired.”

Marber adds: “You can get the hangover effect simply by your body still processing the excess of food from the previous day.”

So how should you clean up after last night’s over-indulgence? Unsurprisingly, greasy food is not the answer to your prayers for health and vigour. Drink plenty of water, and stick to light meals until you’re feeling better. And try not to overdo it next time.

INNOCENT ALTERNATIVES



• MEAT OR FISH WITH BOILED NEW POTATOES AND FRESH VEGETABLES

This represents a good balance of carbohydrates and protein and should leave you feeling satisfied



• SUSHI

This is a nice light option. The small portions will help you sleep soundly



• OMELETTE WITH SALAD AND A WHOLEMEAL ROLL

For vegetarians, this is a good way of getting the glycaemic load right



• A BALTI CURRY

Packed with vegetables and fibre, a balti is less spicy and has less cream than other curries and so is easier to digest.



• STIR-FRIED CHICKEN AND VEGETABLES WITH BOILED RICE

Vegetables should be lightly fried as they’ll contain more nutrients, so you’ll feel more energised