

The lowdown on *lollies*

Memories of childhood – making home made lollies in an ice tray with diluted fruit squash, only to be disappointed by insipid, crumbly cubes of weakly flavoured water rather than the delicious, thirst-quenching, creations you were expecting!

There are thousands of recipes available online nowadays, but to avoid the disappointing results of yesteryear, here are a few tips for making ice lollies, whatever the flavour:

- Sugar is necessary to improve the taste and soften the texture. Try honey as a healthier sweetening alternative.

- When filling the mould, leave about 5mm at the top to allow the mixture to expand.

- To make sure the sticks stand upright, freeze the lollies for about an hour and then insert the sticks. Alternatively, cover the top of the moulds with foil, make a slit and insert the sticks through it.

- Quick freezing reduces the amount of ice crystals. Turn the freezer to the coldest setting and place the moulds at the back. Lollies on average take around 4-5 hours to freeze but the higher the water to sugar ratio the faster the set. Alcohol slows the process, with too much alcohol resulting in a slushy lolly!

- To un-mould, immerse in hot water for 20-30 seconds. Dip just below the top rim and pull hard on the sticks to yank the lollies out.

- Store frozen lollies in sealable



freezer bags or waxed paper. Make sure they are airtight to prevent ice crystals from forming inside.

- For super quick lollies, simply freeze pieces of fruit. Cover bananas in peanut butter or

chocolate spread before freezing or blend fruit puree with plain yoghurt. Frozen Angel Delight tastes just like mini milks!

Let's just hope we get the weather to enjoy these delicious treats this summer!