

Recipe "Make-over"

How to make your recipes healthier

Healthy eating includes healthy cooking. Whether it's a family favourite or a brand new recipe, many recipes can be made healthier. Healthy recipes use:

- A minimum amount of total fat to achieve the desired taste
- Healthy fats like olive, canola or soybean oils or non-hydrogenated margarines
- Less sugar and related ingredients such as honey, jams and jellies which provide calories but are not rich in vitamins, minerals and other nutrients.
- A minimum amount of salt and rely more on other flavourful ingredients like herbs and spices
- Ingredients higher in fibre, such as whole grains as opposed to refined or highly processed grains

Use these helpful tips to "make-over" your recipes by finding ways to reduce fat, sugar and salt and increase fibre.



Steps you can take

Ways to reduce FAT or make a healthier fat choice

All fat is created equal when it comes to the energy (calories) we get from it. Each gram of fat provides 9 calories, more than double than what you get from protein or carbohydrates. So, whether it's butter, margarine, lard or olive oil, they all provide the same 'amount' of calories.

BUT, not all fats are created equal in their nutritive qualities. Healthier

fats are those you can 'see through' - such as olive oil, canola oil, sunflower oil, other vegetable oils. Less healthy fat choices are coconut oil, palm oil and the solid fats such as butter, lard, hydrogenated hard margarines, shortenings, fat in meat and the skin of poultry, and ghee.

Check out these tips to either reduce the total amount of fat used in recipes or make the fat a healthier choice.

| <i>When recipe calls for:</i> | <i>Try this instead:</i> |
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| Butter, margarine, shortening or oil in cookies, cakes, muffins and quick breads; (note: do not use these ideas with delicate chiffon or other cakes.) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replace up to ½ of the fat called for with mashed fruit or vegetables. For example, unsweetened applesauce or pureed pumpkin, squash or sweet potato is a good replacement in items like cookies, carrot cake or banana bread; pureed prunes are a good replacement for fat in chocolate cake, or • Reduce the overall fat called for (with no substitution) by ¼ - 1/3 ; the product quality will likely not be affected, but it may become stale more quickly, or • Replace up to ¾ of the fat in yeast breads with ricotta cheese |
| Fat to prevent sticking | Line baking pans with parchment paper; use silicon baking pans. |
| <i>When cooking:</i> | |
| Fat to prevent sticking | Use cooking spray or a small amount of vegetable oil on a paper towel to grease the pan; use non-stick skillets. |
| Eggs | Use two egg whites or just under ¼ cup egg |

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| | substitute for each whole egg. |
| Cream for cream soups | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thicken soups using pureed potatoes, carrots, lentils or tofu; or, • Use 1% or 2% milk instead of cream; thicken as above to desired consistency |
| Whole (3.25%) evaporated milk | Use skim or 1% evaporated skim milk. |
| Full-fat hard cheese -to eat or in sandwiches -in casseroles | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use reduced fat (<20% MF cheese) • Use smaller amounts of stronger cheeses such as old cheddar, asiago and parmesan to replace milder tasting cheese |

| <i>When recipe calls for:</i> | <i>Try this instead:</i> |
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| Full-fat cream cheese | Use fat-free or low-fat cream cheese or use low-fat cottage cheese pureed until smooth. |
| Full-fat sour cream | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use fat-free or low-fat sour cream, 2% or fat-free cottage cheese, part-skim ricotta or fat-free plain yogurt; • In baking, substitute low fat yogurt or buttermilk • When making dips, use mashed beans (white, black, kidney, chickpeas) instead of sour cream |
| Full-fat buttermilk | Use low fat buttermilk or yogurt; or place 1 tablespoon lemon juice or vinegar in a one cup measure and fill with enough skim milk or 1% milk to make 1 cup. |

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| Mayonnaise | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use reduced-calorie mayonnaise type salad dressing or reduced-calorie, reduced-fat mayonnaise; or, • Replace ½ or all of the regular mayonnaise in a recipe with low-fat yogurt or low-fat sour cream |
| Oil-based marinades | Reduce the oil by up to ½ and increase other ingredients like wine, balsamic vinegar, fruit juice or fat-free broth. |
| Salad dressings | Try fat-free or reduced-calorie commercial dressing or make your own with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mild vinegars like raspberry, rice wine or sherry; be generous with fresh herbs and spices • orange juice, buttermilk or yogurt to replace some of the oil |
| Whole milk | Use skim milk, 1% milk, evaporated skim milk or plain low-fat calcium fortified soy beverage. |
| Cereal Cream | Use 2% milk, low fat evaporated milk or low-fat sour cream. |
| Whipping Cream | Use a small amount of non-fat whipped topping or cream. |

| <i>When recipe calls for:</i> | <i>Try this instead:</i> |
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| Regular ground beef | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use lean or extra lean ground beef and drain off the fat after browning with a strainer; or, • Substitute vegetarian ground round for part or all of the ground beef |
| Meat for stew | Trim visible fat; brown in a non-stick skillet; substitute ¼- 1/3 of the meat with an equal |

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| | weight of extra vegetables |
| Canned tuna | Use tuna packed in water instead of oil |
| Butter to sauté | Use a small amount of vegetable oil (canola, safflower, sunflower, olive, soybean) to sauté meat and vegetables |
| Butter on cooked vegetables | Season vegetables with lemon juice, herbs and vinegar |

Ways to reduce SUGAR

White sugar, brown sugar, icing sugar, turbinado, muscovado or Demerara sugars, corn syrup, honey, maple syrup and molasses are all forms of 'sugar'. They provide sweetness and calories, but few nutrients. Excess sugar can contribute excess calories and can raise blood sugar levels quickly in people with diabetes. Here are some tips to reduce the sugar in your recipes.

| <i>When recipes call for:</i> | <i>Try this instead:</i> |
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| White, brown or icing sugar in baking cookies, squares, cakes, brownies, quick breads, desserts; Note: do not try this for delicate cakes, candy making. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the sugar by ¼ - 1/3, or • Use extracts such as vanilla, almond, maple, etc and/or extra "sweet" spices such as cinnamon, nutmeg and ginger, or • Replace sugar with SPLENDA® Granular sweetener. One cup (250 mL) is equivalent to one cup (250 mL) of sugar. SPLENDA® Brown Sugar Blend requires only ½ the amount in recipes that use brown sugar. One-half cup (125 mL) of SPLENDA® Brown Sugar Blend is equivalent to one cup (250 mL) of brown sugar. |

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| White, brown or icing sugar in baking cookies, squares, cakes, brownies, quick breads, desserts; Note: do not try this for delicate cakes, candy making. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other artificial sweeteners have limited use in baking and cooking as they cannot withstand high temperatures. Try aspartame (NutraSweet®) in products that are not baked. |
| Fruit packed in syrup | Fruit packed in its own juices or water; fresh fruit. |
| Syrup (as a topping) | Pureed fruit such as unsweetened applesauce, low-calorie, sugar-free syrup or fruit coulis such as raspberry. |

Ways to reduce SODIUM

For many people, excess sodium can contribute to high blood pressure as well as some other health problems. While most of the salt (sodium) we get in our diets comes from processed foods, there are ways to reduce the sodium in the foods we purchase and prepare at home. Get into the habit of label reading and looking for lower sodium varieties of canned, frozen or other processed foods.

| <i>When recipes call for:</i> | <i>Try this instead</i> |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Salt, kosher salt or sea salt | <p>Try going salt free! It may be too big of a change to do all at once -so start slowly. Begin by reducing the salt in recipes by ¼, then 1/3, ½, ¾ and finally eliminating or using the least amount possible while still enjoying the recipe.</p> <p>Flavour foods with fresh or dried herbs and spices, or citrus fruit juices or flavourful vinegars such as balsamic and red or white wine vinegars</p> <p>Make your own spice blend or purchase low sodium prepared spice blends</p> |

| <i>When recipe calls for:</i> | <i>Try this instead:</i> |
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| Canned vegetables, legumes | Buy the low salt variety; drain away the brine and rinse the vegetables or beans under cool water and drain Use fresh or frozen vegetables instead. Cook legumes from scratch and freeze in small portions to use later |
| Soy sauce or other prepared sauces, condiments, barbecue sauces and salsas | Use less of the sauce or condiment; choose low sodium soy sauce Try more 'scratch' cooking and season with non-salt seasonings |
| Broth, soups | Choose sodium reduced soups and broths, or make your own |
| Bacon | Use the low salt variety or use less |
| Monosodium glutamate | Eliminate and use additional herbs and spices |
| Prepared luncheon meats | Use leftover prepared meat, chicken or fish that you've made yourself the low salt way |
| Garlic salt, celery salt, onion salt | Use garlic powder, celery seed or onion powder or use the fresh product |

Ways to increase FIBRE

Grandma may have called it 'roughage'! Fibre is a type of carbohydrate that can actually be very helpful to our bodies. Soluble fibre, found in oats, legumes, barley, apples, eggplant and okra can help to control blood sugar and may be helpful in preventing heart disease. Insoluble fibres, such as that found in wheat bran, whole grains, seeds and the

skins of fruits and vegetables helps to speed foods through the intestinal tract and prevent or improve constipation. Both types are very helpful and most of us don't eat enough fibre. Try these tips to help increase the fibre in your recipes.

| <i>If recipes call for:</i> | <i>Try this instead:</i> |
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| <p>White flour When making cookies, squares muffins, cakes, quick breads, pizza dough, homemade tortillas, roti, chapati, ordumplings.</p> <p>Note - do not use these tips for delicate chiffon cakes.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replace up to half the white flour with whole wheat flour; in some recipes, you'll be able to replace all the white flour with whole wheat, but this may take some experimenting on your part. • Look for bread recipes that have been tested using whole wheat or other whole grain flours • Replace up to ¼ of the flour with ground flaxseed |
| White rice | Use brown rice; it will take longer to cook and require a bit more liquid to produce tender rice. |
| White breadcrumbs | Use whole wheat or other whole grain bread crumbs. |
| Crushed corn flakes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use crushed bran flakes or other crushed whole grain cereal, or • ADD ¼ cup wheat bran or ground flaxseed to oatmeal, bread, muffins and cookies, or • SPRINKLE nuts, seeds or dried fruits on salads |
| Peeled and chopped fruit with edible skins, such as apples, pears | Keep the peel on and chop the fruit |

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PULLING IT ALL TOGETHER

Using the recipe makeover tips above, see how we've taken a favourite Canadian recipe and 'made it over', showing what the changes are and how the nutritional value has improved.

| <i>Chicken Parmesan</i> | <i>Healthy Chicken Parmesan</i> |
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| 1 lb chicken, breast, boneless, skinless | 1 lb chicken, breast, boneless, skinless |
| 1½ cup bread crumbs, dry, grated, plain | 1 cup whole grain bread crumbs, dry, grated, plain |
| 8 Tbsp cheese, parmesan, grated | 8 Tbsp cheese, parmesan, grated |
| 1 Tbsp oregano, ground | 1 Tbsp oregano, ground |
| 1 Tbsp basil, ground | 1 Tbsp basil, ground |
| ½ cup grain, wheat flour, white, all purpose | ½ cup grain, wheat flour, whole grain |
| 2 eggs | ¼ cup egg substitute (yolk replaced) |
| 3 Tbsp olive oil | 1½ Tbsp olive oil |
| 2 cup tomato sauce for spaghetti, canned | 2 cup tomato sauce for spaghetti, canned |
| 12 oz cheese, mozzarella, (25% b.f.) | 6 oz cheese, mozzarella, part skim, 16.5% b.f.) |
| Number of Servings: 4 | Number of Servings: 6 |
| Preparation Time: 30 min | Preparation Time: 30 min |
| Cooking Time: 1 hour | Cooking Time: 1 hour |

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The primary changes included:

- reducing the portion size to be in line with "Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide"
- using whole grain bread crumbs to reduce the calories and increase the fibre
- using whole wheat flour to increase the fibre
- using egg substitute to reduce the fat and cholesterol
- using less oil
- using less cheese and a lower fat cheese

Here's a comparison of some of the nutrients in these two recipes. With just a few changes, we've been able to:

- reduce the calories by half,
- reduce the fat by 2/3 and
- reduce the sodium by 1/3.
- reduce the protein serving size so that it is similar to Canada's Food guide portion size for meats and alternatives

| <i>Per serving</i> | <i>Original Recipe</i> | <i>Recipe Makeover</i> |
|--------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| Calories, kcal | 957 | 454 |
| Fat, g | 48 | 18 |
| Protein, g | 62 | 36 |
| Carbohydrate, g | 68 | 38 |
| Sodium, mg | 1577 | 901 |

WOW - what a difference from a few small changes! Try it yourself on your own recipes and start on the road to Recipe Makeovers!

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Notes

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