



Tips to Cooking and Baking a Healthier Way

A smart and simple way to prepare your food in a healthier way is to use basic cooking techniques such as baking, braising, grilling, roasting, broiling, poaching, sautéing, stir-frying, and steaming. Some of these terms might seem daunting, but they are all fairly simple to use once you know about the cooking method.

Healthy cooking techniques can cut fat and calories. For instance, when frying, one tablespoon of oil adds 14 grams of fat and more than 100 calories. By choosing to roast instead of fry, the oil is eliminated which substantially lowers the fat content of that food.

BAKING surrounds the food with hot, dry air in the oven. Food can be cooked covered or uncovered when baking and it generally does not require adding fat to the food.

BRAISING is typically used for larger pieces of meat that are first browned in a small amount of fat at a high temperature in a pan on top of the stove. After browning the ingredients, they are slowly cooked covered with a small amount of liquid, such as water or broth, either in the oven or on the stove top. Since broiled items are cooked for a short period of time under intense direct heat, the loss of nutrients and the amount of fat are reduced. Braised foods are usually served with a sauce made from the cooking liquid.

GRILLING exposes the food directly to heat using a heat source located beneath the cooking surface. For smaller items such as chopped vegetables, use foil or a long-handled grill basket to prevent pieces from slipping through the rack.

ROASTING uses an oven's dry heat to cook the food. You can roast foods on a baking sheet or in a roasting pan. For poultry, seafood and meat, place a rack inside the roasting pan so that the fat in the food can drip away during cooking. In some cases, you may need to baste the food to keep it from drying out.

BROILING uses heat from an overhead source to cook foods as well as indirect heat from the preheated platter or grate. To broil indoors, place food on a broiler rack below a heat element.

POACHING transfers heat from a liquid to a food. To poach foods, gently simmer ingredients in water or a flavorful liquid such as broth, vinegar or juice until they're cooked through and tender. The desired liquid temperature is between 160-180°F, with only slight movement and little to no bubbles. Boiling water which poaching will cause the ingredients to fall apart or toughen.

SAUTÉING transfers heat from a hot sauté pan to food with the aid of a small amount of low-sodium broth, cooking spray, or water. The liquid should just cover the bottom of the pan. The food should be placed in the pan in a single layer and turned or tossed occasionally.

STIR-FRYING is a variation of sautéing. It uses a small amount of liquid to rapidly cook small, uniform-sized pieces of food in a wok or large nonstick frying pan. The ingredients are constantly tossed or turned.

STEAMING is one of the simplest cooking techniques that lock in moisture and nutrients without the added fat. It is often used for tender foods that don't require long cooking times, such as fish and vegetables. If you use a flavorful liquid or add seasonings to the water, the food will be flavored as it cooks. The food is placed in a basket or rack above a boiling liquid so that the food does not touch the liquid, but allows the steam to circulate around the food.



Easy Substitutions to make your Recipe more Nutritious!

Dietary guidelines recommend we reduce the amount of fat, sugar, and salt we eat and increase the amount of fiber in our diets by eating more whole grains, fruits, and vegetables. One way to improve your diet is by altering the recipes of the foods that you are now eating by using less fat, sugar, and salt.

Grains Group	
All-purpose flour	Whole-wheat flour, soy flour, or crushed bran cereal. Try ½ of the called amount in whole-wheat flour and ½ in plain flour. Whole-wheat flour is less dense and works well in softer baked products like cakes and muffins.
Dry bread crumbs	Rolled oats, whole wheat bread crumbs, crushed bran cereal, or flax
Enriched pasta	Whole-wheat or brown rice pasta
Pie crust	Graham cracker crust
White bread	100% whole wheat or sprouted bread
White rice	Brown rice, wild rice, quinoa, bulgur, couscous, pearl barley
Pasta with alfredo, cheese, or cream sauce	Whole-wheat pasta with marinara sauce
Dairy Group	
Dairy	Equal portions of fat-free milk, almond, oat, soy, hazelnut, or rice milk
Condensed whole milk or Evaporated milk	Evaporated skim milk
Creams	Mashed potato, mashed potato flakes, pureed garbanzo beans, pureed tofu, soy sour cream, soy whipping cream, or soy creamer, pureed starchy vegetables
Full-fat cheeses (Colby, Swiss, Cheddar)	Low-fat (part-skim) or fat-free cheese such as string, mozzarella, or cheese labeled low-fat or fat free
Parmesan Cheese	Nutritional yeast or garlic powder
Ricotta Cheese	Firm tofu, drained and crumbled
Cream Cheese	Fat-free or low-fat cream cheese; low-fat cottage cheese or Neufchatel pureed until smooth
Sour Cream	Fat-free or low-fat sour cream; plain fat-free or low-fat yogurt
Butter	Plant stanol spreads, yogurt-based spreads, reduced-fat soft or liquid margarines, Dairy-free non-hydrogenated margarine (Earth Balance; Spectrum)
Fruits & Vegetables	
Iceberg Lettuce	Arugula, chicory, collard greens, kale, mustard greens, spinach, or watercress
Mashed potatoes	Mashed sweet potatoes
Fruit canned in heavy syrup	Fresh fruit or fruit canned in its own juices or water

More Substitutions to make your Recipe more Nutritious!

Protein Group	
Bacon	Canadian bacon, turkey bacon, or lean prosciutto
Sausage	Turkey or chicken sausage (low-sodium)
Marbled, high-fat meats (such as prime cuts)	Leaner cuts like round, loin, sirloin, or chuck
Ground Meat	Extra-lean or lean ground beef, pork, chicken, or turkey (>90% lean)
Meat	Add vegetables and mix in with meat; tofu or soy based for a meatless substitute, legumes, tempeh, seitan, tofu, textured vegetable protein (TVP), vegetarian burgers, portobello mushrooms
Poultry, dark meat	Skinless white meat chicken or turkey
Luncheon Meats (bologna, salami, pastrami, corned beef)	Turkey, chicken, low-sodium boiled ham, lean roast beef, peanut or nut butters
Eggs	(Each is equivalent to 1 egg) 2 egg whites; ¼ c. egg substitute; ¼ c. silken tofu blend; ½ mashed banana; ¼ c. applesauce or pureed fruit; ½ c. soy or rice yogurt; ¼ c. mashed white potato or sweet potato; 2-3 Tbsp tomato paste; ¼ c. cooked oats; 2-3 Tbsp bread crumbs; 2-3 Tbsp flour; 1 tsp baking powder; 1 Tbsp ground flaxseed + 3 Tbsp. water + 1 Tbsp oil + 1 tsp baking powder + 1 tsp cornstarch
Oils	
Butter, margarine, shortening or oil to prevent sticking	Vegetable cooking spray, low-sodium vegetable or chicken broth, or nonstick pans
Butter, shortening, lard, or oil	Light butter or tub margarine or ½ the amount of fruit puree when baking; vegetable oils (canola, corn, olive, soybean)
Oil in baked goods	Unsweetened applesauce, baby pureed prunes, mashed bananas, or yogurt for ½ of the called for shortening or oil. Prune puree works well in darker items like, chocolate cake or brownies.
Mayonnaise	Reduced fat or reduced calorie mayonnaise
Oil-based marinades	Wine, balsamic vinegar ,fruit juice or fat-free broth
Salad dressing	Vinegar and oil dressing, fat-free or reduced-calorie dressing, herbed season olive oil or flavored vinegars
Tartar sauce	Lemon juice