

Make Healthful Meals

IT'S EASY TO MAKE HEALTHFUL MEALS!

Preparing foods in a healthful way does not require more time or effort. Here are some tips to select and prepare foods for better health.

When You Shop for Foods

Use food labels to compare foods and make healthy choices.

1. Read the Nutrition Facts panel to look for:

- the serving size of the food or beverage.
- the number of servings in this size of bottle, jar, or package.
- the amount of calories and nutrients in each serving.

Example:

1 cup of 2% fat milk has 120 calories and 5 grams of total fat.

1 cup of skim milk has 80 calories and 0 grams of total fat.

2. Read the **Ingredients** to see if a product is relatively high in certain ingredients. By law, ingredients are listed in order by weight. The one that adds the most weight to the product is listed first. The one that adds the least weight is listed last.

Example:

Check the ingredient list on a loaf of bread. If whole wheat flour appears first on the list, the bread is high in whole wheat flour.

3. Read the **Nutrition Facts panel** and look for any **nutrient claims** on the label. Food companies must report **Percent Daily Value** in foods and they may also tell you if a food is high or low in certain nutrients.

Example:

Added fiber, reduced fat, no trans fat, or high in vitamin C.

WHEN YOU PREPARE OR SERVE FOODS

Use less fat.

Meat, Poultry, and Fish

- Choose lower-fat meat and poultry.
 - ✓ Ground beef that is less than 20% fat
 - ✓ Lean ground turkey in place of ground beef
 - ✓ Lean meats instead of hot dogs or bologna
- Prepare or serve these foods with less fat.
 - ✓ Bake, broil, or roast these rather than frying them
 - ✓ Trim off all visible fat from meats
 - ✓ Drain fat from cooked meats
 - ✓ Remove skin from chicken or turkey

Milk Products

- Use skim milk instead of whole milk.
- Use low-fat cheese instead of regular cheese.
- Use low-fat yogurt instead of sour cream.
- Use ricotta cheese instead of cream cheese.

Oils, Toppings, and Condiments

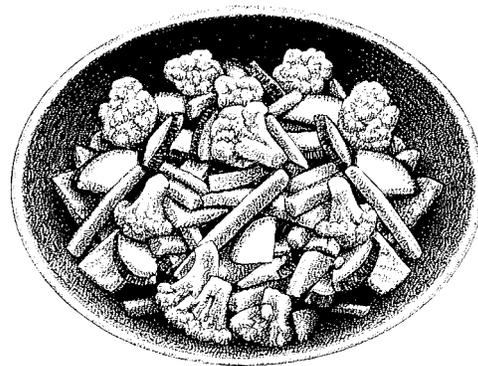
- Use less butter and margarine.
- Use vegetable oil or non-fat cooking spray to sauté foods.
- Use low-fat mayonnaise.
- Use less gravy on meat and potatoes.

Soups and Stews

- Chill, then skim off hardened fat before reheating.
- For creamed condensed soups, prepare with skim milk instead of whole milk.

Breads and Grain Products

- Limit high-fat breads such as croissants and some muffins.
- Replace high-fat crackers with reduced-fat crackers.



Use less sodium.

- Buy fresh or frozen foods rather than canned foods.
- Choose canned foods labeled “no salt,” “no sodium,” or “reduced sodium.”
- Use fewer processed meats.
- Omit salt or use less than the amount listed in a recipe.
- Use less celery salt, seasoned salt, soy sauce, monosodium glutamate (MSG), Worcestershire sauce, and bouillon cubes.
- Make soup stock from turkey, chicken or beef bones.
- Try herbs, spices, and seasonings for flavors.

ALL-PURPOSE SEASONING*For meats, vegetables, and tomato-based foods*

2 Tbsp. dry mustard	2 tsp. black or white pepper
2 Tbsp. onion powder	2 tsp. thyme
2 Tbsp. paprika	½ tsp. ground basil
2 Tbsp. garlic powder	

Blend spices thoroughly. Store in an airtight container.

Yield: about ½ cup**ITALIAN SEASONING***For pasta sauces or Italian dishes*

4 Tbsp. dried parsley, crushed	1 tsp. ground thyme or marjoram
4 tsp. dried minced onion	2 tsp. celery seed
1 tsp. ground oregano	1 tsp. garlic powder
2 tsp. dried basil, crushed	¼ tsp. black pepper

Blend spices thoroughly. Store in an airtight container.

Yield: about ½ cup

Source of Recipes: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Midwest Region. *What's in a Meal? A Resource Manual for Providing Nutritious Meals in the Child and Adult Food Care Program*, Fourth Edition, 2003. Reproduced by the National Food Service Management Institute.

Use less sugar.

- Eat fresh fruit or unsweetened frozen fruit.
- Eat fruit canned in its own juice or water.
- Use up to $\frac{1}{3}$ less sugar in recipes for baked goods.
- Choose foods with fewer *added sugars* (brown sugar, cane sugar, corn sweetener, corn syrup, high fructose corn syrup, dextrose, fructose, glucose, honey, invert sugar, lactose, malt syrup, maltose, maple syrup, molasses, or sucrose).

Add more fiber.

- Use brown rice instead of white rice.
- Use whole grains in mixed dishes, such as barley in stew.
- Add rolled oats to meatloaf or meatballs.
- Use rolled oats as breading for baked chicken or fish.
- Replace half of the meat in chili with kidney or black beans.
- Make soups with dried beans, split peas, or lentils.
- Add vegetables to quiche, casseroles, and spaghetti sauce.



- Serve fresh fruits or vegetables as a snack.

Add more fruits.

- Top cereal with fresh fruit.
- Add orange pieces to a tossed salad.
- Serve cut-up fruit as a snack.
- Mix fruit with low-fat yogurt.
- For dessert, serve baked apples, pears, or a fruit salad.
- Top frozen yogurt with berries.
- Make a fruit smoothie by blending milk or yogurt with fruits.

Add more vegetables.

- Try a main dish salad for lunch.
- Add chopped vegetables to soups, casseroles, pasta sauces, lasagna, meatloaf, and stir-fry meals.
- Use cooked potatoes to thicken stews or soups.