

Healthy Cooking



Healthy eating isn't just about what you eat; it's also about how you prepare the food. Healthy cooking consists of using substitutions and techniques to make delicious, nutritious meals. You don't have to give up your favorite meals to eat healthy; simply modify the ingredients and the method of cooking. There are a variety of healthy cooking techniques and substitutions available to help you create delicious, good-for-you meals.

Healthy substitutes

Healthy eating doesn't mean avoiding your favorite meals. Modify the recipes you love and continue enjoying them -- and still improve your nutrition. One quick and simple way to modify your meals is to flavor them with herbs and spices instead of fats. You can also replace less nutritious ingredients with healthy substitutions for an easy way to make your recipes taste great and still be healthy.

Original ingredient . . .	Substitution
Whole milk	Fat-free milk
Whole eggs	Egg whites
Fats (when baking) . . .	Applesauce or bananas
White bread	Whole-wheat bread
Mayonnaise	Fat-free sour cream or yogurt
White rice	Brown rice

Healthy cooking techniques

Not all cooking methods are created equal. The healthiest way to cook depends on what type of food (vegetables, meats, grains) you are cooking. When preparing food, avoid using fats (oils, butter, margarine, and other solid fats); instead, use water as much as possible. If you must use fats while cooking, choose unsaturated fats (these are typically liquid at room temperature), such as olive, canola, sunflower and safflower oils, which can help lower cholesterol levels.

Here are some of the healthier techniques for preparing specific food types:

- **Steaming** – a quick and easy way to preserve nutrients for cooking fresh or frozen vegetables.
- **Baking** – a good method for cooking many types of foods, including meats, poultry, fish and potatoes. Use a little extra virgin olive oil and herbs/spices to make these foods taste great.

- **Sautéing** – a great alternative to steaming. Use a small amount of fat (olive or canola oil) to give vegetables a nice taste while still providing nutrients.
- **Stir-frying** – a healthy way to cook vegetables, meats, and grains in one pan while using a small amount (1-2 tablespoons) of olive or canola oil.
- **Grilling** – a perfect way to cook meats, poultry, and fish. Lean cuts are healthier and help prevent flare-ups or charring.
- **Roasting** – is a tasty and healthy way to make various vegetables, meats and poultry.

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