

## Recipe Makeover Tips

Many recipes can be altered by using healthier ingredients without affecting their taste or texture. Try some of the following tips:

**1. Reduce the amount of fat, sugar, and sodium.** By cutting fat and sugar, you also cut calories. Use the following guidelines:

- **Fat.** For baked goods, use half the butter, shortening or oil, and replace the other half with unsweetened applesauce, mashed banana or prune puree.
- **Sugar.** Reduce the amount of sugar by one-third to one-half. When you use less sugar, add spices such as cinnamon, cloves, allspice, and nutmeg, or flavorings such as vanilla extract to enhance the sweetness of the food.
- **Sodium.** Reduce salt by one-half in baked goods that do not require yeast. Foods that require yeast *must* have the required amount of salt for necessary leavening. However, most main dishes, salads, soups, and other foods can have salt reduced by one-half or eliminated altogether. Use reduced sodium condiments whenever possible and use herbs and spices to add flavor instead of salt.

### **2. Make a healthy substitution**

Substitutions not only reduce the amount of fat, calories and sodium in your recipes, but can also boost the nutritional content. By using whole wheat pasta or flours you will double or triple the fiber. Try other whole grains such as quinoa or bulgur instead of rice. Save calories and almost 8 grams of fat per cup by substituting fat-free milk or whole milk or cream in recipes.

### **3. Delete an ingredient.**

In some recipes, you can delete an ingredient altogether. Opt to eliminate optional condiments such as pickles, olives, butter, syrup, etc., in recipes which can have large amounts of sodium, sugar, fat and calories.

### **4. Change the method of preparation.**

Use healthy cooking techniques such as braising, broiling, grilling and steaming to capture the flavor and nutrients of your food without adding excessive amounts of fat, oil or sodium. Instead of frying in oil or butter, try baking, broiling or poaching. Instead of basting the meat or vegetables with oil drippings, use wine, fruit juice, vegetable juice or broth. Using nonstick pans or spraying with nonstick cooking spray will further reduce the amount of fat calories added.

### **5. Change the portion size.**

No matter how much you reduce, alter or omit ingredients, some recipes may still be high in sugar, salt, fat or calories. Reduce the amount of food eaten; small portions will allow you to eat a wider variety of foods during a meal without affecting your waistline.

Sources: Mayo Clinic, [www.eatright.org](http://www.eatright.org)