



## Boost nutrients, cut fat in recipes

### I'm looking for easy ways to make some of my recipes and meals healthier. Any ideas?

This is a great way to start the new year, and yes, there are plenty of ideas to increase nutrients and reduce fat and calories in the foods you prepare at home. Below are some favorites, primarily from Ohio State University Extension (see "Modifying a Recipe to be Healthier" at <http://ohioline.osu.edu>) and eXtension (see "Recipe Substitutions" at <http://www.extension.org>).

To reduce fat:

- Use evaporated skim milk instead of cream.

- Use 1/4 cup egg substitute or two egg whites in place of a whole egg.

- In quick breads, muffins, brownies or cakes, substitute half or all of the oil, butter or other shortening with unsweetened applesauce, mashed bananas or fruit puree. Note: Making this substitution will increase carbohydrates in the end product — something to be aware of if you have diabetes.

- Use low-fat or nonfat yogurt in place of sour cream.

- Use low-fat cottage cheese pureed until smooth or low-fat cream cheese in place of full-fat cream cheese.

- Try lower-fat or nonfat versions of a variety of foods, especially milk, cheese, cream cheese, mayonnaise, salad dressing and margarine.

- Use an air popper for popcorn.

To increase fiber:

- Replace half the all-purpose flour in baked goods with whole-

wheat flour.

- Add oats or finely ground fiber-rich non-sweetened cereal to replace some or all of the bread crumbs in a recipe, or to the crust or batter when making desserts.

- Add beans or barley to soups, stews and casseroles.

- Add sauteed vegetables — cherry tomatoes, onions, spinach or zucchini, for example — to scrambled eggs.

- Don't peel apples, cucumbers, zucchini or potatoes before eating them or using them in recipes.

- Choose high-fiber alternatives for cereal, bread and pasta — look at the Nutrition Facts labels.

To increase other nutrients:

- Add cooked and mashed cauliflower to mashed potatoes, or add cooked chopped cauliflower to macaroni and cheese.

- Add chopped spinach or zucchini to pasta sauce, soups and casseroles.

- For salads, choose romaine, endive or other dark-green leafy lettuce instead of iceberg lettuce, and include baby spinach leaves.

- Increase calcium by adding nonfat milk or dry milk to a casserole's cream sauce or to cream soups.

- Increase antioxidants by sprinkling hot sauce on foods. The capsaicin in it shows promise in anti-cancer studies, though it may take quite a bit to have a discernible effect.

*Chow Line is a service of Ohio State University Extension and the Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center. Send questions to Chow Line, c/o Martha Filipic, 2021 Coffey Road, Columbus, OH, 43210-1044, or [filipic.3@osu.edu](mailto:filipic.3@osu.edu).*



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### Editor:

This column was reviewed by Dan Remley, field specialist for Ohio State University Extension in family nutrition and wellness.

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