

Home on the Range

Low-Fat Means Healthful, Flavorful Meals

Eating low-fat meals doesn't mean eating bland, tasteless food. It doesn't mean giving up desserts and eating only vegetables and fruit—although fresh fruit and vegetables should certainly be a vital part of the meal.

With a little bit of know how, you can reduce your favorite calorie-loaded dessert to a healthful level and maintain the taste appeal. Low-fat substitutions of dairy products in particular are becoming tastier and easier to find in supermarkets.

When it comes to baked good, apple sauce and apple juice are excellent fat substitutes for oil and shortening. In addition, the sugar can be reduced because apple sauce and apple juice add natural sweetness and flavor to baked goods.

Some cooks substitute apple sauce for the total amount of shortening requested in a recipe; others use half shortening and half apple sauce. Experimentation works best for determining what levels of substitution is acceptable to you and your family's palette.

Of the baked goods, those that have a naturally dense texture such as coffee cakes, quick breads, muffins, spice, chocolate, and carrot cakes are the easiest to adapt. Cakes that have a light, tender texture are more difficult to modify. These cakes get their volume from the air incorporated into the batter when the butter or shortening is creamed with sugar. Eliminating fat means that the cake will become more compact. To remedy this, beat egg whites and fold them into the cake batter.

It's a good idea to substitute a whole grain flour for at least one-third to one-half of the refined flour used in the recipe. You may also use wheat bran, oat bran or oats to replace part of the flour. The fiber in these ingredients will help maintain a pleasing texture in your baked goods recipe.

Here are some more tips on how to reduce the amount of fat and cholesterol in your diet.

- Steam, boil, or bake vegetables and season them with herbs and spices, rather than serve with sauces, margarine or butter.

- Cut back on the amount of salad dressing or use low-fat salad dressings.

- Drink skim or low-fat milk

instead of whole milk. Use skim or nonfat dry milk in soups, puddings, and home-baked products.

- Choose lean meat and fish.
- Trim visible fat from meat before cooking.
- Broil, bake, or boil, rather than fry meat and poultry.
- Eat poultry without the skin.
- Chill meat broth until the fat becomes hardened, then spoon fat off before using the broth.
- Eat fewer bakery items.
- Limit use of organ meats such as liver.
- Read labels. Limit foods that contain coconut or palm oil.

LOW-FAT POTATO TOPPERS

Texas Topper:

- 1 cup plain low-fat or non-fat yogurt
- 1/2 cup salsa
- 1/2 cup chopped stuffed green olives

Combine all ingredients in small bowl, chill until ready to serve.

Salinas Valley Potato Topper:

- 1 tablespoon butter
- 1/2 cup chopped fresh broccoli
- 1 cup plain low-fat or non-fat yogurt
- 1/2 cup shredded part-skim mozzarella cheese

Melt butter over medium heat. Add broccoli and saute until just tender. Remove from the heat, stir in other ingredients. Spoon on spud. Sprinkle with paprika.

DRY SOUP MIX

Use this instead of cream soups in casserole recipes. It has about one-third the calories.

- 2 cups non-fat dry milk powder
- 1/2 cup cornstarch
- 1/2 cup instant reduced sodium chicken or beef bouillon
- 1/2 teaspoon dried crushed thyme
- 1/2 teaspoon dried crushed basil
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper

Combine all ingredients using blender or food processor. Store in airtight container.

To prepare as substitute for one can of condensed cream soup, stir together one-third cup dry mix and 1 1/4 cups water in saucepan. Cook and stir until thickened.

Rachel Glick
New Holland



Low fat meals can be as tasty as Apple Stuffed Pork Chops, Easy Lemon Mushroom Risotto, Roasted Carrots With Lime, and Better Baked Ziti.

BAKED RAISIN FRENCH TOAST

- 12 slices raisin bread
 - 1 cup skim milk
 - 8 egg whites
 - 1/2 cup packed brown sugar
 - 1 teaspoon vanilla
- Preheat oven to 325 degrees. Spray jelly roll pan with non-stick cooking spray. Lay 12 slices bread on the jelly roll pan; side by side.

Beat together milk, egg whites, brown sugar, and vanilla. Pour mixture over the bread. Turn bread from side to side to soak up the mixture.

Bake for 27-30 minutes. Serve immediately sprinkled with confectioners' sugar or syrup.

Yields: six two-slice servings.
Betty Light
Lebanon

APPLE BUTTER BUNDT CAKE

- 1/2 whole wheat flour
- 1 1/2 cups unbleached flour
- 2 teaspoons baking soda
- 2 cups apple butter
- 2 egg whites
- 1/2 cup dark raisins
- 1 1/2 tablespoons confectioners' sugar

Combine the flours and baking soda, and stir to mix well. Add the apple butter and egg whites, and stir to mix well. Stir in the raisins.

Coat a 12-cup bundt pan with nonstick cooking spray. Spread the batter evenly in the pan, and bake at 350 degrees for 30-35 minutes, or until a wooden toothpick inserted in the center of the cake comes out clean.

Cool the cake in the pan for 20 minutes. Invert onto a wire rack and cool to room temperature. Transfer to serving plate, sift the confectioners' sugar over the top, slice and serve.

Yield: 16 servings. Calories, 146; fat, .6 g; protein, 2.9 g; cholesterol, 0 mg; sodium, 111 mg; fiber, 2 g; calcium, 12 mg; potassium, 185 mg; iron, 1.1 mg.
Secrets of Fat-Free Baking

APPLE SAUCE MAPLE MUFFINS

- 2 cups whole wheat flour
- 1 tablespoon baking powder
- 1 1/4 cups unsweetened apple sauce
- 1/2 cup maple syrup
- 2 egg whites
- 1/2 cup raisins or chopped walnuts

Combine the flour and baking powder, and stir to mix well. Add the apple sauce, maple syrup, and egg whites, stir just until the dry ingredients are moistened. Fold in the raisins or walnuts.

Coat muffin cups with nonstick cooking spray, and fill 3/4 full with the batter. Bake at 350 degrees for 16 to 18 minutes, or just until a wooden toothpick inserted in the center of a muffin comes out clean.

Remove the muffin tin from the oven, and allow it to sit for 5 minutes before removing the muffins. Serve warm or at room temperature.

Yield 12 muffins: Calories, 130; fat .4 g; protein, 3.6 g; cholesterol, 0 mg; fiber 3.3 g; calcium, 26 mg; potassium, 188 mg; iron, 1 mg.

Secrets of Fat-Free Baking
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Featured Recipe

Incorporate calorie- and fat-aware eating into everyday living. Don't do without, do with less—less fat and sodium in the diet for starters.

Vivacious people tend to eat healthier foods—foods that are lighter; yet full of fabulous flavor as well as energy.

Get a start on adding vim and vigor to your lifestyle with this recipe.

APPLE STUFFED PORK CHOPS

- 4 pork loin chops
- 2 1/2 teaspoons Onion and Herb Seasoning Blend
- 2 teaspoons water
- 1 1/2 cups peeled and thinly sliced apples
- 1/2 cup chopped green onions
- 2 teaspoons Balsamic vinegar
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 2 teaspoons Dijon mustard
- 1/2 cup dry bread crumbs

Cut a pocket in each chop. Sprinkle 1/2 teaspoon of herb blend in each chop. Set aside and make the filling.

Filling: In a skillet, saute apple slices and green onions in water. Cook over medium heat until apples just start to cook and soften. Add vinegar and stir to coat. Portion into each chop and fasten meat with toothpicks.

In a separate bowl, mix together olive oil and mustard. Spread on the outside of the chops. Mix bread crumbs with herb seasoning and coat the chops with the mixture. Place in shallow baking pan sprayed with non-stick cooking spray. Bake uncovered in preheated 425 degree oven for 15 minutes. Lower oven setting to 325 degrees and bake until browned and crispy, about 25 to 40 minutes, depending on chop thickness. Serves 8.

No-Fat Drizzle Sauce

- 3 teaspoons cornstarch
- 4 tablespoons low-sodium chicken broth
- 1 cup apple juice
- 2 tablespoons Balsamic vinegar

Cook in a saucepan over medium heat until thickened. Adds flavor to cooked vegetables and meats, like Apple Stuffed Pork Chops.

Recipe Topics

If you have recipes for the topics listed below, please share them with us. We welcome your recipes, but ask that you include accurate measurements, a complete list of ingredients and clear instructions with each recipe you submit. Send your recipes to Lou Ann Good, Lancaster Farming, P.O. Box 609, Ephrata, PA 17522. Recipes should reach our office one week before publishing date.

February	07-	Muffin Mania Week
	14-	Valentine's Day
	21-	Potato Lover's Month
	28-	Cooking for the Diabetic