

# Recipe Substitutions Make for Healthier Meals

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Want to reduce fat, sugar and sodium from your meals without losing flavor? Swapping ingredients is your best and healthiest bet.

With the right ingredients in your meals, you can create the recipe for a healthier life. This usually means recipe substitutions. Swapping one ingredient for another can help subtract calories, sodium, sugar and unhealthy fats from your meals. The right choices will keep them tasting great.

Go ahead - use fat-free or low-fat milk instead of whole. Substitute applesauce for vegetable oil. Swap fat-free or low-fat yogurt for mayo. See how some simple substitutions can make the recipes you love healthier.

| When the recipe calls for:                        | Use:  |
|---|---|
| Whole milk  | Fat-free milk, 1-percent milk or evaporated nonfat milk   |
| Sour cream (1 cup)                                | 1 cup of low-fat yogurt, low-fat cottage cheese, low-fat buttermilk or reduced-fat sour cream   |
| A whole egg                                       | 2 egg whites or 1/4 cup of an egg substitute  |
| Shortening, butter or oil in baking               | Vegetable oil (olive oil or canola oil), trans-fat-free margarine or pureed fruit, such as applesauce or prunes   |
| Mayonnaise for salads and salad dressings (1 cup) | 1 cup plain fat-free or low-fat yogurt. Greek style yogurt is thicker and works better than regular yogurt. Season accordingly with extra herbs or spices. Or mix together 1/2 cup plain fat-free or low-fat Greek yogurt and 1/2 cup low-fat mayo. |
| Cream cheese                                      | Low-fat cream cheese  |
| Ricotta   | Low-fat cottage cheese  |
| Evaporated milk                                   | Evaporated nonfat milk  |
| Margarine   | Trans-fat-free buttery spreads  |
| Salad dressing                                    | Reduce portion by at least third, or use a reduced-calorie dressing. Try a small amount of extra-virgin olive oil mixed with lemon juice or vinegar.  |
| Oil-based marinade                                | Wine, balsamic vinegar, fruit juice or fat-free, low-sodium broth.  |
| Bacon   | Small amounts of turkey bacon, Canadian bacon, smoked turkey or prosciutto  |

More great ways to eat healthy:

- **Top casseroles with healthier ingredients.** Use ground almonds, oats, crushed bran flakes or wheat germ instead of fried onion rings or processed bread crumbs.
- **Choose reduced-fat cheeses** for salads and casseroles.
- **Use low-sodium or unsalted ingredients**, such as herbs and spices. Be careful not to eliminate salt in yeast breads.
- **If your recipe suggests 2 cups of flour**, use 1 cup of all-purpose flour and 1 cup of whole-wheat to boost the fiber and nutrient content. Also, 100 percent whole-wheat pastry flour works great for muffins and cakes.
- **Reduce sugar by one-fourth to one-third** in cookies and cakes. Adding extra spices can perk up the flavor without adding excess sugar. Try adding cinnamon, nutmeg, apple, pumpkin pie spice and ginger.
- **Use meat substitutes** like tofu in lasagna, or use lower-fat meats like lean ground turkey and chicken.
- **Try brown rice, bulgur, barley or quinoa** instead of white rice.
- **Oven- or pan-fry instead of deep frying.** Choose canola oil or olive oil, and use about a teaspoon per serving (depending on the item). For every tablespoon of oil you cut, you'll save 120 calories and 14 grams of fat.
- **Remove or cut extra ingredients.** If a recipe calls for one cup of chocolate chips, use half a cup. Instead of frosting, sprinkle on powdered sugar (or just use less frosting).

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Sources:

- American Heart Association. Smart substitutions.
- United States Department of Agriculture. ChooseMyPlate.gov. Choose a food group.

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