

Q.

How can I make holiday recipes healthier?

A.

So you're hosting and want to make the meal a little healthier? That's great.

You don't have to give up those favorite family dishes. But you can make simple-ingredient swaps (without compromising taste), to serve healthier food.¹

Here are some simple substitutes you can make:²

Dairy Products

- Replace whole milk or cream with fatfree milk or soymilk.
- Substitute plain, fatfree or lowfat yogurt for sour cream.

Spices & Seasonings

- Use a variety of herbs and spices in place of salt.
- Use lowsodium bouillon and broths, instead of regular bouillons and broths.

Oils & Butter

- Instead of cooking with lard, butter, shortening, or other fats that are hard at room temperature, use a small amount of vegetable oil.
- Replace hardstick margarine with regular-soft margarine made with vegetable oil. Healthier margarine includes no trans fats and lists liquid-vegetable oil as the first ingredient on the food label.

Eggs

In baking or cooking, use egg whites or an egg substitute.



Meats & Poultry

- If you eat meat, choose a lean cut of meat and remove any visible fat.
- Remove skin from chicken and other poultry where fat is stored before cooking.

Sandwiches & Salads

- Use fat-free or low-fat mayonnaise, instead of regular versions.
- Make your own low calorie vinaigrette salad dressing with equal parts water and vinegar or lemon juice, and half as much oil.
- Garnish salads with fruits and vegetables instead of cheese and meats.

Soups and Stews

- Use cooking spray, water, or stock to sauté onion for flavoring stews, soups, and sauces.
- Remove fat from homemade broths, soups, and stews by chilling after cooking. Before reheating the dish, lift off the hardened fat that formed at the surface.
- If you don't have time to chill the dish, then float a few ice cubes on the surface of the warm liquid to harden the fat. Then, remove and discard the fat.

ASK THE *Wellness* DOCTOR

Breads

- When making muffins or quick breads, use 3 ripe, wellmashed bananas for each 1/2 C of butter or oil called for in the recipe.
- Applesauce also works as a good substitute for butter, margarine, oil, or shortening in muffins, quick breads, and cookies.

Desserts

- Make your own pie crust without the trans fat used in premade pie crust. Use vegetable oil in place of butter or shortening.
- For chocolate desserts, use 3 T of cocoa instead of 1 ounce of baking chocolate. If fat is needed to replace the fat found in chocolate, add 1 T or less of vegetable oil.
- To make cakes and softdrop cookies, use no more than 2 T of fat for each cup of flour.

Before you start cooking, review this list of substitute ingredients and make sure you have everything you need to make your meal a little healthier.

References

1. Harvard University. (2019). Comfort food without the guilt. From: <https://tinyurl.com/y2yuiryo>
2. American Heart Association. (2014). Smart substitutions to eat healthy. From: <https://tinyurl.com/ybg2f9nl>