

Lower Fat in Meals and Recipes to Make Healthier

While it is not healthy to cut out all of the fat from you and your family's meals, most of us could probably benefit from reducing fat, especially saturated and trans fat. Here are some ways to reduce fat in meals and recipes.

Dairy

- Use reduced-fat, low-fat, or non-fat milk, yogurt, cheese, and sour cream.
- Use less cheese than a recipe calls for.
- Substitute a smaller amount of a sharper cheese for a milder one.
- Try new low-fat or non-fat products, such as skim milk plus or fat free half and half.
- Make low-fat whipped topping from evaporated skim milk. Partially freeze the milk, then add a spoonful of sugar and whip until it holds soft peaks.

Meat

- Use USDA select or choice grades. Limit use of prime grades which tend to be heavily marbled, making them high in saturated fat.
- Pick lean cuts of meat, such as loin and round for beef and pork. Ask your grocer for help if you are not sure which cuts are the leanest.
- Trim fat from the outside of meat.
- Remove skin from poultry.
- Limit your intake of dark poultry meat.
- Choose smaller portions of meat (3-ounce servings) or add less meat to a recipe.
- Limit your intake of high-fat process meats, such as bacon, sausage, salami, bologna, and other cold cuts.
- Choose hamburger that is medium-to-deep red in color. This signifies a lower fat content. Purchase lean or extra lean ground beef or that has no more than 15 percent fat.
- Drain and rinse cooked ground meats before adding other ingredients.
- Remove the fat from meat drippings by using a special separator cup or by chilling drippings so the fat rises and hardens at the top.

Oil and Fat

- Use a soft tub margarine or spread with the lowest levels of saturated and trans fat.
- Use reduced-fat or fat-free salad dressing and mayonnaise
- Use olive and canola oils.

Cooking and baking

- Bake, broil, grill, or roast instead of deep-fat frying or pan frying
- Use less fat in baking
 - Replace up to half the oil with pureed fruit or buttermilk.
 - Experiment with decreasing fat by one-quarter to one-third in your favorite recipes.
- Choose fruit-based desserts instead of heavier, high-fat items like cheesecake, and frosted layer cake.