



SETTING UP A HEALTHY LOW-FAT KITCHEN

There are plenty of reasons for turning to a low-fat diet. The most obvious, as weight watchers know, is that, gram for gram, fat is much higher in calories than either carbohydrate or protein (9 calories per gram of fat versus 4 calories per gram of carbohydrate or protein). What's more, there's a hefty 45 calories in every fat exchange. So the fastest way to trim calories – and inches from your waistline – is to trim fat from your diet.

Low-fat eating is also an important way to reduce the risk of health problems and chronic disease. Research indicates that too much saturated fat and cholesterol in your food can lead to heart disease, atherosclerosis (hardening of the arteries), stroke, and certain types of cancer.

COOKING EQUIPMENT: In addition to cooking techniques that promote healthy cooking, there are several pieces of cooking equipment that help chip away at the fat in recipes. The following items are by no means essential. Evaluate your eating and cooking style; then gradually add the equipment to your kitchen that would benefit you the most. Here are the organizational principles you need to work with:

- Measuring ingredients and portions with standard measuring cups and spoons is important to healthy cooking. Be as precise as you can!
- Fresh vegetables and fruits need to be stored in spacious refrigerated quarters, and prepared on a quality cutting board with first-class knives. The same is true for lean meats, poultry, and fish often must be trimmed, marinated or tenderized.
- A kitchen scale can help with weighing and measuring foods like meat.
- An assortment of large pots, kettles, and casserole dishes make for easy preparation of low-fat pasta and soups. (Prepare then freeze for quick meals later.)
- Likewise, the energy-saving path to pureed soups and sauces is through a blender or food processor.
- No fat-free kitchen is complete without a nonstick skillet and cookware for steaming, grilling, broiling, sautéing, poaching and/or microwave cooking.

How you put these principles into practice in your own kitchen set-up has as much to do with financial and space constraints as with food likes and dislikes.

Broiler Pan The top rack on a broiler pan allows fat to drip away from the meat and poultry. For easy cleanup, coat the bottom pan with vegetable cooking spray or add water to coat the bottom.

Gravy skimmer or fat-separating cup The opening from the cup to the spout is at the bottom of the cup so liquid can be poured off while the fat remains behind in the cup.

Loaf pan with drain holes Used mainly for meatloaf, this pan has a liner with holes that allows fat to drain in to the outer pan away from the meat.

Nonstick baking pans and muffin pans These pans allow baked products to be prepared without heavy greasing, which adds extra fat. Paper muffin liners can accomplish the same result when preparing muffins.

Original Ingredient	Substitution	Original Ingredient	Substitution
Whole or 2% Milk	Skim milk, 1% milk, or evaporated skim milk diluted with equal parts water	Salt	Reduce by ½ or eliminate; use different herbs and seasonings to replace flavor.
Whipping Cream	Chilled, evaporated skim milk, whipped	Margarine	Reduce amount, using margarine made from canola or olive oil, or using reduced-calorie margarine
Hard Cheeses	Cheeses with 5 grams of fat or less per serving	Vegetable Oil	Reduce amount, using canola or olive oil.
Mozzarella Cheese	Part-skim mozzarella	Mayonnaise	Fat-free or reduced calorie mayonnaise.
Cream Cheese	Light or fat-free cream cheese or Neufchatel cheese	Gravy	Gravy made with bouillon or broth and thickened with flour or cornstarch
Cottage Cheese	Nonfat or 1% fat cottage cheese or farmer's cheese	Condensed Cream Soups	99% fat free cream condensed cream soups
Ricotta Cheese	Nonfat, light or part-skim Ricotta cheese	White Rice	Brown or wild rice
Sour Cream	Nonfat or low-fat sour cream or nonfat or low-fat yogurt	Pecans, Walnuts	Reduce by ¼ to ½
Whole Egg	Two egg whites or ¼ cup egg substitute	Beef, pork, veal or lamb	Lean cuts of meat, trim all visible fat, or substitute with chicken or turkey (white meat with no skin)
Baking Chocolate	3 Tbsp. cocoa powder plus 1 Tbsp. canola oil	Ground Beef	Ground turkey (ground with no skin) or lean ground round
Fudge Sauce	Chocolate syrup	Bacon Strips	Turkey bacon or Canadian bacon
White Flour (1 cup)	½ cup whole wheat flour plus ½ cup white flour Or ½ cup oat flour plus ½ cup white flour	Poultry	Skinless poultry, trimmed of any remaining fat
Sugar	Reduce amount by ¼ to ½; substitute brown sugar or honey if it won't affect the taste	Self-Basting Turkey	Baste turkey with fat-free chicken broth
White bread	Whole wheat or whole grain breads	Tuna packed in oil	Tuna packed in spring water