

## TRIMMING THE FAT:

Most of us eat almost 6-8 tablespoons of fat each day which is far more fat than we need. Considering the link between high-fat diets to heart disease, obesity, and cancer risk, it makes sense to limit our intake of fat. Most nutritionists agree that eating no more than 30% of our daily calories from fat sources is a good rule-of-thumb. Trimming the fat from home-cooked meals is a simple and easy way to begin your goal towards a healthy heart.

For more information on heart healthy cooking visit the American Heart Association at [www.americanheart.org](http://www.americanheart.org).

## HEART HEALTHY MEAL IDEAS:

- Grill kabobs with chicken, peppers, cherry tomatoes onions, and pineapple. Serve with brown rice.
- Try hummus with veggies!
- Make your own black bean soup and test out different spices.
- Glaze fish fillets in balsamic vinegar, olive oil, and lemon juice. Serve with brown rice and broccoli florets.
- Stir fry vegetables with tofu or pork and Asian noodles.
- Throw together a salad with your favorite veggies and a vinaigrette.
- Make your own salsa using fresh ingredients!

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# COOKING FOR A HEALTHY HEART



## BUY LOW-FAT FOOD:

You can start trimming fat calories by buying foods that are naturally low in fat, such as fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grain bread and cereal products, lean cuts of meat, poultry without skin, and fish. Avoid rich bakery products since these often derive over half their calories from fat.



Buy low-fat versions of your favorite dairy products—milk, yogurt, and many cheeses now come in low-fat or skimmed milk varieties. In addition, try using margarine instead of butter, plain yogurt in place of sour cream, and vegetable oil instead of shortenings or lard.



## HAVE A PLAN OF ACTION:

Always have a list ready when heading to the grocery store. It is never a good idea to go shopping on an empty stomach. Here's an example of a heart healthy grocery list:



- \* Fresh or Frozen Fruits & Vegetables
- \* Whole grain bread and cereal
- \* Low-fat milk and yogurt
- \* Herbs and spices
- \* Olive Oil or margarine
- \* Pretzels, popcorn and rice cakes

## SEASON WITH HERBS:

Herbs and spices add interesting flavors to foods and help make fats like margarine, sauces and gravies unnecessary. Herbs and spices can be purchased fresh or freeze dried, minced or powdered.

Flavorful seasonings can also help you cut down on added salt. You can also use fresh lemon, lime or vinegar to season salads rather than using high fat salad dressings.

## BAKE, BROIL, POACH OR STEAM:

You can further de-fat (and decalorize) your menus by using cooking techniques that require no added fats. Instead of frying or sautéing food, bake, broil or poach it.

Non-stick vegetable oils sprays can be used to treat pans or grills to prevent food from sticking. Food can be poached (lightly simmered) in seasoned batter or broth for added flavor and aroma. You can also steam or microwave almost any meat or vegetable. Both methods retain nutrients, flavor, and color of most foods and take less time than most other methods.



## EXPERIMENT:

Do some experimenting on your own, like substituting skim-milk mozzarella and farmer's cheese for the whole milk cheeses.

Top your baked potato with chopped vegetables, chives and plain yogurt instead of butter, sour cream and salt. Remember—the fat you reduce may be your own.