



...because health matters!

# Nutrition Matters

September 2002

A Publication of the Peterborough County-City Health Unit

## Tips for Lower-Fat Cooking



Are you looking for ways to trim excess fat from your family's meals? If so, this newsletter will help you get started.

A key place to begin is in your kitchen. Making small changes in how and what you cook can make a big difference in your fat intake. Cutting back on the fat in your diet is important for heart health and weight control.

Try a few of the tips that appeal to you and practise these until they become a habit. Then try a few more. Before you know it, you'll be on your way to living with less fat -- and liking it.

### For Starters - Soups, Salads and Dips

- For cream soup recipes, try using 2% or 1% plain low-fat yogurt, milk or buttermilk instead of cream. Or try a fat-free soup thickener: pureed cooked vegetables (squash, potato, carrots); noodles; legumes (use canned if time is short); rice or barley.
- Make soups or stews a day ahead and refrigerate. Skim off any fat that hardens on top.
- Use these high-fat salad ingredients sparingly: salad dressings, avocado, bacon bits, olives, high-fat cheese, nuts, and croutons.
- Blend your own salad dressings for less fat and more flavour. Change your favourite recipes by cutting the amount of oil in half. Add a little sugar, orange or apple juice to cut the bite of the vinegar.




- For mayonnaise-based dressings and dips, use "light" mayonnaise-type dressing and replace half with plain low-fat yogurt or buttermilk.
- Flavoured vinegars (e.g. red wine, balsamic or raspberry) can stand alone as a simple dressing.
- Traditional dippers like potato chips and taco chips are high in fat. Better choices are raw vegetables -- they're tasty and fat-free.

### Moving on to Main Dishes


- Meat and cheese are a source of fat in the diet. So you may need to cut down on the amount you eat. Whether it's beef, pork, lamb, chicken or fish, plan for no more than 3 ounces or 90 grams per serving at any one meal. One serving of cheese is 2 ounces or 50g.
- Picture what a serving looks like with these example: ½ chicken breast, 1 loin pork chop; 2 loin lamb chops; sliced roast or a fillet of fish about the size of a deck of cards. A serving of cheese is a 3"x1"x1" cube.
- There are high and lower-fat choices among all types of meat, fish and poultry. Choose leaner cuts:
  - Beef:** sirloin, eye of the round, round steaks and roasts, rump, strip sirloin, stewing beef, flank steak.
  - Veal:** all cuts are relatively lean.
  - Pork:** leg butt portion roast, picnic shoulder roast, loin tenderloin end roast, centre cut loin roast.
  - Poultry:** white poultry meat has half the fat of dark poultry meat.
  - Fish:** sole, halibut, haddock, cod, whitefish

- When you can, remove all visible fat from meat and skin from poultry before cooking.
- Instead of frying, use a lower-fat cooking method ... broiling, baking, grilling. To prevent drying and to add flavour, baste with wine, lemon juice or broth. Poaching and braising are good cooking methods too.

- Try baking fish or chicken pieces with some liquid in a covered casserole.

- Invest in a non-stick frying pan.  Saute with less fat.

- For stir fries, omit the oil and steam fry in a little tomato juice, bouillon or chicken stock.
- Prepare more mixed dishes such as stews and casseroles that combine small amounts of meat with pasta, rice or vegetables.
- The next time you make your favourite meat sauce for spaghetti, cut back on the meat and add more vegetables like mushrooms, eggplant or zucchini. When you make chili, add an extra can of kidney beans to make the meat go farther.

- Make more meatless dishes like baked beans, pasta with a chunky tomato vegetable sauce or rice kidney bean casserole. 

- If making a bread stuffing, moisten bread crumbs with chicken broth and chopped onions, celery or apple instead of oil or butter.

- Pizza dough is low in fat but toppings like anchovies, bacon, pepperoni, salami and cheese are full of fat. Use any of these toppings: mushrooms, green or red peppers, sliced chicken, onion, a sprinkle of part-skim mozzarella or goat cheese.

- Serve meat, fish or poultry with lower-fat accompaniments like cranberry relish, chili sauce, chutney or a spicy mustard. Or make lower-fat gravy by thickening bouillon cubes with cornstarch.



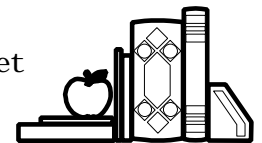
### Don't Forget the Vegetables

- Vegetables are naturally lower in fat. Serve vegetables plain or sprinkle them with chives or parsley or a little lemon juice.
- Spoon salsa, lower-fat yogurt or lower-fat sour cream on a baked potato.

### Winding Up With Desserts

- There are many desserts that taste delicious and are lower in fat. Fresh fruit is great for any occasion. Instead of apple pie, make an apple rhubarb crisp.
- For a refreshing end to a meal, make a fresh fruit sherbet without the fat of ice cream.
- Angel food cake contains only a trace of fat. Serve it with fresh fruit or a sauce made with yogurt and frozen berries.
- Make some meringues for a fat-free cookie.

Try some new recipes you can get ideas from these cookbooks.



- 1) Anne Lindsay's Light Kitchen
- 2) The Lighthearted Cookbook by Anne Lindsay

Both produced in association with Canadian Heart & Stroke Foundation.