

# Smart Cooking for Your Health



This is the fourth article in a series focusing on cardiovascular disease presented by DeKalb Medical.

**W**e all hope for good health and a long, productive life.

Fortunately, you play a major role in making that a reality. Many of the health issues that plague our society today come, at least in part, from making poor lifestyle choices. A high-fat, high-calorie diet can put you at risk for high cholesterol, high blood pressure and diabetes, all of which can lead to heart disease and stroke.

One of the keys to getting and staying healthy is making good food choices. The USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans emphasize the need to reduce the amount of fat, sodium (salt) and added sugar we consume. Sound difficult? It may not be as hard as you think.

By understanding what foods are high in calories, fat, sugar and sodium, you can make better choices. By choosing wisely at the grocery store and making simple substitutions when cooking, you can eat the things you love without putting yourself at risk. Here are a few simple shopping tips that can help you get started:

<b>Rather than:</b>	<b>Buy:</b>
Whole milk	2% milk, 1% milk, skim milk or plain soymilk
Full-fat sour cream	Reduced-fat or non-fat sour cream or plain yogurt
Eggs	Egg substitute
Ground beef	Ground turkey breast
Whole fat cheese	Reduced-fat cheese
White rice	Whole grain rice
Creamy salad dressing	Low-fat dressing or vinaigrette
Sugar	Sugar substitute (such as Splenda™)
Potato chips	Pretzels
Candy bars	Granola bars
Salt	Herbs and spices

Reducing the amount of butter, lard and other saturated fats in your diet is another way to protect your arteries and decrease your risk of heart attack or stroke. While completely eliminating these ingredients from the foods you eat is not a realistic solution, cutting down on them or substituting other, healthier, ingredients could be just the ticket.

Instead of using butter as a spread on your bagel or toast, consider using low-fat cream cheese or an all-fruit jam. Rather than frying meats (without the skin) or vegetables, try dipping them in a beaten egg and then coating with flour, herbs and crushed Corn Flakes or bread crumbs. Then cook them under a broiler which gives them a golden, crisp coating without all the fat.

For cakes and muffins, use applesauce or fruit puree

in place of some or all of the butter or oil. As a general rule, use half the applesauce and half the fat. You will also want to opt for heart healthy oils, like olive oil or canola oil.

For baking, it is best to use canola oil. When cooking, it is better not to substitute reduced-fat margarine or corn oil spreads for regular butter unless a recipe specifically calls for their use. However, you can simply reduce the amount of butter or oil called for in a recipe. This table gives you an example of how much you can safely cut from a recipe and still have delicious results.

<b>Butter/Margarine</b>	<b>=</b>	<b>Olive Oil</b>
1 teaspoon	=	3/4 teaspoon
1 Tbsp.	=	2 1/4 tsp
2 Tbsp.	=	1 1/2 Tbsp.
1/4 cup	=	3 Tbsp.
1/3 cup	=	1/4 cup
1/2 cup	=	1/4 cup + 2 Tbsp.
2/3 cup	=	1/2 cup
3/4 cup	=	1/2 cup + 1 Tbsp.
1 cup	=	3/4 cup

You don't have to skimp on flavor to cut calories and fat from your diet. You just have to know the tricks of the trade!

## Loaded Spaghetti

**T**his meatless sauce tastes like old-fashioned Italian spaghetti sauce, is loaded with veggies and has a zesty aroma.



- 1 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1/4 cup chopped green bell pepper
- 1 medium zucchini, chopped
- 1 medium carrot, grated
- 1 Tbsp. dried oregano, basil & thyme
- 1/2 cup fat-free chicken broth
- 2 cans (28 oz. each) crushed tomatoes, drained
- 8 oz. spaghetti, preferably whole-wheat
- 7 garlic cloves, chopped
- 1 cup chopped mushrooms
- 2 Tbsp. tomato paste
- Salt and pepper

In heavy saucepan, heat oil over medium heat. Add onion, green pepper, zucchini and carrot and sauté 2 minutes. Add oregano, basil, thyme and broth. Stir in tomatoes. Reduce heat and simmer, uncovered, 40 minutes, stirring occasionally. Meanwhile, cook spaghetti according to package directions. To vegetable mixture, add garlic, mushrooms, tomato paste, salt and pepper, to taste. Raise heat to medium, cover and cook 10 minutes. When spaghetti is done, drain and transfer to warm serving bowl. Add sauce and toss.

Source: American Institute for Cancer Research