

Ways to Cut Fat and Salt

Handout 1

1. Use plain yogurt instead of cream cheese or sour cream. Mix 1-2 tablespoons of cornstarch in one cup cold yogurt before adding to the hot liquid to prevent separation.
2. Neufchatel cheese (lite cream cheese) is a good substitute for cream cheese. It works better in some recipes than fat-free cream cheese.
3. Blended low-fat or nonfat cottage cheese can be used as a sour cream substitute. Remember 1/2 cup of cottage cheese has 500 milligrams of sodium.
4. Yogurt cheese is an excellent substitute for cream cheese or sour cream. Line a colander with several layers of cheese cloth or coffee filters. Pour in 2-4 cups of plain nonfat or low-fat yogurt. Put the colander in a shallow container and let the yogurt drain for 8 hours in the refrigerator. Two cups of yogurt will make 1 cup of yogurt cheese. The whey that has drained can be used as the liquid for soup or bread recipes.
5. Evaporated skim milk is a good cream substitute in coffee, creamed soups, pies and even whipped cream. To whip evaporated skim milk, chill the milk, bowl and beaters until they are very cold. Adding 1/2-1 teaspoon unflavored gelatin five minutes before beating will stabilize the whipped milk. Beat until stiff peaks form. Add sugar substitute and vanilla to taste. Use immediately.
6. Use nonstick vegetable sprays on casserole dishes, bread pans and baking pans. The sprays can even be sprayed directly on breaded or batter-dipped foods that are then baked in the oven for an oven-fried taste and texture.
7. Cook vegetables with small amounts of diet margarines or fat-free meat or poultry broths. Season with lemon juice or herb-spice mixtures.
8. Make fat-free broths by cooking meat or poultry bones or scrapes with celery leaves, onions, garlic and other seasonings for half an hour. Cool in the refrigerator and remove any fat on the top. If refrigerated, use in 2-3 days or freeze in ice cube trays, then transfer to freezer bags and store for several months.
9. Reduced-fat cheeses and margarines substitute fairly well in recipes. Baked goods may be less tender, drier and denser. Nonfat margarines and cheeses don't melt well.
10. Marinate meat and poultry with wine, reduced-sodium soy sauce, lemon juice, low-calorie salad dressing and/or herbs and spices. Use three times more of a fresh herb than a dry herb in a recipe.

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