

LOW FAT TIPS FOR VEGETABLES, BEANS & GRAINS

Vegetables

- Sauté with liquid, not oil. Cook in a little liquid such as defatted broth, juice, wine, or water in a covered nonstick pan. This works well with onions and mushrooms, which are sautéed for many recipes.
- Cook vegetables by steaming, stir-frying, simmering or microwaving.
- Adding butter or margarine while cooking dilutes the flavor. Less is needed if it is added just before serving.
- Vegetables can be roasted or grilled. Eggplant, bell pepper and zucchini work well.
- Coat sliced vegetables lightly with vegetable oil spray. Roast in the oven at 400F or grill about 15 minutes until tender-crisp.
- At the table, sprinkle some Parmesan or Romano cheese on vegetables. It adds a lot of flavor, but not much fat.

Starchy Vegetables

- Baking is a delicious and healthy way to prepare potatoes, sweet potatoes and winter squash. You can also oven-bake french fries instead of frying them.
- Be creative when you stuff baked potatoes. Instead of butter, margarine or regular sour cream, top them with salsa and low fat or non-fat sour cream.
- When you make mashed potatoes, go easy on the butter or margarine. Instead, mash them with a little of their cooking liquid or skim milk. Add minced garlic or garlic powder for flavor.
- Sprinkle some Parmesan or Romano cheese on starchy vegetables to enhance their flavor.

Salads

- Flavor salads with lower fat dressings or use less regular dressing. Homemade dressing can be made with less oil and more vinegar.
- Use salsa as a dressing.
- Instead of dressing coleslaw with regular mayonnaise, moisten cabbage with a vinaigrette or use low fat or nonfat yogurt or low fat mayonnaise with seasonings as a dressing.

Grains

- Skip the oil in pasta cooking water, add herbs for flavor instead. After draining the cooked pasta, toss with sauce immediately so pasta won't stick together. Tomato-based sauces generally have less fat than cream sauces.
- When you prepare grains such as rice and couscous, don't rinse them before cooking because it washes away some of the vitamins. Instead of cooking them in water, try using fat free broth and herbs to add flavor. That way there's no need to cook with oil.

Beans

- When you make whole beans, use Canadian bacon or lean ham to season them instead of bacon or other fattier meats.
- Refried beans can be prepared with very little or no fat. Simply mash the beans in a pan while you heat them, adding a little of the cooking liquid.