



## How Can I Cook Healthfully?

A healthful eating plan means more than choosing the right foods to eat. It's important to prepare foods in a healthy way. Some ways of cooking are better than others in cutting saturated fat, *trans* fat, sodium, added sugars and calories. At the same time, you want to get as much nutritional value as possible.

You don't have to give up taste or the things you love. Just learn some heart-healthy cooking skills and you can have it all (almost)!



Stir-frying can be healthy and delicious! The high temperature and constant movement of the food keep it from sticking and burning. For vegetables, poultry or seafood, use a tiny bit of liquid vegetable oil in your stir fry pan.

### What are good ways to cook?

- **Roast** — in the oven with a rack so the meat or poultry doesn't sit in its own fat drippings. Set at 350 degrees to avoid searing. Baste with unsweetened liquids like wine, salt-free or low sodium broth, tomato juice or lemon juice. Roasting is also a delicious way to serve seasonal vegetables.
- **Bake** — in the oven in covered or uncovered cookware. When you bake, food cooks slowly with gentle heat. This causes the moisture to evaporate slowly and enhances flavor.
- **Braise or Stew** — on top of the stove or in the oven with a little bit of liquid (water or broth). After

cooking, you can refrigerate the food and remove any fat that has become solid on the top before reheating.

- **Poach** — by immersing foods such as skinless chicken, fish or eggs in simmering liquid.
- **Grill or Broil** — on a rack over high heat.
- **Sauté** — in a skillet or frying pan over direct heat. Use nonstick vegetable spray or a small amount of canola oil.
- **Stir-fry** — in a wok over high heat with a small amount of vegetable oil.
- **Microwave** — heat food quickly in a microwave-safe dish.

(continued)



- **Steam** — in a wire basket over simmering water. This can help keep some foods' shape and texture better than boiling.

**How can I cut saturated fat and calories without losing taste?**

- Add fruits, vegetables, and whole grains to your meals.
- Select lean cuts of meat and trim off any visible fat before cooking.
- After browning, put ground meat into a strainer lined with paper towels and rinse off any excess fat.
- Choose canned fish packed in water with no added salt or low sodium. Remove oils by draining canned tuna, salmon or sardines and rinsing them in water.
- Don't overcook vegetables. Steam or bake them instead of boiling so they keep more of their natural flavors and textures.
- Compare Nutrition Facts labels to find a tasty salad dressing that is lower in calories, saturated fat, and sodium.
- Use herbs and spices to add flavor to foods.



Instead of boiling vegetables, steam or bake them to keep more of their natural flavors and textures.

**HOW CAN I LEARN MORE?**

- 1 Call **1-800-AHA-USA1** (1-800-242-8721), or visit **heart.org** to learn more about heart disease and stroke.
- 2 Sign up to get *Heart Insight*, a free magazine for heart patients and their families, at **heartinsight.org**.
- 3 Connect with others sharing similar journeys with heart disease and stroke by joining our Support Network at **heart.org/supportnetwork**.

**Do you have questions for the doctor or nurse?**

Take a few minutes to write your questions for the next time you see your healthcare provider.

For example:

- What about desserts?**
- What's a good, healthy cookbook?**

**My Questions:**

We have many other fact sheets to help you make healthier choices to reduce your risk, manage disease or care for a loved one. Visit **heart.org/answersbyheart** to learn more.