

Altering Recipes for Good Health

Recipes specify the ingredients, proportions, and methods necessary to produce a quality product. Companies and publishers spend time and money testing recipes for consumer use. Any change made in the recipe will produce a slightly different product from the one that was tested and published. Some changes you may like and others you may not. Recipes for combined foods, such as casseroles and soups, are more flexible than others. A cookie recipe is more adaptable than a cake recipe. Recipes for most baked products can be altered, but recipes for any preserved product, such as pickles, salsa, jellies, or candies should not be changed at all. Modifying a recipe may produce a product that doesn't meet your expectations. For example, a cake made with less fat will not have the same flavor or texture as the high-fat version. Cookies with less sugar or fat will still be acceptable but might not look or taste the same as those made by the original recipe. Substituting skim milk for whole milk in puddings, soups, and sauces will give a product that is less rich and creamy but has less fat and calories.

Ingredients that can be changed

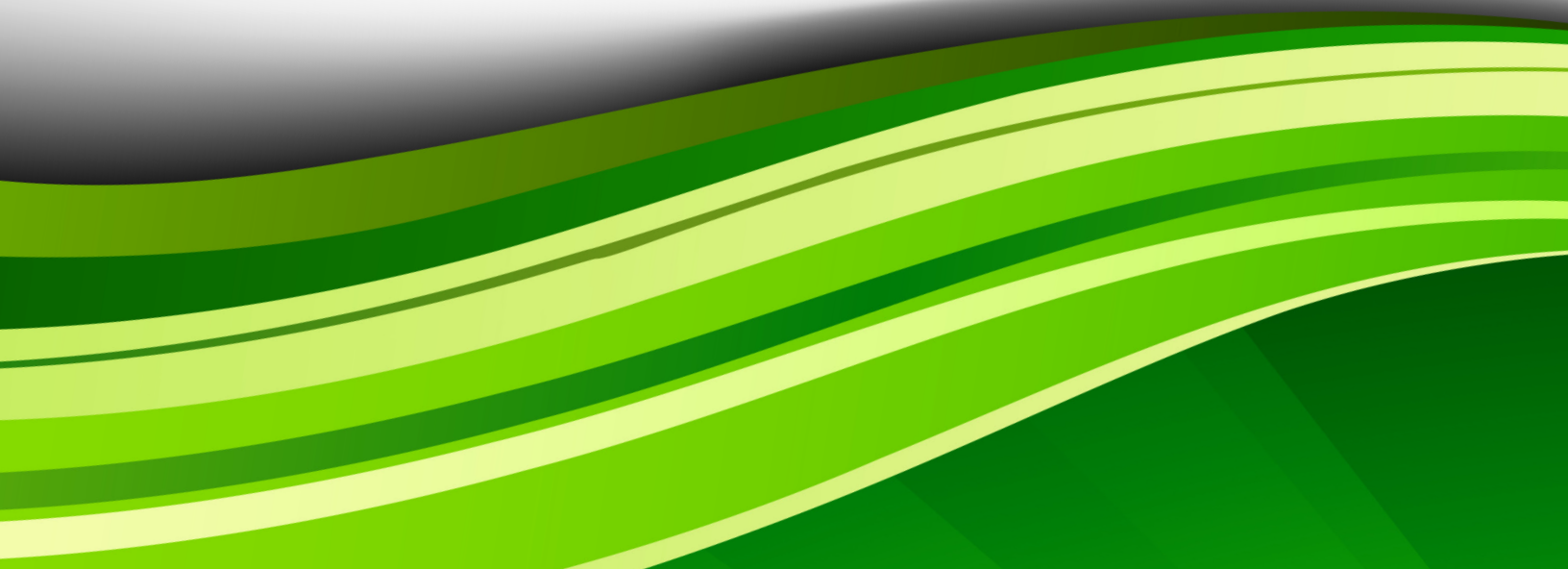
Most people either fail to notice much difference or accept the difference that results when the following kinds of changes are made.

Reduce sugar by one-third. For example, if a recipe says to use 1 cup of sugar, use $\frac{2}{3}$ cup. This change works best in canned and frozen fruits and in making puddings and custards. In cookies and cakes, try using $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sugar per cup of flour. For quick breads and muffins, use 1 tablespoon sugar per cup of flour. To enhance the flavor when sugar is reduced, add vanilla, cinnamon, or nutmeg.

Reduce fat by one-third. For example, if a recipe calls for $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fat, use $\frac{1}{3}$ cup. This method works best in gravies, sauces, puddings, and some cookies. For cakes and quick breads, use 2 tablespoons fat per cup of flour.

Omit salt or reduce by one-half. For example, if a recipe calls for $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt, use $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon. This method may be more acceptable if you gradually reduce the amount of salt each time you make the recipe. Herbs, spices, or salt-free seasoning mixes can also be used as flavor enhancers. Do not eliminate salt from yeast bread or rolls; it is essential for flavor and helps the texture.

Substitute whole grain and bran flours. Whole wheat flour can replace from one-fourth to one-half of the all-purpose flour. For example, if a recipe has 3 cups all-purpose flour, use $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups whole wheat flour and $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups all-purpose flour. Oat bran or oatmeal (that has been ground to flour consistency in a food processor or blender) can replace up to one-fourth of the all-purpose flour. For example, if a recipe has 3 cups all-purpose flour, use $\frac{3}{4}$ cup oat bran or ground oatmeal and $2\frac{1}{4}$ cups all-purpose flour. Bran cereal flour is made by grinding a ready-to-eat cereal such as Bran Buds® or 100% Bran® in a blender or food processor for 60 to 90 seconds. It can replace up to one-fourth of the all-purpose flour. For example, if a recipe calls for 2 cups all-purpose flour, use $\frac{1}{2}$ cup bran flour and $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups all-purpose flour.



To Reduce Fat		
Instead of	Try	Best Choice
Butter	60/40 margarine – butter blend	Margarine or reduced calorie margarine
Sour cream	Lite sour cream	Mock sour cream
2 whole eggs	1 whole egg plus 2 egg whites	4 egg whites or commercial egg substitute
Whole milk	2% milk	Skim milk
Cream	Evaporated milk	Evaporated skim milk
Cream cheese	Light cream cheese or Neufchatel	Yogurt cheese
Whipped cream or non-dairy whipped topping	Non-fat whipped topping	Non-fat whipped topping
Cheddar, Colby, Swiss Cheese	Reduce the amount	Part-skim mozzarella, cheese made with 2% milk
Mayonnaise	Lite mayonnaise	Half cholesterol-free mayonnaise and half non-fat yogurt
Salad dressing	Reduced-fat dressing	Fat-free dressing
Chicken with skin	Remove skin after cooking	Remove skin before cooking
Regular ground beef	Lean ground beef	Extra lean ground beef or lean ground turkey
To Add Fiber		
Instead of	Try	For
Chinese noodles, canned onion rings, croutons, bacon bits	Bran cereal	Casserole toppings
White rice	Brown rice, barley, cracked wheat kernels	Casseroles, soup, stir fry, side dishes
Chocolate chips	Half chips & half raisins	Cookies, bars

Source:

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