

Eating Guidelines to Cook and Prepare Foods Using Less Fat – Adapted for African and Caribbean Communities

This handout will help you to cook and prepare foods using less fat. A lower fat diet can help you manage your weight and lower your blood pressure and cholesterol. It can also help you manage heartburn and lower your risk of some types of cancer.



Steps you can take

Use less fat when preparing your foods.

- | Broil, boil, bake, roast, steam, stew or stir-fry instead of frying or deep frying.
- | Measure how much oil you usually use during cooking and begin to cut back this amount gradually.
- | Cut back on the oil when you cook by using broth, juice, or water to prepare your foods.
- | Use non stick pans so less fat is needed when food is prepared.
- | Use vegetable oil sprays instead of oil to help reduce fat during cooking.

Use lower fat foods instead of the higher fat version of the food when making your meals or favourite recipes. For example:

<i>Use the following lower fat option</i>	<i>Instead of using</i>	<i>Types of dish</i>
Low fat cheese <20% Milk Fat (M.F.)	Regular fat cheese	Macaroni and cheese pie, sandwiches and pasta dishes

Skim, 1%, or 2% milk OR 2% or skimmed evaporated milk OR skim milk powder OR 2% evaporated milk	Whole or 3.25% homogenized milk, condensed milk, Coconut cream, coconut milk	Porridges, hot beverages, puddings, pones, custards, juices, punches (sour sop or carrot juice) Rice and peas, curry, stews, soups, pelau and other mixed dishes
Legumes (dried or canned peas, beans or lentils)	Meat, poultry	Soups, stews, curries, salads
Pork tenderloin or pork top loin chop or roast	Pigtails, ham hocks, pig trotters	Stews, soups
Beef eye of round or beef top round	Oxtail, salt beef or other high fat cuts of beef with visible marbling	Stews, soups
Ground turkey, ground chicken, extra lean ground beef	Regular ground beef	Patties, meat loaf, meat pie
Tomato paste, Tomato puree	Red palm oil	Rice dishes, porridges, stews and soups

Here are some ideas to lower the fat without losing the flavour:

Meat, Fish & Poultry

- ▮ Remove all visible fat and skin from meat, poultry and fish before cooking.
- ▮ Bake, grill, steam or stew meat, fish and poultry instead of deep-

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frying.

- | Use half the amount of oil you would normally use to brown meats, poultry and fish. Drain off the fat after browning meat, fish and poultry.
- | Make lower-fat gravy by thickening reduced sodium bouillon cubes instead of poultry or meat pan drippings.
- | Serve avocado (pear), fruit chutney, chili sauce, hot pepper sauce instead of gravy.
- | Make oxtail one day ahead and when cool remove hardened fat from top before serving.
- | Stir-fry dishes: Omit the oil and steam in a bit of water or chicken broth.
- | Steamed dishes: Omit oil and butter, steam in water and add ingredients like curry powder, ginger, lemon juice, or allspice to boost flavour.

Stews or Mixed dishes

- | Substitute up to ½ of the meat with an equal amount of extra vegetables or legumes in your stews, curries and mixed dishes.
- | Go meatless a couple times a week by serving vegetarian meals eg. vegetarian stew peas, channa and aloo, vegetarian pelau, beans porridge, or red peas soup.
- | Ask your butcher to trim all visible fat from oxtail before purchasing.
- | Use low fat cuts of beef to replace oxtail and low fat cuts of pork to replace pigs' tail.
- | Replace ackee with a vegetable like callaloo, eggplant or kale in traditional ackee and codfish dish.
- | Use more fish than ackee when making ackee and codfish (use fresh cod instead of salted cod fish).
- | Use less palm oil in cooking. To add colour to dishes use paprika, tomato paste and diced or crushed tomatoes instead of red palm oil.

Soups

- | Use lower fat cuts of meat and poultry to make soups. Avoid shaki (cow tripe), cow foot, chicken foot, pigtailed and fatty cuts of beef when making soups.
- | Make soups often with legumes (eg: kidney beans, split peas, lentils, pigeon peas) instead of high fat cuts of meat.
- | Add plenty of vegetables (eg: pumpkin, okra, potato, carrots, callaloo, pumpkin leaves).
- | Make one day ahead and refrigerate. Skim off any fat that hardens on top.
- | Use less palm oil or omit the palm oil from traditional soups like egusi (melon seed soup) and bitterleaf soup. Use tomato paste or puree for colour instead.

Sandwiches

- | Avoid doubling up on fat-containing spreads. For example use soft margarine or mayonnaise (not both).
- | Pick low fat spreads like mustard, low fat mayonnaise or lower fat home-made vinaigrette.
- | Use lower fat cheese with 20% or less Milk Fat (<20% M.F.).
- | Choose canned tuna, sardine or salmon packed in water and leaner meats like chicken, turkey, lean ham and low fat deli meats. Avoid higher fat meats like canned corn beef, bacon and bologna.
- | Keep your meat and cheese portions small.
- | Add lots of vegetables such as lettuce, cabbage, shredded carrots, sweet peppers, tomatoes, cucumbers and onions.

Salads and Cooked Vegetables

- | Use moderate amounts of vinaigrette dressings, nuts, seeds, or avocado (pear) instead of creamy salad dressings on your salad.
- | Add sliced fruits like mango, orange segments, or papaya for a flavour boost instead of excess salad dressing.

- | Blend your own salad dressings for less fat and more flavour
 - | For creamy dressings:
 - n Replace half of the mayonnaise with plain low-fat yogurt or a lower fat mayonnaise.
 - | For oil and vinegar dressings:
 - n Add more vinegar for extra flavour while you cut back on the amount of oil.
 - n Add a little 100% juice or pureed fruit to cut the bite of the vinegar.
- | Add herbs and spices like thyme, allspice, bay leaves, chili powder, cilantro, curry powder, cinnamon, garlic etc. to your vegetable dish for a major flavour boost!
- | Make Nigerian salad, coleslaw and potato salads with a vinaigrette instead of creamy coleslaw or salad cream dressings.
- | Steam vegetables with chicken broth, water, lemon juice, onion or garlic instead of oil or butter. For example: steam callaloo, kale or spinach with water, onion and garlic to enhance flavour.

Starchy Fruits and Starchy Vegetables

- | Boil, bake or roast breadfruit, plantain, bananas, cassava (yucca), matoke, dasheen or potatoes instead of frying.

Grain Products and Cereals

- | Boil or bake dumplings more often instead of making fried Johnny cakes or fried dumplings.
- | Make roti, injera, chapati or other flat breads with whole grain flours and use less oil and fat during cooking. Brush skillet or tawa lightly with oil, do not fry.
- | Steam rice and noodles more often instead of frying.

With just a few changes in food choices and the way you make your meals you can make a big difference in both the amount and type of fat you eat. Here is a sample menu plan to show you how you can make those changes and how much fat you can save.

Lower Fat Sample Menu

<i>Higher Fat Eating</i>		<i>Lower Fat Eating</i>
Breakfast		Breakfast
Malted milk beverage made with condensed milk	250 mL (1 cup)	Malted milk beverage made with milk
Oats porridge (oatmeal) with condensed milk	175 mL (¾ cup)	Oats porridge with 2% evaporated milk
Orange	1	Orange
Fried ripe plantain (matoke)	1/3rd of plantain	Baked, roast or microwave plantain (matoke)
Fat Total (breakfast)	20 grams	Fat Total (breakfast)
Snack		Snack
Banana chips	38 g (½ cup)	Strawberry and banana slices
Vanilla yogurt (3% M.F.)	175 mL (¾ cup)	Fruit yogurt (fat free)
		Almonds
Fat Total (snack)	17 grams	Fat Total (snack)
Lunch		Lunch
Jerk chicken thigh with skin	75 g (2 ½ oz)	Jerk chicken thigh, skin removed
Fried dumpling	3 small	Boiled dumpling

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	dumplings	
Coleslaw with creamy dressing	250 mL (1 cup)	Coleslaw with low fat dressing
Fat Total (lunch)	42 grams	Fat Total (lunch)
Snack		Snack
Plantain chips	250 mL (1 cup)	whole wheat crackers
		cheddar cheese, reduced fat
Fat Total (snack)	15 grams	Fat Total (snack)
Supper		Supper
Fried fish	75 g (2 ½ oz)	Baked fish
Steamed Rice	250 mL (1 cup)	Steamed Rice
Steamed kale, callaloo or spinach with butter	250 mL (1 cup)	Steamed kale, callaloo or spinach with water
Fat Total (supper)	21 grams	Fat Total (supper)
Total Daily Fat	113 grams	Total Daily Fat



Additional Resources

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Notes

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