

Substitutions for Healthier Baked Goods

Whole wheat flour for white flour

Whole wheat flour provides more fiber than white flour which helps digestion and can lower risk of diabetes and heart disease. For every cup of white flour, substitute $\frac{7}{8}$ cup of whole-wheat. For nutty flavor and dense texture whole-wheat flour brings, just substitute half of the total flour.

Black beans for flour or as a fat substitute

Use a can of black beans, drained and rinsed, in brownies to cut fat and add protein. Swap out 1 cup flour for 1 cup black bean puree (about a 15 ounce can) in your recipe. Pureed white beans work well, too. Use a one-to-one ratio when cutting out the oil or shortening.

Reduce Sugar

In most recipes, you can cut the sugar in half without sacrificing texture. To reduce sugar even more or try one of these ideas:

- **Unsweetened applesauce:** One cup of unsweetened applesauce contains about 100 calories; a cup of sugar has more than 770. This swap is perfect for oatmeal raisin cookies. Substitute sugar for applesauce in a one-to-one ratio, but for every cup of applesauce you use, reduce the amount of liquid in the recipe by $\frac{1}{4}$ cup.
- **Stevia:** This natural sweetener is lower in calories and up to 300 times sweeter than sugar. A recipe calling for 1 cup of sugar should be swapped for only 1 teaspoon of liquid Stevia (or about 2 tablespoons of Stevia powder).
- **Honey:** To substitute honey for white sugar, use $\frac{3}{4}$ cup honey for every 1 cup of sugar. Honey adds a lot of moisture to a recipe, so reduce other liquids in the recipe by $\frac{1}{2}$ cup for every 1 cup of honey added. Also, decrease oven temperature by 25 degrees to ensure your baked goods don't brown too much.
- **Vanilla:** Next time you're whipping up some cookies, try cutting 2 tablespoons of sugar and adding an extra $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of vanilla extract for a flavor boost without the calories.

Flax meal for eggs: Mix 1 tablespoon flax seed meal with 3 tablespoons of warm water, and whisk with a fork to combine. Let sit for 5 to 10 minutes before subbing for one egg in any baked recipe. This is great in pancakes, quick breads and muffins.

Avocado puree for butter: The creaminess and subtle flavor of the avocado lends itself well to the texture of fudge brownies and dark chocolate flavorings (and avocados provide heart healthy unsaturated fats). It can take some experimenting to get this swap perfect, but generally, using 1 cup of avocado puree per cup of butter works.

Mashed bananas for fats: Again, the consistency of a ripe, mashed banana works well in replacing fats and they provide potassium, fiber and vitamin B6. One cup of mashed banana works perfectly in place of 1 cup of butter or oil. Always ending up with brown bananas? Don't throw them away! Peel them, slice them up and freeze them to use in smoothies, breads and muffins.

Substitutions for Healthier Meals

Instead Of...	Choose...
<i>Dairy Aisle</i>	
2 eggs	2–3 egg whites or ½ cup (C) egg substitute
Regular cheddar cheese, whole-fat mozzarella cheese, or cream cheese	2% cheddar cheese, part-skim mozzarella cheese, or Neufchâtel cheese
Mayonnaise or sour cream	Low-fat plain yogurt, Greek yogurt, or low-fat versions
Whipped cream	Chilled and whipped evaporated milk
Ricotta cheese	Firm tofu
Whole milk	Buttermilk
Cream in soups	Pureed potatoes or instant mashed potatoes
<i>Meat, Poultry, and Fish</i>	
Oil-packed tuna	Water-packed tuna
Salami, pastrami, or bologna	Lean roast beef or turkey
Fish sticks	Bread your own fish using whole-wheat bread crumbs, olive oil, and lemon juice
Regular bacon	Canadian bacon
Regular ground beef	Extra-lean ground beef or lean ground turkey or try adding extra beans to dishes like chili
Pork sausage	Turkey sausage
Porterhouse steak or chuck	Beef tenderloin or top round
Pork loin	Pork tenderloin
<i>Other Ingredients</i>	
Salt	Sodium free seasonings (see recipe below)
Soup/broth	Low sodium soup/broth
Salad dressing like Ranch, Bleu Cheese, etc.	Flavored vinaigrettes made with olive oil
Added sugar in recipes	Add sweetness with these fruits and vegetables: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caramelized onions • Carrots • Vine-ripened tomatoes • Apples • Bananas • Sweet berries • Pears • Sweet bell peppers • Pineapple
<i>Ordering Out</i>	
Cream-based soup	Broth-based soup
Egg rolls	Fresh spring rolls
Sour cream or cheese on nachos or baked potatoes	Salsa
White sauce	Red sauce
Pasta sauce with sausage or cheese, or cream-based sauces	Marinara sauce

Snacks and Desserts	
Chocolate-chip cookie	Vanilla wafers, gingersnaps, fig bars, or animal crackers
Fruit juice	Fresh fruit
Ice cream	Frozen yogurt, low-fat ice cream, sorbet, sherbet
Ice cream bar	Frozen fudge pop
Pound cake with strawberries	Angel food cake with strawberries
Potato chip dip (prepared)	Fat-free sour cream or Greek yogurt and powdered ranch dressing mix
Chocolate cream pie (prepared)	Chocolate pudding made with skim milk in a graham-cracker crust, topped with low-fat whipped cream
Shortening in piecrust recipes	½ nonfat cream cheese and ½ margarine

Adapted from *CalorieKing.com*

Recipes

Black Bean Brownies

Start to Finish: 30 minutes. Serves: 12. 125 calories, 7 g fat, 3 g saturated fat, 2 mg cholesterol, 12 g carbs, 2 g fiber, 3 g protein, 13 mg sodium

Ingredients

- 1½ cup black beans drained and well rinsed
- 2 tablespoons cocoa powder
- ½ cup quick oats (gluten free)
- ½ cup agave
- ¼ cup vegetable oil
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- ½ teaspoon baking powder
- ⅔ cup chocolate chips (dairy free)
- For the reduction
- ½ cup red wine
- 2 tablespoons agave

Instructions

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Combine all ingredients except for the chocolate chips in the blender. Process in a food processor until completely smooth. Stir in chips. Pour into a greased 8-by-8 pan. Bake 15 to 18 minutes. Let cool at least 10 minutes before trying to cut. In a sauce pan, bring the agave and wine to a boil. Cook until reduced. Serve over brownies.

Spice Blend Recipe

- 5 teaspoons onion powder
- 2-1/2 teaspoons garlic powder
- 2-1/2 teaspoons paprika
- 2-1/2 teaspoons dry mustard
- 1-1/2 teaspoon crushed thyme leaves
- 1/2 teaspoon white pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon celery seed

Combine in an airtight container or in a salt shaker. (Makes about 1/3 cup)

References and recommended readings

American Heart Association. Healthier preparation methods for cooking. Available at:
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