

## 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.