

# HEALTHFUL TIPS

HEALTH AND FITNESS TIPS FOR YOUR ENTIRE FAMILY

## Healthful Cooking Methods



Tips to Minimize Fat and Increase Flavor!

**T**rying to eat healthy can take time and effort but a satisfying, balanced meal is worth all that goes into it. When planning your meal the cooking method you choose is just as important as the meal itself. There are many cooking options, some healthy and some not so much. The choice you make has a tremendous impact on its nutritional value. So what cooking methods are best to retain both taste and nutritive properties? Generally speaking, the best-known healthy methods of cooking are sautéing, stir-frying, grilling, roasting, baking and steaming. Having an understanding of the different cooking methods will help you decide which one is right for you and will help with meal planning.

### STIR-FRYING & SAUTÉING

If you are looking to cook light, consider stir-frying or sautéing vegetables and lean meats. Stir-frying is a traditional Asian method, which quickly cooks small, uniform-sized pieces of food while they're rapidly stirred in a wok or large nonstick frying pan over medium heat. This is a good option since you only use a small amount of oil or nonstick cooking spray.

The other great light cooking method is sautéing. Sautéing is an easy and quick way to cook when you are short on time. It's similar to stir-frying, but done at a high temperature with a small amount of fat (oil, butter,

broth) in a pan or skillet. Sautéing is a great way to cook your vegetables, because it leaves them a bit crunchy but completely cooked.

### GRILLING

Warm weather for most people means hauling the grill out of the garage for some good eats. Grilling is exactly what it looks like—exposing food to direct heat. What's nice about this method is that it allows fat to drip away from the food rather than searing it in the meat. Grilling can be healthy but you should avoid browning or burning your food, as this creates free radicals which can cause cancer. Also, try to grill the traditional meats, like pork or steak, less often; substitute more veggies, chicken or fish.

### ROASTING & BAKING

Who doesn't like a nice roasted bird? Like baking, but at a high temperature, roasting uses the oven's heat to cook food. This is super healthy because it doesn't add fats to the food. When shopping for a roasting pan look for one with a rack you can use to put the meat on, so that fat drains away during the cooking process. If you choose to bake rather than roast, make use of metal trays or pans that are heat resistant and consider using parchment paper to line the baking sheets instead of butter to make baking even healthier.

### STEAMING

Steaming is one of the simplest and healthiest cooking techniques but can appear complicated. Give it a chance, since all you need is a perforated basket which you suspend above simmering liquid. You can also place a strainer above the pot, in such a way that it doesn't touch the water. Your vegetables or fish are cooked by the steam, preserving many of the nutrients (but be careful not to overcook). Vegetables should be brightly colored and slightly crunchy in texture when done.

Almost all the food we eat can be cooked with minimum oil and fat, and can provide all the nutrition we need, with the flavors we like. One more bit of advice: avoid cooking at high temperatures (except if you're sautéing) and long cooking times. Extended heat and liquid can destroy or leach out valuable nutrients. So take some time this summer, master these techniques, and use them often to prepare your favorite dishes so that you might live long and be healthy.

