



2001 W Kenosha Street  
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[herbpower21.com](http://herbpower21.com)

## *Ingredient Swaps to Make Your Recipes Healthier*

### 1. OAT BRAN FOR FLOUR

Making bread or muffins? Boost the nutrition and texture of your baked goods by swapping out some flour for oat bran. Oat bran is rich in fiber (about 3.6 grams per quarter-cup) and protein (four grams per quarter-cup). The protein and fiber will help keep you full, and the fiber can also lower cholesterol. Added bonus? Oat bran holds moisture well so your baked goods won't be dry.

### 2. MASHED BANANAS FOR OIL OR BUTTER

This big calorie-saver is a one-for-one swap that you can use in most baked goods. Take ripe (or even overripe) bananas and mash and use them in place of butter or oil. One cup of butter has a whopping 1,628 calories and 116 grams of saturated fat, but a cup of mashed bananas has just 200 calories and less than half a gram of saturated fat! Plus, bananas are packed with potassium, fiber and B vitamins. Your waistline will thank you, and your guests won't notice any difference from standard recipes.



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### 3. SPAGHETTI SQUASH INSTEAD OF PASTA

Looking for a lower-carb, lower-calorie alternative to pasta? Try spaghetti squash! Although spaghetti squash has a different taste and texture from regular flour-based pasta, it's nutrient-rich, gluten-free and has a tasty, nutty flavor. Two cups of cooked spaghetti squash has just 84 calories and 20 grams of carbs as well as potassium and vitamin A. A similar portion of cooked (flour-based) pasta weighs in at 442 calories and 86 grams of carbs.

### 4. CITRUS JUICE IN PLACE OF SALT

If you're looking to do something good for your health, cut down on salt. Swapping out sodium from your meals and snacks could help reduce your risk of high blood pressure and other major diseases.



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The average American consumes about 3,400 milligrams of sodium a day -- that's more than double the 1,500 milligrams recommended by the American Heart Association. Keep your food flavorful (but give the saltshaker the boot) by spritzing chicken, fish and veggie dishes with lemon or lime juice.

## 5. VANILLA EXTRACT IN PLACE OF SUGAR

According to national data, Americans consume about 20 teaspoons of sugar every day! With so much added sugar in the typical American diet, it's a good idea to cut down on the sweet stuff in your recipes.



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While most baked goods require some sugar, you can half the amount you use by replacing it with one teaspoon of vanilla extract, which boosts flavor. One cup of sugar has about 774 calories, so if you use just half (and add your vanilla extract) you'll save almost 400 calories!

#### 6. UNSWEETENED APPLESAUCE INSTEAD OF SUGAR

Want to really cut calories without losing flavor in your sweet treats? Consider using applesauce in place of sugar. Your waistline will be sure to thank you. One cup of unsweetened applesauce contains only about 100 calories, while a cup of sugar can pack in more than 770 calories! Plus 1 cup of applesauce provides about 10 percent of your daily fiber needs. You can substitute applesauce for sugar in a 1:1 ratio, but for every cup of applesauce you use, reduce the amount of liquid in the recipe by 1/4 cup.



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## PLAIN GREEK YOGURT INSTEAD OF SOUR CREAM

According to research published in the New Zealand Medical Journal, sour cream is one of the worst diet wreckers. At 220 calories for a measly half-cup portion, sour cream can add padding to your waistline with little nutritional benefit. Fortunately, there is a simple swap that will enable you to enjoy the delicious taste of sour cream, but for a fraction of the calories and fat. By switching to plain, nonfat Greek yogurt, you cut the calories in half, while still getting a shot of hunger-squashing protein. In fact, just 1 cup of Greek yogurt packs in about 24 grams of protein -- the equivalent of 4 eggs! Use Greek yogurt to top baked potatoes, incorporate it into your favorite dips to lighten them up, or use it to concoct a healthy salad dressing. For some Greek yogurt inspiration in the kitchen, try garnishing a bowl of chili with a dollop of Greek yogurt for some extra creaminess and an extra punch of protein



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## 8 AVOCADO INSTEAD OF MAYONNAISE

Avocado is a terrific source of heart-healthy monounsaturated fat. Research shows that a diet rich in monounsaturated fat helps to drive down cholesterol and triglyceride levels, plus reduce the risk of type 2 diabetes. This makes avocado a terrific substitute for artery-clogging, high-calorie mayonnaise, which clocks in at 188 calories and 20 grams of fat for just 2 tablespoons -- yikes! Instead of making tuna, chicken, or egg salad with full-fat mayo, mash in some avocado for a heart-healthy spin on your favorite classics. One serving of avocado (about 1/5 of a medium avocado) contains only 50 calories, so it's definitely a smart swap if you're watching your waistline. The smooth texture and delicious flavor of avocado makes it a delicious addition to your favorite meals and snacks, and also makes for a great sandwich spread or salad topper.



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## 9. KALE, SPINACH OR ARUGULA INSTEAD OF ICEBERG LETTUCE

Iceberg lettuce might be low in calories, but it doesn't provide the same nutritional value as the darker leafy greens like kale, spinach or arugula. For example, 1 cup of iceberg lettuce provides a little under 1 gram of fiber and 13 mg of calcium, while a cup of kale boasts 2.4 grams of fiber and 100 mg of bone-building calcium -- so you get much more nutritional bang for your buck. While all dark leafy greens have high antioxidant activity, research shows that the calcium in kale is more easily absorbed.



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Spinach and arugula are also filled with important vitamins and antioxidants. In fact, 1 cup of fresh spinach leaves provides nearly double the daily requirement for vitamin K, which is essential for maintaining proper bone health. So, forego the Iceberg and let these dark leafy greens take center stage.

#### 10. EVAPORATED SKIM MILK INSTEAD OF HEAVY

**CREAM** Full-fat, heavy cream is a dieter's worst enemy. At 414 calories and a whopping 44 grams of fat per cup, this is definitely an ingredient you'll want to use sparingly. To make matters worse, heavy cream is low in protein and fiber, the ultimate duo when it comes to keeping us full and satisfied.





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The good news is that you can slash the calories in half, cut out the fat, and bump up the protein by switching to evaporated skim milk. Because evaporated milk has up to 50 percent of the water removed, it is thicker and richer than regular skim milk, so it's a great alternative for those who find skim milk too watery. For soups, puddings and creamy sauces that depend on heavy cream for texture and consistency, switch to evaporated milk to give your dishes the creaminess you are looking for -- without the fat. Evaporated skim milk contains around 20 grams of protein per cup, and research shows that a diet high in protein can help to control appetite, promote weight loss and help to improve triglyceride levels.



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11. PUREED FRUIT INSTEAD OF SUGAR, BUTTER OR OIL: Good news for all you bakers out there: Looking for a tasty way to provide color, texture, tenderness and moisture to your favorite desserts -- without all the fat? Fruit puree to the rescue! Instead of tacking on unnecessary fat and calories from butter and sugar, you can substitute pureed fruit to slim down your favorite sweet treats. For example, you can incorporate mashed bananas or pureed peaches into chocolate cakes, spice cakes or muffins. Pureed pears are a great option for coffee cakes and quick breads, and prune puree works best in spice cakes, muffins, scones, chocolate cakes, coffee cakes, crumb crusts, brownies and cookies. Fruit purees are also packed with antioxidants and other micronutrients.



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Two tablespoons of prune puree contain 93 calories.

Prune puree is virtually fat-free and is rich in potassium, an important bone-building nutrient. In comparison, just 1 tablespoon of oil clocks in at 120 calories and 13.5 grams of fat, so it's a calorie-dense ingredient. Keep in mind that when modifying a recipe using fruit purees, use about half as much of the puree as the total amount of butter called for in the recipe.

## 12. EXTRA-LEAN Buffalo INSTEAD OF GROUND BEEF

It's a good idea to limit red meat consumption to support a healthy heart, but if you're craving a juicy burger more than once a week, consider replacing fatty ground beef with lean Buffalo. Look for grass fed buffalo.



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Lean red meat is a good source of protein, omega-3 fatty acids and iron, but there's also substantial evidence that it does not increase cardiovascular risk. Compared to lean meat, a typical 3-ounce serving of regular, full-fat ground beef contains 250 calories and 18.5 grams of fat. You can use buffalo your favorite red meat dishes, use buffalo to make meatballs, burgers or meatloaf.