



## COOKING SECRETS

### 1. Choose Whole-wheat Pastas and Grains

Try brown rice instead of white rice. Whole-grain pasta is a tasty substitute for processed pasta.

### 2. Substitute Olive Oil for Vegetable Oil

Instead of frying in vegetable oil or butter, try olive oil. Olive oil contains healthier fats and great flavor. Other tasty, healthy oils include peanut oil, cottonseed oil, soybean oil, sunflower oil, safflower oil and sesame oil.

### 3. Use Spices Instead of Salt

While salt does not have fat, it has been linked to high blood pressure and high fluid retention. Americans as a whole eat too much sodium as it is commonly found in processed foods, canned soups, and of course, topping French fries. There are hundreds of different spices on the market, all with distinct flavors. Common spices include curry powder, chili powder, cilantro, bay leaves, rosemary and saffron. Some spices, such as garlic and oregano, have bacteria-reducing properties, making ground meat dishes safer.

### 4. Choose Stronger Cheeses

Non-fat and low-fat cheeses don't melt well, so instead choose a cheese with a stronger flavor. In a recipe that calls for a cup of cheddar cheese, use 3/4-cup extra sharp cheddar cheese. Freshly shredded cheeses will also have a stronger flavor than their grated counterparts.

### 5. Use Citrus Juice Instead of Butter

In Mexico, it is commonplace to squeeze fresh lime juice on vegetables such as broccoli. Lemon and lime juice have no fat and more flavor than butter. Some sit-down restaurants have caught onto this phenomenon and top their steamed vegetables with fresh-squeezed juices. These juices are also great when broiling or baking fish and chicken.

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