

# Substitutes and Techniques for Fat-free Cooking

## How to Sauté or Stir-fry Without Oil:

- With a good nonstick skillet or wok, you can stir-fry or sauté without any oil. Simply heat your skillet before adding the food. You may add a tablespoon or more of water or broth to prevent sticking. Stir often. Covering the pan will make vegetables cook faster but may not brown onions.
- Onions taste terrific when they are browned or caramelized in a non-stick skillet. You may need to lightly spray or wipe the skillet with oil beforehand. Make sure the skillet is hot before you add the onions and stir constantly, being careful not to let the onions burn. This can take several minutes, but it lends a delicious richness to low-fat recipes.

## To Replace Oil or Margarine In Baking:

- Apple sauce may be used in cakes, cookies, and other sweet baked goods to replace oil or margarine.
- Prune Puree may be used to replace the oil. To make it, puree in blender 6 ounces prunes, 1 cup water, and 2 tsp. vanilla.
- Mashed or pureed tofu can replace oil in other (non-sweet) baked goods.
- Flax meal can replace all or some of the oil in a recipe. The substitution ratio is three parts flax seed meal for every part oil or fat you are replacing. For example, for 15 mL (1 Tbsp.) of fat to be replaced, use 45 mL (3 Tbsp.) of flax seed meal. Baked goods with flax as a fat replacer tend to brown more quickly than regular recipes, so you may have to modify normal cooking times.

## To Replace Oil In Dressings and Sauces:

- Replace oil in dressings with one of the cornstarch-water recipes—[Thick Water](#) or [No-Oil Oil](#).
- Blend silken tofu into the rest of the ingredients for a creamy dressing or sauce.
- Mix ground flax seeds into hot water. Start with hot water in the amount of oil the recipe calls for and add ground flax seeds to it one teaspoon at a time, stirring constantly, until the mixture is almost the consistency of oil. Allow it to stand and cool for a few minutes; it will thicken more as it cools.
- Blend cooked white beans into sauces or dressings to replace oil or dairy ingredients. Use the same amount of beans as oil called for.
- See more tips for oil-free dressings here: [Tips for converting dressings to oil-free](#)

## To Replace Eggs in Baking

Eggs are used in baking for leavening and for binding. The type of substitute you need depends on how the eggs are used in the original recipe and on how many eggs are used. Flat foods such as pancakes do not always depend on the eggs for leavening, and often you can omit the eggs completely and just add a tablespoon of water per egg or one of the binder ingredients listed below. If you are unsure whether or not eggs are used for leavening, you can always err on the side of caution and add an extra 1/4 teaspoon of baking powder to the recipe.

When a recipe calls for three or more eggs, as many cake recipes do, the eggs provide substantial leavening and need to be replaced with something equally leavening. In many cases, the results of using egg replacers for more than three eggs will not be satisfactory.

## The following are substitutes for one egg:

- A flax seed mixture : Mix 15 mL (1 Tbsp.) flax seed meal (ground flax seeds) with 45 mL (3 Tbsp.) water in a blender to substitute for one egg. This acts as a good binder in recipes.
- Half a small banana, mashed, is a good binder. Gives pancakes, muffins, and quick breads a subtle banana flavor.
- 1/4 cup of any kind of tofu blended with the liquid ingredients in the recipe acts as a binder. Light or reduced-fat tofu cuts down on the fat and calories in the finished product.

- 1/4 cup of applesauce, canned pumpkin or squash, or pureed prunes are binders. These give baked goods a heavier texture, so you may want to add an extra 1/2 tsp. of baking powder. They can also flavor the finished product, so use with caution.
- Use an egg-replacer powder such as Ener-G to replace the eggs in baked goods. 1-1/2 teaspoons mixed with 2 tablespoons of water.
- Use [this recipe for a homemade Ener-G type replacer](#).
- Here's another Ener-G type egg replacer: Mix together 1 tsp Baking Powder, 1/2 tsp Baking Soda, 2 Tbsp Flour, 3 Tbsp Water
- A heaping tablespoon of soy flour or bean flour mixed with a tablespoon of water. This mixture works similarly to vegetarian egg replacer.
- 2 tablespoons of cornstarch beaten with 2 tablespoons of water. This, too, works much like vegetarian egg replacer.
- In any recipe where the eggs are used for leavening, consider increasing the amount of baking powder or baking soda called for while using one of the binders. Do this with caution, as too much leavening can affect the taste and the consistency of baked goods.

## To Replace Coconut Milk:

In recipes where coconut milk is used in more than small quantities, soymilk plus coconut extract may be used. Simply use the same amount of soymilk as the coconut milk called for and add approximately 1/2 tsp. of coconut extract per cup of soymilk. Add more coconut extract as needed. The result will not be as rich as the original recipe but can be satisfactory.