



# Kinship Link

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## Pro Kinship for Kids

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## Cooking with Less ...

In the United States, **More is Better!** Seems to be the status quo. We've known for a long time that overindulgence in foods high in non-nutritive value and high in calories may lead to chronic health problems. Despite being a country that is preoccupied with body image and weight loss, obesity continues to rise. Whether you're faced with losing weight, diabetes, or heart disease, or just want to adopt a healthy diet, cooking with less ... sugar, fat, or sodium, is important.

**Why consume less sugar, fat, and sodium?** Chronic disease develops in response to a variety of risk factors, including genetics, physical activity, and smoking. Four of the top six leading causes of death are diet related. Diet influences the development of many chronic diseases, including heart disease, some types of cancer, stroke, and diabetes. Research supporting the relationship between fat and heart disease, sugar and diabetes, sodium and hypertension, and fiber and some types of cancer, makes consuming less ... sugar, fat, and sodium, common sense. Here are some guidelines for reducing these three ingredients without

sacrificing quality.

**Sugar.** Sugar is the number one additive in the United States. The USDA consumption figures show we went from two pounds of sugar per year per person in 1790 to 140 pounds of sugar in the 1990s. These figures include waste. Nutritive sweeteners are carbohydrates, which supply the body a source of energy. One teaspoon of sugar = 4 grams of carbohydrate and 15 calories. Nutritive sweeteners include brown sugar, corn syrup, corn sweetener, dextrose, fructose, fruit juice concentrate, glucose, high fructose corn syrup, molasses, raw sugar, sucrose, and sugar alcohols. Follow these guidelines when baking with sugar:

- ◆ Use 1/2 cup sugar per cup of flour in cakes
- ◆ Use 1 tbsp. sugar per cup of flour in muffins and quick breads
- ◆ Use 1 tsp. sugar per cup of flour in yeast breads
- ◆ If you reduce the amount of sugar in a recipe adding a small amount of vanilla, cinnamon, or nutmeg can enhance the sweet flavor

**Fat.** Fat is a concentrated source of energy that offers about twice the calories ounce-for-ounce of either protein or carbohydrates. It is generally recommended that adults consume no more than 30% of total calories from fat. Besides energy, fats are used for energy storage, organ insulation, and transporting the fat-soluble vitamins A, D, E, and K. Fats also add flavor and texture in foods, giving us a feeling of fullness after eating. Follow these guidelines when cooking with fat:

- ◇ 1-2 tbsp. per cup of flour is the minimum amount of fat needed in quick breads
- ◇ Pureed fruits such as applesauce or prune paste can replace fat. Substitute equal amounts up to 1/2 cup total.
- ◇ English muffins and French bread can be made without fat
- ◇ Substitute low fat or skim milk in all recipes

**Sodium.** Sodium is an important mineral to the body. It helps keep body fluids in balance, helps the body to absorb certain nutrients, and also aids in muscle performance and sending nerve messages. Sodium and salt are

## Cooking with Less ... continued

mistakenly thought to be the same ingredient. Actually, sodium is a mineral while salt is a naturally-occurring chemical compound made up of 40% sodium and 60% chloride. Salt is the major source of sodium in the diet. Follow these guidelines when using salt in recipes:

- \* Use 1/4 tsp. salt per cup of flour in yeast breads
- \* Use half the salt in other baked products
- \* Reduce or omit salt when foods such as cheese, canned soup, canned vegetables, ham or other cured meats are also in the recipe
- \* Omit salt when cooking pasta, rice, or hot cereal
- \* Use herb or vegetable powders in place of half of seasoned salts

**Ingredient Substitution.** Beyond reducing the amount of an ingredient in the diet, you may opt to make an ingredient substitution. Non-nutritive sweeteners or sugar substitutes are being used more and more as our dietary habits change and the quality of

sweeteners improve. Capitalize on the non-nutritive sweeteners. The many sweeteners on the market allows you to use recipes and keep the calories down to a minimum. Granular products pour and measure just like sugar. Liquid products 10 drops = 1 tsp. of sugar, 20 drops = 1 packet of non-nutritive sweetener = 2 tsp. of sugar. Low calorie brown sugar products are also available. Other store and name brands are available besides the ones listed here. The label will provide you with the number of calories per serving.

Saccharin: Sweet n' Low, Sugar Twin  
 Acesulfame K: Sweet One, DiabetiSweet  
 Aspartame: Equal, Nutrasweet - The Original, Nutra Taste  
 Sucralose: Splenda

Remember Saccharin products lose their sweetness when heated over 104 degrees F. Aspartame contains phenylalanine so it is a concern for individuals diagnosed with PKU but is good for cooking and baking. At this time, Splenda and DiabetiSweet seem to give the best results with cooking

and baking.

**Fruit Substitutions.** Beyond using processed sweeteners, nature has provided us with a wholesome sweeteners, available in a variety of colors and delicious flavors in the way of fruit. Whereas sugar supplies added calories and no vitamins and minerals, fruits also contribute fiber, which may reduce the risk of developing heart disease and some types of cancer. When substituting fruit juices for milk or water in recipes that require baking, add 1/4 to 1/2 tsp. baking soda per cup of juice. Some suggested unsweetened fruit juices are apple, apricot, guava, grapefruit, lemon, lime, mango, orange, papaya, peach, pear, and pineapple.

Is there such a thing as healthy desserts? In the grand scheme of a healthy diet, desserts are normally portrayed as a nonessential luxury, eaten purely for pleasure. But with a little creativity, lighter desserts can allow you to have your cake, and eat it, too!

## Fun Stress Relief Ideas

**Stress** is mental tension caused by demanding, taxing or burdensome circumstances. Stress doesn't just affect our mental state and mood; it affects our physical health as well. When we are very stressed, a hormone called cortisol is released into our bloodstream, suppressing the functioning of our immune, digestive and reproductive systems. This is why we need to relieve our stress in our lives and learn to control it.

Fun stress relief comes in many shapes and sizes. The choice is yours. Stress relief activities can be any simple, natural activity which: eases your heart, gives you delight, and helps you to feel better. Laughter is the best way to feel better and a wonderful stress reliever. Fun stress relief is going to make you laugh. You should vary your activities and try some new ones,

so you are not doing the same ones all the time. This will make your fun ways to reduce stress even more effective.

Here are just a few fun stress relief ideas to spark your creativity:

- Play an instrument
- Go to a concert
- Take up painting
- Give lessons of something you know how to do to others
- Do nothing - sit under a shady tress and just watch nature
- Plant a garden
- Make a gift for someone else
- Go fishing, canoeing, or kayaking
- Take a nap
- Bake a cake or cookies and give them away
- Write a letter to someone you love
- Take a few deep breaths, and then

watch a funny movie

- Remember 10 things you are grateful for
- Call a friend and cheer them up
- Visit a park, or go for a walk
- Read some good jokes
- Get a massage
- Build a sand castle
- Meditate
- Feed the birds or squirrels
- Play with your pet
- Listen to your favorite music
- Read a good book
- Say a prayer for someone you care about
- Get out of your rut. Learn something new and creative, like photography or a second language, just for the fun of it. It can give you a whole new perspective on life