

Quick, Healthy Ways to Cook



Here are some tips for quick and nutritious food prep. These methods will save you time and help to cut down on fat.

Stir-frying

If you don't have a wok, use a cast-iron or stainless steel skillet. Most dishes can be cooked with just a tablespoon or two of a high-quality oil if you heat the pan first. Buy pre-cut vegetables to reduce prep time. Try stir-frying sliced lean beef or boneless, skinless chicken and ready-cut broccoli. Add a dash of soy sauce and some slices of fresh ginger root.

Microwaving

Microwaves cook very quickly. So most of the nutrients in the foods you're cooking don't have time to escape. Read the cooking directions carefully. It's easy to overcook foods. Use the microwave to cook baked potatoes or winter squash. You can also reheat leftovers and soup. Fish filets can be microwaved in minutes. Just add seasoning and a dash of milk. Then cover with wax paper and cook.

Slow cooking

A slow cooker is a handy kitchen appliance that cooks food slowly at low temperatures. Set it up in the morning and dinner will be waiting for you when you get home. Soups, stews, and pot roasts all make great slow cooker meals. Be sure to trim fat from meat before cooking. Extra-lean, less marbled cuts of meat become tender and juicy when cooked in a slow cooker. Add more flavor by using different types of canned tomatoes, herbs, and spices.

Baking, broiling, and grilling

Bake, broil, or grill foods on a rack to drain fats away during cooking. This is a healthier way to eat. And it's delicious as well. Grill meat and vegetables, too. Add bell peppers, tomatoes, onions, summer squash, and mushrooms to kebobs. Or cook vegetables in foil-wrapped packets.

Steaming

Steaming can be done in a microwave or on the stovetop. Either way, it keeps in nutrients and flavor without adding fat. Ready-cut broccoli, cauliflower, and baby carrots can go right from the bag to the steamer.

Pressure cooking

By using steam, a pressure cooker can cook a pound of potatoes in just 4 minutes. It can cook a chicken stew in less than half an hour. A pressure cooker can also turn the toughest cut of meat into a tender main course. Don't over-season foods. Pressure cooking uses very little liquid, so flavors are stronger.

Poaching

In poaching, the food is covered with liquid. This could be broth, water, milk, or wine. The food is then gently simmered until done. Poaching uses less liquid than steaming or boiling. This means that delicate flavors are less diluted. Poaching works well for fish or eggs.

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