

Indulge yourself in low-calorie excellence

When you enjoy good cooking, you often think of all the calories that must be in the dish. After all, you've got to keep an eye on your waistline, right? Well, the fact is, you can have your cake and eat it too! Low calorie recipes, carefully selected, taste every bit as good as the fattening versions. If you want to be trim, follow these tips for a delicious diet without guilt.

When you want to lose weight, the absolute bottom line to success is keeping track of the total number of calories you take in each day.

Let's say you've got a low calorie recipe which consists of a selection of fruits in a cup. Boring dishes make it less likely you'll stick with your menu. That dull fruit cup can be dressed up with a couple of tablespoons of non-dairy whipped topping or plain yogurt. Mix in a sprinkling of shredded dry coconut and you've got happy tastebuds. The additional calories are few, but now you have a low calorie recipe you look forward to eating!

There are an abundance of calorie counter books available. Look through a few and choose one with extensive lists that include brand name products. Should you choose not to cook from scratch, those brand name product lists tell you the calorie count of say, a slice of processed American cheese. A good calorie counter book allows you to modify or substitute ingredients while knowing the exact calorie count of your modified creation.

Browse the cooking section of any magazine rack. You'll find many magazines dedicated to low calorie recipes. Leaf through a few until you find one or two that have recipes that appeal to your personal taste. Pass on those that seem too spartan or stingy to your palate.

Check out ethnic cookbooks. Mediterranean cuisines, especially the Italian and French coastal dishes, are famous for mouthwatering and healthy low calorie recipes. Other tempting examples are found in Middle Eastern and Indian dishes, replete with vegetables and fragrant seasonings that pack a delightful punch of savory goodness.

Low calorie recipes with imaginative seasonings can turn plain green beans into gourmet fare. Take that can of green beans - sorrowfully plain on its own - add a teaspoon of garlic, a 1/2 teaspoon of thyme and a light dousing of pine nuts mixed in before steaming. The result - a flavorful side dish fit for company. As a nutritional bonus, know that garlic lowers cholesterol, while thyme fights infection naturally.

We all know that salt causes water retention. Salting food can have a

discouraging effect on your outlook and results. Get a good seasoning book and consult the index for herbal salt substitutes.

So, you can see that low calorie recipes needn't be dull or taste like hospital food! Do count your calories. Make use of seasonings in your menus. Watch the pounds melt away!