

5 Tailoring Your Tastes

Taking the focus off fat



YOU COUNT,
CALORIES
DON'T



Is the obsession moving from counting grams of carbohydrate, calories, or exchanges to counting grams of fat? Is this simply a repackaging of the same old diet message where the focus is still on numbers rather than fullness and enjoyment of taste and texture? The answer is yes. Look around you and begin to critically evaluate the new language people are using, the talk in the lunch room, the commercials on television. This is not about a new life-style . . . this is the same message repackaged to attempt to fool the consumer that the intentions of the weight loss industry are real and valid. The fear of fat on your body is now transferred to a fear of eating too much fat in food. Yet, rigidly restricting fat in the way you eat, or replacing an obsession with body fat with counting the amount of fat grams in your food, is adding to your health problems.

Take a look at how *you* feel about fat in the food you eat. Ask yourself these questions:

1. Am I counting the number of grams of fat in the food I eat?
2. Do I base decisions about what foods to eat on the amount of fat in the food?
3. Am I attempting to cut out all fat in my food?
4. Am I afraid of fat on my body and fat in food?
5. Am I buying into society's culture of adopting this behavior as normal and healthy?
6. Does my conversation revolve around food, fat, and fiber?
7. Is this way of thinking causing me to obsess around numbers, calories or fat grams or make me feel bad about myself?
8. Am I restricting my fat intake by too much, resulting in hunger, cravings, and feelings of deprivation?
9. Do I binge on high-fat foods when I get the chance?
10. Do I deny the need to eat some fat for my physical health and enjoyment of food?

If you answered yes to one or more of these questions, then you need to recognize that you can decide to choose to buy into this way of thinking or make some changes.

WHY DO WE NEED TO EAT SOME FAT?

Healthwise, a small amount of fat daily in our daily eating pattern is needed to give us the essential fatty acids we need. Fat is also necessary to act as a carrier for fat soluble vitamins.¹ Just as importantly, fat helps our food to taste and feel good. It makes us feel full and helps to keep us full for a longer period of time because it takes time for us to digest it.

Why the concern about the fat in food? In the past, foods with a higher fat content were prized because they were not as easily found in nature. We have come a long way since that time. Today convenience foods, which are generally higher in fat content than foods prepared from scratch or in their fresh form, are readily available. In recent years investigators have found evidence that the body may be able to convert dietary fat into body fat with greater ease than it can convert carbohydrates (starches and sugars) into body fat. (2-4) In other words, it takes more energy to convert carbohydrates into body fat than to convert fat calories into fat tissue.

In class, when Barbara heard this, she felt she had to cut back her fat intake even more. She was consuming very little fat to begin with—only a little bit in cooking and on her salad. Eating too much fat is not desirable for overall health but dieters can actually restrict their fat consumption too much. Remember those days when people used to restrict carbohydrates, those foods that contain natural sugar like breads, potatoes, and pasta, only to crave those foods later on? The same process may be occurring with fat. Denying yourself fat can lead to feelings of deprivation, increased cravings for fat and eventually bingeing on the food or foods restricted. The purpose is not to go down to the bare minimum of fat, which is the diet mentality. You might end up feeling psychologically deprived and bingeing on higher fat items. Take it gradually. The taste for the lower fat way of eating will come with time.

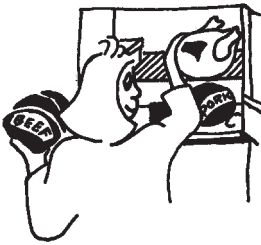
Today people are more conscious of their fat intake and are consuming less butter and meat. However, the total fat content of their daily intake has not decreased. How could this be? Even though people are eating less meat, trimming the fat off the meats they do eat, and consuming less butter, their fat intake often remains

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high because there has been an increase in the purchase of specialty foods such as premium ice cream, gourmet soups, and convenience foods such as processed meats. These items are high in fat. If you eat them often you have not learned to enjoy the taste and texture of lower fat foods, you have simply shifted the source of your fat consumption. The visible type of fat is being traded for the hidden fat you don't actually see.

WHERE DOES MEAT FIT IN?

Eating more grains, legumes, fruits, and vegetables instead of convenience foods and protein foods such as prepared meats gives better health and the bonus of a reduced grocery bill. However, some consumers have cut down on beef and pork and are eating more fish and poultry thinking that these items are leaner. Not so, because modern meat sources contain less fat than animals raised years ago.⁵ In fact, round steak has the same fat content as the white meat of chicken breast with the skin removed.



MAKE ROOM!

Note The type of fish and preparation method will determine whether the fish has a high fat content. Vary the types of fish you eat since fish such as salmon, herring, sardines, mackerel, tuna, and trout contain a higher amount of omega-3 fatty acids which seem to have an effect of lowering blood cholesterol levels.

Ann would not eat pork and beef because she thought they were too high in fat. But her lunches would often consist of deep-fried chicken or fish burgers, garlic toast, and fries with gravy. All these items are high in fat and Ann added even more fat by topping them with greasy gravy. Was she compensating for the fact that she liked fat and was cutting it out too quickly by eliminating pork and beef? Adding gravy to fries did not allow her to tune into the crispness (texture) of the fries. The idea is not to eat one way at home, "being good all week," only to binge on high-fat foods when you go out, or on weekends, as "your reward." You are not dieting. You are developing a new life-style where your new-found preferences help you to make healthier choices more frequently.⁶

In another situation, Donna decided to use margarine instead of butter as she enjoyed the taste of butter but

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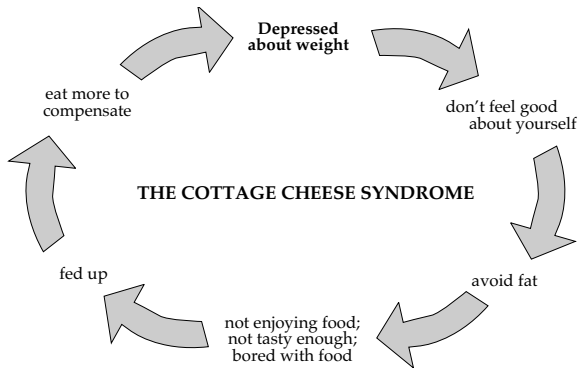


did not care for margarine. Her thinking was that if she didn't like margarine she would not eat as much of it and therefore decrease the amount of fat she was taking in. This is in fact what happened in the short term. She did eat less margarine and therefore less total fat, but a few months later her craving for butter became so strong that she ended up bingeing on butter. Sudden decreases in fat content are recognized as being part of the dieting process. Attempts to restrict higher fat foods while people still have a preference for these foods result in feelings of deprivation and may cause a higher intake of fat than would normally be consumed.⁷

Thus, the starve/ binge cycle that occurs with sweets is now also occurring with fats. Part of the reason for this increase is the tendency to make changes in your eating patterns, in this case, fat intake, too quickly. Sudden changes may turn out to be only temporary changes.

Compare the big jump to the smooth slide in the chart on p130 and decide for yourself which you prefer.

Jane, who is a longtime dieter, ate cottage cheese and fruit every time she was on a diet. The problem was that she did not like the taste or texture of cottage cheese so her new way of eating did not become a life-style change. It was only something temporary she did in order to lose weight. Resuming old habits of eating once the weight has been lost leads to weight gain. And then the cycle brings you right back to the same ineffective and unappetizing eating habits in order to



lose weight. To succeed, break the diet cycle.

THE BIG DECISION

"I've decided that our whole family is going to move to healthier eating."

THE BIG JUMP

THE SMOOTH SLIDE

First action on decision

BRACE YOURSELF.
Quickly eat all of your favorite foods because they won't be part of your diet tomorrow.

LOOK AT YOURSELF AND FEEL GOOD ABOUT YOU! Feel good that you have made the conscious decision to start making slow changes that will reflect a healthier life-style.

First shopping trip for healthy food

Stock up on foods that say "light," "low fat," and/or "diet" on the labels regardless of whether you enjoy them.
Your family likes whole milk but now that you've made the decision to "eat healthy," you buy skim milk.

Stock up on a wide variety of foods that you and your family enjoy, paying more attention to moving towards more carbohydrate foods and less protein. Buy a few herbs to highlight the flavors of your foods. Your family likes whole milk, so now you buy some 2% milk and plan to serve it to your family. If they don't like it at first, you can mix it half and half with whole milk till they prefer the lighter mouth feel.

Feelings of cook after 1 week

Frustrated and overwhelmed. Food is drier than the family enjoys. You still have a strong resolve to eat healthy, even if rest of family isn't as enthusiastic.

Encouraged by how easy it has been to make small changes to the foods, cooking techniques, and carbohydrate/protein balance that the family already enjoy. Surprised that the family hasn't complained or even really noticed the changes. Notices that the foods have a nicer color and texture with all the taste they had before.

Reaction of family after 1 week

Concerned that the food will never be "tasty" anymore. Tired of the new chewier, drier tastes and textures of these new foods. Longing for last week's menu. Quite agile at slipping food to grateful canine under table. Wishing that the budget allowed more order in or eat out foods for next week. Snacking and eating away from home as much as possible.

Surprised that even though the decision to "go healthy" was made, they still get to eat the foods they love! Notice that the foods they loved have more color and just as much, if not more, flavor than before. Feel more energized after they eat rather than tired and overfull.

Feelings of cook at 1 month

Almost ready to give up because no one (including the cook) is enjoying the food that is prepared. Disappointed and feeling deprived. Misses cooking and eating all the foods that the family used to eat. Wishes that cooking wouldn't be such an overwhelming chore. Sneaking "favorites" more and more often.

Excited that the process is still so enjoyable; not even thinking about quitting; having more and more fun experimenting with old and new recipes; pleased with the results, flavors, and textures.

Feelings of family at 1 month

Ready to move to the neighbors during the meal time. Wishing the "health kick" that hit the house would stop kicking. Eating out or ordering in as much as possible and when eating foods they enjoy, really eating lots. Snacking and sneaking foods that they love on a more frequent basis.

Still enjoying the food that is on the table. Asking for certain favorites more often, "When are you going to make that great bread again?" Noticing that they aren't hungry between meals as often.

Situation after 3 months

Disillusioned with the "health movement." Feeling disappointed and a little guilty, they give up and return to the old ways of eating and cooking again. Some of the family only feels "joy" because they finally get to eat what they love!

Feel good about themselves and their new ways of eating and preparing foods. Energized by the successes, the whole family wants to keep moving on the smooth slide toward healthier eating. They are surprised and pleased to find that they actually like the new ways better. They prefer the new flavors, textures, and tastes and don't want to go back.

Tailoring Your Tastes



The best plan is to fine-tune your present eating habits. Start from where you are right now and implement gradual changes to allow your entire family to acquire a taste for a healthier way of eating. Begin by ensuring that you have a balanced menu and then gradually make changes to bring out new flavors and textures.

Many people are enthusiastic about a new way of eating at the beginning of the program but then give up because trying new ideas seems too much trouble. This process is actually easier than switching to all new recipes and foods. You don't have to spend time gathering new recipes and buying new ingredients to get on the road to healthier eating. When you try to alter your recipes drastically, you are switching back into the diet mentality. It is better to adjust your present recipes while retaining, even enhancing, the flavor and texture you are used to. Otherwise, you may bake and eat flavorless cookies which do not satisfy you, and this inevitably leads to bingeing on the cookies you do like. When you are out of the diet mentality, you will eat only 1 or 2 cookies at a time instead of 6 or the whole box of cookies. Making a diet recipe that contains half the calories and eating twice as much is not the way to change your tastes and listen to your body.

Putting the HUGS philosophy into practice by gradually cutting back fat content does not mean eliminating fat. Gradual is the key. Otherwise you will miss the flavors you enjoy, feel deprived, and become very discouraged.

Sylvia had a hard time accepting the idea of gradual change. "But I have a friend who eats in a healthy way and exercises regularly and she looks great. So why can't I do it too?" She wanted immediate results. I eventually discovered that Sylvia's friend puts all her efforts into looking good and doing things just right. Then she gets fed up and reverts to her old behavior. Apparently she does this several times throughout the year. If you constantly compare yourself to others, you will be wasting your energy on wishful thinking rather than action. Remember, you are doing this for yourself for a lifetime. Do it gradually, one step at a time, and never mind what others think.

SELECTIONS THAT SATISFY

Part of the philosophy of listening to your body and tuning into taste and texture involves making gradual changes, one step at a time. If you are getting cravings for foods high in fat, it may be a sign that you are not eating frequently enough or that you are restricting your fat intake too much. You will gradually acquire a taste for new foods with lower fat content. Remember, the new way of eating is for life! You do not want to

You are listening to your body if:

1. You are tuning into the texture, taste, and satiety value of the meal.
2. You are enjoying the energizing feeling of balanced meals. Higher fat meals make your mind and your body sluggish by slowing circulation and reducing the oxygen-carrying capacity of the red blood cells. Meals too low in fat will leave you feeling hungry and thinking about food.
3. You are accommodating your present taste preferences by only making slight changes in your eating pattern.
4. You are checking the regularity of meals and the type and quantity of food eaten if you are experiencing cravings.
5. You are paying attention to the experience of eating and allowing yourself to taste, savor, and enjoy your meal.

feel deprived while you are acquiring your new tastes. If you answer no to some of the above questions, reassess if you are eating too low fat and therefore need to readjust to a more normal and natural way of eating. A low-fat way of eating is not desirable for everyone all the time. If something does not feel right, make adjustments and go slower in the process of moving towards healthier eating. Recognize that any change is progress. Striving for a particular endpoint is falling back into the diet thinking. Use improved health as your guide. Tailor your tastes to appreciate the slight subtle differences in the taste and texture (the “mouth feel”) of healthier foods. If they are not becoming choices you make because you prefer and enjoy them, then you are returning to the diet mentality.

Tailoring Your Tastes

Let's look at some examples.

If you need a snack, eat it; otherwise, you will be too hungry by the next meal and will eat too quickly and not enjoy your food as much. Eat regularly, being guided by your physical hunger and appetite. Try introducing more carbohydrates and do not restrict yourself to salads alone. They do not have much substance and may lead to bingeing later on. While a salad may fill you up more quickly because of the high water content of the lettuce, there is little substance and few nutrients in the meal. In fact, there is almost twice as much fat in a caesar salad as a roast beef sandwich. A meat sandwich, on the other hand, will provide you with more carbohydrate for energy, nutrients, and holding power, not to mention the feeling of satisfaction and taste. *The aim is to focus more on the satisfaction, taste, and hold-over power of foods and meals rather than the content of fat and calories.*

Compare fast food at home to a fast-food meal in a restaurant. A typical fast-food chicken dinner has over four times the amount of fat as a well balanced 20-minute home-made chicken dinner. Those of you familiar with fast-food fried chicken will remember the grease marks on plates and napkins, the greasy fingers and lips that require a soap and water wash after eating, the thirst produced by the extra salt needed to cut through the fat flavor, and the full and bloated feeling after eating. In contrast, the home-cooked chicken meal has a variety of colors, tastes, and

FAST FOOD AT HOME

Twenty-minute home-cooked dinner (for four)

Baked breaded chicken

Rice

Peas with green onions

Sliced tomato

Milk (2%)

compare this with:

Fast-food fried chicken dinner

1 piece side breast

French fries

Coleslaw

Milk (2%)

textures, and leaves a refreshing, satisfying feeling.
**TAKING THE FOCUS OFF FAT ADDS PIZZAZZ
TO MEALS**

“My partner is a great cook and it tastes so good. I agree with the saying ‘butter makes it better.’ Doesn’t it?”



Maybe not. The true chef can use herbs tastefully without a lot of fat to bring out the flavors in a meal. (See Chapter 14 for more details.) Changing to a lower fat way of eating can be a simple matter of adapting the foods you normally enjoy. Lower fat eating can still mean eating very well, especially when foods are prepared at home. Food can be moist, tasty, and have flavor and texture without being heavy with grease.

In order to acquire a taste for foods and meals lower in fat, you have to learn how to make gradual changes to your food preparation techniques so that you will enjoy the end product. The traditional way of frying with fat and no lid leads to moisture evaporation and food sticking to the bottom of the pan. Adding more fat results in a meal loaded with fat and grease, which is heavy on the stomach and difficult to digest. Instead of feeling energized, you feel drowsy.

Choosing meat with less marbling (the streaks of fat seen throughout a cut of meat) and trimming all visible fat off meat before cooking can sometimes result in a drier, less tender product. Try using a non-stick frying pan with a lid to retain the moisture. Trim the fat from the meats, sear the meat in a non-stick frying pan with a light coating of oil or non-stick cooking spray, turn the meat over, brown, and add the lid while the meat cooks. When the oil has been heated, add onions, garlic, and fresh or dried herbs for more flavor prior to adding the meat. If meat sticks to the pan, deglaze with wine, alcohol, milk, or vegetable or fruit juice, water and herbs, or broth or water with a bouillon cube to brown the meat nicely. The liquid will gradually evaporate and it can be thickened to make a gravy, if desired. The alcoholic content does not remain.



You can brown meat in the oven instead of using a frying pan. Just coat the meat lightly with seasoned flour and place it on a rack set over the pan to catch the drippings. Bake at 350°F (180°C) for 15 to 20 minutes.

Tailoring Your Tastes

Chops can also be done in the oven on a rack in a covered dish. Add seasonings instead of fat flavor.

Roasting can be done on a rack in a covered roaster. The rack prevents the fat drippings from coming into direct contact with the roast, so the roast will be less greasy. Use lower temperatures when cooking a roast, 325°F or 160°C (for tender cuts) and 275°F or 130°C (for medium tender cuts). This process retains the moisture, reduces shrinkage, and prevents the fat from going back into the roast. Gravy can be added for flavor, color, and moisture. Remove the roast, then put ice cubes in the fat drippings to allow the drippings to cool quickly. The number of ice cubes added will depend on the volume of juices. Ensure that sufficient ice cubes are added so all the fat rises to the top as it cools. Remove fat and thicken juices with flour or cornstarch. Lump-free gravy thickeners are also available to make the job easier. Quark cheese, yogurt, or oat bran can also be used as thickeners. Add extra seasonings such as garlic or onion powder or milder herbs and spices to add new flavors. *Note* If time permits, placing the gravy in the freezer or refrigerator will allow the fat to float to the surface for easy removal.

Use sauces as accents to meat, not the main feature. Tune into texture and natural flavor.

Less tender cuts of meat are best cooked in liquid (braising, stewing, or pot roasting) to create succulent, tasty dishes. Marinating meat helps to tenderize and add flavor. Marinating liquids include wine, vinegar, seasoned vinegars, soy sauce, citrus juices, beer, yogurt, and oil. The acidic ingredients soften the tough connective tissue and the oil lubricates. Often the oil can be eliminated. Don't use salt in a marinade because it draws out the moisture.

When microwaving beef, it is not recommended that beef come to room temperature before microwaving. It is best to slightly undercook beef. Remember, cooking continues during standing time. Large dense items need a standing time of 10 to 20 minutes. Overcooking or cooking at too high a power level causes the meat to be dry and tough.

Steaming, microwaving, or stir-frying vegetables retains the flavor, texture, and color. If you sauté vegetables, cook them over lower heat and add white

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TIP To microwave your vegetables so they are crisp and not mushy, put a consistent quantity of vegetables cut uniformly on to a plate, cover with plastic wrap, and watch for it to fill with air. When this happens the vegetables are cooked but still crisp.

Note Potatoes do not need to be peeled. Peels add color and fiber to the potatoes and most of the vitamins are right under the peel. Add paprika or your favorite seasoning. These potatoes are a real treat for the whole family.



wine or water to help soften them. The addition of fresh or dried herbs can heighten the flavor. Use herbs such as dill, rosemary, thyme, and garlic instead of salt for flavor. Thyme is a mild herb that works well with any dish and the bonus is that it is high in iron. A small amount of a simple white sauce (below) will enhance the natural flavor of vegetables.

White sauce Place a teaspoon (5 ml) of oil in a non-stick frying pan. Add fresh or dried herbs to hot oil to extract the flavor of the herbs. Add chopped onions, if desired. Add skim or 1% milk or yogurt and heat. Thicken with flour or cornstarch, or for convenience, add white instant gravy thickener. If you prefer a cheese sauce, add a hint of your favorite cheese to accent the flavor of the vegetables (too much cheese will mask the vegetable flavor).

When using oil to saute foods, use a heavy non-stick pan so that a light coating of oil will prevent the food burning. Make sure the oil is hot before adding the ingredients in order to reduce the amount of oil that soaks into the food.

Roasted french fries Crisp, tasty french fries can be made without them tasting and feeling greasy. Cut potatoes into french fry strips, toss lightly with a bit of oil to coat the potatoes lightly, and add seasoning, if desired. Cook in a hot oven (425° to 450°F or 210° to 230°C) on a non-stick baking tray brushed with a very thin coating of oil to prevent potatoes from sticking as the starch is released. Cook for 15 to 25 minutes, turn and cook for another 15 to 25 minutes, or until brown.

Seasoned rice The cooking instructions on the rice box may call for butter or margarine. Since minute rice is so overly processed it needs extra fat or spices to give it flavor. Use converted rice instead. It takes only 20 minutes to cook, has more nutrients than even long grain rice, and you end up with rice that does not stick together. Add a bouillon cube or juice to water to add flavor to rice. Chopped vegetables such as celery, mushrooms, onions, and herbs and spices make a very nice rice pilaf. Brown rice is now available in the converted form (the rice is parboiled and some of the nutrients are pushed back in). Note that packaged

Tailoring Your Tastes



A small amount of the real thing may be more satisfying than a large amount of something artificial. The substitute is okay, if you can enjoy the taste.

seasoned rice is costly and is often disappointing and artificial tasting, so go with the real thing!

Flavor enhancers Herbs and spices are natural flavor enhancers (see Chapter 14 for more details). Substitutes for high-fat products are effective only if you enjoy the replacement. For example, if you enjoy butter on your potato and you replace it with a lower fat product such as light sour cream or yogurt, which you don't really like, then eventually you will crave the butter. The true butter connoisseur might try gradually using less butter as an accent to the meal. On the other hand, if you enjoy the replacement, then the substitute will work. Low-fat substitutes, such as diet margarines or diet butters, are high in water content. For this reason, they cannot be used for frying. If you try to fry with them, you will notice that the pan soon becomes dry because the water from the product evaporates as soon as it is exposed to heat. The high water content of these products can make hot toast soggy. Experiment and do what works best for you.

If you are drinking whole milk, try diluting it with 2% for several weeks until you get accustomed to this taste. Then try 2% milk for several weeks. Work your way down to mixing 2% and 1% and then finally switch to 1%. You may decide to stop here or to mix 1% and skim and finally drink only skim milk. Skim milk has a fuller body than it did years ago due to the higher solid content. As you become aware you will gradually acquire a taste for foods with a more refreshing, less thick texture. This is much easier and more enjoyable than the diet approach of going from whole milk to skim milk all in one swoop.

Cheese has a high hidden fat content. If you like cheddar cheese and go straight to cottage cheese, you may find it difficult to adjust to this sudden drop in fat content. If you don't like cottage cheese because of its taste and lumpy texture, then you will eat it temporarily because you think you should and then go back to what you were doing before. If you prefer the taste and texture of cheddar cheese, try mixing it with skim mozzarella or a lower fat cheddar cheese to gradually reduce the greasy feel and still savor the cheddar taste. Eventually you may prefer the lighter

taste of the lower fat cheese.

WHY THERE AREN'T NUMBERS (CALORIES OR FAT COUNTS) IN THIS BOOK

Focusing on numbers can take the enjoyment out of life and it doesn't help us to become healthier, happier people. We exercise to lose weight or burn calories rather than to enjoy the outdoors or feel the improved energy and self-concept that activity brings. We feel good about ourselves on the days when we weigh the "right" amount and feel depressed and forlorn when we are above that number. Often we choose foods because they are lower in fat or have fewer calories rather than because we enjoy them. But when we get tired of counting we crave the familiar flavors, tastes, and activities we enjoyed before, and we return to old eating habits and patterns. None of these numbers help us to become healthy and numbers didn't help us to learn to enjoy the flavors and textures of foods lower in fat, sugar, and salt and higher in fiber. Numbers just provide a rule book of what is good and bad to eat.⁸

So let's look at food in another way. What are the flavors and textures of the foods we enjoy? What is it about food we enjoy? Can we slowly change our preference for familiar flavors and textures to reflect healthier eating patterns without becoming obsessed with numbers? We know we can! The charts on pp139 and 140 illustrate how the tastes and textures of familiar foods prepared and served in the usual ways can slowly be replaced by an appreciation of foods and meals with more refreshing and energizing qualities. It isn't important to know the exact calorie or fat content of food. What is important is that you enjoy what you eat.⁹

Tailoring your tastes to enjoy new flavors and textures is a slow, pleasurable process. Over time, your new choices will become preferences. You will choose techniques and foods which are lower in fat, sugar, and salt and higher in fiber because you *prefer* them, not because you think you *should* eat them. When you prefer something, you repeat it. Repeating healthier life-style practices leads to healthier living. You can find more information regarding these areas in *Tailoring Your Tastes*.¹⁰ (See order form at back of book.)

THE PROCESS OF TAILORING YOUR TASTES

TRADITIONAL

NEW EXPERIENCE

Appearance	Grease may be seen or is floating on top of sauces, salads, or soups. Washed out colors of vegetables. Thick beverages. Grease leaves a mark on napkins.	Refreshing, clean looking. Sauces, dressings, and garnishes provide a colorful accent without overwhelming the food. Exciting colors and textures.
Taste	Subtle flavors not noticeable. Flavors masked by fat taste. Sauces, dressings, or garnishes overwhelm the food. Needs more salt or sugar to bring out flavors masked by fat.	Natural flavor can be tasted. Less salt and seasonings needed. The more you taste it, the better it gets; taste is subtle and builds gradually. Sauces, dressings, and garnishes enhance flavor without overwhelming it.
Texture	Mushy, gooey, soft, dense, greasy.	Crunchy, crisp, chewy, cleaner.
Mouth feel	Coats mouth, greasy; beverages leave mouth more dry, coated with fullness of beverage.	Experience the variety of textures and consistencies. Beverages feel refreshing and go down easily.
Body response	Heavy feeling as it goes down. Feel tired and bloated when finished. Beverages leave you feeling still thirsty.	Refreshing, satisfying feeling as it goes down. Not overfilling. Leaves you energized. Beverages quench your thirst.

Broken down into food categories, the above chart would look like this:

Soups & Appetisers	Rich, creamy mouth feel, coats top of mouth, overpowering with first mouthful, subtle flavors not noticeable, real taste is masked, heavy feeling as it goes down.	Real flavor can be tasted, less salt or seasonings necessary, the more you taste it, the better it gets; taste is subtle and builds gradually, refreshing, satisfying feeling as it goes down. Coarser texture; garnishes used only as accents, don't overpower.
Salads & Dressings	Heavy, salad is drenched so that crunch and texture is not noticed; color is washed out.	Dressings provide a colorful accent and bring salad to life; salad remains crunchy and colorful.
Bread & Bread Products	Soft, cake-like texture; no coarseness; a greasy feel on fingers and mark on napkin.	Experience the chewier texture, the satisfying mouth feel of the grains. Breads have a coarser look, and variety in color and texture. You are able to taste the flavor and feel the moisture without masking it with fat.
Vegetables	Gooey, mushy, washed out, needs butter or margarine on them for any flavors; sauce overpowers vegetables.	Crisp, subtle flavor that adds life to the plate; crunchy; herbs, spices, and sauce enhance without drowning flavor; vibrant colors.
Main Dishes	Heavy, greasy, rich sauces; too full feeling; feel tired and bloated when finished.	Natural flavors more pronounced; a balance of carbohydrate and protein; exciting colors and textures; satisfying, not over full.
Fluids (full strength)	The "pucker" experience that leaves mouth more dry, coated with fullness of beverage, stark in color, still thirsty afterward.	<i>(water added to beverage—refer to chapter 11)</i> Refreshing feel, goes down more easily, leaves your thirst quenched and satisfied, a hint of color, subtle flavor.

Desserts	Rich, creamy, dense texture heavy feeling once you have eaten; garnishes overpower it, fat masks other flavors.	Airy, fluffier texture; taste true flavors of ingredients, garnishes used as accents, a pleasant ending to a meal.
Snacks	Rich, greasy, leave a ring on the napkin and greasy fingers.	Crunchier, flavorful, and chewy; a more substantial, satisfying feeling.

MODIFYING RECIPES TO SUIT YOUR NEW TASTES

Getting in tune with the HUGS philosophy does not mean turning to special low-fat versions of recipes and spending a lot of time preparing new foods. It means modifying your present recipes and learning what you can do to enjoy new flavors and textures which are not masked by fat. Use your own recipes, and let your creativity and new-found knowledge allow you to make slight changes so that you produce a product that is moist, tasty, and lower in fat and sugar content.

Muffins

Function of fat — moisture, flavor

Function of sugar — tenderizer, flavor (sweetness); need sugar for egg to coagulate at a higher temperature, allowing muffins to rise. Cutting out the sugar completely will result in small muffins.

Take time to adjust to new taste before making more changes.

Initially, decrease sugar and fat called for by 1/4. Next time you make muffins, you may be able to decrease the sugar and fat a little more. Enhance the new flavors by using sweeter spices such as cinnamon, mace, lemon extract, vanilla extract, lemon or orange peel, or your favorite spice. If the recipe already contains one of these, try doubling the amount.

Retain the moisture by adding milk, yogurt, or light sour cream. Applesauce, pineapple, juice, blueberries, shredded carrots, or chopped raisins can add back moisture and some sweetness. Raisins are a concentrated source of sugar, so a small amount goes a long way.

Replace leavening by adding more baking powder and baking soda with the sifted flour (1/2 tsp or 2 ml baking soda and 2 tsp or 10 ml baking powder). Ensure that you sift the baking powder and baking soda with the flour; otherwise lumps of these ingredients may

Tailoring Your Tastes



Less fat in a recipe may reduce cooking time by around 25 percent. Overcooking will result in a dry product.

appear in your muffins. If you can taste the soda and do not like it, then add a little more sugar the next time and slightly cut back on the baking soda content of the recipe.

Cookies

Function of fat — to allow creaming effect of ingredients, flavor

Function of sugar — sweetness, allows creaming effect.

Sugar, flour, and fat are the main ingredients. Cutting back on sugar and fat too much does not allow the creaming effect to occur. Sugar also adds to the sweetness of the cookies so you may be able to cut back by about half and replace with some sweeter spices such as nutmeg and cinnamon. Fat content can only be cut back slightly (by 1/4). Cutting the fat content too much will change the nature of the cookies. A crispy oatmeal cookie may become a chewy oatmeal cookie that, with time, will go hard. To keep cookies moist, add milk to replace the moisture taken out by cutting back the fat content. Applesauce or blueberries can also add back moisture to cookies or brownies. Try storing cookies in a tight cookie jar with a slice of apple. This will help retain some moisture.

The idea is to modify your present recipes so that they still taste good and you will enjoy them. The purpose is to learn to taste and savor more wholesome foods.

Learn to tune into the texture and wholesome flavor to ensure the end product is enjoyable.

CAKES AND QUICK BREADS

Try replacing the butter in your recipe with sour cream. If this works, the next step is to try to replace some of the sour cream with plain low-fat yogurt and eventually to move towards using more plain low-fat yogurt.

Use the concept of replacing oil with fruit juice to give moisture and flavor to all your cooking. Chicken fingers made this way are moist and tasty. Use a deboned chicken breast, dunk slices in concentrated orange juice and then bread crumbs or crushed cornflakes. Bake in the oven. Makes a tasty meal or an innovative snack! Let your creativity take hold for your own creations.

TIPS & TECHNIQUES FOR LOWER FAT COOKING

When you move toward lower fat foods you will find that there are some techniques and ideas that will make the move more enjoyable. Try the following suggestions. You can use these ideas and techniques in your own recipes.

These techniques help to make baked and cooked foods tastier, moister, and more enjoyable when using less fat content. Some of the techniques are a little more time consuming than traditional methods of cooking. Once you begin to incorporate these skills into your way of cooking, they become a more natural quick process. The end results are worth the extra effort. Enjoy the gradual process of change. Make meal preparation a fun part of your day by including your family.

Browning ground beef

- Ground beef can be browned alone or with onion and garlic in a microwave oven. Place beef, onions, and garlic in a microwave-safe sieve. Put the sieve in a microwave-safe bowl.
- Microwave uncovered on high for 2 to 3 minutes at a time. Take the meat mixture out and stir. Return to microwave again.
- Repeat this procedure until the meat is completely browned. The sieve will allow fat to drip to the bottom of the bowl, so you aren't cooking the meat in the fat.

Sautéing vegetables

- Replace some or all of the sauteing oil with dry white wine to add moisture to vegetables. You may need a greater amount of wine than oil because the liquid cooks out of the wine faster than the oil. Adding about 1/4 cup (50 ml) white wine increases the sugar content to the equivalent of approximately 1/4 tsp (1 ml) white sugar. The increase is very small and compensates for the decrease in fat content.
- Cheaper white wine found at liquor stores is a good choice. Using a bottle with a screw top makes storage easier. Remember the alcohol content is removed during the cooking process as long as the wine boils (which it does when sautéing).
- Using wine to saute vegetables results in a lower fat

food that has a lovely tangy flavor. And the aroma of vegetables cooking in white wine is very appealing.

Separate eggs and whip the whites

- Use this technique for a lighter fluffier texture, when baking lower fat cookies, puddings, cakes, or muffins.
- Separate egg whites and beat until they are white and hold their shape. Add egg yellows to other ingredients as outlined in the recipe. Follow the recipe as instructed, leaving the egg whites until the end. Then gently fold the beaten egg whites into the remainder of the ingredients until completely blended.

Underbake cookies

- Cookies have a nicer texture if they are slightly underbaked and this is essential when the fat content is decreased.
- Never bake a lower fat cookie much longer than 8 minutes in a 375°F (191°C) oven (time will vary depending on the oven).
- When the outside of the cookies start to get firm, the middles will still look soft and unbaked. However, once the cookies have cooled they will be moister than if they are overbaked.

Tips for storing lower fat baked foods

- Most lower fat baked foods taste best fresh. If you want to store them, use an airtight container. Store them in your freezer and remove only what you want to eat at one sitting.
- Lower fat baked foods can be stored on your counter in an airtight container for a few days. However, lower fat foods don't taste as good the second day. Freezing everything not used the day it is baked is preferable.

Using low-fat yogurt

- Plain or plain low-fat yogurt (.9% M.F. or less) can replace some of the oil, shortening, or butter/margarine in cakes, cookies, or muffins.
- Adding yogurt to a baked food replaces some of the moisture lost when fat is decreased.

Using honey, corn syrup, or molasses to sweeten lower fat foods

- These products can be used in baking when you

are decreasing the fat content to replace all or part of the sugar content in recipes.

- These three sweeteners replace moisture that is lost when decreasing oil and fat and add lovely flavors to foods.

- Honey, corn syrup, or molasses do not have the same sweetening capacity as table or brown sugar, so you can't replace them cup for cup in a recipe.

Here are some guidelines for the same amount of sweetness:

—**Honey** about *3/4 cup (175 ml) honey to 1 cup (250 ml) sugar*

—**Corn syrup** *3/4 cup (175 ml) plus 2 tbsp (30 ml) corn syrup to 1 cup (250 ml) sugar*

—**Molasses** *1 cup (250 ml) molasses to 1 cup (250 ml) sugar*

- Honey, corn syrup, and molasses give foods an added soft texture when used in place of sugar.

Molasses has a distinctive flavor and dark color.

- If you substitute honey directly for table sugars, you will actually be consuming more sugar than you were originally.

- When making changes to your recipes do so gradually. If you make changes too quickly you and your family won't enjoy the flavor changes. Slower changes last longer.

Unsweetened applesauce adds moisture to lower fat foods

- Unsweetened applesauce adds extra moisture and sweetness to recipes so you won't notice the decrease in sugar and/or fat in lower fat cooking. You may want to decrease the sugar content when using this product in baking to replace some of the fat.

Otherwise you will end up increasing instead of decreasing the total sugar content due to the natural sugar in applesauce.

- Do not use unsweetened applesauce in the same recipe you are replacing the sugar content with alternate sweetening agents such as honey, molasses, or corn syrup. The end product will be too moist and won't hold together.

- Unsweetened applesauce has a much less sweet taste than table sugar. Use *1/2 cup (125 ml) unsweetened applesauce to 1 tbsp (15 ml) white sugar* for the same amount of sweetening power.