



17 Smart Food Swaps to Cut Calories

From Your Nurse Care Manager

1. Eat your eggs with hot sauce instead of cheese

- Instead of cheese – *1 oz. of cheddar has 114 calories* – top your eggs with hot sauce, which contains no calories and helps with satiety and metabolism.

2. Top your toast, waffles, or pancakes with mashed berries instead of jelly or syrup

- Half a cup of berries – *fresh, frozen, or thawed* – has about 40 calories, compared with 2 tablespoons of maple syrup or jelly, which both have about 100 calories. Plus, who only uses 2 tablespoons of syrup? The berries will also give you a good punch of fiber, which helps keep you full and satisfied and won't spike blood sugar quickly, like the jelly or syrup.

3. Swap the non-fat latte for black coffee with a splash of half-and-half

- Contrary to its name, that non-fat latte has 130 calories and a startling 19 grams of carbohydrates per 16 ounce serving. Replacing that “light” drinkable dessert with black coffee with a splash of half-and-half saves you more than 100 calories per 16 ounce serving.

4. Sprinkle salads with freeze-dried raspberries instead of dried cranberries

- If you want a sweet addition to your nutritious salad, stay away from dried cranberries. They have a whopping 130 calories per 1/4 cup and 30 grams of carbohydrates. Instead, sprinkle freeze-dried raspberries guilt-free and save more than 100 calories per 1/2 cup serving, adding 3 grams of belly-filling fiber.

5. Go for mustard in place of mayo on your sandwich

- Mustard can add really nice flavor to any sandwich, and there are tons of varieties, from spicy to honey. A serving of mayo is 95 calories, versus 10 calories in a serving of mustard.

6. Choose a DIY salad dressing instead of the store-bought kind

- Again, mustard is your friend. Mix Dijon or whole grain mustard with low-fat kefir or red wine vinegar and garlic.

7. Use hummus as a spread instead of a dip

- With 70 calories in a 2 tablespoon serving, using hummus as a dip can turn healthy crudité's into a high-calorie snack. Instead, use hummus as a spread on a high-fiber cracker with a sandwich and save calories without sacrificing taste.

8. Pick just one salad “accessory”

- Instead of topping your salad with nuts, avocado, and cranberries (*all three will clock in at 313 calories*), just pick one. The next day, choose a different accessory, which will also keep your salad interesting. Plus, they're a mere fraction of the calories of potato chips, but with the same crunch factor we crave so often.”

9. Ditch the white pasta in favor of spaghetti squash

- One cup of cooked spaghetti squash has about 40 calories, compared with traditional spaghetti, which comes with more than 200. Spaghetti squash is also nutrient-dense. It's a good source of fiber and Vitamins A and C, and it can be eaten just like you would eat pasta – with a great tomato sauce and turkey meatballs or with pesto or spinach.

10. Dress up your chili, soups, and stews with non-fat Greek yogurt instead of sour cream

- Just a dollop of sour cream can set you back 115 calories and a whopping 12 grams of fat – seven of which are of the artery-clogging variety. Greek yogurt is packed with muscle-building protein, calcium, and B vitamins.

11. Mash cauliflower instead of potatoes

- One cup of traditional mashed potatoes has more than 200 calories, compared to mashed cauliflower, which you can typically eat for less than 100 calories per 1 cup serving. Cauliflower is a great source of the antioxidant indole-3-carbinol (I3C), which may help reduce the risk of some cancers, including breast cancer.

12. Ditch the ice cream sundae in favor of a Greek yogurt parfait

- Instead of a cup of ice cream for dessert, try 1 cup of nonfat Greek yogurt topped with fresh berries and a sprinkle of cacao nibs. Both toppings are packed with antioxidants, which can help reduce cellular inflammation and oxidative damage. And the comparison is a no-brainer: One cup of ice cream has about 275 calories; one cup of frozen yogurt has about 230; and a cup of Greek yogurt has just 130, plus twice the protein, so you're less likely to return to the freezer for a second helping.

13. Put olive oil in a spray container instead of using it directly from the bottle

- Each tablespoon of olive oil is 120 calories and 15 grams of fat. Use a mister instead of pouring it straight into the pan or onto a salad. This allows for portion control and will save you more than 100 calories.

14. When baking, substitute canned pumpkin for butter or oil

- Canned pumpkin – *not pumpkin pie mix* – is loaded with Vitamin A, which is important for skin and eye health, as well as immunity, and the comparisons are pretty crazy: ½ cup of canned pumpkin has about 40 calories, compared to butter or oil, which has more than 800 calories. Applesauce and mashed banana can also serve as good substitutions for butter or oil, usually in a 1:1 ratio.

15. Top casserole with high-fiber cereals instead of breadcrumbs

- Breadcrumbs are typically made with white bread, while breakfast cereals contain 5-9 grams of fiber per serving. Not only will you save more than 150 calories per ½ cup serving, the swap will also keep you more full and you'll get a metabolism boost from the added fiber.

16. Snack on pistachios instead of macadamia nuts

- You get the same amount of calories from 35 pistachios (100 calories) as you would from only five macadamia nuts.

17. Chow down on kale chips rather than potato chips

- Kale chips are so easy to make at home, and you can spice them up with a little grated parmesan or chili powder. Plus, they're a mere fraction of the calories of potato chips, but with the same crunch factor we crave so often.

