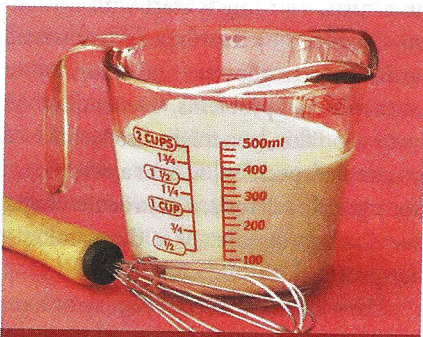


# To eat better, swap this for that

It's easier to eat healthfully if you keep your kitchen stocked with foods that are packed with nutrients but low in calories and saturated fat. Here are seven ingredients that fit the bill, plus advice on how to substitute them for their less-healthy counterparts.



Use evaporated milk instead of heavy cream.

**1 Instead of heavy cream** (411 calories, 27 grams of saturated fat per half-cup), **try evaporated milk** (170 calories, 6 grams of saturated fat per half-cup).

It looks like cream and has a similar consistency. Low-fat evaporated milk has even fewer calories and less fat.

**Cooking tips:** Try it in creamy soups or rice pudding. You can whip it by first chilling the milk, bowl, and beater. Two other options: Substitute light coconut milk (about 100 calories, 6 grams of saturated fat per half-cup) for heavy cream when making curries or squash soups. And replace some of the cream in sauces with lower-sodium chicken broth thickened with cornstarch.

**2 Instead of baking chocolate** (73 calories, 5 grams of saturated fat per half-square), **try cocoa powder** (12 calories, 0.4 grams of saturated fat per tablespoon).

It has less sugar, calories, and fat but still has a deep dark-chocolate flavor.

**Cooking tips:** Use it in chocolate soufflés, cakes, and meringues. Cocoa made by the Dutch process (such as Droste) has a very rich, smooth flavor.

**3 Instead of bacon** (42 calories, 1 gram of saturated fat per slice), **try paprika, peppercorns, or smoked salt** (6 calories or less, 0 grams of saturated fat per teaspoon).

You can get the smoky flavor of bacon without the calories and, perhaps more important, without the preservatives, like nitrates and nitrites. Worried about sodium? Stick with the peppercorns or paprika.

**Cooking tips:** Sprinkle smoked salt into simmering pea or potato soup, or stir one of the spices into an omelette or scrambled eggs. Or try chipotle chilies, which have a potent, almost meaty flavor.

**4 Instead of ground beef** (231 calories, 6 grams of saturated fat per 3-ounce serving of cooked, 80 percent lean beef), **try canned beans** (about the same calories but almost no saturated fat per cup, depending on the type).

They can have almost as much protein as ground beef, plus lots of fiber and other nutrients.

**Cooking tips:** Try beans in burritos, swap them for meat in chili or stews, or add them to a salad. Put cannellini beans into a blender with rosemary, then thin with water for a tasty soup. Or purée chickpeas with cilantro, cumin, or jalapeño peppers and use the spread in place of butter.

**5 Instead of full-fat sour cream** (444 calories, 26 grams of saturated fat per cup), **try fat-free sour cream** (189 calories, 0 grams of saturated fat per cup) or **plain, fat-free yogurt** (137 calories, 0.3 grams of saturated fat per cup).

They have a similar tangy flavor and creamy texture, so they work well in dips or on top of baked potatoes.

**Cooking tips:** Strain yogurt to thicken it and use in place of crème fraîche or cream cheese, or add to cold soups or

salad dressings. Try using yogurt seasoned with curry or ginger to marinate chicken, fish, and lamb. You can also try low-fat plain Greek yogurt, which is most like sour cream in texture.

**6 Instead of canola or olive oil** (about 120 calories, 1 to 2 grams of saturated fat per tablespoon), **try balsamic vinegar** (14 calories, 0 grams of saturated fat per tablespoon).

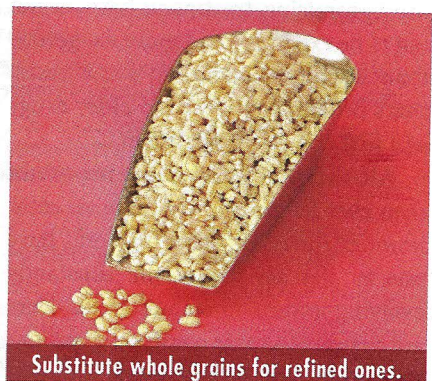
Balsamic vinegar's sweet, fruity flavor is smooth, so you can use it to replace some of the oil in many salad dressings, sauces, marinades, and other recipes.

**Cooking tips:** Drizzle vinegar over cooked meat, or add to steamed grains combined with dried fruit.

**7 Instead of white rice and pasta** (about 100 calories per half-cup cooked), **try whole grains** (about the same number of calories).

Packed with fiber and other nutrients, they're healthier and more flavorful than refined (white) grains. Plus, they can take longer to chew and digest, which may help you eat less and feel full longer. Experiment with a variety of whole grains, including barley, bulgur, farro, and quinoa, as well as brown, black, or even purple rice.

**Cooking tips:** Cook grains in vegetable broth for richer flavor. And use them not just as side dishes but also in casseroles, salads, and soups. ■



Substitute whole grains for refined ones.