

No time to cook

Make quick and tasty meals from a mix

Packaged mixes like au gratin potatoes, macaroni and cheese or flavored rice and pasta can easily be turned into healthy and satisfying meals. You save time and still eat healthy. Packaged mixes and soups are often high in sodium and fat, but there are ways to reduce the sodium and fat without changing the taste. These additions may also allow you cook once and eat twice. The table below shows you how to make these changes.

Packaged mix	Changes	Additions
Macaroni and cheese	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reduce added margarine by half or omit• Use low-fat or fat-free milk• Add extra whole-wheat macaroni when cooking the macaroni• Choose Option A or B	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cook $\frac{1}{2}$ cup additional whole-wheat macaroni• Option A Add the following:<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ 1 to 2 cups cooked vegetables◦ Tuna in water or salmon, cooked chicken• Option B Add the following:<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ 1 cup canned tomatoes, drained◦ $\frac{1}{2}$ pound lean ground beef, browned◦ 1 teaspoon chili powder
Seasoned rice	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reduce added margarine by half or omit• Omit seasoning packet and add your own herbs and spices like garlic powder, cilantro, basil, oregano• Add extra regular rice to cook or prepare instant rice• Add brown rice, bulgur or whole-grain barley	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• $\frac{1}{4}$ cup rice and $\frac{1}{2}$ cup water or $\frac{1}{2}$ cup rice plus 1 cup water Then add one or more of following:<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ 1 cup canned red or black beans, drained and rinsed◦ 1 cup chicken or ham, cooked◦ $\frac{1}{2}$ cup celery, sliced◦ $\frac{1}{2}$ cup green pepper, chopped◦ 1 cup canned tomatoes, drained◦ $\frac{1}{4}$ cup low-fat sharp cheese, shredded
Noodles in sauce	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reduce added margarine by half or omit• Use low-fat milk• Cook extra whole-wheat noodles to combine with noodles in the mix	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• In separate pan, cook 1 cup whole-wheat noodles, drain• Then add one or more of following:<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ 1 to 2 cups peas or broccoli, cooked◦ 1 can tuna in water, drained or 1 cup chicken, cooked◦ 1 hard-boiled egg, chopped◦ $\frac{1}{4}$ cup low-fat sharp cheese, shredded

Packaged mix	Changes	Additions
Scalloped and au gratin potatoes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce margarine by half • Use low-fat milk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stove-top method: Add extra medium potato, cooked and sliced. Add extra potato when stirring in low-fat milk (microwave a potato while dry potatoes from mix simmer) • Then add one or more of following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ 1 cup green vegetables ◦ 1 cup ham, chicken or turkey, chopped ◦ 2 tablespoons red or green pepper, diced
Canned bean soup		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add can of white or red beans, drained and rinsed • ½ cup water
Canned cream of potato soup		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 can creamed corn • 1 cup low-fat milk • Then add one or more of following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ ½ cup celery (cook in microwave), sliced ◦ ½ teaspoon dry onion, minced ◦ ½ cup carrots (cook in microwave), grated ◦ Garnish with fat-free cheese
Bread stuffing mixes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce margarine by half or omit • Use low-salt chicken broth or salt-free homemade chicken broth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add 1 to 2 cups extra dry whole-wheat bread crumbs (use blender to make dry bread crumbs) • Add extra spices and herbs, if desired like garlic, onion powder, sage, thyme

Putting it together for better nutrition

Round out your meal with fruits, vegetables and whole grains. Fruits and vegetables are heart healthy and low in fat. They have important phytochemicals that reduce your risk of cancer. Whether you eat a frozen dinner or prepare a convenience mix, round out your meal with fruits and vegetables. Top off your meal with a glass of low-fat milk — we never outgrow our need for milk and all its wonderful nutrients.

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