Make a change for your health

Change doesn't happen overnight! Go slow. It is easier to make small changes over time than to change everything all at once. Look for recipes that are low in fat or sugar.

**Less fat in baking**
- Cut fat by one-fourth or one-third in baked products. This works best in muffins, quick breads and cookies. (Fat adds moisture. When cutting fat in a recipe, add a liquid like water, milk or fruit juice. Add back at least half as much liquid as fat was reduced. For example, if you cut the fat by 4 tablespoons, add 2 tablespoons of liquid back.)
- Replace half to all of the fat in muffins and snack cakes with unsweetened applesauce, low-fat yogurt or puréed fruit.
- Use 1 percent low-fat or skim milk or evaporated skim milk.
- Use reduced-fat or fat-free cream cheese instead of regular cream cheese.
- Substitute 2 egg whites for every whole egg. You can also substitute 1/4 cup of egg substitute for every egg. This may make baked goods dry and less tender, so add 1 teaspoon of canola oil to replace the fat of the egg yolk.

**Other ways to reduce fat**
- Omit oil when cooking pasta and rice.
- Use low-fat sour cream, low-fat cottage cheese or plain low-fat yogurt to top baked potatoes.

**Latino foods with less fat**
- Beans: Cook pinto, red or black beans with ham or smoked turkey instead of bacon or salt pork, or use just a little of these fatty meats.
- Refried beans: Use less lard, bacon drippings or other fat in refried beans. Make refried beans moist enough by adding some of the liquid that the beans were cooked in.
- Meat: Instead of cooking meat in fat, cook it in sofrito or chili sauce with a little water. Trim fat from meat before cooking. If you use chorizo, bacon or other fatty meats, pour out the fat that cooks before you add other ingredients.

**African-American foods with less fat**
- Beans and peas: Cook black-eyed peas, lima beans and navy beans with little or no bacon, ham hocks or salt pork. Instead, use smoked turkey or chicken parts with skin removed or lean ham. In bean-and-rice combinations with meat, like Hoppin’ John or red beans and rice, use meat that gives a good taste with less fat, like lean ham, turkey ham or Canadian bacon.
- Greens: Greens can be steamed or boiled with smoked turkey or chicken parts with skin removed, or lean ham, instead of fat back, ham hocks, salt pork or neck bones. Onion, cayenne pepper, vinegar or liquid smoke give good flavor.
- Sweet potatoes and yams: These are naturally fat-free. Add less butter or margarine. Cinnamon, nutmeg and cloves are good for seasoning, whether the potatoes are eaten as a vegetable or in a pie.
Less sugar
• Cut sugar by one-fourth or one-third in baked goods and desserts. Adding spices like cinnamon or nutmeg or flavoring like vanilla adds sweetness. This works best with quick breads, cookies, pie fillings, custard and puddings. (Sugar adds moisture. When cutting sugar in a recipe, add a liquid like water, milk or fruit juice. Add back at least half as much liquid as sugar was reduced. For example, if you cut the sugar by 4 tablespoons, add 2 tablespoons of liquid back.)

More fiber
• Choose whole-grains like whole-wheat bread, rolls or tortillas.
• Use whole-wheat flour for part or all of the flour in a recipe. If you need 2 cups of flour, try 1 cup whole-wheat flour and 1 cup all-purpose flour. When using all whole-wheat flour instead of 1 cup flour, use 7/8 cup whole-wheat flour.
• Add extra fruits and vegetables to recipes. Include peel when possible – it has fiber in it.

Salt
• Use less salt in your recipe, but go slow. If 1 teaspoon is needed, try ½ teaspoon.
• You don’t need salt when cooking pasta, rice and hot cereals. Try cooking pasta or rice in unsalted broth or unsalted tomato juice.
• Use onion and garlic powder rather than onion salt, garlic salt or other seasoned salts.
• Use low-sodium broth to cook or stir-fry.

For seasoning meat or casseroles, use herbs, spices, vinegar, fruit juices, fruit peel or chopped vegetables instead of salt, seasoned salt, monosodium glutamate (MSG) or low-sodium soy sauce. Use no-added-salt “low sodium” vegetable or tomato juice in soups and stews.

Thicken casseroles and soups or stews with fresh, frozen or no-salt-added canned vegetables. Avoid using convenience foods like main dishes or meals.
• If you use canned vegetables, drain and rinse them to reduce sodium content.

Change your eating habits
Making a change for you and your family’s health also means making a few changes in your kitchen or dining area.
• Keep serving dishes in the kitchen so you have to get up to put more food on your plate.
• Use short, wide glasses instead of tall, narrow ones — you’ll pour less into the short glasses.
• Use small dishes — you’ll eat less and the portion will look bigger in the dish.
• Put leftovers in containers you can’t see through, so you’ll be less tempted to eat the leftovers.
• Keep fresh fruits on the counter or cut up in the refrigerator for quick and easy access.

Don’t forget physical activity
• Turn the TV off! Be active together as a family – go on a walk or play together.