

Introduction

An essential part of becoming a Healthier You is making healthy choices. This part of the book will give you some of the tools to stay on track. One of the simplest and most effective healthy choices you can make is to know what you are eating. Cooking at home is one sure-fire way to plan and keep track of calories, portion sizes, nutrients, and all of that other good stuff. Unfortunately, many people avoid cooking at home either because they feel that their cooking skills aren't up to par, don't have the time, or prefer the taste and quality of meals eaten out. This doesn't have to be the case! If you are one of those people, don't worry—we can help!

Here are almost 100 easy-to-make, fun, and delicious recipes. They are “heart healthy.” We know that because they were developed by researchers and nutritionists with the HHS National Institutes of Health. No advanced cooking skills required, and they taste great.

The recipes are for appetizers, soups, breads, beef, poultry, fish, vegetables, pasta, rice, sauces, desserts, great vegetarian dishes, and more! On the next page, they are categorized by the amount of time they take to prepare AND cook—from start to finish, all less than 90 minutes total. Since many of us want to save money by preparing our own meals, we've provided some healthy recipes that will be satisfying for the cost-conscious. If you have children that want to help make healthy meals, we have kid-friendly recipes as well.

There are multi-cultural dishes for a variety of tastes, and the best part is that each one is healthy. And you will know that because nutrition information is provided for each recipe. This information includes calories, total fat, saturated fat, cholesterol, and sodium for all recipes. Since you can see the ingredients, you know EXACTLY what is in each serving you eat—a great advantage to cooking your own food—nothing is HIDDEN. We hope you will enjoy the recipes and experiment a little! Make them your own. But be aware of what ingredients you are adding in the process (that means no adding saturated fat and salt!).

Becoming a Healthier You doesn't stop here! Check out the list of government Web resources that you can use to access up-to-date information, advice, and tips for maintaining your progress. You'll find resources for just about every aspect of being healthy. Plus, there are resources for kids (including some really cool teen and tween

sites) and older Americans. You'll also find: cultural-specific suggestions, physical activity ideas, nutritional information, menu planning, and shopping tips. There is even a resource for finding recreation areas and parks near you to get out there, be active, and enjoy the scenery!

We also have some great cost-savings tips, tips for using spices to add new flavor and use less salt, food shopping lists, and information on keeping food safe—all tools that will keep you being a Healthier You.