

Food & Drink

Lowering fat intake is easy Take transitional approach when lowering amount of fat

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As we fast approach the end of May we will gladly say good-bye to winter and hello to the lazy, hazy (and sometimes crazy) days of spring and summer.



Food
for
Thought

Lisa Carwright

Any recipe
can be low
in fat

Vegetable Alfredo Sauce

It isn't as hard as you think to lower your fat intake.

The following recipe is your typical vegetable alfredo sauce, made low in fat by substituting cream with evaporated milk and cottage cheese.

And you can pick up all the ingredients at area grocery stores.

Ultra Food & Drug has a bunch of sweet carrots for \$1.99, while Loeb and Food Basics carries snow-white mushrooms for \$1.99.

Broccoli (\$1.29 a head), partly-skimmed evaporated milk (\$1.39), extra-large California garlic (\$2.99/lb), extra-large eggs (\$1.99) and fresh parsley (\$.59 a bunch) can all be found at Village Grocer.

Butter or margarine can be picked up in two places. IGA has Becel margarine on for \$3.89/tub. While it is a little more expensive, it is one of the lowest in fat. Ultra Food & Drug has Lactantia margarine on for \$.99/tub.

The Bulk Barn carries the parmesan cheese (\$7.21/lb) and the black pepper (\$3.99) required for this recipe.

Ultra Food and Drug also has Equality cottage cheese for \$1.49/tub.

Fettucine (or pasta) can be purchased at No Frills for \$.69 and or The Garden Basket for \$.99.

Using fresh Italian bread from A&P and the leftover garlic and butter, you can make garlic bread.

Just because you are lowering your fat intake, doesn't mean you have to give up the foods you love — just eat in moderation. Cut a few strawberries (found at Food Basics for \$.88/pint) into small pieces and add a scoop of vanilla Breyers ice cream (on at Dominion for \$2.88/tub).

For most of us, as the seasons change so do our eating and entertaining habits. We cook, eat and socialize more outdoors — around the barbecue, at the cottage or by the pool.

It's the season of trips to the beach, pool parties and casual living. A renewed interest in our eating habits, fitness and general health creates the impetus for a pro-active approach to a healthier lifestyle and a positive step in the right direction.

Sandra Edwards, a registered dietician in Markham offers nutritional counselling to clients on many different health-related issues.

For individuals who are interested in reducing the fat content of their diets, Edwards recommends a transitional approach.

This approach offers an opportunity to adjust to the flavors and cooking techniques of lower fat foods over time.

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Fat gives foods a wonderful mouthfeel — a sensation many of us have become accustomed to and find difficult to give up.

With a transitional approach, individuals have an opportunity to make the adjustment at their own pace, so it becomes a lifestyle change rather than just a change for a few days, a week or a season.

Edwards recommends that her clients begin by measuring out oil when preparing or cooking foods.

It is often surprising how liberally we pour oil into the pan and on our salad. This is often the way extra fat (and calories) gets into our recipes and menu items.

Flavors of food can also be enhanced with fresh herbs, vinegars and freshly-squeezed lemon juice. After a short time of measuring the oils you will begin to get a feel for how much oil you need (and want) and it will become second nature.

A cookbook that Edwards recommends to many of her clients is titled *Tailoring Your Taste*.

It was written by two dietitian, L. Omichinski and H. Wiebe Hildebrand and is available at any bookstore by

order or through Edward's office. The authors of the book offer a unique approach for individuals interested in adjusting to a lower fat lifestyle.

In *Tailoring Your Taste* a recipe is included in its original format. Adjustments are then made in the recipe's ingredient list and preparation techniques to offer the reader a variety of healthier alternatives.

The reader can experiment with the different variations and, over time, adjust the original to a preferable lower fat version.

Along the way, the authors offer suggestions, explanations and ingredient alternatives for the different recipes in the book.

In *Tailoring Your Taste* the recipe for vegetable alfredo sauce is included in its original higher fat format and then with three modified

lower fat variations. We have included the third variation of the recipe for you to try at home. It reduces the butter content, and replaces the cream with evaporated milk and cottage cheese.

You'll be amazed with the results. The sauce has a wonderful light texture and it won't leave you feeling full and bloated when you are finished eating.

Low in fat

is not low in flavor

In the past, when we thought of low fat foods we would think of foods that were also low in flavor; however, this is not the case anymore.

Foods that are low in fat are not only healthier choices they are also delicious alternatives. Thank goodness for all the flavors that have no connection with fat at all: the fresh taste of herbs, the spark of ginger, the tang of hot and sweet peppers, and the intrigue of vanilla.

Not to mention the spunk of vinegar, the warmth of freshly ground spices and the smokiness of grilled foods.

Our choices are not only abundant they are simple and extremely accessible.

Everyday, you will learn more about reducing the fat in your diet. Surprisingly, with the addition of each new flavor you will find your foods tasting fresher and more exciting.



EATING HEALTHY: Registered dietician Sandra Edwards recommends the transitional approach for people interested in cutting down on the fat in their diets.

Photo by SJOERD WITTEVEEN

Vegetable Alfredo Sauce

Yield: 3-4 cups (750-1000 ml)

1	cup	broccoli florets	250 ml
1	cup	diced carrots	250 ml
1	cup	fresh mushrooms, sliced	250 ml
1-2		cloves garlic, minced	1-2
1	tblsp	butter or margarine	15 ml
1	cup	part-skim evaporated milk	250 ml
1-2/3	cups	1 per cent cottage cheese, pursed until smooth	400 ml
1		egg	1
1/8	tsps	pepper	5 ml
1/4	cup	fresh parsley, chopped	50 ml
1	cup	parmesan cheese, grated	250 ml

1. Steam broccoli and carrots until tender but still crisp.
2. Sauté mushrooms and garlic in 1/2 tblsp (7.5 ml) butter or margarine until tender in heavy saucepan. Set vegetables aside.
3. In the same saucepan melt remainder of the butter/marg, add evaporated milk to melted butter/marg, and heat until hot but not boiling. Purse cottage cheese and egg until very smooth. Add pursed cottage cheese to evaporated milk mixture and heat together.
4. Add salt, pepper, parsley, parmesan cheese, mushroom, garlic, broccoli, carrots to sauce, heat on med/low heat stirring constantly until sauce is hot and through and desired consistency.