

HOW TO SELECT AND USE RECIPES IN NUTRITION EDUCATION

Recipes mean different things to different people. Most view a recipe as a new idea for preparing food to be shared with family and friends. For educators, recipes are a popular way of translating nutrition concepts into practical information that consumers can use.

Often, consumers ask nutrition educators for particular recipes. Handing out recipes on demand is not an effective use of nutrition education resources. Recipes should complement an educational program or demonstrate a principle you are trying to teach. For example, if you are developing a handout to explain how to increase fiber in the diet, you may wish to provide a three-bean salad or whole grain muffin recipe.

When you consider providing recipes as part of your programming use the following checklist to guide your decision:

Does the recipe emphasize the points in your program plan?

- ✓ Use recipes that encourage eating fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low-fat milk and lean meats.
- ✓ Use recipes that are consistent with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
 - Use salt sparingly and designate “optional” if possible.
 - Minimize the use of foods with low nutritional value and high in solid fat and/or added sugar such as whipped topping (e.g., Cool Whip), chocolate syrup or cream cheese.
- ✓ Include at least one nutrition tip covered in your lesson on the recipe.
 - How children could help with the recipe
 - How the recipe fits with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans or MyPlate recommendations
 - A food safety message

Is the recipe appropriate for your audience?

- ✓ Recipes should be written clearly and in familiar terms, especially for low-literacy audiences.
- ✓ Ingredients should be familiar and readily available at local stores.
- ✓ Choose recipes that do not use expensive equipment or ingredients.
- ✓ Consider the cultural preferences of your learners.
- ✓ Consider learner’s age, level of education, and experience with food preparation. Keep in mind that many adults today have limited food preparation knowledge and skills.
- ✓ Choose recipes that are quick and easy. [If possible, choose recipes with fewer than eight ingredients and that can be prepared in less than 45minutes.]
- ✓ Consider whether learners have storage space for leftovers or extra perishable ingredients.

Is the recipe in the public domain or do you have permission to reprint?

- ✓ Use recipes in the public domain (from public sources such as the U.S. Department of Agriculture or National Institutes of Health). Examples are recipes in the SNAP-Ed Connection – Recipe Finder Database, <http://recipefinder.nal.usda.gov/>.
- ✓ Get permission to reprint any recipes that are not in the public domain. Note that recipes on the Internet as well as recipes in cookbooks from organizations such as the American Heart Association are copyright protected.
- ✓ State the source on the recipe. State “reprinted with permission from (insert source)” if you received permission to reprint the recipe.
- ✓ Pre-testing recipes is highly recommended to make sure the product is the quality that you expect it to be.

Does the recipe conform to food safety guidelines and should food safety be mentioned?

- ✓ Recipes should not include unsafe practices, e.g., using uncooked eggs in the finished product or marinating meat at room temperature.
- ✓ If a recipe is to be cooked in advance and reheated later for serving, be sure to include proper cooling and storage instructions.

Is the response “yes” for the following items?

- ✓ The recipe has a short descriptive title.
- ✓ The ingredients are listed in the order they will be used.
- ✓ Measurements are spelled out rather than abbreviated (i.e., use tablespoon rather than Tbsp.)
- ✓ since abbreviations can be confusing.
- ✓ The recipe specifies can size and describes preparation of ingredients where helpful (e.g., eggs, beaten).
- ✓ The method of preparation is described using short, simple, numbered steps. Pan sizes, baking time and temperature are specified.
- ✓ The recipe states expected yield in number and size of servings.
- ✓ The recipe includes Nutrition Facts. If it is not practical to print the Nutrition Facts with the recipe, then have it available for reference.
- ✓ The recipe does not specify brand names.

For more information on formats and writing for low literacy audiences, see <http://extension.missouri.edu/explore/regpubs/ncr475.htm> and <http://www.nal.usda.gov/fnic/pubs/bibs/gen/lowlit.html>.

Here is an example of a recipe that meets these criteria. It might be used as a teaching aid to support a lesson about food safety, good calcium sources, low-cost cooking, or reducing calories and saturated fat in entrees.

Salmon Patties

Serving Size: 1/9 of recipe

Yield: 9 servings

Ingredients:

- 1 can (15 1/2 ounce) drained salmon
- 1 cup whole-grain, crushed cereal or crackers
- 2 large eggs, lightly beaten
- 1/2 cup 1% or skim milk
- 1/8 teaspoon black pepper
- 1 Tablespoon vegetable oil

Instructions:

1. Use a fork to flake salmon until very fine.
2. Crush cereal or crackers into crumbs.
3. Add cereal or cracker crumbs, eggs, milk, and pepper to salmon.
4. Mix thoroughly.
5. Shape into 9 patties.
6. Heat oil in a skillet.
7. Over medium heat, carefully brown both the sides until patty is thoroughly cooked (to internal temperature of 160 degrees.)

*Don't forget to wash
your hands after
handling the
salmon-egg mixture.*

| Nutrition Facts | |
|--|-----------------------------|
| Serving Size 1/9 of recipe (77g) | |
| Servings Per Container | |
| Amount Per Serving | |
| Calories 110 | Calories from Fat 40 |
| % Daily Value* | |
| Total Fat 4.5g | 7% |
| Saturated Fat 1g | 5% |
| Trans Fat 0g | |
| Cholesterol 20mg | 7% |
| Sodium 270mg | 11% |
| Total Carbohydrate 5g | 2% |
| Dietary Fiber 1g | 4% |
| Sugars 1g | |
| Protein 12g | |
| Vitamin A 2% | • Vitamin C 0% |
| Calcium 15% | • Iron 2% |
| *Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs: | |
| | Calories: 2,000 2,500 |
| Total Fat | Less than 65g 80g |
| Saturated Fat | Less than 20g 25g |
| Cholesterol | Less than 300mg 300 mg |
| Sodium | Less than 2,400mg 2,400mg |
| Total Carbohydrate | 300g 375g |
| Dietary Fiber | 25g 30g |
| Calories per gram: | |
| Fat 9 • Carbohydrate 4 • Protein 4 | |

Adapted with permission from: Eat for Health Toolkit, **Missouri Nutrition Network**

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