



Nourish to Flourish SOUTH CAROLINA



South Carolina
**DEPARTMENT
ON AGING**

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A Newsletter for Fueling Strength, Health, and Independence

The Nourished Holiday: Cooking with Ease

The holidays always bring us together in the heart of the home: the kitchen. It is a fun place filled with the sounds of chopping herbs, the wonderful smell of baking spices, and the happiness of making meals together. Food is much more than fuel for our bodies; it is a way to share our family history, show love, and feed both our bodies and our spirits. However, keeping our holiday traditions healthy means keeping an eye on sneaky ingredients like salt. According to the American Heart Association, **more than 70% of the sodium Americans consume comes from packaged, prepared, and restaurant foods rather than the saltshaker.** Embracing fresh, from-scratch cooking allows us to reclaim complete control over our sodium intake and protect our cardiovascular health. Staying in charge of our own kitchens keeps these wonderful holiday traditions alive.

This newsletter looks at clever kitchen tools that make cooking easier, stop unwanted strains, and help everyone stay independent. Simple, ergonomic devices like food choppers, automatic stirrers, and easy-grip mandolines make working with fresh ingredients completely effortless and far more nutritious. By making tasks like chopping, stirring, pouring, and baking much smoother, we can focus on what really matters: the joy of being creative and sharing a delicious, heart-healthy holiday feast with family and friends!

No Stress, Less Mess: Organizing Your Cooking Space

When your kitchen is set up the right way, cooking stops feeling like a chore and starts feeling like a fun hobby!

- Move ingredients you use the most, baking dishes, and any heavy pots, to shelves that sit right at counter level. This keeps you from having to bend down low or reach up high for what you need.
- Putting pull-out drawers and lazy Susans (spinning trays) inside deep pantry cabinets brings your items right to the front so you can see them instantly.
- Adding a sturdy, tall stool to the kitchen lets you sit down comfortably while doing longer tasks, like peeling vegetables or rolling out pie dough. This helps you save your energy so you can fully enjoy the holiday celebration!

Source: <https://www.heart.org/en/healthy-living/healthy-eating/eat-smart/sodium/sodium-and-salt>

Nourish to Flourish SC is developed by:
South Carolina Department on Aging - <https://aging.sc.gov/>

No Strain Kitchen Tools

Automatic One-Touch Can and Jar Openers:

These small gadgets pop tough vacuum seals and smoothly cut right through metal lids with the press of a single button. This means you never have to twist your wrists hard to open a jar again.

Angled Measuring Cups: These cups have clear, slanted measurements printed on the inside.

They let you read exactly how much liquid you have just by looking straight down into the cup. You do not have to bend down low or lift a heavy, full cup to your eye level to see it.

Lightweight, High-Contrast Pots and Pans:

Trading heavy cast-iron pans for lightweight aluminum or carbon steel keeps your food cooking evenly while making things much easier to lift. Choosing pots with two loop handles, one on each side, gives you a safe, balanced, two-handed grip when moving hot dishes from the stove to the dinner table.



Pan holder that attaches to stove-top to increase stability for one-handed stirring.



What You Need to Know About Sodium

- While the average American consumes over 3,100 mg of sodium daily, the American Heart Association recommends a limit of 2,300 mg per day, with an optimal target of 1,500 mg for most adults to support heart, kidney, and metabolic health.
- Always check the serving size on the Nutrition Facts label: if you eat two servings of a product, you are consuming double the listed sodium, which includes both table salt and hidden preservatives like MSG or sodium nitrate.
- Your body actually needs less than 500 mg of sodium a day (under 1/4 teaspoon) to function, and trimming just 1,000 mg a day from your current diet can significantly improve your blood pressure.
- Keeping a daily tally of your intake can help you make better dietary choices, though individuals with specific medical conditions, competitive athletes, or those exposed to extreme heat stress should consult their healthcare team for personalized guidelines.

Salt Savvy!



What It Says	What It Means
Salt/Sodium-Free	Less than 5 mg of sodium per serving
Very Low Sodium	35 mg of sodium or less per serving
Low Sodium	140 mg of sodium or less per serving
Reduced Sodium	At least 25% less sodium than the regular product
Light in Sodium or Lightly Salted	At least 50% less sodium than the regular product
No-Salt-Added or Unsalted	No salt is added during processing – but these products may not be salt/sodium-free unless stated

Season's Seasonings: Ditch the Hidden Salt for Holiday Spice

Chopping fresh herbs and adding festive spices is the perfect way to deck your holiday dishes with flavor without the extra salt. While cooking salt and natural foods make up just a quarter of our daily sodium, the real culprits crashing your feast are processed staples like canned soups and pre-made sides. This festive season, skip the hidden sodium and let fresh, aromatic herbs and spices bring your holiday meals to life.

BASIL SWEET & PEPPERY  Add to fish, meat dishes, pesto, marinades, and salad dressings	CAYENNE PEPPER MILD AROMA, BUT HOT  Add to meats, poultry, stews and sauces	CUMIN EARTHY, NUTTY, SPICY  Adds a warm aromatic lemon flavor to meat, fish, or egg dishes.
LEMONGRASS SWEET & LEMONY  Pairs well with fish, seafood, and chicken. Use in soups and stews.	OREGANO WARM & SPICY  Marinate meats, poultry, or seafood before grilling.	TUMERIC EARTHY & CITRUSY  Blends with fish, chicken, beans, eggplant, and rice dishes.
THYME PEPPERY & LEMONY  Blends with fish, chicken, beans, eggplant, and rice dishes.	ROSEMARY MINTY & PEPPERY  Pairs with lamb and chicken.	SAGE BITTER & WOODSY  Enhances pork, lamb, meats, and sausages.

Chop Like a Champ

Cutting and dicing lots of food can really make your hands tired. Luckily, rocker knives, roller mincers, and manual choppers are designed to help. Instead of pushing down hard with just your wrist, these tools let you use the natural strength of your whole arm to slide smoothly through tough vegetables or to mince fresh herbs.



Source: <https://www.wellness4ky.org/resource/adaptive-kitchen-equipment>

Sweet Potato Shepherd's Pie

Ingredients

2 large sweet potatoes
nonstick cooking spray
1 small onion
2 cloves garlic (minced)
1 ¼ lbs. lean ground turkey
1 (14.5 oz) diced canned tomatoes
1 (16oz) bag of frozen mixed vegetables
1 tbsp mustard
2 tbsp worcestershire sauce
¼ tsp black pepper
2 tsp cornstarch
1 tbsp cold water
2 tbsp margarine

Instructions

1. Place sweet potatoes in steam basket in a medium pot with 2 cups water. Bring to a boil, reduce heat, and simmer. Cover and steam until tender, about 15 minutes.
2. While potatoes are cooking, spray a large sauté pan with cooking spray. Add onions and sauté over medium-high heat for 3 minutes or until onions look clear. Add garlic and sauté for 30 seconds. Remove from pan and set aside.
3. Add turkey and cook until brown, about 6-7 minutes. Add onions back to pan and stir to mix.
4. Add diced tomatoes, mixed vegetables, yellow mustard, Worcestershire, and black pepper. Bring to a simmer.
5. In a small bowl, mix together cornstarch and water. Add to turkey mixture and stir. Let simmer for 5 more minutes.
6. Meanwhile, drain the sweet potatoes. Place sweet potatoes in a medium bowl and mash with a potato masher. Add margarine and whisk until smooth.
7. Preheat broiler. Pour cooked turkey mixture evenly into a medium-sized casserole dish or individual casserole dishes. Spread sweet potatoes evenly on top of turkey mixture.
8. Broil for 5 minutes.



Nutritional Information (8 Servings, 1 ½ cups per serving):
210 calories, 18g total carbohydrates, 9g total fat, 0g trans fat, 2g saturated fat, 5g total sugars, 16g protein, 310mg sodium, 4g dietary fiber, 50mg cholesterol, 0g added sugars, 490mg potassium

Nourish, One Step at a Time

This month I will...

Word Scramble

1. *rewtin* _____
2. *dcdei* _____
3. *dcopphe* _____
4. *yhiolad* _____
5. *cgookin* _____
6. *olot* _____
7. *pmach* _____
8. *djatsu* _____
9. *gutcitn* _____
10. *yesa* _____

Answers:

1. winter
2. diced
3. chopped
4. holiday
5. cooking
6. tool
7. champ
8. adjust
9. cutting
10. easy