

Taylor's Favorite Fitness Foods

Recipe Supplement

to

Cutting Myself in Half



Taylor's Family Fruit Cake

These are some of *my* favorite fitness foods (I don't cook them, but I like to eat them). You may look at them and think, "You've got to be kidding. Who eats broccoli unless their mother makes them?" You can find recipes that fit *your* tastes by Googling "low-calorie rabbit stew" or "reduced-fat persimmon pancakes" or whatever foods you like best. Almost any recipe can be made healthier and lighter with a few changes, and the Internet is filled with suggestions.

Choose the recipes that sound good and promise the cooks in your family that you'll clean up the junk under your bed if they'll help you cook up a batch of something delicious and healthy.

The serving sizes on all these recipes are approximate. The best way to measure an exact serving is to divide the entire recipe into the number of servings. For instance, cut Protein-by-the-Square into 12 equal pieces or pour Soup by Ruth equally into 5 bowls. A serving may end up being a little over or under the approximate serving size.

Turkey Gobbles

These snacks are similar to sausage balls, but they're much healthier and lower in calories. Since the size of the appetizers you make will affect the proportions in the mixture, the best way to get an accurate calorie count is to calculate the calories in all the ingredients and divide by the number of appetizers to figure the calories in each. The ones our family makes contain about 75 calories per appetizer.

1 pound ground turkey

1½ to 2 cups low-fat cheddar cheese*

2 cups low-fat biscuit mix

Salt and pepper**

Heat oven to 375 degrees. Spray a cookie sheet with nonstick cooking spray. In a large bowl, mix together all of the ingredients, a little at a time. Then shape into 30–35 balls. If the mixture seems a little dry, add a little water, a teaspoon at a time, until it's easy to shape. (The best way to make these appetizers is to wear disposable plastic gloves and mix everything with your hands.)

Place the balls an inch apart on the cookie sheet. Bake until brown throughout. Ovens vary, and you want turkey cooked throughout, so start checking your snacks after eight minutes, then check every few minutes until they're cooked on the inside but not burned on the outside. To check to see if they're done, take the cookie sheet out of the oven and pry one of the appetizers open with a fork. If it's not cooked in the center, keep cooking.

Serve warm. Freeze leftovers and reheat by wrapping in a paper towel and microwaving a few seconds at a time until they're warm but not dried out.

* Cheddar's stronger flavor lets you use less cheese.

** Turkey is blander than pork sausage, so you'll need seasoning. Start with a good dose of salt and pepper. You may also want to try chili pepper or other spices that you like.

Pumpkin (Not *Plumpkin*) Bread

I'm a big pumpkin fan, as you'll notice from the pumpkin bread, pumpkin pancakes, and pumpkin pie recipes. It's one of those super foods that tastes great and is even better for you. And with these reduced-calorie versions of my favorite pumpkin foods, it's also something I can afford to "buy" with my UFG dollars. This bread recipe makes twelve servings at 115 calories each.

1½ cups self-rising flour

1 teaspoon cinnamon

½ teaspoon pumpkin pie spice

1/3 cup reduced-calorie butter, softened

18 packets or 16 tablespoons Splenda

½ cup Egg Beaters

½ teaspoon vanilla

1 cup solid-pack pumpkin

1/3 cup fat-free milk

Heat oven to 350 degrees. Spray a loaf pan with nonstick cooking spray. In a small bowl, stir together flour, cinnamon, and pumpkin pie spice. In a larger bowl, using a mixer, blend together butter and Splenda. Blend in Egg Beaters and vanilla, then pumpkin. Add flour mixture and milk, each a little at a time until well mixed.

Pour mixture into loaf pan and bake 50–60 minutes or until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean. Cool.

Sweet Pumpkin Pancakes

These pancakes taste sweet without syrup and are moist enough to be eaten without butter. My mom fixes these on cold mornings, and it's great to smell them cooking when I come downstairs. This recipe makes six servings of 200 calories each. Each serving will be two or three pancakes, depending on the size you make them. Bottom line, remember that one-sixth of this recipe is 200 calories.

2 cups self-rising flour

5 packets Splenda

1 teaspoon allspice

1 teaspoon cinnamon

½ teaspoon ginger

1½ cups fat-free milk

1 cup solid-pack pumpkin

¼ cup Egg Beaters

2 tablespoons vegetable oil

2 tablespoons vinegar

In a small bowl, stir together flour, Splenda, and spices. In a large bowl, combine milk, pumpkin, Egg Beaters, oil, and vinegar. Use a large spoon to stir the flour mixture into the pumpkin mixture until blended.

Coat a griddle or skillet with nonstick cooking spray and heat to medium. Pour the batter onto

the hot griddle, about 1/4 cup per pancake. Brown both sides. Serve hot and plain. Or top with a tablespoon or two of no-sugar maple syrup. (Check the calories. Some brands have only 6 calories per tablespoon.)

Protein-by-the-Square

This casserole is good for breakfast, but it's also a nice high-protein supper or pre-exercise snack. This recipe makes twelve servings of 98 calories each.

3 cups Egg Beaters

4 slices of low-cal (46 calorie) wheat bread, crumbled into small pieces

2 cups fat-free cheddar cheese

1 cup fat-free milk

10-ounce can seasoned diced tomatoes

Salt and pepper to taste

Heat oven to 350 degrees. Coat two medium or one large baking dish with nonstick cooking spray.

In a large bowl, use a mixer to blend all of the ingredients. Pour into a baking dish. Cover with foil and bake until a knife inserted into the middle comes out clean, about 35–50 minutes.

To save time in the morning, the ingredients can be mixed the night before and stored in the refrigerator. Then bake as directed. Freeze leftovers in one-serving containers for future quick meals or snacks.

Soup by Ruth

Ruth's a family friend who first introduced us to this healthy, filling soup, so we named it in her honor. This recipe makes five 1¾-cup servings of 205 calories each.

Dry ingredients:

¾ cup brown lentils

4 teaspoons minced onions
2 teaspoons sodium-free instant chicken bouillon
1 teaspoon dried leaf oregano
½ teaspoon garlic powder
½ teaspoon black pepper
1/8 teaspoon crushed red pepper
½ cup quick-cooking barley

Wet ingredients:

14½-ounce can of diced tomatoes with peppers and onions (undrained)
6 cups water

Layer the dry ingredients in a two-cup jar. Seal and store at room temperature until you're ready to make the soup (several weeks is fine). Or mix the dry ingredients in a large pot or crock pot for immediate use.

In a large pot or crock pot, combine the dry ingredients with the tomatoes and water. (Filling the tomato can three times with water equals 6 cups.) If using a pot, stir and simmer, partially covered, for about an hour or until the lentils and barley are tender. If using a crock pot, cook on low for two or three hours or until lentils and barley are tender. Add more water for a thinner consistency.

You can add leftover chicken or beef if you want. Estimate the calories in the leftover meat, and add that number to 1,025--the calories in the entire pot of soup. With the extra ingredients, you may want to divide the soup into six servings instead of five. Divide your total calories by the number of servings.

Crocky Chicken Soup

You can enjoy this soup in a bowl, or you can spoon it over whole-grain toast cut into bite-size pieces. Makes ten 1½-cup servings of 120 calories each.

1 onion, chopped
1 cup chopped celery (1 or 2 stalks, according to their size)
4 chicken bouillon cubes
4 boneless, skinless chicken breasts, uncooked
3 cans low-fat cream of celery soup
8 ounces fat-free milk

Spray a skillet with nonstick cooking spray. Place over medium heat. Add the onion and celery and cook and stir until tender. Place the cooked onion and celery into a crock pot.

To the crock pot, add 4 cups of water, the bouillon cubes, and the chicken. Cook on low overnight or all day, until the chicken is tender.

Remove the chicken from the broth and let it cool. Measure 2 cups of the broth and freeze the rest for later (you can make the same soup later by adding baked chicken to the rest of the broth).

Break the chicken into small pieces and return it to the crock pot. Add the 2 cups of broth, celery soup, and milk to the crock pot. Mix well and cook on high until the soup is hot.

Tasty Tomato Bisque

Add a sandwich of turkey and whole-grain bread, and this soup makes a winter meal. Makes twelve 1-cup servings of 70 calories each.

1 large onion, chopped
3 tablespoons minced garlic
3 bay leaves
1 teaspoon basil
1 teaspoon oregano
1 teaspoon dill
28 ounces tomato sauce
46 ounces tomato juice

8 ounces fat-free cream cheese, cut into small cubes

2 cups fat-free milk

Salt and pepper to taste

Spray a large electric skillet or large pot with nonstick cooking spray. Add the onion and cook at medium heat till tender. Add the garlic and cook about one minute longer. Add the spices and stir till blended.

Add the tomatoes and tomato juice, and simmer uncovered 20–30 minutes. Add the cream cheese, milk, salt, and pepper. Simmer 15 minutes longer.

Hearty Bean & Beefy Chili

This is a great way to get double protein from the beans and beef. Like so many of our family's recipes, it freezes well, so you can look forward to leftovers. Makes twenty-four 1-cup servings of 140 calories each.

2 pounds cooked and drained ground beef, 95 percent lean*

54 ounces chili beans

2 packages chili mix

58 ounces tomato sauce

28 ounces diced tomatoes

1 cup water

Mix together all of the ingredients in a large pot or crock pot. Heat on high till warm and bubbly, then cover and simmer for 3 hours. If you're using a crock pot, you won't have to check the chili for a couple of hours. If you're cooking it on the stove, be sure to keep the temperature low and stir your chili often to make sure it doesn't stick.

*We cook the meat, drain it on paper towels, then place the meat in a bowl lined with paper towels, and refrigerate it for an hour. Any remaining fat gets absorbed into the paper towels or can be scraped off the top.

Zero Salad

I'm sure you could use other no-calorie soft drinks, but why mess with the best? This salad just screams for Coca-Cola Zero. Makes twelve servings of 50 calories each.

20-ounce can crushed pineapple, packed in its own juice

½ cup water

6-ounce sugar-free gelatin mix

21-ounce can light cherry-pie filling

¾ cup Coke Zero

Drain the pineapple, reserving the juice. Set the pineapple aside.

In a saucepan or a microwave dish, combine the pineapple juice and water. Bring to a boil.

Remove from heat. Add the gelatin and stir until completely dissolved.

Stir in the pie filling and Coke Zero. Chill in the refrigerator until slightly thickened (about an hour). Fold in the crushed pineapple and refrigerate until firm (at least a couple of hours—overnight is better).

Cheddar Waldorf Salad

I'm not a big apple eater, but I know they're good for you. This recipe turns an apple into a super treat. Makes eight servings of 71 calories each.

2 large Red Delicious apples, cut into bite-sized cubes

2 large Golden Delicious apples, cut into bite-sized cubes

¼ cup chopped pecans

3 tablespoons fat-free mayonnaise-type salad dressing*

3 packets Splenda

¼ cup frozen cranberries, thawed

¼ cup fat-free shredded cheddar cheese

In a large salad bowl, toss together the apples and pecans. In a small bowl, combine the mayonnaise lookalike and two packets of Splenda. Add mayonnaise mixture to the apple-pecan mixture and toss well.

In a small bowl or cup, mix together the remaining packet of Splenda with the cranberries. Sprinkle the sweetened cranberries over the apple-pecan mixture. Spread the cheese over the salad. Serve immediately.

*It's not real mayonnaise but it looks and tastes like it and has lots less calories: 49 calories per tablespoon of reduced-fat mayonnaise and 13 calories per tablespoon of the look-alike. It's right beside the real mayonnaise on the grocery shelf.

Olive Tuna Wraps

These make great snacks or full meals, depending on the serving size. You can cut them into one-inch pieces and serve them as party snacks, too. Makes two wraps of 180 calories each or four one-half wraps for 90 calories each.

1 can tuna, packed in water
2 tablespoons no-fat mayonnaise
5 olives, chopped
Salt and pepper to taste
2 eight-inch flour tortillas

Mix the mayonnaise into the tuna. (It doesn't take a lot of mayonnaise if you mix it well.) Add the olives, salt, and pepper, and mix again.

Spread half the tuna mixture on each tortilla. Roll the tortillas and cut them in half. You can add other ingredients, like lettuce and tomato, but be sure to factor in the calories.

Chili Cheese Turkey-Dog

Here's a way to cut calories and still enjoy a chili cheese dog. A regular chili cheese hotdog is about 430 calories. Try this healthier version for 200 calories. That's assuming your turkey dog is 100 calories. You can find them as low as 40 calories, reducing your total calories to 140. Makes one serving.

1 turkey hotdog
1 whole-wheat reduced-calorie hot dog bun
1/8 cup canned chili without beans
1/8 cup fat-free shredded cheddar cheese

Warm the chili in the microwave. Place the turkey dog on a paper towel and microwave a few seconds, just until warm throughout. Place the turkey dog in the bun and spread on the chili. Sprinkle with the cheese. If the chili's not warm enough to melt the cheese, put your dog-and-bun back in the microwave for 5 or 6 seconds, or until cheese is soft.

Budget Burgers

These burgers are an inexpensive alternative to beef burgers and are full of great vitamins and protein. Makes six patties of about 140 calories each.

12-ounce can black beans, rinsed and drained
1 cup whole-wheat bread crumbs
¼ cup Egg Beaters
½ cup frozen or canned whole kernel corn
1 teaspoon garlic powder or minced garlic
1 teaspoon chili powder
½ teaspoon salt
4 whole-wheat buns

Mash the beans in a large bowl. Mix in the bread crumbs, Egg Beaters, and corn. Add the seasonings and mix again. Divide the mixture into six parts and shape into half-inch thick patties.

Spray an electric skillet or frying pan with nonstick cooking spray. Add the patties to the pan, and cook at medium-low heat about three minutes on each side. Serve on whole-wheat buns.

Super Sauce with Mega Meatballs

*Try this sauce with whole-wheat spaghetti, which has 175 calories per cup. Or try pouring it over spaghetti squash, which has only 85 calories for 2 cups (recipe here on the site). The calories in this recipe will vary according to the types and quantities of meat, bread, and sauce you use. Since packages of ground beef are seldom an exact pound, vary the bread crumbs and milk so the meatballs stick together easily.**

*When we make our own sauce and load it with baked meatballs, the mixture has about 230 calories for a 2-cup serving.***

Meatball ingredients:

1 pound ground beef, lean (such as ground chuck)

1 cup whole-wheat bread crumbs

Salt and pepper to taste

minced garlic to taste

1/4 cup Egg Beaters

1/2 cup fat-free milk

Sauce ingredients:

Two 28-ounce cans of diced tomatoes

16-ounce can tomato paste

Salt and pepper to taste

Garlic powder to taste

Alternative to homemade sauce:

2 pound 13 ounce can of ready-made spaghetti sauce***

Heat oven to 350 degrees. In a large bowl, combine all of the meatball ingredients. Mix well. Spray a cookie sheet with nonstick cooking spray. Shape mixture into one-inch balls and place on a cookie sheet. Bake until brown throughout, about 20 minutes.

Place the meatballs on paper towels to drain. (We're fanatical about grease, so we also freeze the meatballs for an hour or two so any additional grease solidifies on top and can be scraped off.)

To make the spaghetti sauce, just mix all the ingredients and simmer on low until heated through.

* The best way to get an accurate calorie count is to add the calories of every ingredient you include, measure the number of cups of finished sauce, and divide the number of cups into the total calories. That will give you the calories per cup.

** We like to make a huge batch and freeze it in smaller containers, labeling each container with the calories per serving. When you have a gigantic batch of spaghetti sauce simmering, it's easy to scoop up too much, so be sure to use a measuring cup when passing out servings.

*** Check the nutritional panels on ready-made spaghetti sauces. They vary greatly, so try to find the healthiest one with the least amount of calories.

Spaghetti from the Garden

Spaghetti squash looks like any other veggie in the produce department, but once it's baked it almost looks and almost tastes like spaghetti--and it's much better for you. A 2-cup serving has 85 calories. Depending on the size of the squash, you can get 2 to 4 servings from one squash.

1 large spaghetti squash

Salt and pepper, to taste

Super Sauce with Mega Meatballs (recipe on this site), 1 or 2 cups per serving, depending on how much **UFG** "money" you have to spend

Heat oven to 400 degrees. Cut a spaghetti squash in half lengthwise and scoop out the seeds. Spray the insides of the squash halves with nonstick cooking spray and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Place the squash halves, cut size down, on a cookie sheet.

Bake 45–60 minutes, or until you can loosen the inside of the squash with a fork. Remove from oven. Scratch at the inside with a fork until it separates from the shell. (You'll have mounds of

healthy squash that looks and tastes a lot like spaghetti.) Top with Super Sauce with Mega Meatballs. Serve warm.

Ahh, Steak . . .

If you've never grilled a steak, it's easy to learn. First of all, choose a steak that doesn't have veins of fat running through the meat portion because that type of fat can't be cut away. (Fat around the edges can easily be removed. Grill it with the fat still on it, but cut off all the fat around the edges after it cooks.) Steak's good with just salt and pepper, so shake some on both sides before grilling.

Heat a skillet or an outdoor grill and toss on the steak. After 4–5 minutes, turn the steak over and cook for another 4–5 minutes or until it's cooked the way you like it. That's it. Serve with steamed veggies on the side.

Remember, a serving size of meat is 3 ounces, about the size of a deck of cards. Steaks vary in calories, but the average is 50–75 calories per ounce of cooked steak. Check the store wrapper for a calorie count or look up the type of steak you're cooking on an online calorie counter.

Skinny Chicken

I used to love an extra crispy fried chicken breast for 585 calories. Now I can have this single-serving baked version for 195 calories.

1 medium chicken breast with skin removed, rinsed and patted dry

1/8 cup fat-free sour cream

1 slice of no-sugar whole-grain light bread (45 calories), crumbled into fine crumbs

Heat oven to 350 degrees. Coat the chicken with the sour cream, and roll it in the bread crumbs. Place the chicken on a baking sheet lined with foil. Bake uncovered for 30–45 minutes or until the chicken is cooked thoroughly.

Stuffed (But Not Overstuffed) Shells

These shells are a good source of protein with about 12 grams per pasta shell. Makes 24 stuffed shells of about 95 calories each.

1 pound lean ground beef, cooked with 1 tablespoon onion flakes and drained

1 can (about 12 ounces) spinach, drained and squeezed dry on a paper towel

8 ounces part-skim ricotta cheese

¼ cup Egg Beaters

1 cup fat-free grated mozzarella cheese

1 cup fat-free grated cheddar cheese

Salt and pepper to taste

24 whole-wheat jumbo pasta shells, cooked according to package directions and drained

24-ounce can low-calorie spaghetti sauce

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Spray a 9-x-13 pan with cooking spray. In a large bowl, mix the ground beef, spinach, ricotta cheese, and Egg Beaters together. When well mixed, stir in half the mozzarella cheese, all of the cheddar cheese, and the salt and pepper.

Stuff the mixture into the pasta shells, placing each filled shell in the pan. Cover the shells with the spaghetti sauce. Cover and bake for 40–45 minutes. Uncover and sprinkle with the remaining mozzarella cheese. Heat 5 minutes or until the cheese is melted.

Anything (Healthy) Goes Kabobs

You'll need meat skewers to make kabobs. If you don't have metal ones, the wooden disposable ones are inexpensive. You can add just about anything to a kabob, so it's fun to let everyone build their own. Below are the calories in some common kabob ingredients so you can pick and choose. You'll have to calculate the calories yourself. As I load my kabob, I count the calories and stop when I'm out of "money." Kabobs go well with brown rice (at 110 calories per half cup).

1 ounce beef tenderloin, 80 calories

1 ounce chicken breast, 32 calories
1 cherry tomato, 2 calories
½ cup pineapple chunks, 30 calories
1 medium-sized mushroom, 6 calories
½ cup green pepper, 5 calories
½ cup red pepper, 9 calories
1 tablespoon Greek vinaigrette dressing, 50 calories
1 cup diet cranberry-grape juice*, 5 calories
½ of a yellow squash, 15 calories
½ cup zucchini, 15 calories
½ cup pearl onions, 40 calories

Heat oven to 550 degrees. Spray a cookie sheet with nonstick cooking spray. Slide your ingredients onto the skewer and spray all the ingredients with a light coating of nonstick cooking spray (or drizzle with dressing or juice*).

Place everyone's kabobs on the cookie sheet, at least an inch apart. Broil until the meat is cooked as desired, turning the skewers several times to cook evenly. To serve, slide the ingredients off the skewer.

*Ocean Spray has a diet cranberry-grape juice that's 5 calories per cup.

Lasagna Even I Could Make (Like I'd Try)

When I started UFG, I figured I'd have to say adios to most pasta dishes, but my mom and grandmother found ways to keep them in the family. If you're adventurous, try making this pasta yourself. Makes four 2-cup servings of 335 calories each.

1 tablespoon onion flakes
2 tablespoons minced garlic
26-ounce can of low-calorie spaghetti sauce
1 cup water

4 cups egg noodles, uncooked*
1/8 teaspoon salt
4 ounces part-skim ricotta cheese
1 cup fat-free shredded mozzarella cheese

Spray an electric skillet or a large pot with nonstick cooking spray. Cook the onion and garlic for 2 minutes on medium heat. Stir in the spaghetti sauce, water, and noodles. Turn heat to high and cook until the sauce boils. Reduce heat to low and simmer, uncovered, until the noodles are tender and most of the liquid is absorbed (about 10 minutes). Stir in salt.

In a small bowl, mix together the ricotta and mozzarella cheeses. Spoon the cheese mixture carefully on top of the noodles. Cook on low until the cheese is melted, about 5 minutes. Serve immediately.

*Check out the great healthy kinds that are available, like whole wheat and cholesterol-free no-yolk.

Stir-Fry Chicken

This stir-fry dish is rich and filling, and it makes good leftovers. Our family usually doubles the recipe. It makes four 1-cup servings of 195 calories each. Serve over brown rice, which has 110 calories per half cup.

1 pound boneless, skinless chicken breast, cut into strips
2 tablespoons minced garlic
3 carrots, sliced
5 stalks celery, diced
1 green pepper, cut into small strips
1 onion, diced
5 fresh mushrooms, sliced
2 packets Splenda

Sauce ingredients:

½ cup water

4 tablespoons lemon juice

1 tablespoon cornstarch

¼ cup diet cranberry-grape juice*

2 teaspoons light soy sauce

1 teaspoon instant chicken bouillon (or 1 cube)

In a small bowl, combine all of the sauce ingredients, and set aside. Spray a wok or an electric skillet with nonstick cooking spray. (You can use a regular pot and cook the recipe on the stove, too, but watch it carefully so it doesn't stick or burn.) Cook the chicken and garlic about 10 minutes, stirring often. Remove from the pan. Spray another coating of nonstick cooking spray on the pan and add the vegetables. Cook and stir until the vegetables are heated through and are as soft as you prefer. If necessary, add a little water to keep the mixture from sticking.

Add the chicken and the sauce to the vegetables. Heat until bubbling. Stir in the Splenda. Serve immediately.

*Ocean Spray has one that's 5 calories per cup.

Fast-n-Easy Beef Stew

Anyone can make this stew. Vary the ingredients to suit your tastes, adding different vegetables and varying the proportions. Add leftover steak or chicken for extra protein. Of course, you can use fresh veggies, but this "canned" version is super easy and super fast. This recipe makes twenty-eight 1-cup servings of 105 calories each, so plan to freeze leftovers.*

40 ounces of ready-made beef stew

29 ounces tomato sauce

28 ounces diced tomatoes

2 14–15 ounce cans carrots

2 14–15 ounce cans whole kernel corn

2 14–15 ounce cans green peas

Mix all the ingredients in a slow cooker or large pot. Cook until the stew is warm throughout.
That's it!

*If you vary the recipe, add the calories in all of the ingredients you use, measure the number of cups of your finished stew, and divide the calories by the cups to calculate the calories-per-cup.

Better-Than-Fries Baked Potato Wedges

These are just nutritious, delicious potatoes without the extras that make them diet-dangerous. Salt and pepper give them all the flavor they need. Makes 1 serving of about 200 calories, depending on the size of the potato.

1 medium white potato

Salt

Pepper

Heat oven to 350 degrees. Wash the potato. Cut it into about 16 wedges. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Spray a cookie sheet with nonstick cooking spray and place the wedges on the cookie sheet. Bake until you can pierce them easily with a fork (about 30–45 minutes).

Sour-Creamy Mashed Potatoes

You won't miss the calories in this recipe. It tastes just like the fattening version. Makes about six servings of 160 calories each.

5 medium white potatoes with skins, cut into large wedges

2 tablespoons light butter

½ cup fat-free sour cream

½ cup fat-free milk (approximate)

Salt and pepper to taste

Boil the potatoes until very soft. Drain and pour into a large mixing bowl. Use a mixer to mash the potatoes. Add butter and mix again. Add sour cream and mix again. Add milk slowly until the potatoes are the consistency you prefer. Add salt and pepper.

Hash Brown Casserole

I used to love the fattening version of this recipe. My family found ways to keep it on the menu by making just a few changes. Makes ten servings of 145 calories each.

2 pounds frozen hash brown potatoes

10½-ounce can reduced-fat cream of chicken soup, undiluted

8 ounces fat-free sour cream

1 teaspoon garlic salt

1 cup fat-free cheddar cheese, shredded

3 slices low-cal wheat bread, crumbled

Heat oven to 350 degrees. In a large bowl, mix the potatoes, soup, sour cream, salt, and half the cheese. Spray a 9-x-12-inch baking dish with nonstick cooking spray. Pour the potato mixture into the pan. Mix the remaining cheese with the bread crumbs. Spread over the potatoes and spray with a little nonstick cooking spray. Bake 45–60 minutes. Serve immediately and freeze leftovers.

Cauliflower Mashed “Potatoes”

Okay, it's not exactly the same as mashed potatoes, but when you consider that regular mashed potatoes have about seven times more calories, I'll choose mashed cauliflower any day. It has its own unique taste, and I now love cauliflower raw and steamed, as well as mashed. Makes five servings of 30 calories each.

1 pound frozen cauliflower

2 tablespoons fat-free milk

1 slice fat-free cheddar cheese

Salt and pepper to taste

Cook cauliflower according to package directions, using 2 tablespoons extra water. Cook until it's very soft. Place the cauliflower and liquid in a blender. Add the milk and blend. Break the cheese into small pieces, add to the blender, and blend again. Add salt and pepper and blend again. Warm in the microwave or bake at 350 degrees until hot.

Broccoli Chop and Brown Rice

This is filling and good. Lots of great nutrients, too. Makes six 1-cup servings of 135 calories each.

10-ounce package frozen chopped broccoli, cooked and drained

2 cups cooked brown rice

10½-ounce can 98 percent fat-free cream of mushroom soup

1 cup fat-free grated cheddar cheese

Cook the broccoli according to package instructions. Drain. Mix cooked broccoli with rice, soup, and cheese. Heat in the microwave until warm throughout.

Brazilian Baked Bananas

My grandparents went to Brazil and all they brought me back was this recipe. They said it's popular there. It's sort of like banana pie without the pie. If you're craving a dessert, you can trick your taste buds into thinking this is it. Makes two servings of 56 calories each.

1 medium firm banana, sliced in half lengthwise

1 tablespoon lemon juice

1 teaspoon cinnamon

1 packet Splenda

Heat oven to 350 degrees. Coat a small baking dish with nonstick cooking spray. Place banana halves cut side up in the dish and brush with lemon juice. Spray banana lightly with nonstick cooking spray.

In a small dish, mix together the cinnamon and Splenda. Sprinkle mixture over the bananas. Bake until soft, about 8 minutes. Serve immediately.

Crust-Free Pumpkin Pie

Most of the calories in pie come from the crust. Try this crust-free pie for a good source of vitamins A and C, as well as calcium and iron. Less than 100 calories for one-eighth of this pie versus 320 calories per serving of regular pumpkin pie.

15½-ounce can of solid-pack pumpkin

13-ounce can evaporated fat-free milk

½ cup Egg Beaters

1/3 cup low-fat biscuit mix

10 packets Splenda

2 teaspoons pumpkin pie spice

1 teaspoon cinnamon

2 teaspoons vanilla

Heat oven to 350 degrees. Spray one large pie pan with nonstick cooking spray. Place all of the ingredients in a large mixing bowl and beat with an electric mixer until blended. Pour the mixture into the pie pan. Bake about 45 minutes or until a knife placed in the middle of the pie comes out clean.