

10 Lesser Known Uses Of Salt

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# **Food Eating Well**

Instead, pay attention to the type of fat you're using. Saturated and trans fats have been implicated in heart disease, so focus instead on unsaturated fats. That means replacing palm oil, butter, and lard (all high in saturated fat) with olive, canola, or avocado oils (high in monounsaturated fat). Or ditch trans fat-laden vegetable shortening and some margarines for safflower or sunflower oils (packed with polyunsaturated fat). You can also use healthy fats to infuse flavor, such as making salad dressing with almond oil or stir-frying vegetables in peanut oil.

HEAT THE PAN FIRST It may sound strange, but your dinner will be lower in fat if you add food to a pan of already-hot oil. When a pan is still heating and the oil you've added is cold, it's more likely to seep into your food. On the flip side, "if it's already hot, it will sear the meat," and less will soak in, Bynum says.

### Rely on Herbs and Spices

You could say Americans have a bit of a salt addiction. A recent Institute of Medicine report found that adults consume about 3,400 mg of sodium per day—well above the government-recommended 2,300 mg or less per day and more than twice the recommended 1,500 mg or less per day for people over age 50, those with high blood pressure, and those of African descent. And while most sodium comes from processed foods, there's no reason to go overboard in the kitchen. Instead of using salt to flavor your foods, cook with herbs and spices. Try rosemary on your potatoes, basil on your tomatoes, and dill on your salmon.

## Shake Salt Last

Many chefs add seasoning as their dish cooks. But many chefs also cook highsodium meals. If you're at high risk for heart disease or have heart problems, nixing the sodium can help your health. That's because the more sodium you consume, the greater risk you have for high blood pressure.

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Piscatella and La Puma suggest salting food after it's done cooking because you're less likely to go overboard. "[As you cook], you sort of lose track of how much you've added," La Puma says. "I like people to salt their own foods because not everyone has the same taste." Piscatella also uses this trick with shredded cheese, which he adds, sparingly, at the table.

## 10 Add Flavor

For a tangy punch, vinegar, wine, and citrus fruits brighten even the most robust flavors. Reduce the amount of cheese and sour cream on your taco, then squeeze a lime over it. Drizzle balsamic vinegar over berries instead of adding sugar for dessert. And simmer fish in white wine.

Try Ingredients in Tubes Get big flavor with small portions by buying tubes of sun-dried tomato, olive, anchovy, or harissa (hot red pepper) pastes. "Just a dash will enliven dishes," La Puma says.

DON'T DISGUISE YOUR FOOD The simplest of preparations make for the healthiest of meals, so naturally a diet that benefits your heart health should avoid "dressed up" foods. What does that mean? Stop hiding your meat, vegetables, or pasta under creamy sauces, dressings, piles of cheese, bread crumbs, or other toppings. Those additions may be tasty, but they won't do your ticker any favors. Instead, experiment with herbs, spices, and acidic foods or enjoy the food for its own delicious flavor.

# **TIP 13 DOUBLE**

You can make dishes more flavorful, La Puma says, by using two forms of an ingredient. Add extra tomato flavor to pizza by using marinara sauce and topping the pie with fresh tomato slices. Or double up a dish's basil flavor by using fresh and dried versions of the herb.



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