

UPDATING SOUTHERN FOOD

Are Grandma's recipes killing you?

Many Southern food staples are full of healthy ingredients such as dark leafy greens, sweet potatoes, beans, and peas. But problems arise when these healthy ingredients are prepared using products high in fat, sugar, and sodium like bacon, ham hocks, lard, fat back, heavy cream, and added sugar.

So how can we keep eating the foods we love, but update them for our current time and health needs?

We can start with a few tweaks to our favorite dishes to start enjoying better health.



Updating Grandma's Recipes for Healthy Living

- Steam your veggies instead of cooking them with high fat meats or high-sodium broths.



- Choose lean proteins instead of high-fat meats. Try turkey thighs, lean ham, ground turkey meat, smoked turkey necks, and skinless chicken.

- Use ground turkey instead of ground beef when cooking hamburgers or spaghetti sauce.

- Try baking, roasting, boiling, grilling, or stir-frying instead of pan or deep-frying.

- Use small amounts of monosaturated or polysaturated oil like olive oil, canola oil, or coconut oil, instead of lard or shortening



- Avoid canned vegetables and beans that can have added sodium. Rather, buy "no salt added" canned veggies or buy fresh produce or dried beans and cook them at home.



- Use low-fat milk instead of whole milk or cream in recipes



- Use whole-wheat pasta and brown rice instead of white pasta and white rice.



- Use herbs and other seasonings instead of salt. For example, use garlic and onion powders instead of garlic and onion salts to reduce added sodium.



Where Do I Start?

Make One Change At A Time

Don't try to change your entire diet all at once. Rather, first make one small change like using brown rice instead of white rice. Once you feel comfortable with that change, make another. And another, and another, and another.... Until your favorite recipes are healthier.

Be A Role Model

The best way to encourage healthy eating in others is to eat well yourself. If you eat such things as lean meats, fruits, and vegetables and don't overindulge in less nutritious food, then children and others around you will follow your example.

Look For Inspiration

Search the internet or cookbooks for healthy Southern recipes. There are many chefs who focus on updating Southern cuisine and their recipes and books are available on the internet or at your local library.

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