

Simmering health

Cooking techniques to help you get the most out of your foods

by Mairlyn Smith

COOKING METHODS have an effect on the nutrient levels in the foods you eat. So before you make dinner tonight, consider these tips on how to prepare foods for maximum nutritional value.

STEAM, STIR FRY, MICROWAVE, OR RAW

Mother Nature had it right in the world of fruits and vegetables: raw is always a great choice, unless you're a tomato. The **antioxidant** lycopene is best absorbed cooked and in the presence of a heart-healthy fat.

Steaming or stir frying are both great choices for cooking vegetables. In both cases, cook at medium rather than high heat until vegetables are tender crisp. So long as there's some crunch left in them, your can be sure the vitamin C is still going strong.

According to Health Canada, microwave cooking tends to be less harsh on nutrients than conventional cooking methods, mainly because cooking times are shorter and less water is used. The microwave is an ideal way to cook fruits and vegetables.

See the glossary on page 23 for a definition.



SOUPS

Slow simmering meats and vegetables over low heat in a soup pot ensures that all of the nutritional goodness in the foods is preserved in the final meal. Make sure to limit salt when using commercial soup stocks.

BBQ RULES

Be sure to marinate any protein you'll be BBQing. When a protein like meat, fish or poultry blackens, it means a carcinogen has been produced. Marinating meats in a combination of high antioxidant ingredients like olive oil, lemon juice, herbs and spices will reduce the amount that meat blackens. Flipping often will help as well. Don't worry about the blackening on vegetables: that's just the sugars caramelizing. 🍷





Mulligatawny soup



Slightly spicy and loaded with flavour, this soup is great served with 100% whole wheat rolls

Cooking instructions:

1. Heat the stock in a large pot over medium heat until boiling.
2. Add leeks and carrots and return to boil. Reduce heat, cover and simmer 5 minutes.
3. Add chicken, return to boil, reduce heat, cover and simmer 10 minutes.
4. Add red pepper, celery, apple, curry powder, turmeric and red pepper flakes. Return to boil, cover, reduce heat and simmer 5 minutes.
5. Remove from heat, add parsley and serve.

MAKES 4 SERVINGS

4 cups (1 L)	lower sodium chicken stock
1 large	leek, sliced into ¼ inch (5 mm) slices
1 large	carrot, thinly sliced
14 oz (400 g)	skinless, boneless chicken breasts or thighs, cut into 16 pieces
1	red pepper, diced
1 stalk	celery, diced
1	Granny Smith apple, unpeeled, cored, cut into 8 pieces, each piece cut into 8 pieces
1 tsp (5 mL)	curry powder
¼ tsp (1 mL)	turmeric
¼ – ½ tsp (1–2 mL)	red pepper flakes
½ cup (125 mL)	diced parsley

Each 1¼ cup (425 mL) serving contains:

Calories	240
Total fat	8 g
Saturated fat	2.5 g
Trans fat	0 g
Sodium	465 mg
Carbs	17 g
Fiber	3 g
Protein	25 g