

Healthy Holiday Baking

Now that the holiday season is upon us, it can be easy to overindulge in all of the seasonal sweets and treats!

Magna Wellness is here to help add some health back into your recipes. We have come up with some simple baking swaps, so you can enjoy your baked goods with a little less guilt this holiday season. These easy healthy swaps can slim down your baked goods and save you calories!

Butter Alternatives

Butter is a source of saturated (bad) fat that should be limited in your diet. Swapping all or even part of the butter in your recipes will not only help reduce the saturated fat but will help boost the nutrient value and health benefits of your baked goods!

- Swap 1 cup of butter for ½ cup of unsweetened applesauce to drastically cut down the fat and calories, while also adding extra fibre and nutrients.
- Swap 1 cup butter with 1 cup coconut oil. Although coconut oil is still a source of saturated fat, it provides other health benefits like improving “good” cholesterol (HDL), not to mention it adds a boost of flavour.
- Swap 1 cup butter with ½ cup of Greek yogurt to add extra protein to your recipe.
- Swap 1 cup of butter with 1 cup of mashed avocado to really pack a punch! Avocados are packed full of nutrients and high in unsaturated (good) fat and fibre.



Egg Alternatives

Eggs are a great source of protein and fat, but happen to be a common allergy. If you have family members with dietary restrictions or allergies, do not fret, there are lots of great egg alternative options for you.

- Swap 1 egg for 1 flax egg! To make a flax egg, mix 1 tbsp of ground flax seed with 3 tbsp of water. Ground flax seeds can be found at any grocery store and are packed full of nutrients, including fibre and omega 3 fats.
- Swap 1 egg with ¼ cup silken tofu which is a good source of vegan protein and iron.

Sugar Alternatives

Sugar Sugar Sugar! It can be very easy to over indulge on sugary treats, especially during the holidays. Luckily, there are lots of great sugar substitutes that keep your baked goods tasting great without the harmful effects of refined sugar. Natural sugar sources include Honey, and Maple Syrup, which are all lower than white sugar on the Glycemic Index. The glycemic index (GI) is a scale from 0 – 100 that rates foods on how quickly they raise your blood sugar levels. A lower



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rating on this scale means that the sugar in the food is released into your blood stream more slowly, and a higher rating on the scale means that the sugar in the food raises your blood sugar more quickly, which can cause blood sugar spikes. For example, white sugar scores around 68 on the glycemic index, whereas Maple Syrup scores around 54.

- Swap 1 cup white sugar with $\frac{3}{4}$ cup honey. Honey is sweeter than white sugar so you need less to obtain the same level of sweetness.
- Swap 1 cup white sugar with $\frac{3}{4}$ cup Maple Syrup which contains natural minerals that help boost the nutritional value of your baked good, not to mention the delicious maple flavor it provides!
- Swap 1 cup white sugar for 1 cup date paste. To make date paste, blend (using a food processor, blender or magic bullet) 1 cup of pitted dates with $\frac{1}{4}$ cup warm water. Dates are a great source of dietary fiber, potassium and iron.
- It is important to note that sugar serves a bigger role than simply sweetening baked goods. Sugar can influence many features of your baking including lift, texture, moisture and colour. Therefore, when substituting sugar, the end product might vary slightly from the original recipe. Also note that when replacing a dry ingredient like white sugar with a wet ingredient (listed above), you will need to reduce the amount of liquid in the recipe by 2-4 tbsp.

All Purpose Flour Alternatives

White all-purpose flour is one of the most common ingredients in baked goods. Unfortunately, it is a highly refined product that has been stripped of much of its nutritional value during processing. Luckily there are many alternative flours that can be used to add some nutrition to your baking. Additionally, if there is a gluten sensitivity in your family or if you want to branch out, there are some naturally gluten free flour alternatives you can use including chickpea and quinoa. So this holiday season, try some of these easy flour alternatives!

- Swap 1 cup All Purpose Flour with 1 Cup Whole Wheat Flour which is higher in nutrients and dietary fibre.
- Swap 1 cup All Purpose Flour with 1 cup Chickpea Flour. Chickpea flour is a good source of both protein and dietary fibre.
- Swap 1 cup All Purpose Flour with 1 cup quinoa flour. Quinoa flour is a good source of complete protein.

If you are looking at a recipe and want to swap out more than one of the ingredients, try searching for recipes that call for many of the alternatives to ensure your final product is a success. Have fun with all of your healthy holiday baking!

