



A Top Chef's Healthy Cooking Tips That Every Home Cook Needs to Know

By Chad Sarno
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We know that cutting out processed foods and animal products is necessary for better health. However, longtime cooks often find themselves at a loss when it comes to adjusting their home-cooking techniques. For help with modifying recipes, we turned to renowned vegan chef Chad Sarno. As the lead instructor of the [FOK Online Cooking Course](#), he has trained thousands of students to cook delicious, healthy, and beautiful plant-based food. Sarno is also the former spokesperson for Whole Foods Market's Global Healthy Eating Program and co-author of the *New York Times* best seller *Crazy Sexy Kitchen*.

Less Salt and Fat ... Same Taste?

Some substitutions are easy, such as swapping meat for beans in a hearty stew, but other modifications require a little more finesse, so you don't give up flavor in the process.

Sarno says, "When modifying recipes, the most common mistake people make is thinking they can remove the oil and salt and then just follow the rest of the instructions. Then, of course, they're disappointed in the finished product. When modifying a dish, you need to look at the recipe as a whole and figure out how to draw more flavors out of the ingredients without the added oil and salt. To build flavor, it's important to adjust both your techniques and your ingredients."

Chad Sarno's Tips for Healthier Cooking:

1. Look for Alternative Cooking Techniques

"If you have removed oil (or fat) and most of the salt from a dish, then look for ways to build healthy flavor. For example, if a recipe calls for vegetables steamed in a dish, you can roast or grill them instead. If the instructions say to sauté some onions, you can cook them longer and caramelize them in small amounts of vegetable stock or wine to build flavor. You can also reduce sauces to concentrate and intensify them."
(Editor's note: On this diet, salt is not used during preparation as it is in traditional cooking. It can sometimes be added at the end of cooking.)

2. Adjust Spices and Boost Herbs

"Rely on herbs and spices to boost the flavor of your dishes. If a recipe calls for dried herbs, then try to use fresh instead. If it calls for seeds or spices, toast them first to bring out more flavor. You can also grind your spices for bolder flavors. Brighten a dish with a squeeze of citrus at the end. But most important, if you are using fresh herbs or other flavor-building ingredients, use greater quantities to elevate the overall flavor of the dish than you would if you were using salt."

Visit us here for more information on the [Forks Over Knives Online Cooking Course](#).

The below how-to video for Roasted Garlic & Onion Buttah is part of the FOK cooking course, and the "buttah" will help to boost the flavor in any dish. You can add it to sauces, soups, stews, beans, and bread, and a little will go a long way.

- 1/4 cup raw garlic, peeled
- 2 cups shallot or white onion, peeled and cubed
- 2 to 3 cups vegetable stock
- 2 sprigs fresh rosemary or fresh thyme
- freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 1 1/2 cup raw cashews, soaked in 3 to 4 cups of warm water until softened, then drained
- 1/4 cup non-dairy milk