

Dear Health Care Professional,

February is American Heart Health month, so it's a great time to inspire your patients and clients to make heart-healthy diet changes. To help you with new ideas for tasty and heart-healthy meals, Hope Barkoukis, PhD, RD, LD, Associate Professor, Department of Nutrition, School of Medicine at Case Western Reserve University shares her Top 10 Heart-Healthy Cooking Tips.

Sincerely,



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## Top 10 Heart-Healthy Cooking Tips

In honor of American Heart Health month, it's a great time to inspire your patients and clients to make heart-healthy diet and lifestyle changes. We've asked Hope Barkoukis, PhD, RD, LD, Associate Professor, Department of Nutrition, School of Medicine at Case Western Reserve University to share tips she uses in her practice. Here are her Top 10 Tips for creating heart-healthy culinary delights.

**1. Go Green.** Add about a cup of chopped fresh spinach or kale to any pasta, casserole, stew, soup or side dish. It's a great way to increase the amount of green leafy vegetables in your diet as well as add a source of folate to a meal.

**2. Save on Saturated Fat.** By using a soft spread like Promise<sup>®</sup> or I Can't Believe It's Not Butter!<sup>®</sup> instead of butter, you reduce saturated fat by 70%, and both of these soft spreads contain no hydrogenated oils — so no trans fat! Soft spreads can be used for cooking, baking and sautéing as well as spreading, and they can help your patients lower their intake of saturated fat while still enjoying the delicious buttery taste.\*

**3. Add Zest and Zing.** Add citrus zest from fresh lemons, limes and oranges or mince fresh herbs and hot peppers to create depth of flavor without added sodium.

**4. Roast 'em!** By oven roasting vegetables such as beets, carrots, squash, onions, bell peppers, eggplant or sweet potatoes, you seal in the flavor and enhance the sweetness. Start by pre-heating the oven to 400°. Cut veggies into similar sizes and add 1 teaspoon of soft spread per 1 cup of veggies and toss thoroughly to coat. Place on a baking sheet, stir every 20 minutes and bake until vegetables are tender and browned (about 45-60 minutes). Serve them hot as a nutrient-packed accompaniment!

**5. Become a Garlic Lover.** Roasted garlic is the ultimate flavor enhancer that can be used for appetizers, spreads, soups, vegetables, grains, salads or meats. Start with an entire garlic bulb. Slice ½ inch from the non-root end and add 1 to 2 teaspoons of soft spread over the top of the bulb. Cover with foil and place the garlic bulb in an oven-proof dish. Bake at 375° for 45-60 minutes until golden brown and soft. Roasted garlic also makes a delicious appetizer. Squeeze the pulp out of the cloves and spread on bread or serve with bruschetta and/or tapenade.

**6. Be a Spice Connoisseur.** Freshly-ground spices and herbs dramatically increase the flavor of any dish.

Invest in a mini-grinder to grind your own, such as cumin, nutmeg and pepper.

**7. No Yolk.** Using two egg whites in the place of a whole egg saves on calories, cholesterol and saturated fat. Egg whites have a bland flavor in comparison to the egg yolk, which allows the whites to easily pick up the flavors of other ingredients used in a dish.

**8. Use Fruit for Added Flavor.** People often forget that fruit can be more than a snack or cereal topping. You can add pineapple to pizza or a pork dish, mango in a stir fry, dried cranberries to a casserole or papaya in a stew! They add flavor and nutrients without fat or sodium!

**9. Fiber Up!** Sneak soluble fiber into a meal by adding any kind of bean — chickpeas, black-eyed peas, pinto, black or kidney — to salads, casseroles, soups, vegetables and side dishes.

**10. Create a Romantic, Heart-Healthy Dinner for Two.** It's also Valentine's Day so cook up a heart-healthy dining experience for two. Try [Sesame Shrimp Hearts With Passion Sauce](#) made with I Can't Believe It's Not Butter!® Spread or serve [Portobello Passion](#) to your sweetheart.

For more great recipes created for a heart-healthy diet, visit [SpreadsNutrition.org](http://SpreadsNutrition.org) and search the database of tested and approved recipes for a fresh take on an old favorite or discover a delightful new dish!

\* Promise® Buttery Spread contains 8 grams of total fat and 1.5 grams of saturated fat per serving; I Can't Believe It's Not Butter!® contains 8 grams of total fat and 2 grams of saturated fat per serving.

