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## FOOD SAFETY TIP

Slow cookers are convenient and nearly fool proof. Even though your food was cooking for hours, you should still use a food thermometer to check that your food reached the appropriate internal temperature and is safe to eat.

## Dietary Fat

January is National Fat Free Living Month. Fat free and low fat diets and foods were at the peak of trendiness in the 90's. Now, popular diets are pushing the opposite—eating very high amounts of fat. So what's the deal? Is dietary fat good or bad?



- First, dietary fats are essential. Fat gives your body energy and supports cell growth. Fat helps protect your organs and keep your body warm. Fat is also important for producing hormones.
- If you read the December edition you also know that fat helps your body absorb some nutrients, like Vitamins A, D, E, and K.
- There are different types of fats. Saturated and trans fat are less good for our health while monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats are 'good' fats.
- Healthier fats can be found in foods like olive oil, avocados, nuts, salmon, and tuna.
- Saturated and trans fats are found in foods like fatty meat, butter, cheese, fried foods, and some baked goods.
- Fat intake impacts our cholesterol. Eating more 'good' fat is linked to having better cholesterol.

## National Soup Month

Soup can make us feel better when we're ill or warmer when we're cold. Plus, when soup is done right, it can make for a nutrient dense meal.



Making soup at home can seem overwhelming. Here's a step-by-step to help make broth-based soups:

- Start with a soup pot and add oil to the bottom and sauté onions.
- Add in broth (chicken, beef, vegetable).
- Add in your starchy veggies (potatoes, squash) and already cooked protein (shredded chicken, beans).
- Add other vegetables and grains (if using). Bring to a boil and simmer until grains are cooked.
- Add seasonings and salt and pepper to taste.

Still rather buy soup than make it? Here are a few tips to pick out a healthy soup:

- Check how much sodium the soup has. Aim for less than 480mg per serving.
- Make sure it's a meal—look for soups with veggies, whole grains, and protein or add your own. It's easy to add spinach, cooked rice, or beans to a packaged soup.



## Recipe Facts

Amount Per Serving (1 1/2 cups each)

**Calories** 343

Calories from Fat 117

% Daily Value\*

<b>Total Fat</b> 13g	20%
Saturated Fat 3g	15%
Trans Fat 0g	
Polyunsaturated Fat 3g	
Monounsaturated Fat 6g	
<b>Cholesterol</b> 40mg	13%
<b>Sodium</b> 288mg	12%
<b>Potassium</b> 599mg	17%
<b>Total Carbohydrates</b> 40g	13%
Dietary Fiber 2g	8%
Sugars 6g	
<b>Protein</b> 17g	34%
Vitamin A	36%
Vitamin C	41%
Vitamin D	0%
Calcium	7%
Iron	9%

\* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2000 calorie diet.

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# Chicken Soup with Kale

This soup is an easy way to load up on colorful veggies. White beans would be a good addition or substitution for chicken.

## Ingredients:

- 2 teaspoons vegetable oil
- 1/2 cup onion, chopped
- 1/2 cup carrot, chopped
- 1 teaspoon thyme, dried
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 cups chicken broth
- 3/4 cup tomatoes, diced
- 1 cup cooked chicken, cubed
- 1/2 cup brown rice, cooked
- 1 cup kale, chopped

## Directions:

1. Heat oil in a medium saucepan over medium high heat.
2. Add onion and carrot. Sauté until vegetables are tender, about 5-8 minutes.
3. Add thyme and garlic. Sauté for one more minute.
4. Add broth or water, tomatoes, rice, chicken, and kale.
5. Simmer for 5-10 minutes until heated through and serve warm.

*Yield: 3 servings*

*Recipe adopted from What's Cooking? USDA Mixing Bowl*

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**Check out Click 'N Cook®,**  
**our online recipe database**  
**at ClickNCook.org**



# What Can You Do With ... Frozen Fruit?

**Choosing:** Frozen fruit is a cost effective way to keep eating fruit through the winter. Prices for fresh berries and other fruits skyrocket during the winter but frozen fruit tends to stay the same price. Watch for frozen fruit to go on sale. Often buying in bulk will be the best deal and you don't need to worry about the fruit going bad. Compare price per ounce to make sure you're getting the best deal. Look for fruit with no added sugars.



**Storing:** Store in the freezer! Frozen fruit will maintain the best quality for about 1 year. After that, it will still be safe to eat but may not be as tasty. If you want to defrost fruit for use later, thaw it in the refrigerator.

**Uses:** Frozen fruit can be used in so many ways. Try making a smoothie, adding frozen fruit to baked goods, making jam, or topping your oatmeal or yogurt with defrosted fruit. You can also make a quick sauce to use over pancakes or waffles. Blending frozen bananas with a few chocolate chips and cocoa powder makes an amazing substitute for ice cream.

**Nutrition:** Frozen fruit is picked and frozen at the peak of ripeness, ensuring it's just as nutritious as fresh fruit, sometimes even more.

**Fun Fact:** Imagine you're eating a frozen fruit smoothie. It's delicious so you can't stop eating it until you start getting brain freeze. But what is brain freeze? When something really cold touches the roof of your mouth, the blood vessels between your mouth and brain tense up, slowing blood from leaving your brain. The pressure from that blood traffic jam causes pain.

## Warm Berry and Peanut Butter English Muffins

### Ingredients:

- 3 English muffins, whole wheat
- 6 tablespoons peanut butter
- 1 cup strawberries, sliced (fresh or frozen)
- 1/2 cup blueberries (fresh or frozen)

### Directions:

1. Split English muffins in half.
2. Toast if you'd like.
3. Spread 1 tablespoon of peanut butter on each English muffin half.
4. Layer strawberries and blueberries on top of peanut butter.
5. Serve immediately.

*Yield: 6 servings; 1/2 English muffin each  
Recipe sourced from [clickncook.org](http://clickncook.org)*

# Winter Salad Tips

Salads are a great way to eat multiple servings of vegetables in one sitting but in the winter a light, crisp salad loses a lot of its appeal. Forget about those cukes, tomatoes, and peppers for now and try these ways to spruce up a winter salad:



- Start with heartier greens—kale, shaved brussels sprouts, or spinach
- Add some starchy vegetables—roasted squash, sweet potatoes, beets, potatoes, carrots
- Layer on the fruit—oranges, pears, apples
- Don't forget protein—white beans, lentils, shredded chicken, steak, shrimp
- Top it with flavor—dried fruit, cheese, nuts, red onion, seeds

Here are a few combos you could try:

- Apple, baked squash, and kale salad with a balsamic vinaigrette
- Chicken Caesar Brussels salad— instead of romaine lettuce, use shredded brussels sprouts
- Warm spinach salad with roasted sweet potatoes and feta



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## January 2019

**National Oatmeal Month**

**National Spaghetti Day**  
January 4

**National Curried Chicken Day**  
January 12

**National Peanut Butter Day**  
January 24