



## Shake Out the Salt!

February is American Heart Month! A great way to celebrate is to limit the sodium in our diets to support heart health.

Sodium is important for our bodies to function properly. It controls the fluid balance in our bodies and helps with nerve and muscle function. However, when we consume too much, it becomes an issue. It is recommended for adults to consume no more than 2,300mg of sodium per day, which is equal to one teaspoon of salt.

There is a link between excess sodium and high blood pressure, which increases the risk of heart attack, stroke and heart failure. Here are some ways to cut down on sodium:

### Limit high-sodium food sources.

The “Salty Six” are six popular food items that contribute high levels of sodium in our diet. This includes bread and rolls, pizza, sandwiches, cold cuts and cured meats, soup, and tacos and burritos. Some “sneaky” sources of sodium include canned vegetables, cheese, frozen dinners and various condiments like ketchup, mustard and soy sauce.

### Reduce sodium from canned foods.

Options for lower sodium or no salt added canned items are often available. To reduce the sodium in the canned item you are going to use, you can rinse that item under cold water.

### Add more flavor.

Many spices add just as much flavor as salt, if not more! Great herbs and spices to add to any recipe can include basil, garlic, onion, paprika, dill, ginger, thyme, and many more.

### Know the terms.

Items that say they are marinated, smoked, brined or cured are primarily higher-sodium items.

### Check the label.

View the Nutrition Facts label on your products. Try to choose products with 5% Daily Value (DV) or less of sodium. 20% DV or more is considered high.

## Food Safety Tip

Don't cross contaminate!

Raw foods can spread germs to our other foods if they are not kept separate.

When grocery shopping, it is ideal to keep raw meat, poultry and seafood away from other foods. In your refrigerator, make sure they are wrapped tightly and stored at the bottom of the fridge to prevent juices from leaking.



If you need help with food, apply for SNAP today!

The Greater Boston Food Bank can help you apply for SNAP benefits. Contact us to find out if you are eligible, want to apply, or want support on your existing case.

CALL: (617) 598 5022

OR

VISIT: [GBFB.org/SNAP](http://GBFB.org/SNAP)



# Zucchini Pancakes

Zucchini pancakes are an easy and delicious way to incorporate vegetables in your diet and use up any zucchini you may have! They're deliciously crispy and cheesy in each bite.

They can be eaten as a snack, appetizer or even as a side dish to your favorite meal.

## Ingredients

- 2 cups zucchini, grated
- 1 tablespoon onion, diced
- 1 egg, beaten
- 1 1/2 tablespoons all purpose-flour
- 1 tablespoon Parmesan cheese, grated
- 1/4 teaspoon parsley, dried
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 tablespoon olive oil

## Directions

1. Grate zucchini and mix with the other ingredients, except the oil, and blend well.
2. Form the mixture into 2 patties, 3-4 inches in diameter.
3. Heat the oil over medium heat in a skillet. Cook pancakes for 3-4 minutes per side. Remove and drain on paper towels.

## Recipe Tips

Serve these over salad greens or topped with plain yogurt.

Use whole wheat flour in place of all purpose flour.

*Makes 2 servings*

## Nutrition Facts

Zucchini Pancakes

Amount Per Serving (2 4-inch pancakes each)

Calories 166	Calories from Fat 99
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 11g	17%
Saturated Fat 2g	10%
Trans Fat 0g	
Polyunsaturated Fat 2g	
Monounsaturated Fat 6g	
Cholesterol 96mg	32%
Sodium 94mg	4%
Potassium 623mg	18%
Total Carbohydrates 12g	4%
Dietary Fiber 2g	8%
Sugars 4g	
Protein 7g	14%
Vitamin A	50%
Vitamin C	46%
Vitamin D	0%
Calcium	6%
Iron	9%

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

## LOOKING FOR RECIPE INSPIRATION?

Check out Click 'N Cook®, our online recipe database at [clickncook.org](http://clickncook.org)



Yuca, or cassava root, is a starchy root vegetable originating from South America. With the right preparation, this vegetable can be delicious.

## What can you do with:

## Yuca (Cassava Root)



**Choosing:** When picking fresh yuca, choose roots that are firm and without any bruises or cuts on the skin.

**Storing:** Store unpeeled yuca in a cool, dark and dry place for up to one week. It can also be tightly wrapped and frozen for several months.

**Preparing:** It is important to peel and cook yuca completely, otherwise it can be toxic.

**Uses:** Yuca can be boiled, added to stews, made into fries or mashed.

**Nutrition:** Yuca is a great source of potassium, Vitamins A and C and magnesium. Both potassium and magnesium support overall heart health and function. Vitamin A is great for our vision and helps support our immune system. Vitamin C works as an antioxidant, which protect our cells from damage.

**Fun Fact:** Tapioca powder comes from the pulp of the yuca plant, making pearls for bubble tea or tapioca pudding!

**A CLICK N' COOK RECIPE**  
MORE AT: [CLICKNCOOK.ORG](https://www.clickncook.org)

### Ingredients

- 1 pound yuca peeled and cut into 3-inch sections
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- salt and pepper to taste

### Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350 °F.
2. In a pot, combine the yuca with enough cold water to cover it by 1 inch. Bring the water to a boil, and slowly simmer the yuca for 20 to 30 minutes, or until it is fork tender.
3. Drain the yuca and pat dry with paper towels. Let it cool and cut it lengthwise into 3/4-inch wide wedges, discarding the thin woody core.
4. Place dried yuca into a large bowl and toss with oil. Season with salt and pepper as desired. Toss again to evenly coat. Place yuca on a large baking sheet in an even layer.
5. Bake until golden and crispy, about 15 minutes, tossing halfway through.
6. Serve right away as a side dish or as a snack with your favorite dip.

## Baked Yuca Fries





## February 2024

**National Grapefruit Month**

**National Chocolate Lovers Month**

**National Carrot Cake Day**  
February 3

**World Nutella Day**  
February 5

**National "Italian Food" Day**  
February 13

**National Almond Day**  
February 16

**National Pancake Day**  
February 21

**National Tortilla Chip Day**  
February 24

**National Pistachio Day**  
February 26

## Exercises to Boost Heart Health

Similar to your diet, exercise is a great way to promote a heart-healthy lifestyle. It is recommended to exercise for 150 minutes per week. Below find three types of exercise and examples of each.

### Aerobic Exercise

This type of exercises improves circulation and how well our heart pumps our blood.

*Examples:* brisk walking, running, swimming and jumping rope.

### Resistance Training

In combination with aerobic exercise, resistance training can help raise our HDL (good) cholesterol and lower our LDL (bad) cholesterol, supporting heart health.

*Examples:* working out with free weights, resistance bands or body-resistance exercises like push-ups and squats.

### Stretching and Balance

This exercise does not directly affect heart health, but it makes our bodies more capable of doing resistance training and aerobic exercise by supporting the muscles and bones.

It is recommended to stretch before and after other exercises. Yoga and tai chi can also be great stretching exercises.