



Roasted Root Vegetables (page 84)

## CHAPTER FIVE

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# Mashed Cauliflower

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MAKES 3 CUPS / PREP TIME: 10 MINUTES / COOK TIME: 5 MINUTES  
TOTAL TIME: 15 MINUTES

Potatoes are a staple of the American diet and a side dish on many a dinner plate. Unfortunately, when we take these starchy spuds and deep-fry them or load them with butter and sour cream, we surpass our daily allowance for carbohydrates, fat, and calories. Try swapping your traditional spuds for this twist on mashed potatoes. You will save on calories and carbohydrates yet still feel comforted by the creamy nature of this simple dish.

1 large head cauliflower  
¼ cup water  
⅓ cup low-fat buttermilk  
1 tablespoon  
minced garlic  
1 tablespoon extra-virgin  
olive oil

## Post-Op Servings

- P** ¼ cup
- S** ½ cup
- G** ½ cup

- 1** Break the cauliflower into small florets. Place in a large microwave-safe bowl with the water. Cover and microwave for about 5 minutes, or until the cauliflower is soft. Drain the water from the bowl.
- 2** In a blender or food processor, puree the buttermilk, cauliflower, garlic, and olive oil on medium speed until the cauliflower is smooth and creamy.
- 3** Serve immediately.

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**Ingredient tip:** You can buy buttermilk in most supermarkets, but it's just as easy to make your own. Mix 1 teaspoon freshly squeezed lemon juice with ⅓ cup low-fat milk. Let the mixture sit for about 10 minutes, or until the milk begins to thicken.

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**Cooking tip:** For even more flavor, microwave the cauliflower with chicken or vegetable broth instead of water and add ½ cup shredded Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese when you puree the mixture. You can add protein to this dish by blending in powdered egg whites or unflavored protein powder after the first puree (puree until smooth and creamy; then add the protein powder and puree to incorporate).

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**Per Serving (½ cup):** Calories: 62; Total fat: 2g; Protein: 3g; Carbs: 8g; Fiber: 3g; Sugar: 3g; Sodium: 54mg

# Simple Spinach Dip

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MAKES 12 SERVINGS / PREP TIME: 10 MINUTES, PLUS 2 HOURS TO CHILL  
TOTAL TIME: 2 HOURS, 10 MINUTES

*It's certainly easy to max out on fat and calories after only a few bites of traditional spinach dip. And who can stop after only a few bites of this rich, creamy appetizer? Save on calories without compromising flavor with this simple spinach dip recipe that uses Greek yogurt instead of sour cream. Use whole seasonings and herbs instead of a premixed packet to cut back on sodium, leave out the MSG, and improve the flavor.*

1 cup plain nonfat  
Greek yogurt  
4 ounces  
Neufchâtel cheese  
½ cup olive oil-based  
mayonnaise  
2 teaspoons minced garlic  
1½ teaspoons  
onion powder  
1 teaspoon  
smoked paprika  
¾ teaspoon freshly  
ground black pepper  
¼ teaspoon red  
pepper flakes  
2 teaspoons  
Worcestershire sauce  
1 (8-ounce) can water  
chestnuts, drained and  
finely chopped  
½ cup chopped scallions  
1 (10-ounce) package  
frozen chopped  
spinach, thawed and  
squeezed of excess  
moisture

- 1** In a large bowl, use a hand mixer on low speed to mix the yogurt, Neufchâtel cheese, mayonnaise, garlic, onion powder, paprika, black pepper, red pepper flakes, and Worcestershire sauce.
- 2** Add the water chestnuts, scallions, and spinach and stir by hand until well combined.
- 3** Cover and refrigerate for at least 2 hours prior to serving, or overnight.
- 4** Serve with raw vegetables or whole-grain crackers.

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**Serving tip:** Use as a spread on deli-sliced (nitrate-free) turkey and roll it up for a quick snack or a simple lunch. Or substitute for mayo or mustard on an open-face sandwich. The possibilities abound.

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**Per Serving (¼ cup):** Calories: 71; Total fat: 4g; Protein: 3g; Carbs: 5g; Fiber: 1g; Sugar: 2g; Sodium: 131 mg

## Post-Op Servings

**G** ¼ cup

# Pickle Roll-Ups

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MAKES ABOUT 40 MINI ROLL-UPS / PREP TIME: 20 MINUTES

TOTAL TIME: 20 MINUTES

*Pickles have a crisp, sour, delicious taste and almost no calories. Here is an easy recipe to make as a low-carb appetizer for your next family gathering or just for a simple snack. You can even pack them for your lunch when you're in a hurry. The pickles will satisfy your craving to "crunch" without all the added calories.*

¼ pound deli ham  
(nitrate-free), thinly  
sliced (about 8 slices)  
8 ounces Neufchâtel  
cheese, at room  
temperature  
1 teaspoon dried dill  
1 teaspoon onion powder  
8 whole kosher dill  
pickle spears

## Post-Op Servings

**G** 5 roll-ups (1 entire  
pickle roll-up)

- 1** Get a large cutting board or clean counter space to assemble your roll-ups.
- 2** Lay the ham slices on the work surface and carefully spread on the Neufchâtel cheese.
- 3** Season each lightly with the dill and onion powder.
- 4** Place an entire pickle on an end of the ham and carefully roll.
- 5** Slice each pickle roll-up into mini rounds about ½- to 1-inch wide.
- 6** Skew each with a toothpick for easier serving.

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**Did You Know?** *There is any number of foods with gut-healthy probiotics. Yogurt, fresh sauerkraut, and—you guessed it—pickles contain beneficial bacteria that keep your gastrointestinal tract regular and may even be linked to healthy body weight.*

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**Per Serving (1 roll-up):** Calories: 86; Total fat: 7g; Protein: 4g; Carbs: 4g; Fiber: 0 g; Sugar: 2g; Sodium: 540mg

# Baked Zucchini Fries

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MAKES 6 SERVINGS / PREP TIME: 15 MINUTES / COOK TIME: 30 MINUTES  
TOTAL TIME: 45 MINUTES

*The salty taste of French fries is a comfort to many people—and fries are one of those foods that you can't eat just one of. After the gastric sleeve, fried food is off limits—not only because it's loaded with fat and calories, but also because it can make you feel sick. But there are plenty of healthier “fries” out there that can sate any cravings. These zucchini fries are the perfect substitute. So enjoy your next side of fries—guilt free!*

3 large zucchini  
2 large eggs  
1 cup whole-wheat  
bread crumbs  
¼ cup shredded  
Parmigiano-  
Reggiano cheese  
1 teaspoon garlic powder  
1 teaspoon onion powder

## Post-Op Servings

**G** 4 zucchini fries

- 1** Preheat the oven to 425°F. Line a large rimmed baking sheet with aluminum foil.
- 2** Halve each zucchini lengthwise and continue slicing each piece into fries about ½ inch in diameter. You will have about 8 strips per zucchini.
- 3** In a small bowl, crack the eggs and beat lightly.
- 4** In a medium bowl, combine the bread crumbs, Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese, garlic powder, and onion powder.
- 5** One by one, dip each zucchini strip into the egg, then roll it in the bread crumb mixture. Place on the prepared baking sheet.
- 6** Roast for 30 minutes, stirring the fries halfway through. Zucchini fries are done when brown and crispy.
- 7** Serve immediately.

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**Per Serving (4 fries):** Calories: 89; Total fat: 3g; Protein: 5g; Carbs: 10g; Fiber: 1g; Sugar: 3g; Sodium: 179mg

# Italian Eggplant Pizzas

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MAKES 6 SERVINGS / PREP TIME: 15 MINUTES / COOK TIME: 30 MINUTES  
TOTAL TIME: 45 MINUTES

*These mini pizzas are great as an appetizer or snack, or can serve as a meal by themselves—especially if you are looking for some variety when on the soft diet. Plus, it's a great way to include eggplant in your diet, a vegetable rich in potassium and fiber yet often overlooked at the farmers' market or grocery store. Mix up your toppings and even the cheese you use to create some variety on these mini low-carb pizzas.*

1 large eggplant, cut into  
¾- to ½-inch rounds  
1 tablespoon salt  
1 tablespoon extra-virgin  
olive oil  
2 teaspoons minced garlic  
½ teaspoon  
dried oregano  
1 cup Marinara Sauce with  
Italian Herbs (page 178)  
1 cup fresh basil leaves  
1 cup shredded part-skim  
Mozzarella cheese  
¾ cup shredded  
Parmigiano-  
Reggiano cheese

- 1** Preheat the oven to 425°F. Line a large rimmed baking sheet with aluminum foil.
- 2** Put the eggplant rounds on paper towels and sprinkle them with the salt. Let them sit for 10 to 15 minutes to help release some of the water in the eggplant. Pat dry afterward. It's okay to wipe off some of the salt before baking.
- 3** In a small bowl, mix together the olive oil, garlic, and oregano.
- 4** Place the eggplant rounds 1-inch apart on the baking sheet. Using a pastry brush, coat each side of the eggplant with the olive oil mixture. Bake the eggplant for 15 minutes.

## Post-Op Servings

**S** 1 to 2 eggplant  
pizza rounds

**G** 2 to 4 eggplant  
pizza rounds

- 5 Create pizzas by layering 1 to 2 tablespoons of marinara sauce, 2 basil leaves, about 1 tablespoon of mozzarella cheese, and about ½ tablespoon of Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese on each baked eggplant round.
- 6 Bake the pizzas for an additional 10 minutes or until the cheese is melted and starting to brown.
- 7 Serve immediately and enjoy!

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**Per Serving (2 eggplant pizza rounds):** Calories: 99; Total fat: 6g; Protein: 5g; Carbs: 7g; Fiber: 2g; Sugar: 4g; Sodium: 500mg

# Tomato, Basil, and Cucumber Salad

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MAKES 4 SERVINGS / PREP TIME: 15 MINUTES, PLUS 30 MINUTES TO CHILL  
TOTAL TIME: 45 MINUTES

*One of the most delicious parts about summertime is enjoying a refreshing salad—especially if you can make it with fresh produce from the farmers' market or your garden. The flavors and nutrients of fresh, in-season vegetables are like nothing else. This is an easy salad to make and it will complement any meal—and since it's lettuce-free, it's a great way to get out of your usual salad rut.*

1 large cucumber, seeded and sliced  
4 medium tomatoes, quartered  
1 medium red onion, thinly sliced  
½ cup chopped fresh basil  
3 tablespoons red wine vinegar  
1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil  
½ teaspoon Dijon mustard  
½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

## Post-Op Servings

**G** ½ cup serving

- 1** In a medium bowl, mix together the cucumber, tomatoes, red onion, and basil.
- 2** In a small bowl, whisk together the vinegar, olive oil, mustard, and pepper.
- 3** Pour the dressing over the vegetables, and gently stir until well combined.
- 4** Cover and chill for at least 30 minutes prior to serving.

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**Serving tip:** Turn this salad into a well-rounded meal by grilling up some chicken breast and cutting it into 1-inch pieces. Gently toss the chicken in the salad for a refreshing and filling lunch or dinner.

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**Per Serving (½ cup):** Calories: 72; Total fat: 4g; Protein: 1g; Carbs: 8g; Fiber: 1g; Sugar: 4g; Sodium: 5mg