

## MARCH RECIPE

### SWEET POTATO, SQUASH, AND TURKEY CASSEROLE FRY

Celebrate National Nutrition Month® with a simple casserole the whole family will love.

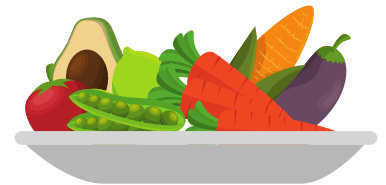


#### INGREDIENTS

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 medium zucchini, diced
- 1 medium yellow squash, diced
- 2 medium sweet potato — sliced
- 1 lb ground turkey breast
- 1/2 cup onions, chopped
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 1 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1 teaspoon chili/red pepper flakes
- 1 cup diced stewed tomatoes, or homemade tomato sauce
- 1/2 cup mozzarella cheese — (shredded)
- Garnish with fresh parsley — (chopped)

## CELEBRATE NATIONAL NUTRITION MONTH®

For National Nutrition Month®, celebrated each March, the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics encourages everyone to make informed food choices and develop sound eating and physical activity habits. With that in mind, consider how you can implement changes in your cooking to include more flavors while reducing fat, salt and sugar in your recipes.



Look at your favorite recipe(s); can you add fresh herbs and spices that will take the place of salt? Remember, salt is primary flavor in our foods. Our taste buds actually houses sensations for salt and our acuity (like for that flavor) which develops over the years, from the first time solid foods are introduced as toddlers through adulthood.

However, getting outside of your “flavor box” can lead to exciting and creative changes to your foods!

Substituting lemon for example can mimic the ‘salt’ flavor but add pungency to the dish, or how about some ‘real spice’ that has become more popular as ethnic cuisines emerge. Curry, cumin, chipotle pepper, picante “hot spicy” such as jalapeno and sriracha are almost the norm today, found as a flavor even in ketchup! Spicing up your dishes, even family favorites that you put your own “spin on” can become the next tradition!

## RECIPE (CONT.)

### PREPARATION

- Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.
- 2. In a medium skillet, heat 1 teaspoon of olive oil over medium-high heat.
- 3. Add chopped onions, saute for 1 minute.
- 4. Add the rest of the olive oil, then the ground turkey and cook until pink color changes
- 5. Add squash and mix together well.
- 6. Stir in garlic, peppers and tomatoes/sauce.
- 7. Line a non-stick casserole dish with the sweet potato slices, pour turkey mixture on top of potatoes.
- 8. Sprinkle the shredded cheese on top.
- 9. Cover with foil, bake for 20 minutes at 350 F, uncover and bake for 2 – 5 minutes to brown cheese on top.
- 10. Sprinkle with fresh parsley.

Serving suggestions: serve up as is or brown rice to keep it gluten free. Add pasta if you need to have more 'carbs'!  
Serves 4

Source: Primavera Kitchen

## NUTRITION MONTH, CONT.

Another flavor ingredient is the fat source that we use in cooking. Butter, margarine, cream, cheeses are some common ingredients that we add for flavor.

Reducing the amounts by half while adding in some herbs and spices will not alter the flavors, but will enhance and even make it taste better while achieving a lower fat and healthier result!

So, as you 'savor the flavor' how about changing your preparation methods as well. Instead of 'frying', try baking or grilling instead. Maybe you want to braise meats to get the delicious 'brown' color and crust on your meats but using a very little amount of oil (less than one tablespoon) to brown the meat and finishing off/completing the cooking process in the oven will be healthier! Using broth can be a great substitute for sautéing instead of oil as well, whether for vegetables or stir frying combinations. Choose the healthier oils if you must however, such as olive, canola or peanut.

Substitution suggestions:

- Use smoked paprika or liquid smoke to replace smoked meats
- Add apple cider or rice vinegar to your greens
- Marinate your chicken in rosemary and lemon juice before grilling
- Use sharp, reduced-fat cheese and low-fat milk in your macaroni and cheese
- Sweeten your desserts with fruit puree or apple sauce instead of sugar
- Opt for brown rice instead of white rice in your beans and rice or rice casserole dishes

Source: Carol Chong, National Nutrition Advisor, Alliance for a Healthier Generation

## RECIPE (CONT.)

center of the pan outwards to the sides of the skillet. Add the other vegetables one at a time into the center of the pan and pushing outwards to mix them together. Stir-fry for one minute. Remove vegetables to a bowl/plate and set aside.

4. Add the remaining oil to the skillet/wok on medium heat. Add chicken using a slotted spoon to drain the marinade as you put it into the pan. Stir fry the chicken until just cooked through, about 2-3 minutes on each side using the same technique of pushing the chicken from the center to the outside of the pan. Add marinade to coat the chicken and stir well.

5. Mix broth with remaining one (1) tablespoon cornstarch to make a slurry, stirring well to dissolve cornstarch.

6. Add vegetables back into the pan with the chicken. Add broth/slurry stir-frying chicken and vegetables together. Cover for 1 minute. Remove from heat. Serve with steamed rice.

Yield: 4 servings

Serving Size: 1 cup (approximately 250 calories per serving)

Source: Carol Chong, National Nutrition Advisor, Alliance for a Healthier Generation

## FIVE WAYS TO BRING MINDFULNESS HOME

Connecting with your family is crucial to everyone's well-being. Here are some things to keep in mind as you make the effort.



### 1. You do have time

Balancing all of life's demands can be stressful and time-consuming. It can often feel like there isn't enough time to really connect with your family—it can even feel like another chore on your to-do list. See if you can slow down enough to find small moments in each day to make a connection with each other—from saying “good morning” to your children in a loving way or doing something thoughtful, there are so many small moments ripe for connection.

### 2. It's not all about you

It's hard not to take things personally when someone speaks to you in a rude or unkind way, but often these behaviors are coming from a place of discomfort within the other person. When you can take their action as a message that the other person is having a difficult time rather than as a personal attack, you can begin to relate to him/her differently. Doing this can open you both up, releasing defenses and leading toward communicating and connecting in a different way.

## QUICK TIPS: PA FOR KIDS

Exercise doesn't have to mean going to the gym or running laps. Your child can work in daily physical activity while at soccer practice, dancing, riding bikes, walking to school, or by playing with friends.

All kids 2 years and older should be physically active for at least 60 minutes on most days of the week. Toddlers and young children should not be inactive for prolonged periods of time — no more than 1 hour unless they're sleeping.

1. Be active together. Use physical activity as family bonding time.
2. Talk with your kids while walking the dog or shooting hoops.
3. Insert physical activity into the things you already do.
4. Park farther away from store entrances.
5. Take the stairs instead of the elevator.
6. Set up a safe area in your home where active play is okay.
7. Nasty weather is no excuse to sit on the couch all day!
8. Set your weekend in motion by planning active family fun. Try a hike, a walk through the zoo, a dip in the local pool, or a frisbee toss in the park.
9. Choose activities at different levels of intensity, like slow walking and skating.

Source: [www.nemours.org](http://www.nemours.org)

## FIVE WAYS TO BRING MINDFULNESS HOME, CONT.

### 3. Really listen

We often confuse hearing for listening. Hearing is just perceiving the sounds around you. You can hear someone while typing a text on the phone. Listening is the intentional choice to fully pay attention to the other person—from the tone and texture of their voice to their emotional state and body language. Next time you ask your loved ones how their day was, make sure to really listen. Take in what they're saying without projecting what you feel or expect onto their words. Remember how you feel when someone is actually listening. Offer that to others.

### 4. Keep in touch with loved ones

Families need to be in touch with each other, literally. Not everyone is “touchy-feely,” but touch can be soothing and communicate both a feeling and a sense of connection that words alone cannot convey. From a gentle hand on a shoulder to lingering in a hug a bit longer, see if you can reach out and touch your loved ones a little more.

### 5. Have an attitude of curiosity

Close family members often see each other as having a fixed identity and assume they know how the other is going to act in any given moment. By doing this you become closed to seeing each other as you really are in moment—it prevents you from having the ability to see the change that's happening as those around you grow. We're constantly changing and evolving, especially in small, subtle ways, so rather than assuming you know the other person completely, see if instead, it's possible to be open and have an attitude of curiosity. See what's new.

Source: [www.mindful.org](http://www.mindful.org)