



**Alternatives
Substitutions**

Vegan versions of foods traditionally made with animal products are great not only for vegans, but for those who suffer from food allergies as well. Here is a list of vegan substitutes for eggs, peanut butter, and milk, as well as lists for variations on staples such as flour and sugar. There are also hints for that great mother of all food substitutes, tofu. Going vegan or having allergies can be a challenge; again, imagination is the key.

E G G S

The following are some healthy alternatives to high-cholesterol eggs. Each of these substitutions has a distinct flavour and method of use. Experiment with them all when cooking and baking to see how they can be used. Each one is the equivalent of 1 egg unless otherwise noted:

- Flax Eggs (3 tablespoons = 1 egg) (pg. 157)
Flax is great for pancakes, breads, and other baking.
- 1½ tsp powder egg replacer + 2 tbsp water
Most health food stores carry egg replacer.
- ½ banana
Bananas are great egg substitutes for desserts, or sweet items like pancakes or smoothies.
- ¼ cup tofu
When using tofu as an egg substitute, ensure you're using soft tofu, and a food processor, so you don't get any grainy bits.
- 3 tbsp apple sauce
Like bananas, apple sauce is great for sweeter recipes.
- 1 tbsp psyllium husks + 2 tbsp water
The longer you let the psyllium husks sit in water, the more they become an eggy substance. Terrific in breads and baking.

M I L K

Humans consume cow's milk as a beverage but it was designed for baby cows, not humans. There are so many milk substitutes out there on the market, and each brand has its own taste. Try them all and find the ones you like best, or better yet, try making your own.

- Soy milk (pg. 29)
- Rice milk (pg. 30)
- Oatmeal milk (pg. 30)
- Coconut milk (pg. 31)





B U T T E R

Butter is made from churning whole milk or cream until the fats separate and form a solid mass. It has a high salt and saturated fat content and is thought to contribute to heart disease. These substitutions offered not only are nutritious, but taste great in baking, too.

- Vegan butter (pg. 85)
- Soy lecithin spread
- Store-bought margarine (check the label for animal products – see Appendix for list)
- Flax oil
Don't use this for baking or cooking, but as a topping for potatoes, rice, popcorn, etc.
- Nut butter
Can be made from almonds, cashews, or other nuts.
- Vegetable shortening
Use for making pastry.
- Applesauce
Use for baking only; can replace up to $\frac{3}{4}$ of butter in a recipe.

C H E E S E

There are hundreds of varieties of cheeses offered throughout the world. Sadly, only a few varieties of “mock” cheeses made from rice or soy are available; sadder still, even fewer brands offer vegan versions. (Some brands contain casein, which is an animal by-product.) Check the ingredients before buying your mock cheese, which is available in most health food stores.

- Soy, rice cheese
- Soy, rice Parmesan cheese
- Faux Parmesan cheese (pg. 160)

P E A N U T B U T T E R

Peanut butter is the most familiar and common nut butter around. But many people are severely allergic to peanuts. It is possible to enjoy the same rich flavouring as peanuts by substituting any of the seed butters located in the list below. Different nuts and seed butters have different tastes, so experiment with them all and choose your favourite. Here are a few examples available in most health food stores.

- Tahini (sesame seed)
- Almond butter
- Cashew butter
- Sunflower seed butter

S U G A R

Here are a few examples of natural alternatives to those white and brown granules found in most homes. Generally found in most health food stores, these alternatives offer a more holistic and healthy approach to sweetening your foodstuffs. Remember that when using a liquid sweetener, you must cut back a little on the other liquid in the recipe.

- Maple syrup
- Cane sugar
- Date sugar
- Barley malt
- Fruit juice concentrate



FLOUR

Wheat is the most popular grain in the North American diet. It is used to make bread products, as a thickening agent – the list goes on and on. Your local health food store probably offers a number of grains that can be used in place of wheat, each one having a different flavour and density. Try them all. In addition to these different kinds of flour, you can make your own in a blender or a food processor. For example, you can make oat flour by blending rolled oat flakes until powdered.

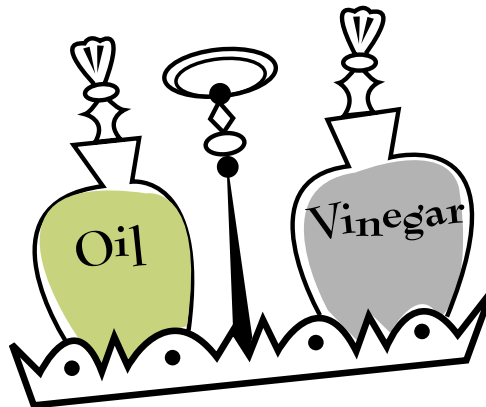
- Spelt flour
Tends to make your recipes heavier; you can slightly increase the baking powder so that it rises more. Good for bread and baking.
- Kamut flour
Good for bread and other baking; best if used half and half with other flours.
- Barley flour
Good for pancakes, cookies.
- Buckwheat flour
Good for pancakes, but is a heavy flour so use half and half with other flours.
- Oat flour
Good for breads, cookies.
- Brown rice flour
- Corn flour
- Millet flour
A dry, coarse flour.
- Potato flour
- Soy flour
Has a strong flavour.
- Chickpea flour
Has a strong flavour.



O I L

Oil is an essential part of the daily diet, needed for a variety of purposes to keep the body healthy and strong. Generally, oils are used in baking, cooking, or as a topping on rice or salad. Try to use organic cold-pressed oil, which can be found in most health food stores.

- Olive Oil
The best oil there is. Splurge a little, because it's worth it! We even use it in our baking, but it does have a distinct flavour, so you may want to use sunflower oil when you bake.
- Sunflower oil, safflower oil, canola oil, vegetable oil
These are cheaper oils that can be used for basically anything.
- Sesame oil
Has a strong taste; not good for frying. Excellent oil for salads and Asian recipes.
- Flax oil
Don't cook with this oil! Use it for salads, or in place of butter on popcorn, potatoes, and rice.



S A L T

Increasing levels of salt in the North American diet in the last few decades have led to wide concern. Salt finds its way into our lives by means of flavour enhancers and food preservatives. Instead of reaching for the salt shaker, replace it with these nutritious substitutions.

- Gomashio (pg. 160)
A condiment made of roasted sesame seeds. Use on cooked vegetables, salads, soups.
- Braggs
Liquid aminos! Braggs, an all-purpose seasoning brand, is formulated vegetable protein made from pure soybeans and purified water. Great on salads and dressings, soups, veggies, rice and beans, tofu, stir-fries, tempeh, casseroles, potatoes, vegan jerky, popcorn, gravies, and sauces.



T O F U

Tofu is a white, semi-solid product made from soy milk and a curdling agent. Tofu by itself is almost tasteless. It can be used as a filler or substitution or on its own. Think of tofu as a sponge: it will soak up whatever it's surrounded by. Tofu is high in protein and calcium, low in fat and sodium, and cholesterol-free.

There are many kinds of tofu. Which one to use depends on your recipe:

- **Firm:** Good for stir-fries, scrambled tofu, tofu jerky.
- **Medium:** Easily blended; good for stir-fries, scrambled tofu, tofu jerky, sauces, desserts.
- **Soft and silken:** Very easily blended; good for desserts, dips, sauces.
- **Tempeh:** Not a kind of tofu, but a somewhat meat-like substance made from cultured soybeans. It is used in dishes like chicken salad (pg. 67) or in barbecuing, and has a rather strong taste compared to tofu.
- **TVP or Textured Vegetable Protein:** A soy product that comes in granules or chunks. Rehydrate it in water (1 cup of TVP in $\frac{1}{8}$ cup water; add more water if necessary) and use in place of ground meat as in chili. It takes on the flavour (somewhat) of whatever you cook it with.
- **Miso:** Made from fermented soybeans, and usually is found in a paste form. It is used as a flavouring agent and for soup stocks and gravies. There are 3 basic varieties of miso: soybean, barley, and brown rice; each has a different and distinct flavour and colour. Look for this in Japanese food markets or health food stores. Hint: add only at the end of cooking; boiling it will ruin its properties.

BUYING TOFU

When you buy tofu, choose one that has the same consistency as the recipe requires or the ingredient you are replacing. Buying tofu is like buying wine: each brand has a different texture, a different taste. Shop around until you find the one you like.

DRAIN YOUR TOFU

Before using your tofu, place it in a colander over the sink. Let it sit for 5 to 10 minutes so excess water may drain out. You can help it along by giving it a loving squeeze! Note: use this method carefully when working with soft and silken tofu.

MEASURING YOUR TOFU

Here's a trick for measuring tofu in a measuring cup without making a mess. If the recipe calls for a cup of tofu, fill a 4-cup measuring cup with 2 cups of water. Add tofu until it reaches 3 cups. And there you have your 1 cup of tofu!

STORING TOFU

Store your tofu in an air-tight container. Fill the container with water until the tofu is covered. If you are using only part of a package of tofu, recover the remainder with fresh water daily. An open package of tofu will last 4-6 days if stored properly. If it starts to smell "beany" or the water becomes cloudy, then it's time to compost it.

FREEZING TOFU

Freezing tofu will give it a chewy, meaty texture. First, open the tofu package, drain well, and press out any excess water. Seal it in a plastic bag and freeze for at least 8 hours. To thaw quickly, pour hot water over the tofu, then press excess water out before using.



B E A N S

Although there are hundreds of varieties of beans available throughout the world – each one having a unique history and place or origin – only about 10 to 15 varieties are commonly used. Be imaginative and try out different kinds of beans; experiment with different tastes and textures. Beans contain virtually no cholesterol, little fat, and valuable vitamins and minerals. They provide necessary protein and are a great source of carbohydrates.

Dry beans should be pre-soaked in a bowl or jar of water in the refrigerator overnight before using; this shortens the cooking time and helps the body to digest them. Make sure to rinse the beans before and after soaking, and discard any flawed beans, such as those with a lighter colour, or any that contain insect punctures.

Here is a list of readily available beans, and their suggested cooking times:

- Adzuki beans: Combine 1 cup of pre-soaked beans with 4 cups of water, bring to a boil, then simmer on medium heat for 1-1 ½ hours. Stir occasionally.
- Black beans: Combine 1 cup of pre-soaked beans with 4 cups of water, bring to a boil, then simmer on medium heat for 1 ½-2 hours. Stir occasionally.
- Chickpeas/Garbanzos: Combine 1 cup of pre-soaked beans with 4 cups of water, bring to boil, then simmer on medium heat for 1 ½-2 hours. Stir occasionally.
- Kidney beans: Combine 1 cup of pre-soaked beans with 3 cups of water, bring to a boil, then simmer on medium heat for 1 ¼-1 ¾ hours. Stir occasionally.
- Pinto beans: Combine 1 cup of pre-soaked beans with 3 cups of water, bring to a boil, then simmer on medium heat for 1 ¾-2 hours. Stir occasionally.
- Navy beans: Combine 1 cup of pre-soaked beans with 2 cups of water, bring to a boil, then simmer on medium heat for 1 ½-2 hours. Stir occasionally.
- Soy beans: Combine with 1 cup of pre-soaked beans with 4 cups of water, bring to a boil, then simmer on medium heat for 3 hours. Stir occasionally.
- Green and brown lentils: Combine 1 cup of dry beans with 3 cups of water, bring to a boil, then simmer on medium heat for 25-35 minutes. Stir occasionally.
- Mung beans: Combine 1 cup of dry beans with 3 cups of water, bring to a boil, then simmer on medium heat for 35-45 minutes. Stir occasionally.
- Split peas: Combine 1 cup of dry beans with 3 ½ cups of water, bring to a boil, then simmer on medium heat for 35-45 minutes. Stir occasionally.