

## Healthy Dressings

What could be healthier than eating a fresh salad? Salads made with dark green lettuce, mixed greens, corn, carrots, tomatoes, cucumbers, onion, broccoli, celery, radishes, mushrooms, avocado, peppers, or leftover cooked veggies are filled with color, vitamins, and minerals, and low in calories. Add a healthy protein such as chicken, salmon or tuna, canned beans, cottage cheese, turkey, nuts, or hard-boiled egg — along with a fruit and/or whole grain side, and you have a balanced meal. Starting off dinner with a small salad helps satisfy your appetite. This makes it easier to eat smaller portions of your protein entrée and starch side dish, so there are less calories and carbohydrates in your meal — better for blood sugar and weight control.

**Warning:** When you add a high calorie salad dressing, you may “drown out” the benefits of a lower calorie salad, especially if you just turn the bottle upside down and pour! It is easy to use more than the 2 tablespoon serving size listed on the label, and some store-bought dressings are a lot higher in calories, fat, and sodium than others. Don’t be fooled by the word “Healthy” on the label! Always read the Nutrition Facts Label on the back of the bottle. Making your own salad dressing is fast, costs less, and you can avoid the high sodium and other additives in store-bought dressings. Mixing a little olive oil with lemon juice, ground pepper and (optional) garlic makes a fast, easy, and healthier dressing substitute!

**Be calorie conscious:** Look for dressings with under 130 calories in 2 tablespoons. Italian or balsamic vinaigrette dressings, as well as yogurt-based dressings will usually be lower than “creamy” varieties. Be careful! One 2 Tbsp serving of many creamy Caesar or Ranch dressings contain 180 calories and 18 grams of fat. In addition, creamy dressings are thicker than vinaigrettes, so it is easier to use more than this to cover your salad. There are a few light Caesar, Ranch and blue cheese dressings that can be found for 130-140 calories. Look for “light” and “low-fat” varieties. **TIP:** Try dipping each bite of salad into a 2 Tbsp small dish of dressing on the side, rather than pouring dressing into the bowl.

**Spare the sodium:** Read the label. Ideally, choose dressings with under 150 mg of sodium. There are many brands with 150 mg or less, such as Newman’s Own Olive Oil & Vinegar. Avoid dressings that pack 300-400 mg sodium into a 2 tablespoon serving. It is easier to find less sodium in sweet dressings (like raspberry vinaigrette) than an Italian or Caesar.

See next page for several more homemade recipes. Store leftover dressings in the fridge for 1 to 2 weeks.

## Dressing Recipes

Source: *Cooking Matters for Adults, Share Our Strength*

Simple Salad Dressing	Honey Mustard	Citrus Dressing	Balsamic Vinaigrette
3 Tbsp olive oil 2 Tbsp red wine vinegar ½ tsp salt ¼ tsp black pepper	3 Tbsp smooth Dijon mustard 2 Tbsp apple cider vinegar or rice wine vinegar 5 Tbsp honey <i>Source: Alton Brown</i>	4 Tbsp lemon juice 3 Tbsp orange juice 3 Tbsp oil 2 tsp sugar ¼ tsp garlic salt <i>Source: food.com</i>	2 Tbsp balsamic vinegar 1 Tbsp Dijon mustard 3-4 Tbsp oil Salt and pepper to taste

Try the dressings above as a sauce for the foods below:

Chicken, pork, orange, apple, pear, grapes, carrot, celery, mushroom, cucumber, almond, walnut, sunflower seeds, bell pepper, low-fat cheddar cheese	Fish, shellfish, chicken, pork, black beans, corn, mangos, pineapple, oranges, grapefruit, peppers, carrots, nuts, asparagus, avocados, tomatoes	Chicken, pork, beef, fish (try salmon), white beans, apples, pears, cranberries, figs, beans, strawberries, beets, green beans, raisins, almonds, walnuts, potatoes, tomatoes, feta, parmesan	Chicken, pork, beef, cucumber, tomatoes, broccoli, cauliflower, radishes, carrots, green beans, zucchini
--	--	---	--

## Caesar Dressing

Source: *Nutrition Action HealthLetter*

8 two Tbsp servings

- ½ c mayonnaise
- 3 cloves garlic
- ¼ c grated Parmesan cheese
- ¼ tsp ground black pepper
- ⅛ tsp Worcestershire sauce
- ⅛ tsp Tabasco
- ¼ c low-fat or fat-free sour cream
- 1 tsp Dijon mustard

### Directions:

Place all ingredients in a blender or food processor and process until smooth. This dressing can also be prepared by hand and shaken up; just mince the garlic first. Use immediately, or refrigerate in a covered container for up to 1 week.

*Makes 1 cup of dressing.*

Nutrition Facts per 2 Tbsp: *Calories 90, Fat 9 gm, Saturated Fat 2 gm, Sodium 125 mg, Carbs 2 gm, Sugars 1 gm*

## Low-Fat Creamy Balsamic Vinaigrette

6 two Tbsp servings

Source: *salad-in-ajar.com*

- ¼ cup balsamic vinegar
- 1½ Tbsp honey
- 1 Tbsp low-sodium soy sauce
- 3 Tbsp nonfat Greek yogurt (may substitute regular plain yogurt)
- 1½ Tbsp Dijon mustard
- ½ Tbsp olive oil

### Directions:

Combine all ingredients and mix well. Store in the refrigerator. *Makes ¾ cup of dressing*

Nutrition Facts per 2 Tbsp: *Calories 45, Fat 1 gm, Saturated Fat 0 gm, Sodium 140 mg, Carbs 7 gm, Sugars 6 gm*

## Light Italian Vinaigrette

Source: *foodnetwork.com*

8 two Tbsp servings

- 2 Tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 1 small clove garlic, minced
- 1 Tbsp red wine vinegar (may substitute cider vinegar)
- ¼ tsp dried basil
- ¼ tsp dried oregano
- 1 Tbsp lemon juice
- ¼ c water
- 2 tsp Dijon mustard
- ¼ tsp salt
- pepper to taste
- 1 medium tomato, halved
- pinch of sugar

### Directions:

Rub the cut sides of the tomato along the large holes of a grater into a bowl, or alternatively squeeze the tomato into the bowl; throw away the skins. Whisk in the water, vinegar, lemon juice, mustard, sugar, olive oil, garlic, oregano, basil, salt, and pepper to taste.

*Makes 1 cup of dressing*

Nutrition Facts per 2 Tbsp: *Calories 40, Fat 4 gm, Saturated Fat 0 gm, Sodium 180 mg, Carbs 1 gm, Sugars 1 gm*

## Basic Recipe for Homemade Salad Dressings

Source: *Cooking Matters for Adults, Share Our Strength*

- 2 parts olive or canola oil
- 1 part acid (vinegar, lemon or lime juice, or mustard)
- Salt and pepper