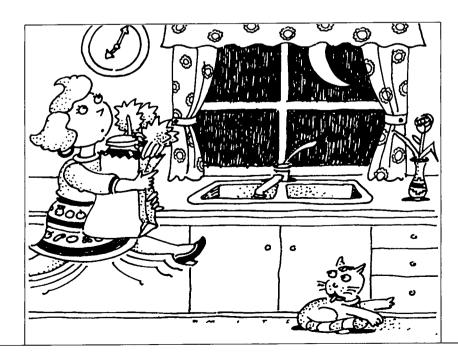
### Session Thirteen

# Meals in a Hurry

#### During this session you will:

- Discuss time-saving strategies you could use to reduce the time spent in food preparation activities
- ◆ Make a shopping list for quick meal ideas
- Identify ways to use increase your use of fish and seafood



#### **Review of Home Activity**

- What planning ahead strategy did you find most helpful during your special occasion (holiday or vacation)?
- What would you do differently next time?
- How did you like your modified home-baked good or low-fat commercial dessert?

#### Successful Meals in Less Time

henever you change your eating habits, you spend extra time in the beginning. However, once you learn the basics, lower-fat meals can be quick and easy to prepare.

In Session 12 you learned how to plan ahead to handle special occasions, such as holidays and vacations. Planning ahead is also an important strategy to use when you need to make meals in a hurry.

#### Identifying What You Currently Do

In order to save time in the kitchen, first you need to have an idea of how much time you currently spend in key food-related activities. Think about the steps you used to prepare your meals yesterday.

- How far ahead of time did you know what you were going to make?
- When did you shop for your food?
- Did you have all the basics you needed in your kitchen?

Now, look at the items listed on Worksheet 13-1 (pg. 13). This worksheet is a quick way for you to see the time-saving strategies you already use. Compare your steps to the checklist. Go through the list and check the column that shows how often you use each strategy (often, sometimes or never).

- What time-saving strategies do you use "often"?
- What strategies do you "never" use?
- Why do you think you use these strategies less frequently?
- What strategies would you like to use more frequently?

### Key Strategies to Make Meals in a Hurry

he two most important ways to reduce the time you spend in the kitchen are:

- **♦** Improve organization
  - Use a shopping list.
  - Keep a well-stocked kitchen.
- Save time by using time-saving food preparation ideas.
  - Use quick recipes and foods.
  - Use quick preparation and cooking methods.

# Make and Use a Shopping List

A shopping list will help you shop more quickly, especially if you organize your list to match the layout of your own grocery store. For example, list similar foods together (e.g., canned beans, meats, dairy, etc.). It will help you find everything.

Consider making a partial shopping list if you like to make decisions at the grocery store. For example, your partial list might contain: vegetables-3 meals, poultry-2 meals, etc.

This idea lets you take advantage of 'in-store' sales or specials, but saves you time on basic food decisions. It also lets you select lower-cost or seasonal foods that will help you save money.

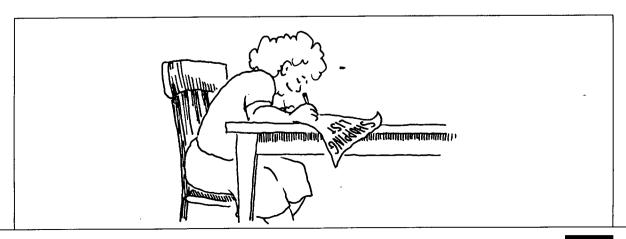
Consider saving time by shopping at less popular times (early in the morning or later at night). The lines are shorter and you will have more time to make decisions. However, try not to shop when you're hungry. Eat something before you go to the

store, even if it is a piece of fruit or a can of juice. This will help you feel less tempted to pick up extra food items.

#### **Stock Your Kitchen**

The easiest way to take charge of your eating patterns is to control the food around you. Shop for quick low-fat food items and fill your kitchen cupboards with a supply of the low-fat basics. Keep a shopping list posted in your kitchen (on the refrigerator, etc.). As you use the last of an important low-fat food, write it down on your list. This will help you remember to restock the low-fat basics you need.

What foods do you like to have available at all times in your kitchen?



## Use Quick Recipes and Foods

Meals can be easy if you have quick recipes and low-fat basic foods on hand. Pasta makes a filling and delicious meal in less than 15 minutes. You can also create simple and quick meals by using a flavorful marinade over boneless chicken breasts, lean meat or seafood. For some more ideas, look at Low-Fat Fish Marinade Ideas and Ouick Fish Meal Ideas in the Resource section of your Participant Manual.

In addition, there are a number of convenience foods that can save you time and money. Some examples are: frozen fruit juice concentrates, canned or dried soups; canned fish or poultry; quick-cooking rice, potatoes or pasta; and canned beans.

- What are 'quick' foods you like to use to save time in meal preparation?
- If you are using higher-fat foods for quick meals, what lower-fat foods could you substitute?

What quick recipes do you currently use?

#### Use Quick Food Preparation Methods

There are many different ways you can save time in preparing food. One short-cut is to prepare the food ahead of time and make extra. For example:

- Chop more vegetables than you need and place them in airtight containers.
- Cook more onions, peppers, or other vegetables and freeze what you don't need for your next meal.

Double your recipes and make enough for two meals at one time.
Refrigerate or freeze the extra amount. This is a great strategy to use when you are cooking for one or two people. It lets you have two meals for the time and effort it takes to prepare one.

 What food preparation shortcuts do you use?

### **Use Quick Cooking Methods**

There are many kitchen appliances that can make meal preparation quicker and easier. Some of these, such as the microwave oven and electric frypan have increased in popularity over the years. Other kitchen appliances, such as the pressure cooker and crockpot, may not be as popular, but many people still use them.

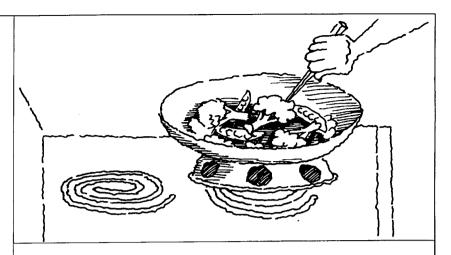
Microwave cooking can be quick and let you cook in flavor and tenderness. A microwave oven can be used to steam vegetables, poach fish, bake potatoes, reheat foods and defrost meat. You can add flavor to microwave meals by using bouillon, broths or wines instead of adding fat. For more microwave cooking tips, look at *Light* and Healthy Microwave Cooking Tips in the Resource section of your Participant Manual.

Try **stir-frying**, it is quick, easy, and efficient. It also preserves the crisp texture of vegetables and produces intense flavors with a minimum amount of fat.

The idea behind stirfrying is simple. Small pieces of vegetables and/ or meat are cooked as quickly as possible over very high heat. It can be done using an electric frypan, a wok, or a regular frying pan.

Most dishes can be prepared using little or no fat. You can also use nonstick spray or a pan with a non-stick coating. For more information on stirfrying, look at *How to Stir-Fry* in the Resource section of your Participant Manual.

Pressure cooking is another time-saving cooking method. It uses steam to cook foods quickly. A pressure cooker can cook vegetables, stews, and roasts in one-third the regular time. It can also change the most inexpensive



tough cuts or stringy chicken into a delicious main meal.

What time-saving appliances or cooking methods do you currently use?

#### Practice Time-Management Skills

Stocking your kitchen with basic ingredients and having a supply of quick meal ideas are important time-management skills. Use Worksheet 13-2 (pg. 14) to identify one or two quick meal ideas you would like to try.

Use Worksheet 13-3 (pgs. 15-16) to begin a shopping list. Check off any foods you need to buy to prepare your quick meals.

Include any low-fat basic foods you need to restock in your kitchen. Use this list to shop for your meals.

- What "quick" foods or recipes do you like to use to save time in meal preparation?
- If you are using higher-fat foods for quick meals, what lower-fat foods could you substitute?

### Using Fish or Seafood for Quick Meals

he latest medical research shows that fish, especially the fattier types such as salmon, mackerel and trout contain a high concentration of a type of fat called omega 3. This fat lowers blood cholesterol levels, actually decreasing the risk of heart disease. Studies suggest that including fish in your meals at least twice a week is desirable for good health. If you haven't eaten much fish or seafood before, now is the time to learn quick and delicious ways to prepare it.

#### How many different kinds of fish have you tried?

Although many people are interested in eating more fish and seafood, they may have some concerns that get in their way.

### Reasons to Eat Fish

- **♦** Low in fat
- **♦** Low in calories
- ◆ Easy to prepare
- High in nutrients
- ◆ Moderate in cost

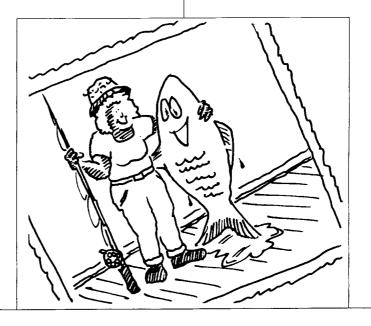
# Concerns About Eating Fish

- **♦** Expensive
- Limited selection and availability
- Strong "fishy" taste and odor
- ◆ Difficult to prepare
- Not accepted by others

Some of the concerns may be due to lack of information, while others may actually be due to negative thoughts or the influence of others.

Many of the skills and strategies you have learned in earlier sessions can be used to develop solutions to increase the number of fish meals you eat.

- What are some of the reasons you don't use fish or seafood in your meals?
- How do you and your family like to have fish prepared?



### Thoughts and Facts About Fish and Seafood

The chart below summarizes some of the positive and negative thoughts people have about using fish as a quick meal and some helpful ideas.

Negative Thought	Positive Thought	Helpful Ideas
Fish is too expensive.	I can use fish or seafood as a great way to make inexpensive meals.	<ul> <li>Watch for store specials and seasonal varieties for less expensive choices.</li> <li>Frozen fish fillets and water-packed tuna usually cost less all year 'round.</li> </ul>
Fish smells up the	I can reduce the "fishy" smell by storing the fish properly and cooking it	<ul> <li>Buy fresh fish. Ask your store when their fish is delivered, then buy your fish on that day.</li> <li>Store fish properly: 0° F or lower in moisture-</li> </ul>
house.	differently.	proof wrap.
		<ul> <li>Thaw fish in the refrigerator for 6-8 hours before cooking.</li> </ul>
	•	<ul> <li>Soak fish in non-fat milk for 30 minutes before cooking or during the thawing process to decrease the strong odor.</li> </ul>
		<ul> <li>Cook by poaching, steaming, baking, or oven frying. Avoid pan frying at high temperature without moisture.</li> </ul>
		Use a kitchen fan to rid the house of the aroma.
		<ul> <li>Wrap and refrigerate leftover fish as soon as possible.</li> </ul>
		Remove fish waste from house immediately.
Fish tastes too	There are lots of different kinds of fish	<ul> <li>Use mild tasting varieties of fish, such as Orange Roughy, Sole or Amber Jack.</li> </ul>
fishy or is too soft.		<ul> <li>Use fish in casseroles and use flavorful sauces or marinades.</li> </ul>
		<ul> <li>Use swordfish, halibut or fresh tuna for a firmer type of fish.</li> </ul>
		<ul> <li>Choose a variety of fish to suit your taste. See handout Getting to Know Fish in the Resource section of your Participant Manual.</li> </ul>

#### Presenting Fish in a Meal

Remember, fish cooks quickly. If fish is over-cooked it tends to dry out and lose its tenderness and flavor. You can tell if the fish or shellfish is done by looking for the following signs:

- The center of the fish should "flake" (fall apart) when a fork is stuck through the thickest part and turned.
- Fish loses its shiny appearance and turns opaque (nontransparent) when done.
- The shells on clams, mussels or oysters open when they are done.

Use the 10-minute rule when cooking fish.
Use a ruler to measure your fish fillet or whole fish at the thickest part.
Allow it to cook 10 minutes for each inch of thickness. Turn the fish halfway through the estimated cooking time unless the fish is less than 1/2-inch thick. This 10

minute rule applies to all cooking methods, except microwaving.

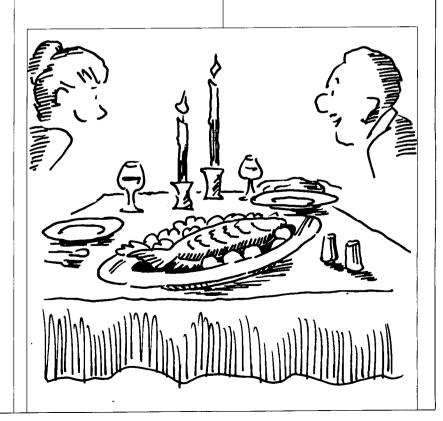
#### Make Fish Meals Appealing

Many people who like fish find that fish meals are not accepted by others. The tips in this session for buying, preparing and cooking fish and seafood will be very helpful, but the key to getting others to taste the meal is eye ap-

peal. Look at the meal below.

Poached white fish
Boiled potatoes
Coleslaw with fat-free
mayonnaise dressing
Non-fat tartar sauce
Milk

This is a traditional lowfat fish meal. How would it look to you?



How could you change the meal to make it more interesting or appealing?

Here are some guidelines to make a fish meal more appealing.

- ◆ Add color.
- Use a variety of shapes and textures.
- ◆ Use a variety of fish.
- Use a variety of cooking methods.

The way you arrange foods and the colors of the foods are important. This is especially true when you introduce new or unfamiliar foods to your family or friends.

Serve two or three vegetables on the side. For example, serve snow peas, grilled tomatoes and/or julienne carrots with the white fish. This adds color and makes the dish more appealing. You

can also add interest by changing shapes or sizes of foods. For example, grill tomatoes and slice carrots crosswise. In addition, you can add texture to a softer fish by serving it with crunchy vegetables such as snow peas and carrots.

New varieties of fish and new ways of cooking can also make fish dinners more appealing. Poached sole may be healthier than hamburger, but your family will get bored if it's the only fish you serve. Try oven-frying or grilling, instead of always baking or steaming your fish.

There are many different ways you can cook fish. The basic cooking methods are: baking, grilling, broiling, microwaving, pan frying, poaching, stirfrying, steaming and stewing.

Find some new varieties of fish and fish dishes to try. You can start by selecting one of the new recipes given at the end of this session. For other ideas look at the handout *Getting to Know Fish* in the Resource section of your Participant Manual.

For additional ideas on how to make low-fat meals more appealing, refer to Session 5 (pages 6-8).

The important things to remember when you are adding more fish to your low-fat eating pattern are:

- Buy the freshest fish you can find.
- ◆ Enjoy a variety of fish.
- Try new ways to prepare fish.
- Make presentation a top priority.

#### **Summary**

ow-fat meals don't have to take a lot of time to prepare. In the beginning, you may spend more time because you need to learn what and how to change. However, once you learn the

basics and use some timesaving ideas, lower fat meals can be quick and easy to prepare.

Seafood is a quick meal choice that often gets overlooked. Today you learned why fish is an important food choice. You also received hints about ways you can overcome negative feelings about using more fish in your meals.

# Here are some questions for further thought:

- What new time-saving food preparation ideas are you going to try?
- What can you do to include more fish in your current meals?

#### **Home Activity**

#### Areas to work on next month:

- ◆ Use two Fat Scans during the next month. Complete one at the beginning of the month and one at the end of the month. Be sure each Fat Scan includes a weekend day.
- ♦ Increase your use of at least one of the time-saving strategies from Worksheet 13-1.
- ◆ Try one of your quick low-fat meal ideas.

Use Worksheet 13-4 (pg. 17) to outline a plan and evaluate how well it worked.

# Time-Saving Meal Preparation Strategies Checklist

Check the column that indicates how often you use the strategy listed.

		Often	Some- times	Never
. •	nization:			
1.	I plan my meals ahead of time.		<del></del>	
2.	I keep an ongoing shopping list.			
3.	My kitchen has a good stock of low-fat basic foods (see Worksheet 13-3 for low-fat basics).			
Time	-Saving Preparation Techniques:			
4.	I use time-saving ingredients in recipes			
	(e.g., pre-cut vegetables, boned, skinless chicken, etc.).			
5.	I use convenience foods (frozen, canned, instant, etc.).			
6.	I have a file of quick and easy recipes.			
7.	I make part of a meal ahead of time.			
8.	I make double and freeze part for a later meal.			
9.	I use leftovers as a base for another meal.			
10.	I use quick cooking methods.			
	(microwave, stir-fry, poach, broil, etc.)			
11.	I use time-saving equipment to make my meals (microwave, electric skillet, pressure cooker, etc.).		<del></del>	

# Quick Meal Idea Worksheet

To save time it's important to have a supply of quick meal ideas and to stock your kitchen with low-fat basics. Use this worksheet to write down 3 to 4 quick meal ideas. Then identify the basic ingredients you already have on-hand and the foods you need to buy. Use Worksheet 13-3 to help you develop a shopping list of the foods you need to buy.

Low-Fat Basics On-Hand	Foods I Need to Buy
and the second s	,

# **Low-Fat Shopping List**

Make a shopping list. Include the items you need for your menus and any low-fat basics you need to restock in your kitchen.

Dairy case 1% or skim milk 1 or 2% cottage cheese Fat-free cottage cheese Low-fat cheeses Low-fat or nonfat yogurt Light or diet margarine Fat-free sour cream Fat-free cream cheese Eggs	Cereals, crackers, rice, noodles, and pasta (cont.) Rice (brown, white, etc.) Pasta (noodles, spaghetti) Bulgur, couscous, kasha Potato mixes (made without fat) Rice mixes (made without fat) Other	Canned fruits vegetables, beans and soups  Canned pineapple Applesauce Other canned fruits  Canned tomatoes Tomato sauce or paste Other canned vegetables  Canned broth (fat-free) Other canned soups
bread		
English muffins Yeast breads Fat-free biscuit mix	Meat case Chicken, turkey Fish Beef, round or sirloin _ Extra lean ground beef	Canned beans
Cereals, crackers, rice, noodles, and pasta Cereal, dry or cooked Saltines, soda crackers Graham crackers Other low-fat crackers	Pork tenderloin  95% fat-free lunch meats or low-fat deli meats	Baking items  Flour Sugar Butter substitute Nonstick spray (PAM) Canned evaporated   milk (skim or 2%) Nonfat dry milk powder Cocoa powder,   unsweetened Baking powder

#### Worksheet 13-3 (continued)

# **Low-Fat Shopping List**

Baking items (cont.)  Baking soda Cornstarch Unflavored gelatin Jello, any flavor Pudding mixes (low-fat) Angel food cake mix Other cake mixes Other	Fresh fruits/vegetables Lemons Other fresh fruit Carrots or celery Onions Potatoes Other fresh vegetables	Sauces and seasonings  Other low-fat sauces  Jam or jelly  Spices  Flavored vinegars Hoisin sauce, plum
Condiments and spreads  Low-fat or non-fat salad dressings  Mustard (Dijon, etc.)  Catsup Barbecue sauce	Other foods Raisins/dried fruit	sauce Salsa or picante sauce Canned green chiles Soy sauce Bouillon cubes/ granules Other
Frozen foods  Frozen fish fillets Egg substitute Frozen juices Frozen fruits Frozen vegetables Other frozen foods		Miscellaneous

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# **Home Activity Worksheet**

#### Areas to work on next month:

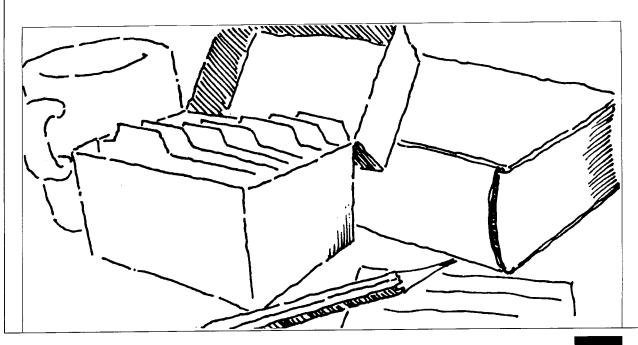
<b>♦</b>	Increase your use of at least one of the time-saving strategies listed on Worksheet
	13-1.

<u>E۷</u>	aluation:
1.	Strategy I used:
2.	How well did my strategy work?
Tr	y a new quick meal idea or recipe.
<u>Ev</u>	aluation:
1.	Quick meal prepared (or purchased):
2.	How well did my quick meal idea and shopping list work?
3.	What would I do differently next time?

#### **Session Thirteen**

# Recipes

- Ginger-Sesame Sole Fillets (Microwave)
- Crispy Oven-Fried Fish
- Croaker Stir-Fry
- Fiesta Fish and Shells
- Fat-Free Tartar Sauce
- Dijon Mayonnaise Marinade



#### Ginger-Sesame Sole Fillets (Microwave)

1/2 tablespoon sesame seeds

2 teaspoons fresh ginger, minced

1 clove garlic, minced

1 tablespoon sesame oil

1 teaspoon soy sauce

1 pound sole fillets (grouper, flounder, tilefish or trout)

1 tablespoon fresh ginger, thinly slivered

pepper to taste

Toast sesame seeds in small dry skillet over low heat. Combine minced ginger and garlic, sesame oil and soy sauce in small bowl; set aside. Season fillets lightly with pepper and arrange in single layer in microwave-proof baking dish. Spread ginger mixture over fillets, then sprinkle with slivered ginger. Cover dish with plastic wrap. Microwave on HIGH for 3-5 minutes, turning dish halfway through cooking time. Remove from microwave and let stand until fish flakes when tested with a fork (about 1 minute). Sprinkle with sesame seeds and serve.

Makes 4 servings

Fat: 5 grams per serving

Recipe from Safeway's Light-Hearted Seafood

### Crispy Oven-Fried Fish

- 1 pound fish fillets (1/2" thick)
- 4 teaspoons margarine, melted
- 4 tablespoons flour
- 1 teaspoon paprika

salt and pepper to taste

Mix the flour, paprika, salt and pepper together. Place fish in a baking dish and top with the flour mixture. Drizzle melted margarine over top and broil for 5 minutes.

Makes 4 servings

Fat: 5 grams per serving

Grain Servings: 1/4 per serving

Recipe from Over 50 and Still Cooking

#### \*Croaker Stir-Fry

#### Marinade:

3 tablespoons lemon juice

2 tablespoons soy sauce

1-1/2 pounds croaker fillets, skinless

2 tablespoons vegetable oil, divided

1 cup carrots, thinly sliced

1 cup broccoli, thinly sliced

1 cup mushrooms, sliced

3/4 cup green onions, cut into 1/2 inch lengths

2 medium tomatoes, cut into eighths (optional to peel tomatoes)

2-1/2 tablespoons cornstarch

1/4 teaspoon pepper

1 cup cold water

reserved marinade

\*Other fish you could use instead of croaker include: perch, Northern pike, pollock, swordfish, pompano, striped bass, and snapper.

Cut fish into 3/4-inch strips and place in bowl. Combine lemon juice and soy sauce and pour over fish. Let marinate while preparing vegetables. After vegetables are ready, heat 1 tablespoon oil in wok or skillet. Add carrots and stir-fry for 2 minutes. Add remaining vegetables and stir-fry for another 2 minutes. Remove vegetables to a warm platter. Add remaining 1 tablespoon of

oil to skillet. Drain fish strips; reserve marinade. Stir-fry fish strips for approximately 2 minutes or until fish is opaque and flakes when tested with a fork. Add vegetables to fish in the skillet. Combine cornstarch, pepper, cold water and reserved marinade; mix well. Add to fish mixture and stir only until broth is clear and thickened. Serve with rice.

Makes 6 servings
Fat: 6 grams per serving
Fruit/Vegetable Servings:
1-1/2 per serving

Recipe from <u>Seafood A</u>
<u>Collection of Heart-</u>
<u>Healthy Recipes</u>

#### Fiesta Fish and Shells

12 ounces fish fillets, unbreaded
1 cup small shell macaroni, uncooked
1 can (16 ounces) tomatoes, cut up
1/2 package (1.25 ounces) taco seasoning mix (2 Tb)
1/2 cup onion, chopped
1 medium green pepper, cut in strips
1/4 cup low-fat cheddar cheese, grated

Cook macaroni according to package directions; drain. In a medium saucepan, stir together undrained tomatoes, onion and taco seasoning mix. Add macaroni and green pepper strips; bring mixture to a boil. Pour tomato-macaroni mixture into a rectangular baking dish (10 x 16 x 2-inch). Place fish over mixture and spoon some of the sauce over the fish. Bake covered at 350°F for 35 minutes or until fish flakes easily when tested with a fork. Uncover; sprinkle cheese over fish and bake 5 minutes more or until cheese melts.

Makes 4 servings

Fat: 3 grams per serving

Fruit/Vegetable Servings: 1-1/2 per serving

Grain Servings: 1 per serving

Recipe from participant in Women's Health Trial (Her grandchildren didn't like fish but loved this recipe)

#### **Fat-Free Tartar Sauce**

1/4 cup fat-free mayonnaise

1/2 cup plain non-fat yogurt

1 drop hot pepper sauce

1 tablespoon sweet or dill pickle relish

1 or 2 teaspoons of dried onion flakes

1 teaspoon Dijon style mustard

1 teaspoon dried parsley flakes

Combine ingredients in a small bowl. Chill for two to three hours to blend flavors.

Makes approximately 1 cup

Fat: 0 grams

Recipe from Laura's Fat Free Kitchen

#### Dijon Mayonnaise Marinade

2 tablespoons fat-free or reduced-calorie mayonnaise 1 tablespoon Dijon-style mustard 1/2 teaspoon dried tarragon leaves 1/2 teaspoon dried thyme leaves dash of crushed red pepper

In a medium bowl, combine all ingredients.

Marinade 1/2 lb. chicken or fish overnight or at least 4 hours. Broil or grill to cook

Makes 4 tablespoons of sauce

Fat: 0 grams per teaspoon if fat-free mayonnaise

1 gram per teaspoon if reduced-calorie mayonnaise

Recipe from Weight Watchers Quick Success Program Cookbook