

Your guide to

Cheese

**Bonus:
5 cheese
recipes**



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What is cheese?

Cheese is made from four basic ingredients: milk, salt, a “good bacteria,” and an enzyme. Cheese makers can use different techniques and ingredients to make the variety of cheeses we eat. If you love cheese, you’re not alone. “Cheese” is the food most logged by Teladoc Health users!



Is cheese healthy?

Cheese is a nutrient-dense food. Each type of cheese is a little different. Most provide protein, calcium, and other important nutrients. Many cheeses, however, can also be high in nutrients that many people need to limit, like saturated fat, sodium, and calories. Cheese can be a part of a healthy eating pattern, as long as you consume it in moderation. Make sure any cheese you choose fits onto your balanced plate. One ounce of cheese is equal to one serving of protein.

Should I buy reduced-fat cheese?

Reduced- or low-fat cheeses are a great way to cut back on saturated fat and calories without sacrificing flavor. There are many different varieties you can try. Non-fat cheeses are even lower in fat and calories. They tend not to have the same mouthfeel or meltability of regular cheese, but may work well in certain recipes.



What's the deal with non-dairy cheese?

Nutrition-wise, non-dairy cheese is pretty different from regular cheese. Take a close look at the ingredients and nutrition facts of a non-dairy cheese before you buy it. Some are made from better-for-you ingredients like nuts, while others are made with less nutritious ingredients like coconut oil and tapioca flour. In general, there's no reason to choose a non-dairy cheese unless you are avoiding dairy.

Five tips for enjoying cheese



Choose reduced-fat if it's your lean protein

While cheese can be a good source of protein, it can also have a lot of calories. If you're using cheese as the "lean protein" on your balanced plate, opt for a reduced-fat cheese. This will give you all of the flavor with less saturated fat and calories.



Consider it a condiment

Another approach to using cheese is to go for full-fat varieties, but use them sparingly. This works well with flavorful varieties like Parmesan, feta, and blue cheese. You can get the flavor you crave, and a little goes a very long way. Think sprinkled on a bowl of soup, salad, or veggie side.



Upgrade your pairings

Maybe your favorite way to eat cheese is with a pile of crackers or atop a doughy deep-dish pizza. Instead, try a partner that lets the cheese shine. Swap low-fiber, high-sodium crackers with a fruit or veggie like pear slices or cherry tomatoes. This will help fill you up and squeeze more produce into your day. If it's cheesy pizza you crave, experiment with a thinner whole grain crust, or even a cauliflower-based one.



Buy portion-controlled snacks

If it's hard to stop at one serving of cheese, try buying cheese that comes in preportioned servings. Mozzarella string cheese, Babybel cheeses, and goat cheese medallions are all delicious options that come in single-serving packages.



Try (naturally) lower-sodium cheeses

Cheese can be loaded with sodium, which can increase your blood pressure. Certain varieties, though, are less salty than others. If you're a cheese fan, be sure to include lower-sodium options like ricotta cheese, no-salt cottage cheese, fresh mozzarella, and swiss cheese in your rotation.

5 healthy and delicious cheese recipes ↪



Ricotta & fresh berry parfait

Soft and spreadable, ricotta is naturally lower in sodium than other cheeses. It's still a good source of protein and calcium. This can be a refreshing breakfast or snack, depending on when you eat it.

Ingredients

½ cup part-skim ricotta
¼ tsp vanilla extract
1 tsp honey
¼ tsp lemon zest
½ cup sliced strawberries
½ cup blueberries

Preparation

Makes: 1 serving

Preparation time: 5 minutes

In a small bowl, whisk together ricotta, vanilla, honey, and lemon zest. In another small bowl, toss together strawberries and blueberries. Spoon half of the ricotta mixture into a tall glass. Follow with half of the berry mixture. Repeat with ricotta and berries.

Nutrition per serving

Calories	Fat	Sat.Fat	Sodium	Cholesterol	Carbs	Fiber	Sugars	Protein	Potassium
175	5 g	3 g	79 mg	19 mg	25 g	3 g	17 g	8 g	250 mg



Tomato-basil english muffin melt

Ingredients

1 light multigrain English muffin
4 basil leaves
1 tomato, sliced ¼-inch thick
1 slice part-skim mozzarella cheese, cut in half
¼ avocado, sliced

Preparation

Makes: 1 serving
Preparation time: 3 minutes
Cook time: 3 minutes

On each muffin half, place 2 basil leaves, 2 tomato slices, and ½ slice of cheese. Heat in toaster oven or broiler until cheese melts. Top with avocado slices.

Nutrition per serving (2 halves)

Calories	Fat	Sat.Fat	Sodium	Cholesterol	Carbs	Fiber	Sugars	Protein	Potassium
256	12 g	4 g	352 mg	18 mg	32 g	12 g	3 g	13 g	396 mg



Fig & feta salad

Ingredients

2 cups mixed greens
2 dried figs, chopped
½ oz crumbled feta cheese
2 tsp olive oil
1 Tbsp balsamic vinegar
⅓ cup canned lentils,
rinsed and drained

Preparation

Makes: 1 serving

Preparation time: 5 minutes

Toss mixed greens, figs, and feta with olive oil and balsamic vinegar. Top with lentils.

Nutrition per serving (2¼ cups)

Calories	Fat	Sat.Fat	Sodium	Cholesterol	Carbs	Fiber	Sugars	Protein	Potassium
314	12 g	3 g	351 mg	5 mg	44 g	11 g	20 g	12 g	513 mg



Cauliflower cheddar soup

Sharp cheddar is a great example of a bold cheese that can provide a punch of flavor in a small serving. Pair it with cauliflower for a classic combo.

Ingredients

2 Tbsp olive oil
1 medium onion, diced
1 medium head cauliflower, trimmed and cut into small pieces
4 cups low-sodium vegetable broth
1½ cups low-fat sharp cheddar
¼ cup chopped chives

Preparation

Makes: 4 servings
Preparation time: 15 minutes
Cook time: 30 minutes

In a large pot over a medium flame, heat olive oil. Add onion and cook until softened. Add cauliflower and cook until browned. Add broth. Bring to a boil. Reduce to a simmer until cauliflower is soft, around 20 minutes. Blend soup to a puree using a hand blender. Add water if soup appears too thick. Stir in cheese until melted. Distribute into bowls and top with chopped chives.

Nutrition per serving (Around 1¼ cups)

Calories	Fat	Sat.Fat	Sodium	Cholesterol	Carbs	Fiber	Sugars	Protein	Potassium
148	9 g	2 g	179 mg	5 mg	11 g	4 g	5 g	8 g	502 mg



Parmesan white beans

This satisfying dish can work as a side, or as the center of a meal paired with a sautéed green like spinach, kale, or broccoli.

Ingredients

2 Tbsp olive oil
2 cloves garlic,
crushed and chopped
½ teaspoon dried rosemary
2 cups white beans, cooked
without salt (or no-salt canned
beans, drained and rinsed)
¼ cup shredded Parmesan

Preparation

Makes: 4 servings
Preparation time: 5 minutes
Cook time: 8 minutes

In a skillet, warm oil over a low heat. Add garlic and sauté until soft. Add rosemary and blend with garlic for a few moments until fragrant. Add beans and stir. Sauté for 1-2 minutes, then turn off heat. Pour into a serving bowl and top with Parmesan. Serve immediately.

Nutrition per serving (½ cup)

Calories	Fat	Sat.Fat	Sodium	Cholesterol	Carbs	Fiber	Sugars	Protein	Potassium
181	9 g	2 g	87 mg	4 mg	19 g	7.2 g	0 g	8 g	329 mg