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HEALTHY NEW MEXICO CUISINE



Chile a vegetable high in vitamins A and C. Chile is the key ingredient of many New Mexican foods. Red and green chilies are used fresh, roasted, frozen, dried and ground into powder. Information on all things chile can be found on the NMSU chile pepper institute web site; <http://www.chilepepperinstitute.org/> Garlic and Cilantro are commonly found in New Mexican food and salsas. Many commercial chile powders from New Mexico are made of a combination of chilies, salt, oregano, garlic, coriander and possibly cumin. Anise is a common spice used for sweet treats.

Tips in making New Mexican food healthier, increase the nutrition and lower the calories.

- Use very lean cuts of meat and ground beef, the cost may be higher but the waste is less.
- Use ground turkey or chicken ground without the skin.
- Trim off the fat on pork and beef cuts and remove skin from chicken and turkey.
- Use Canola oil or other vegetable oils instead of shortening or lard when recipe calls for fat or oil.
- Cut back or eliminate fat and add flavor by including herbs, spices, onion and garlic.

- In recipes that call for eggs, use egg whites or egg substitutes instead.
- Steam or bake tortillas, or dip in chili sauce instead of frying to soften.
- Rather than frying potatoes slice thinly, drizzle a little oil on the pan and bake them or boil potatoes until medium firm then finish cooking in chili sauce.
- Use non-stick cookware or a small amount of cooking spray to reduce the amount of fat needed to cook food.
- Use low fat cheese, ricotta or queso fresco (soft crumbly cheese) instead of regular cheddar or jack cheese.
- To reduce the amount of fat added by cheese, combine lower fat cheeses such as mozzarella to cheddar cheese.
- Extra sharp cheddar will provide cheese flavor and a smaller portion can be used.
- When recipe calls for sour cream, substitute no-fat sour cream or fat free Greek yogurt.
- Substitute 1% or skim milk for non-fat evaporated milk instead of whole milk in recipes
- Corn tortilla or whole wheat tortillas are a healthy substitute for flour tortillas and require less fat to make.



- Use fresh garlic or garlic powder rather than garlic salt to decrease sodium.
- Try cut up vegetables like jicama, celery, bell peppers to dip into salsa and dip instead of corn chips.
- Replace salt with fresh lime or lemon juice in soups, stews and salsa's.