

A healthy twist on a classic eggplant recipe

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(HealthDay)—Eggplant is a high-fiber food that will leave you feeling satisfied and well-nourished. Most people think of the classic purple-colored vegetable, but eggplant comes in many varieties, colors and even

shapes. All are perfect for a lighter take on a classic eggplant dish that your whole family will love.

One secret to making this Italian standard healthier is using a skillet technique to cook the [eggplant](#). This limits the amount of oil it will absorb. The slices won't be greasy, and the dish will have fewer calories.

Lighter Eggplant Parmesan

- 1 1-pound eggplant, sliced into half-inch rounds
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- Non-stick cooking [spray](#)
- 1 15-ounce container part-skim ricotta
- 1 egg
- 1/4 cup fresh basil leaves, thinly sliced
- 2 cups fresh or jarred marinara sauce, divided
- 2 cups grated part-skim mozzarella, divided
- 1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Sprinkle eggplant slices with salt. Set in a colander for 30 minutes to release some of the vegetable's moisture. Rinse and pat the slices dry.

Coat a large, heavy skillet with non-stick cooking spray. Place the pan over medium heat and add a few of the eggplant slices. Cover and reduce heat to low. Cook two to three minutes until the slices brown. Lightly spray the tops of the slices with cooking spray and flip them. Cook another two to three minutes, until browned. Repeat the steps with the rest of the eggplant slices.

Mix the ricotta with the egg and the basil in a medium bowl; set aside. Spread one cup of tomato sauce inside a square baking dish. Add a layer of eggplant slices, and then sprinkle on one cup of mozzarella. Spread on

the ricotta mixture. Add another layer of eggplant and the rest of the sauce. Top with the rest of the mozzarella and sprinkle with the Parmesan.

Bake 30 minutes, until cheese is bubbly and golden. Rest five minutes, then serve.

Yield: 4 servings

More information: Learn more about the nutrients in [eggplant](#) at the website of the non-profit George Mateljan Foundation.

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