

# Four ways to healthier (and allergen-friendly) holiday baking

December 17 2019, by Jen Maser

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Here are some ways you can lighten up (and shake up) your favorite holiday treats:

## Skip the Egg

The primary role of [eggs](#) when it comes to cookies and other baked goods is acting as a binder, thanks to their high protein content. If you are baking for someone who does not include eggs in their diet, you can make a flax "egg" by whisking one tablespoon of ground flaxseed (also sometimes called flaxseed meal) with three tablespoons of water and allowing the mixture to sit until it reaches an egg-like consistency (about five minutes). Generally speaking, this combination amounts to approximately one whole egg—it can be extrapolated for recipes calling for multiple eggs.

## No Nuts? No Problem!

If you're going the nut-free route due to an allergy or [dietary restriction](#), get creative about other add-ins you can consider to enhance texture and taste. Dried fruit, oats, quinoa or other grains, crisped rice cereal, and pumpkin or [sunflower seeds](#) can all add interesting elements to your recipe. If you're feeling adventurous, small amounts of fresh herbs or even potato chip or pretzel fragments can help bring your baked goods to the next level.

## Dairy-Free Baking

If you've taken a stroll down the health food aisle at your local grocer recently, you may have noticed that there is no shortage of plant-based milk substitutes on the market. Depending on your preferences, almond, soy, cashew, coconut or oat milk can all generally be used as a one-to-one substitute for cow's milk in a recipe. Go for unsweetened, unflavored varieties to minimize the impact on your recipe's taste. If you're looking for a dairy-free butter substitute, unrefined coconut oil and full-fat, plant-based margarines can be substituted in a one-to-one

ratio as well.

## **Add Some Hidden Nutrition**

You may be familiar with the hack of swapping out oil for applesauce in sweetbread and cake recipes to help lessen the calorie load while maintaining yummy moistness. But avocado in your cupcake frosting? Black beans in your brownies? Protein powder in your cookies? There are lots of sneaky ways to pack a nutritional punch into your treats. Search engines are your friend when it comes to the specifics.

Provided by Syracuse University

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