When you hear “salad,” you may think of a boring bowl of lettuce and tomatoes. But salad can be so much more! With a few simple additions, it can be a delicious, healthy and inexpensive meal.

**GREENS**

Choose dark, leafy greens like romaine, spinach or arugula. Add color with radicchio, red leaf lettuce or red cabbage. If you have fresh herbs, like basil, thyme, parsley or mint, they add not only extra nutrients to your salad bowl.

**VEGGIES**

Raw vegetables like carrots, cucumbers, broccoli and cauliflower add great crunch and color. Roasted veggies like beets, potatoes and squash add herby flavor and a little bit of sweetness to any main meal salad.

**PROTEINS**

Add more satisfaction to your salad with skinless poultry like grilled chicken breast or fish like salmon and tuna which provide omega-3 fatty acids. Mix in a chopped hard-boiled egg or a small amount of cheese. Toss in some chickpeas, kidney, navy or black beans. Unsalted nuts, like peanuts, almonds and walnuts, give your salad extra crunch and a dose of healthy fat. All these protein foods will keep you feeling fuller longer.

**FRUITS**

Slice up fresh fruit that’s in season or on sale! Choose a rainbow of colors! Panning sweet fruits like pear, apple or pomegranate with savory vinaigrettes will bring complexity and flavor to any salad. Dried fruits without added sugars are another super salad ingredient.

**GRAINS**

Warm or cold cooked whole grains add bulk and satisfaction. Try whole wheat couscous, barley, quinoa or wild rice. To save money, look for whole grains in the bulk aisle of your grocery store. White wheat pasta is another inexpensive way to bulk up any basic salad.

**DRESSINGS**

With oil, vinegar and spices in your pantry, you are minutes away from a simple, healthy homemade vinaigrette dressing. Jazz it up with tasty ingredients like chopped fresh herbs, a squeeze of citrus juice and diced veggies with lots of flavor, like onions, garlic and scallions. Experiment by adding small amounts of these add-ins to this vinaigrette recipe, taste-testing as you go.

**VINAIGRETTE RECIPE:**

Whisk together 1/4 cup olive oil, 1/4 cup balsamic vinegar and 1/4 teaspoon ground mustard. Add a dash or two of salt, pepper and toss into salad (serves four).

**QUICK TIP:**

Choose lower-fat, lower-sodium cheeses such as mozzarella or Swiss.

**QUICK TIP:**

Check labels and choose the options with the lowest amounts of salt and added sugars. Drain, rinse and pat dry to help your greens stay crisp.

**QUICK TIP:**

Chopped toasted nuts or seeds are a great addition to any vinaigrette. Check the labels and choose the options with the lowest amounts of fat and added sugars. Chop if you can or ask the store to chop your greens for you.

**ADD COLOR**

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