

Try this healthy makeover for a favorite fast food

8 March 2019, by Len Canter, Healthday Reporter



(HealthDay)—Take-out pizza is the ultimate fast food—gooey cheese, salty sauce, fatty pepperoni, all baked on top of what's basically white bread. But there's no need to feel guilty about enjoying a hot slice once you've mastered a nutritious and delicious pizza makeover.

Add just a few ingredients to your weekly shopping list. It can take *less* time than a trip to the drive-thru, but now your [pizza](#) will be healthy, too.

Here's what you'll need: Choose a high quality 100-percent whole wheat crust to get fiber with every slice. Look for low-sodium jarred marinara sauce or simply buy a large can of diced tomatoes. Stock up on plenty of low-cal, high-fiber veggies like mushrooms, red bell pepper and baby spinach. If you like your pizza spicy, replace fatty pepperoni with red pepper flakes for heat.

Low-fat mozzarella might seem a better way to go, but you're only saving a few calories per ounce and, for most people, dairy fat isn't the taboo it

used to be. Just use less of it to limit the saturated fat. Even in small amounts, full-fat mozzarella tastes richer and helps you feel full. Try to find a freshly made ball of mozzarella. The pre-shredded bagged varieties have unwanted ingredients used to keep the shreds from clumping. (If you need to cut calories for [weight loss](#), you can substitute ricotta cheese.)

Healthy Homemade Pizza

- Whole-wheat pizza dough, frozen or refrigerated
- 1/2 cup low-sodium marinara sauce or 12 ounces canned diced tomatoes, well drained
- 1 red bell pepper, sliced into rounds
- 1 cup fresh mushrooms, thinly sliced
- 1 cup baby spinach leaves, shredded
- 1 teaspoon red pepper flakes (optional)
- 6 ounces whole-milk mozzarella, shredded

Preheat oven to 400 degrees.

Let the dough come to [room temperature](#), then roll it out on a rimmed baking pan lined with parchment paper. Evenly spread on the sauce and then top with the vegetables, pepper flakes, if desired, and cheese.

Bake eight to 10 minutes (or according to the dough package directions), until bubbly.

Yield: 8 slices or 4 servings

More information: The U.S. National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute has a pita pizza recipe [and links to other healthy family recipes](#).

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