



# mix itup

The Culinary Medicine Cookbook for  
Mixing Things up in the Kitchen

## Preparing Protein

Many recipes call for protein sources such as meats, fish, beans, and legumes, which you can easily buy pre-cooked. However, preparing protein yourself can save money and give you more control over the flavor and ingredients used. By preparing a batch of protein in advance, you will have a convenient option for various dishes throughout the week. Some basic cooking techniques that will help you get started are presented below. You can substitute a similar amount of other poultry for the chicken and other fatty fish for the salmon.

### SHREDDED CHICKEN

#### Ingredients

- 1 pound boneless skinless chicken breasts or thighs (2–3 pieces)
- 1 cup water
- ½ teaspoon salt (kosher salt, table salt, salt substitute, etc.)
- Optional: ½ teaspoon black pepper, ½ teaspoon garlic powder, ½ teaspoon onion powder, ½ teaspoon paprika, 1 teaspoon dried herbs (oregano, thyme, rosemary, etc.)

#### Directions

1. To cook the chicken, start by placing the chicken pieces in a single layer in a medium saucepan or large skillet.
2. Sprinkle the optional seasonings over the chicken.
3. Pour the water over the chicken pieces, ensuring they are submerged about halfway in liquid.
4. Bring the liquid to a boil over medium-high heat. Once boiling, reduce the heat to low, cover the pan, and let it simmer for 15–20 minutes or until the chicken is fully cooked (internal temperature should reach 165°F [74°C]).
5. Remove the chicken from the pan, set it on a cutting board, and let it rest for 5 minutes. Using 2 forks, shred the chicken into thin pieces.
6. To make the shredded chicken extra juicy, add some leftover cooking liquid and toss pieces to coat.
7. You can use the shredded chicken immediately in salads, tacos, sandwiches, soups, or a casserole. Store in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 4 days or freeze for up to 3 months.

### BOILED EGGS

#### Ingredients

- 4–6 large eggs
- Water (enough to adequately cover the eggs)

#### Directions

1. Place the eggs in a single layer at the bottom of a saucepan. Ensure they are not stacked so that they cook evenly.
2. Fill the saucepan with cold water, covering the eggs by about 1 inch.
3. Place the saucepan on the stove over medium-high heat and bring the water to a rolling boil.
4. Once the water is boiling, remove the pan from the heat and cover with a lid. Let the eggs sit in the hot water, following the times below for your preferred doneness:
  - a. Soft-boiled: 4–6 minutes
  - b. Medium-boiled: 7–9 minutes
  - c. Hard-boiled: 10–12 minutes
5. Once the eggs are cooked to the desired doneness, pour them into a colander and run them under cold water until completely cool. Or, set in a bowl of ice water until the eggs are cool to the touch.
6. Peel the egg by lightly tapping it on a hard surface to crack the shell. Gently roll the egg under your palm to loosen the shell. To peel the shell, start peeling from the larger end, where there is usually an air pocket, and work around the egg. Rinse the peeled egg under cold water to remove small shell pieces, if needed. Store any uneaten eggs in the refrigerator for up to 7 days.





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### CRUMBLIED TOFU

#### Ingredients

- 1 14-ounce block firm or extra-firm tofu, drained
- ½ teaspoon salt (kosher, table, substitute, etc.)
- Seasoning (1 teaspoon garlic powder, 1 teaspoon onion powder, 1 teaspoon smoked paprika, ½ teaspoon ground black pepper, ½ teaspoon ground cumin, etc.) (optional)
- 1 tablespoon oil (extra virgin olive, avocado, peanut, etc.)

#### Directions

1. Drain the tofu. To remove excess moisture, wrap the block in a clean cloth or paper towel and place something heavy on top (like a skillet or a plate with a weight) to press it for 10–15 minutes.
2. After pressing, crumble the tofu into small pieces with your hands or a fork and pour pieces into a bowl. Aim for a texture similar to ground meat.
3. Mix the crumbled tofu with optional seasonings and toss until the tofu is evenly coated.
4. Heat a large skillet over medium heat. Once hot, add the oil and the seasoned tofu crumbles and spread them out in an even layer. Cook for 8–10 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the tofu becomes crispy and golden brown.
5. Use the crispy crumbled tofu in tacos, salads, grain bowls, or stir-fries. Store leftovers in the refrigerator for up to 5 days.

### BEANS

#### Ingredients

- 1 cup dried beans (black, pinto, navy, kidney, etc.)
- Water (enough to soak and then cover the beans)
- Optional: 1 bay leaf, 1–2 garlic cloves, 1 sprig fresh oregano, etc.
- ½ teaspoon salt (kosher, table, substitute, etc.)

#### Directions

1. Place the dried beans in a colander and rinse them under cold water to remove any dirt or debris.
2. The preferred method to prepare the beans—and requiring less active time—is to soak them by placing them in a large bowl and covering them with water by about 2 inches. Let them soak for 6–8 hours or overnight. Or, use the "quick soak" method by boiling the beans for 2 minutes, removing them from heat, and letting them sit for 1 hour before cooking. Drain and rinse. After soaking, drain and rinse the beans under cold water.
3. Cook the beans by transferring them to a large pot and adding enough water to cover them by about 1–2 inches. Add optional aromatics like a bay leaf or garlic for extra flavor. Bring the water to a boil. Then, reduce the heat to low and let the beans simmer uncovered.
4. Depending on the type of beans, cook the beans for 45 minutes to 2 hours. Stir occasionally and check for tenderness. If needed, add more water during cooking to keep the beans completely submerged.
5. Once the beans are tender, add salt to taste. Avoid adding salt earlier since doing so can toughen the beans during cooking. Use or store in the refrigerator for up to 5 days.

### BAKED SALMON

#### Ingredients

- 1 pound salmon fillet with skin on, cut into 3 equal pieces
- 1 tablespoon oil (extra virgin olive oil, avocado, coconut, etc.)
- ½ teaspoon salt
- Optional: 1 tablespoon lemon or lime juice (optional)
- Optional: 1–2 teaspoon(s) fresh or dried herbs, minced or dried garlic, ground black pepper, etc. (optional).

#### Directions

1. Preheat your oven to 400°F (200°C).
2. Place the salmon fillets on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper or lightly greased foil, skin-side down. Pat the salmon dry with paper towels.
3. Drizzle the salmon with olive oil and preferred seasoning.
4. Bake the salmon in the preheated oven for 12–15 minutes, depending on the thickness of the fillets. When done, the salmon should be opaque and flake easily with a fork. Use or store in the refrigerator for up to 3–4 days.