

Chinese Chicken Salad with Sesame Dressing



Serves 3-4

Ingredients:

Salad

- 2 T. lemon juice
- 1 tsp. soy sauce
- ½ tsp. sriracha hot sauce
- 2 boneless, skinless chicken breasts
- 1 head napa cabbage, thinly sliced
- 1 cup chopped sugar snap peas
- 1 large carrot, sliced thin diagonally
- 3 clementine oranges (AKA “cuties”), peeled and segmented
- ¼ cup cashew pieces
- 1 avocado, sliced

Dressing

- 2 T. toasted sesame oil
- 3 T. rice vinegar
- 1 tsp. soy sauce
- ¼ tsp. garlic powder
- ½ tsp. sugar
- 1 tsp. toasted sesame seeds

Directions:

1. In a small bowl, stir together lemon juice, soy sauce, and sriracha. Add chicken and flip to coat evenly. Allow to marinate for at least 5 minutes or up to 8 hours.
2. Spray a medium skillet with cooking spray, and heat over medium high heat. Add seasoned chicken breast, and cook about 7 minutes per side, until cooked through. Remove to cutting board.

3. In a small container with tight fitting lid, add sesame oil, vinegar, soy sauce, garlic powder, sugar, and sesame seeds. Cover tightly and shake well to combine. Set aside.
4. In a large salad bowl, add cabbage, snap peas, carrots, oranges, and cashews.
5. Shred chicken with two forks, and add to salad bowl. Pour dressing over the salad, and toss well to combine. Arrange avocado slices over the top of the salad and sprinkle lightly with sesame seeds before serving.

You may already know that choosing cooking oils over butter or margarine is better for your health. But with all the varieties of cooking oils, how do you choose the right one for you? Cooking oils such as canola, olive, peanut and safflower oil contain healthy fats: monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats. These healthy fats can lower LDL levels and, in turn, reduce the risk of heart disease and stroke. Choosing an oil with a healthy omega-6 and omega-3 fatty acids ratio is also important. While both are essential to the body, it is recommended to get between a 2-to-1 ratio of omega-6 to omega-3s to a 4-to-1 ratio. Most Americans get a 10-to-1 ratio of omega-6 to omega-3s. Omega-3s are abundant in fish, whereas omega-6 fatty acids are found in vegetable oils like corn, safflower, and sunflower oil. Canola oil has a 2-to-1 ratio of omega-6 to omega-3, which makes it a healthy choice. When choosing a cooking oil, the smoke point is also of great importance. The smoke point is the temperature the oil can be heated to before it starts to smoke. Heating an oil longer than that point can cause it to taste bad and also can create free radicals that can potentially damage healthy cells in the body.

Here are the highlights for some cooking oils that may be beneficial when you are choosing a cooking oil the next time you go to the store.

- Avocado oil—high in monounsaturated fat. Neutral flavor. Good for frying. High smoke point.
- Safflower oil—extracted from safflower seeds. Flavorless. High in polyunsaturated fat. Good for deep frying. High smoke point.
- Grapeseed oil—neutral flavor. High in polyunsaturated fat. Low in saturated fat. High smoke point.
- Corn oil—odorless refined oil. Mild flavor. High in polyunsaturated fat.
- Peanut oil—subtle flavor. Good for deep frying and stir frying. High in monounsaturated fat.
- Soybean oil—heavy. Pronounced flavor and aroma. High in polyunsaturated fat.
- Sunflower oil—light. Extracted from sunflower seeds. Subtle flavor. Low in saturated fat. High in polyunsaturated fat.
- Canola oil—neutral flavor. Extracted from rapeseeds. Low in saturated fat. Good omega-3 and omega-6 balance.
- Olive oil—extra-virgin varieties have lower smoke points and are better for salad dressing. High in monounsaturated fat. Low in saturated fat. Pure olive oil has a higher smoke point and is better for cooking.
- Sesame oil—extracted from sesame seeds. Two types: light, mild and nutty flavor and dark with strong aroma, flavor. Low to moderate smoke point depending on the type.
- Coconut oil—heavy. Extracted from dried coconut meat. High in saturated fat.
- Walnut oil—light. Unrefined. Delicate nutty flavor and aroma. Highly perishable; refrigerate. Best used as additive for salads, pastas, desserts, rather than for cooking.