

your

# COMMISSARY



... It's Worth the Trip!



## THINKING OUTSIDE THE BOX

### Double A Brownies (Applesauce and Avocado)

The current Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGAs) focuses on building a healthy eating pattern, rich in high nutrient quality foods, and low in empty calories. This doesn't mean that everything you eat needs to be completely absent of ingredients that are typically known for empty calories, such as baked goods, candy and other sweets, chips, sodas, etc. Instead, your focus should be on eating them mindfully and an overall eating pattern that promote optimal performance and health.

Empty calories are the calories that one consumes that provide little or no nutritional value. Saturated fat and added sugar are the biggest culprits of empty calories in the diet. This is why DGAs recommend limits on saturated fat and added sugar to less than 10 percent of total calories. This roughly equates to no more than 50 grams of added sugar per day for most people.

Added sugar is different from the naturally occurring sugars in milk products and fruit or even the term carbohydrates. The term 'added sugars' means that the manufacturer added some form of sugar to the product. The new Nutrition Facts Panel on packages now lists "added sugar." To help you aim to limit to no more than 50 grams total per day. Foods that contain complex carbohydrates such as vegetables, legumes, whole grains, plain milk products, and fruits are nutrient-rich foods, and should be key parts of healthy eating patterns. Since the carbohydrates are naturally occurring in these foods, they do not need to be figured into the 50 gram added sugar limit.

Saturated fat is mostly found in animal products such as butter, cheese, meats, and eggs. It's best to choose nonfat versions of items and the leanest meats as much as possible. Always check the Nutrition Facts Panel on all packaged goods to assess the amount of saturated fat. Ideally, it's best to use mono-unsaturated fat instead of saturated fat. For example, using an avocado spread instead of mayonnaise for a sandwich condiment. Just remember fat is pretty high in calories, so care should be taken to keep overall calories in check while aiming for a caloric balance that supports a healthy weight.

Using the recommendations above, there can be room in most eating patterns for a sweet treat here and there. The key to developing healthy eating patterns is to watch the portion size and to work to reduce the amount of added sugars and saturated fat as much as possible. The easiest way to include the occasional indulgence in a healthy eating pattern is to make them at home so you can control the portion sizes and swap out ingredients to lower the saturated fat and added sugar. For example, use two egg whites instead of one whole egg, use an equal amount of avocado in place of butter, use apple sauce or mashed banana in place of the sugar or half the oil or butter.

This recipe uses a boxed brownie mix to show you a quick and easy way to try some of the suggested substitutions that can help you avoid saturated fats and added sugars. Hopefully, this will inspire you to experiment with other recipes and aim to increase the nutrition quality of baked sweets!



#### Ingredients: 20 servings

- 1 18-18.5 oz. box fudge brownie mix
- 1/3 cup no sugar added applesauce
- 1 egg
- 1/3 cup mashed avocado
- 2 egg whites

#### Directions: Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.

1. In a large mixing bowl, mash a ripe avocado with 1/4 cup water until completely smooth. Add the egg whites, egg, and applesauce. Mix well.
2. Pour the brownie mix into another mixing bowl and make a well. Pour the mixture from step 1 into the well and stir until well blended.
3. Pour the brownie batter into a lightly greased (with olive oil or cooking spray) 13x9x2 pan.
4. Place the pan in the oven and bake for 24-26 minutes.

#### Notes

Incorporate sweet indulgences into a healthy eating pattern by keeping overall daily consumption of calories in balance, saturated fat below 10 percent total calories and added sugars below 50 grams per day. Indulgences should be consumed on occasion and portions sizes should be small. Add 1/2 cup of walnuts to add a little more Omega-3 fatty acids to this treat.

DISCLAIMER:

THIS RECIPE DOES NOT CONSTITUTE AN ENDORSEMENT BY DOD OF ANY INDIVIDUAL VENDOR. ANY PRODUCT OF SIMILAR SPECIFICATION MAY BE USED TO MAKE THIS HEALTHY CHOICE MEAL.

FOR ADDITIONAL MEAL SOLUTIONS, PLEASE [CLICK HERE](https://www.commissaries.com/healthy-living/healthy-eats) [COMMISSARIES.COM/HEALTHY-LIVING/HEALTHY-EATS](https://www.commissaries.com/healthy-living/healthy-eats)