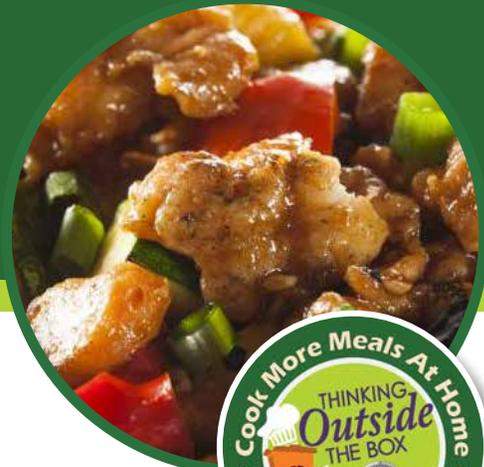


THINKING OUTSIDE THE BOX

KUNG PAO CHICKEN



Week night meals can easily fall into a rut: lean meat, vegetables, and rice or potatoes on the side. A standard meal that does not require much planning, is quick and easy, but can get dull if made five days in a row. An alternative is to take those same ingredients and make a stir fry instead. Stir fries allow for more variety in vegetables, anything goes!

Stir fry is a term that refers to cooking a few ingredients in a small amount of hot oil while stirring or tossing in a wok. It is a simple cooking technique that can be used by the most inexperienced and turn out a tasty meal. Some meals that might initially sound intimidating, like perhaps Kung Pao Chicken, are stir fries. Learning to cook can be a lot less intimidating when you break it down.

While aiming to consume mostly lean meats is the goal, some dishes call for different cuts of meat. In that case, be aware of the unhealthy fats consume so you can make adjustments to the rest of your diet. Both chicken breasts and chicken thighs are good sources of protein. Chicken thighs contain around 3 times the amount of fat than chicken breasts, resulting in 9 grams of fat, 3 grams of saturated fat.

The Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommends limiting calories from saturated fats to less than 10% of the total calories you eat and drink each day. Most saturated fats come from animal products. To reduce your intake, look toward vegetables, whole grains, low-fat and fat-free dairy products, most monounsaturated rich oils such as avocado or olive, and lean cuts of meats, fish and poultry. Keeping your saturated fat intake in check has been shown in multiple studies to be a heart healthy habit.

Food that is considered low in saturated fat contain about 1 gram or less of saturated fat per serving and it means that saturated fat is 15 percent or less of the total calories. Consider opting for low saturated fat foods this week. Switch the cut of meat or go meatless, low fat or fat free dairy products are good options. Use our Dietitian Approved Thumb to help you.

MACROS / SERVING SIZE:

Protein 26 g | Fat 16 g | Carbs 12 g

% CALORIES OF MACROS / SERVING SIZE:

Calories 293 | Protein 35 % | Fat 49 % | Carbs 16 %

NUTRIENT / SERVING SIZE:

Fiber 2 g | Sodium 448 mg | Sat. Fat 3 g

INGREDIENTS (Serves 4)

- 1 lb. boneless skinless chicken thighs, chopped
- 2 tbsp. sesame oil
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 tsp. ginger, minced or ½ tsp. ginger powder
- ¼ tsp. dried red pepper flakes (adjust to taste)
- ¾ cup celery, chopped
- 1 red pepper, chopped
- 1 medium-sized zucchini, chopped
- 2 tbsp. low sodium soy sauce
- 1 tsp. hot sauce
- 1 tbsp. honey (adjust to taste)
- ¼ cup unsalted, roasted peanuts
- ¼ cup or 2 green onions, chopped

DIRECTIONS:

1. Heat the oil in a large sauce pan over medium heat. Add the chicken, garlic, ginger, and red pepper flakes and cook for about 5 minutes.
2. Add the chopped vegetables and peanuts and cook until the vegetables are crisp-tender (about 5 more minutes).
3. While the vegetables are cooking, mix together the honey, hot sauce and soy sauce. Add the sauce to the pan and cook for an additional minute mixing gently to incorporate the sauce.
4. Remove from the heat and serve over a bed of chopped green leafy lettuce or some brown rice. Top with the green onions.

DIETITIAN TIP

The key to keeping your overall saturated fat in check, is to balance your food choices throughout the day. By choosing mostly lean proteins, low fat dairy products, heart healthy oil, and filling your plate with fruits and vegetables, there will still be room for your favorite indulgence. Just keep your calories and portions in check and get your fruits and veggies and fiber first.



A list of recipes on [commissaries.com/healthy living](https://www.commissaries.com/healthy-living) also has nutrition education.