



# MARY'S MEMO

*Recipes • Menu Ideas • Shopping • Cooking Tips*

Memo No. 2233 September 26, 2011

Chief and Rays Supermarkets

## HOW HEALTHY IS IMITATION CRAB MEAT?

Imitation crabmeat is typically made from Alaska pollock, a mild-flavored white fish, which is minced, rinsed and strained. The resulting paste, called surimi, is blended with sugar, salt, binders like egg whites and starch flavorings and other ingredients. After cooking, it's cut into various shapes resembling crab leg meat and other shellfish like lobster and shrimp. Orange dye is also added to make to look more like shellfish. Some imitation seafood contains small amounts of real crab and other shellfish. Imitation crabmeat provides good quality protein though not as much as other seafood because of its fillers. It's comparable in calories to real crabmeat (80 to 90 calories per three ounces, on average) but has much less cholesterol. Because it's very low in fat, imitation crabmeat is a poor source of omega-3s. Some companies add these heart-healthy fats but the levels are still below that of real crab meat. That said imitation crabmeat costs much less than the real thing. And because it's precooked, it's ready-to-eat and less perishable than fresh fish. Moreover, it's considered a good environmental choice by the Monterey Bay Aquarium's Seafood Watch program. You can use faux crab in any recipe that calls for real crab, such as seafood lasagna, soups, quiches, noodle and rice dishes, stir-fries and sushi rolls. Mix with a little mayo and chopped celery and bell pepper to make a "crabmeat" salad.

**SOURCE:** *University of California, Berkeley Wellness Letter*, September 2011.

## SPECIFIC FOODS LINKED WITH THE MOST LONG-TERM WEIGHT GAIN

For many adults, weight gain occurs gradually over many years, which makes it difficult to pinpoint food choices that are responsible for excess pounds. By examining dietary choices made by more than 120,000 study participants, the majority of whom were women, researchers have zeroed in on the foods that are associated with the most weight gain over a period of 20 years. The top five foods linked with the most weight gain are potato chips, other potatoes, sugar-sweetened beverages, unprocessed meats and processed meats. Increasing consumption of vegetables, whole grains, fruits, nuts and yogurt was associated with the least amount of weight gain. Study findings were published in the June 23, 2011 issue of the *New England Journal of Medicine*.

**SOURCE:** *Weill Cornell Medical College Women's Nutrition Connection*, September 2011.

## OLIVE OIL MAY PREVENT STROKE

Including olive oil in the diet may help prevent strokes in people over the age of 65, according to a study published in

the June 15, 2011 issue of *Neurology*. Researchers in France examined dietary patterns and medical records of 7,625 people and categorized them into "no use," "moderate use" and "intensive use groups," depending on how often olive oil was used in cooking, as a dressing or with bread. After a five-year follow-up period, those who regularly used olive oil for both cooking and as a dressing had a 41% lower risk of stroke that those who never included it in their diets.

**SOURCE:** *Duke Medicine HealthNews*, September 2011.

## MY OBSESSION WITH MEATLOAF RECIPES

You might think with a collection of cookbooks as large as mine that I would have stumbled onto a meatloaf recipe as good as Mother made but no such luck! What I do know is that Mother's meatloaf mixture was moist enough that it could not be formed with one's hands. I do remember her using enough wax paper to shape the loaf and then slide it off into a baking pan. I get the moist meatloaf part; it's the flavor that's challenged me all my cooking life.

Just before I started working on the recipe part of this memo, I had a meatloaf sandwich made with Barbecue Meatloaf, a recipe I made this summer in the slow cooker and froze in individual servings to eat as needed. No, it doesn't taste like Mother's meatloaf but it's moist and definitely has a barbecue flavor.

### SLOW COOKED BARBECUE MEATLOAF

- 2 lbs. ground chuck (or close to it)
- 1 can condensed tomato soup, divided
- 1 egg, slightly beaten
- 1 cup crushed Ritz® crackers
- 2 Tbsp. honey
- 1 Tbsp. plus 2 tsp. Worcestershire sauce, divided
- 2 Tbsp. dried minced onions
- 1/2 tsp. kosher salt
- 1/4 tsp. pepper
- 1/2 cup water
- 2 tsp. prepared salad mustard
- 2 Tbsp. packed brown sugar

Combine ground chuck with half the tomato soup, egg, cracker crumbs, honey, 2 tsp. Worcestershire sauce, onions, salt and pepper. Mix well and form into a ball. Place in 5 or 6-quart slow cooker sprayed with non-fat cooking spray. Combine remaining soup, 1 Tbsp. Worcestershire sauce, the water, mustard and brown sugar. Whisk together and pour over the meat loaf. Cover and cook on low for 8 to 10 hours. Recipe makes 6 servings.

**SOURCE:** Adapted from [www.recipe4living.com](http://www.recipe4living.com) recipe.