



# Nourish

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## March is National Nutrition Month

### Add Some Flavor to Your Menus with Herbs and Spices

What is the main reason people choose the foods they do? Are you thinking about nutrition, food safety or cost? Yes, they play a role but taste or flavor is the top reason.

Flavorful food can be healthful, budget friendly and, of course, safe to consume. During March, which is National Nutrition Month, add extra flavor with herbs and spices when you cook. You can leave out the salt and use spices and herbs to cut the sodium.

### Herb or Spice: What's the Difference?

Herbs are leaves from low-growing shrubs. Herbs include parsley, chives, thyme, basil, dill, rosemary, sage and others. Spices are from plant material other than leaves. Spices may be from bark (cinnamon), buds (cloves), roots (ginger, onion, garlic) and seeds (mustard seeds).

### Send Your Taste Buds on an Adventure

Most cookbooks have lots of ways to use spices. If you are not sure where to use the herbs or spices in your cupboard, try these ideas to add flavor to veggies:

- Basil: tomatoes
- Curry powder: cabbage, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cauliflower
- Dill: green beans, peas

Visit [www.ag.ndsu.edu/fieldtofork](http://www.ag.ndsu.edu/fieldtofork) and check out the recipes and tips in the herbs section. Some herbs add beauty and culinary ingredients to your kitchen.



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### How to Substitute

Use this general rule when substituting dried herbs for fresh:

$\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon dried herbs =  $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon ground herbs = 2 to 3 teaspoons freshly minced herbs

### Enhance Natural Sweetness

You can enhance naturally sweet foods (such as fruit) by adding cinnamon, cloves, ginger or nutmeg. Try a sprinkle of one or more of these spices on baked apples or a mixed fruit salad.

### Keep the Flavor

Store spices in a tightly covered container in a cool, dry place. Keep them away from heat sources such as a dishwasher or stove.

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EXTENSION

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# Question

I noticed that my microwave oven and refrigerator are in need of a good spring cleaning. Do you have any tips?

- Microwave ovens often get overlooked in day-to-day cleaning, but you can get your microwave clean with just a few steps. Check your manual for directions. Many cleaning experts suggest this process: Heat a microwave-safe bowl filled with water on high for 3 to 4 minutes. Remove bowl and use hot water and dish soap to wipe down the microwave interior. Dry with a fresh paper towel.
- Clean the inside surfaces of your refrigerator with hot water and soap (such as mild dish detergent). Rinse with a damp cloth and wipe dry with a clean cloth. Do not use chlorine bleach, strong cleaners or abrasives (such as Comet) near the refrigerator gaskets and seals. Visit [www.fightbac.org/spring-clean-your-way-to-a-safer-kitchen/](http://www.fightbac.org/spring-clean-your-way-to-a-safer-kitchen/) for more tips to clean other areas of your kitchen, such as your sink drains and countertops.



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Here's a delicious side dish you can prepare in an oven or air fryer. The time to cook depends on the thickness of the fries. These are much lower in calories and fat than typical fries.



## Parmesan Rosemary Carrot Fries

3 to 4 large carrots, peeled  
3 tablespoons olive oil  
¼ cup grated Parmesan cheese  
1 tablespoon garlic powder  
Leaves from 4 sprigs of fresh rosemary, chopped  
¼ teaspoon salt  
¼ teaspoon pepper

Preheat oven to 400 F. Peel and cut the carrots lengthwise to resemble the shape of french fries. Mix olive oil, Parmesan, garlic powder, rosemary, salt and pepper in medium bowl. Add carrots and toss to coat. Place carrots on baking sheet lined with parchment paper and bake for 15 to 20 minutes or until carrots become slightly crispy. Turn carrots over halfway through baking.

Makes four servings. Each serving has 110 calories, 7 grams (g) fat, 3 g protein, 10 g carbohydrate, 2 g fiber and 290 milligrams sodium.