



## Bleach Solution for Disinfection

### Quick Facts:

- ◆ Homemade Bleach solutions should be remade after 24 hours.
- ◆ Bleach expires 1 year from production.
- ◆ Bleach needs to be stored in a cool, dark place.
- ◆ Bleach deteriorates more quickly if exposed to heat or sunlight.

### Bleach Solutions:

- ◆ Combine 1 1/4 teaspoons of bleach per cup of cool tap water.
- ◆ Dispose of any unused solution after 24 hours.



### Ingredients

- 1 cup baking soda
- 2-5 tablespoons water
- 10 drops eucalyptus essential oil
- 10 drops peppermint essential oil
- 10 drops lavender essential oil
- Food coloring (optional)
- Silicone mold

### Directions

1. Add baking soda to a glass bowl.
2. Slowly mix water with baking soda one tablespoon at a time until you reach a thick paste consistency. You may not need 5 full tablespoons. I ended up using about 4 to get the consistency I was looking for.
3. Add in your essential oil and soap colorant if using and mix well. The amount of each is up to your personal preference. I used 10 drops of each scent, but if you want a stronger aroma, you could easily do 15-20 drops. You can also add a drop to the finished shower melt right before you get in the shower if they don't turn out to be strong enough.
4. Press your mixture firmly into your mold. It may get watery at the top once it settles. Just take a paper towel and blot the water away. Put it in the freezer to dry.
5. After about an hour, your shower melts are ready to use. Store them in a dry, airtight container for 1-2 months.

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# Heart Healthy Foods

Heart disease accounts for nearly one-third of all deaths worldwide. Diet plays a major role in heart health and can impact your risk of heart disease. In fact, certain foods can influence blood pressure, triglycerides, cholesterol levels and inflammation, all of which are risk factors for heart disease. What you put on your plate can influence just about every aspect of heart health, from blood pressure and inflammation to cholesterol levels and triglycerides.

**\*\*Listed below are 15 foods that you should include in your diet to maximize your heart health.\*\***

## 1. Leafy Green Vegetables

Leafy green vegetables are high in vitamin K and nitrates, which can help reduce blood pressure and improve arterial function. Studies show that a higher intake of leafy greens is associated with a lower risk of heart disease.

## 2. Whole Grains

Studies show that eating whole grains is associated with lower cholesterol and systolic blood pressure, as well as a lower risk of heart disease.

## 3. Berries

Berries are rich in antioxidants. Studies show that eating berries can reduce multiple risk factors for heart disease.

## 4. Avocados

Avocados are high in monounsaturated fats and potassium. They may help lower your cholesterol, blood pressure and risk of metabolic syndrome.

## 5. Fatty Fish and Fish Oil

Fatty fish and fish oil are both high in omega-3 fatty acids and may help reduce heart disease risk factors, including blood pressure, triglycerides, and cholesterol.

## 6. Walnuts

Studies suggest that walnuts can help reduce cholesterol and blood pressure and may be associated with a lower risk of heart disease.

## 7. Beans

Beans are high in resistant starch and have been shown to reduce levels of cholesterol and triglycerides, lower blood pressure and decrease inflammation.



# Heart Healthy Foods

## 8. Dark Chocolate

Dark chocolate is high in antioxidants like flavonoids. It has been associated with a lower risk of developing calcified plaque in the arteries and coronary heart disease.

## 9. Tomatoes

Tomatoes are rich in lycopene and have been associated with a lower risk of heart disease and stroke, as well as an increase in “good” HDL cholesterol.

## 10. Almonds

Almonds are high in fiber and monounsaturated fats and have been linked to reductions in cholesterol and belly fat.

## 11. Seeds

Human and animal studies have found that eating seeds may improve several heart disease risk factors, including inflammation, blood pressure, cholesterol, and triglycerides.

## 12. Garlic

Garlic and its components have been shown to help reduce blood pressure and cholesterol. They may also help inhibit blood clot formation.

## 13. Olive Oil

Olive oil is high in antioxidants and monounsaturated fats. It has been associated with lower blood pressure and heart disease.

## 14. Edamame

Edamame contains soy isoflavones, which have been shown to help decrease cholesterol levels. Edamame also contains fiber and antioxidants, which can also benefit heart health.

## 15. Green Tea

Green tea is high in polyphenols and catechins. It has been associated with lower cholesterol, triglycerides, and blood pressure.

Visit the American Heart Association website, [www.heart.org](http://www.heart.org), for recipes, tips, exercises, and other information regarding a heart healthy diet.





# Electric Pressure Cooker

The electric pressure cooker is a popular kitchen tool, but it takes time to learn how to use it properly. Electric pressure cookers, **like the popular Instant Pot**, cook food three to ten times faster than a conventional oven.

- ◆ This quicker cooking time saves time and energy and can lower your fuel bills.
- ◆ Electric pressure cookers can save you money by allowing you to buy less-tender cuts of meat.
- ◆ Faster cooking times allow foods to retain more moisture and nutrients.

On the other hand, it can be difficult to cook a variety of different foods at the same time with an electric pressure cooker.

- ◆ Different foods cook at different rates, so you have to pay close attention to timing to have all of your dishes ready at the same time.
- ◆ It can be easy to overcook foods because you can't monitor their doneness during the cooking process.
- ◆ It is difficult to add or adjust seasonings during the cooking process.

## Cooking Tips

For meat and vegetable cooking times, cleaning, and common electric pressure cooking terms, visit [extension.msstate.edu](http://extension.msstate.edu) and view publication 3564.

- ◇ Electric pressure cookers cook by surface area, so large pieces of meat cook slower than smaller pieces.
- ◇ Do not overfill the inner pot.
- ◇ The sealing rings may take on the flavors of the food being prepared, so use separate rings for strong and mild flavored foods.
- ◇ Cook large batches of foods like eggs and chicken to use in recipes throughout the week.
- ◇ Cook and shred meat to use in tacos or casseroles, or as you would use rotisserie chicken or pulled pork. For quicker cooking foods, use a steam insert, wrap in foil, or put in an oven-safe container.
- ◇ Use caution with dairy and cheese (unless making yogurt).
- ◇ Thicken after cooking because adding a thickener, such as flour or cornstarch, during the pressure cooking process will interfere with the steam, and the degree of thickening will be hard to control.
- ◇ Be sure to use the correct cut of meat. Pressure cookers allow you to use cheaper cuts that are less tender, but give you a tender piece that is comparable to more expensive cuts.
- ◇ Opening the lid before the cook time is complete can cause uneven cooking and could cause the cooker not to reach the desired temperature.

# Electric Pressure Cooker Lasagna

## Ingredients:

- 1 small yellow onion
- 3 garlic cloves
- 10-12 dried lasagna noodles
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 1/2 pounds lean ground beef
- 2 tablespoons tomato paste
- 1 tablespoon dried Italian seasoning
- 1 teaspoon red pepper flakes
- 2 tablespoons kosher salt
- 1/2 teaspoon black pepper
- 1 jar marinara sauce (24-25 ounces)
- 3 cups of water
- 1 cup ricotta cheese
- 1/2 grated parmesan cheese
- 1/2 shredded mozzarella cheese

## Directions:

1. Select the sauté function on a 6 quart or larger electric pressure cooker. Meanwhile, dice 1 small yellow onion, mince 3 garlic cloves, and break lasagna noodles into thirds and set aside.
2. Add 2 tablespoons of olive oil to the electric pressure cooker and heat until shimmering. Add 1 1/2 pounds lean ground beef and cook until the bottom is browned, about 4 minutes. Break up beef into pieces with a wooden spoon and continue to cook until browned all over and cooked through, about 6 minutes more.
3. Add the onion and garlic and cook until softened, 4 to 5 minutes. During the last minute of cooking, add 2 tablespoons tomato paste, 1 tablespoon dried Italian seasoning, 1 teaspoon red pepper flakes, 1 teaspoon salt, 1/2 teaspoon pepper. Cook until the tomato paste darkens in color, about 1 minute.
4. Add 1 jar marinara sauce and 2 cups of water. Stir and scrape any browned bits from the bottom of the pot. Layer the broken noodles in different directions on top of the sauce. Press down on the noodle until they are just barely submerged in the meat mixture. Pour in the remaining 1 cup of water and stir gently again to incorporate, making sure the noodles are covered with a little bit of liquid.
5. Lock on lid and make sure the valve is set to seal. Cook under high pressure for 5 minutes. It will take about 12 minutes to come up to pressure. Meanwhile, stir 1 cup ricotta cheese with 1/2 cup grated parmesan cheese together in a medium bowl.
6. When the cook time is up, let the pressure naturally release for 10 minutes. Quick release any remaining pressure.
7. Dollop the ricotta mixture over the lasagna and sprinkle with mozzarella cheese. Place the lid back on and let sit for 10 minutes for cheese to melt.

# King Cake Bites

## Ingredients:

### Bites

- 1 (8 oz) package cream cheese, softened
- 1 cup powdered sugar
- 1 tsp lemon juice
- 1 /4 cup cinnamon
- 2 (8 oz) cans refrigerated crescent dinner rolls

### Glaze

- 1 cup powdered sugar
- 2 tablespoons milk
- Yellow, green, purple sugar



## Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 350F.
2. Beat cream cheese, 1 cup powdered sugar and lemon juice with mixer until well blended.
3. Separate dough into 8 rectangles; seal seams. Sprinkle each rectangle down the center with cinnamon.
4. Spread cream cheese mixture down the middle of each rectangle. Fold each rectangle lengthwise to enclose filling; cut each into 3 squares. Place seam-side down on baking sheet.
5. Bake 13 to 15 minutes to until golden brown. Cool slightly.
6. Mix together remaining 1 cup powdered sugar and milk. Spread on top of King Cake Bites and sprinkle with colored sugars.

# Air Fryer Jalapeno Poppers

## Ingredients:

- 4 jalapenos
- 3 ounces cream cheese, softened
- 1/2 cup shredded cheddar cheese
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/4 teaspoon onion powder
- 1 pack of bacon



## Instructions:

1. Slice jalapenos in half length-wise. Carefully scrape out the seeds and membranes with a spoon and discard.
2. Add cream cheese, cheddar cheese, garlic powder, and onion powder to a small bowl and combine.
3. Spoon the cheese mixture evenly between the jalapenos.
4. Wrap each jalapeno with a piece of bacon.
5. Turn air fryer to 390F and let heat for 2 minutes.
6. Carefully add the jalapenos to the basket of the air fryer in a single layer with space between each.
7. Air fry for 10 minutes or until bacon is as crisp as you'd like.

# Sodium and Spices

## Limit Foods High in Sodium

Regularly eating high-sodium foods will result in more than 2,000 mg per day, even if you do not add table salt. Use this list of common high– sodium foods and products to see if you are eating too much sodium. If so, ask a registered dietitian or your local extension agent for information about reading labels and replacing high-sodium foods.

- Table salt (1 teaspoon provides about 2,300 mg of sodium)
- Seasonings that contain salt (like celery salt, garlic salt, onion salt)
- Sauerkraut or other vegetables prepared in brine (pickles)
- Regular canned soups
- Breads and rolls with salted toppings
- Potato chips, corn chips, pretzels, saltines, salty crackers, and salted popcorn
- Salty or smoked meats
- Salty or smoked fish
- Processed cheese or cheese spreads
- Salted nuts, olives, bacon, bacon fat
- Peanut butter
- Bouillon, ketchup, chili sauces, meat extracts, meat sauces, meat tenderizers, monosodium glutamate, prepared mustard, relishes
- Antacids containing sodium
- Most fast foods and prepackages foods
- Canned or frozen entrees

## Replace Sodium with Spices and Herbs

No-salt seasonings add a unique flavor to your dishes without adding a bunch of salt. Use more herbs and spices, and look for seasonings that end in “powder”, like garlic, chili, and onion powders. Spice up your foods with the substitutions found on page 2 of publication 3555 on the MSU Extension website.

[extension.msstate.edu](http://extension.msstate.edu)

**Come join the Northeast Family and Consumer Science Agents  
for our next virtual program!!!**



# Food Safety at Home

Food Safety at Home equips families with food safety knowledge and resources that will help improve food safety preparedness, behaviors, and practices at home.

**When:** Every 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday's of the month at 10:00 a.m.

**Start Month:** March

**Where:** The local Extension Office's Facebook Page

Lee County Contact: Mary Kathryn Moore: [mary.moore@msstate.edu](mailto:mary.moore@msstate.edu)