

# Recipe Conversion Guide

To determine if a recipe is appropriate while on the **OPTAVIA** Program, use one of the recipe calculators listed below to determine if it adheres to the lean and green meal nutritional parameters.

## Recipe Calculators

- <https://www.verywell.com/recipe-nutrition-analyzer-4129594>
- <http://www.myfitnesspal.com/recipe/calculator>

## Lean and Green Meal Nutritional Parameters

- 250-400 calories
- ≤20 grams total carbohydrate (ideally <15 grams)
- 10-20 grams total fat
- ≥25 grams protein

## Making Recipes Compliant

Adjusting recipes to be compliant on program is not as intimidating as it may appear! In addition to following the lean and green meal parameters above, keep these helpful hints in mind:

### 1. Use the following tools:

- [Lean Options list](#), [Green Options list](#)
- [Condiment/Healthy Fat list](#)
- [Vegetable Conversion Chart](#), [Meatless Options list](#)

### 2. Figure out total lean, green, condiment, and fat servings per ingredient in the recipe.

Divide these totals by the number of servings.

**NOTE:** If a recipe lists a specific number of servings, keep in mind you do not have to keep it as such! Depending on the recipe, you may decrease or increase the serving size to make it fit on program. Remember, you can include up to 3 condiments per lean and green meal.

### 3. Look at condiments/fats first and see what can be adjusted/omitted.

- Reduce or omit salt/pepper, spice blends/powders, onion, and sauces if possible. This is a quick way to reduce condiments, and thus carbohydrates and calories, without compromising the recipe.
- Remove anything that says “pinch of”, “optional”, or “season to taste” in recipe.
- Use cooking spray or broth to sauté foods in place of oil if you need to reduce the amount of fat.
- Crush our Multigrain or Rosemary Sea Salt crackers to use as a breadcrumb substitute, or processing them into a fine powder to use as a flour substitute. One packet of crackers yields about 2 Tbsp breadcrumbs and counts as one optional snack on the Optimal Weight 5 & 1 Plan®.
- You can replace mayo or sour cream with plain, low-fat Greek yogurt in a 1:1 ratio. For every 1/2 cup of low-fat Greek yogurt used, count it as 1/3 leaner. You can also count 2 tbsp of low-fat Greek yogurt as 1 condiment serving.
- Walden Farms® products count as condiments (serving size ranges from 2 Tbsp to 1/4 cup)—and make great substitutes for dressings, pasta sauces, and syrups, etc.

### 4. Lean suggestions:

- Increase/decrease portion in recipe as needed to make complete protein per serving. The amount of raw meat, poultry, and seafood needed to yield a certain amount of cooked will vary. As a general guideline, add 2 to 3 oz. to the desired cooked weight to account for shrinkage (example: 8 oz. raw chicken breast to yield 6 oz. cooked).
- Make type of protein lower fat (bacon vs. turkey bacon) as needed to fit on program.



## 5. Green suggestions:

- a. Replace onions with leeks or green onions (1/2 cup of each = 1 green serving).
- b. Replace recipes that contain rice, pasta, quinoa, and other grains with cauliflower rice, zucchini noodles, or spaghetti squash. A 1/2 cup cauliflower rice, 1/2 cup zucchini noodles, and 1/2 cup spaghetti squash = 1 green serving (each).
- c. For recipes calling for tomato sauce, use lower carbohydrate versions. Look for tomato sauces with < 50 calories, < 3 g fat, < 200 mg sodium, and ≤ 5 g of carbs per serving (ex. 1/4 cup of Rao's brand sauce = 1 green serving).
  - i. Or, make your own lean and green compliant tomato sauce using our [Italian Tomato Sauce recipe](#).
- d. For pizza/flatbread recipes, cauliflower pizza crusts make excellent substitutes:
  - i. Outer Aisle® Pizza Crust (1 whole) = 1/3 lean and 1 green
  - ii. Cali'Flour Foods® Pizza Crust (1 whole) = 1 lean and 3 greens
  - iii. Make your own veggie crust by trying our [Cheesy Zucchini Breadsticks recipe](#).

### Example: Chicken & Broccoli Casserole

#### Original recipe (no serving size provided):

- 1 Tbsp olive oil
- 1 Tbsp butter
- 2 large boneless, skinless chicken breasts
- 1/2 cup chopped onion
- 1, 14 oz. can chicken broth
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1/2 tsp black pepper
- 1/8 tsp red pepper flakes
- 1 Tbsp dried parsley
- 2 Tbsp cornstarch
- 2 Tbsp water
- 4 oz. light cream cheese, cut into cubes
- 1 cup shredded cheddar cheese
- 3 cups chopped broccoli, lightly steamed

#### Revised/Compliant Recipe:

##### Servings: 3

Per serving: 1 leaner protein, 3 greens, 2 condiments, and 1 healthy fat

- 1 tsp olive oil (1 healthy fat)
- 18 oz. (raw) boneless, skinless chicken breasts (18 oz. raw to give 12 oz. leaner protein) (2 leaner protein)
- 1/2 cup chopped leeks (1 green)
- 1, 14 oz. can chicken broth (3 condiments)
- 1/4 tsp salt (1 condiment)
- 1/2 tsp black pepper (1 condiment)
- 2 tsp almond flour (1 condiment)
- 2 Tbsp water
- 2 oz. light cream cheese, cut into cubes (2 healthy fats)
- 1 cup shredded reduced-fat cheddar cheese (1 lean protein)
- 4 cups chopped broccoli, lightly steamed (8 greens)

## 6. Other resources:

- a. Check out the **OPTAVIA** Pinterest page (<https://www.pinterest.com/OPTAVIA>) for some delicious recipes that are already broken down for you!
- b. Talk with your **OPTAVIA** Coach for assistance on recipe modifications and/or access to any of the documents listed above.



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