

Food Storage and Cookware- Tips for a Healthier Kitchen

1. Use stainless steel, glass, ceramic, or cast iron pots and pans instead of Teflon®, other nonstick cookware, or anodized aluminum without a coating.
2. Make popcorn in an air popper or use a pot on the stovetop. Microwaveable popcorn bags (as well as pizza boxes and other food boxes) may be lined with non-stick chemicals such as PFASs.
3. Replace Teflon® (and similar) coated ironing board covers with safer materials, such as cotton or towels.
4. Avoid using safflower and avocado oils when cooking with Teflon®-type coatings. Their higher smoke points (above 500 degrees F) may cause you to exceed the safe temperatures recommended for cooking with Teflon®-type coatings.
5. Have gas stoves and heating systems regularly checked for safe use.
6. Clean ovens with a natural cleaner instead of the self-cleaning option. **Self-cleaning mode should not be used.**
 - See the Toolkit for a link to wellnessmama.com, which provides natural cleaning recipes.
7. Avoid spray-on oven cleaners—they may contain lye or ammonia and can be very caustic. Be skeptical of oven cleaners labeled “eco-friendly.” Be sure to read the ingredients label and consult ewg.org/cleaners for more information.
8. When using stainless steel, cast iron, ceramic, or glass, use healthy oils or fats to keep the food from sticking; typically you only need just a little more than usual. Olive oil is a good choice at lower temperatures; avocado oil is better for higher heat. Seasoning cast iron before cooking also improves its nonstick capabilities.
9. Use wood or bamboo cutting boards instead of plastic.
10. Avoid burning or charring food, especially when grilling. Cancer-linked chemicals (HCAs and PAHs) may be formed when meat is cooked using high-temperature methods or grilling directly over an open flame. Exposure to these chemicals have been shown to cause cancer in animals; however, whether such exposure causes cancer in humans has not been well researched.