

HEALTHY SALAD RECIPES

By Julie Cottrell, MS, RD, LD

Below you will find a variety of salad recipes. Some will have the ingredients and directions listed out (later in this document); others will showcase a mouth-watering picture and a link to a website where the recipe may be found. These recipes (plus others you may find elsewhere) can be added to your personalized stash of healthy recipes. See “Recipe Book Tool Kit” for more information on how to create your own notebook, plus tips for using recipes from other websites.

For HEALTHY SALAD DRESSING options, use these resources found on the Direct Access website:

- “Sauces, Condiments and Dressings” for recipes to make yourself
- “Healthy Fat Options” to see pictures of brands that use olive or avocado oil
- *Remember that the overall goal is to avoid unhealthy “seed oils” as well as too many sugars, preservatives and other potentially harmful ingredients.*

Everyone’s tastes are different when it comes to salads! Some folks don’t even need a recipe; they only like lettuce with a couple of veggies tossed in, perhaps topped with cheese and/or dressing. Others enjoy exploring salads with a “theme” for which you need to have specific ingredients. Either way, it’s a win! Whether you are looking for a **side item** or a **larger salad to serve as your meal**, the recipes below should provide some inspiration! Compare what you see here to what you might find at restaurants. Unnecessary ingredients - like croutons, fried onions and sugary nuts - are not on this menu. You may find a little bit of fresh fruit or perhaps a handful of dried fruit - or maybe a dash of honey in the dressing - but the overall contribution of sugar is minimized. Check out these recipes to find ones that you’d like to try!

Getting more greens into our bodies is the goal; SALADS are a tasty way to accomplish this!

RECIPE INSPIRATION FROM A VARIETY OF WEBSITES

Here are some options taken from www.PrimaveraKitchen.com.

- Use this link: [15 Super Easy Low-Carb Salads For Lunch](#) to view all of these and more.

			
Pesto Chicken Salad	Asparagus Greek Chopped Salad	Shrimp Avocado Tomato Salad	Cauliflower “Potato” Salad
Recipe says 4 servings but more filling as 2-3 servings; substitute this pesto if desired.	This would be a tasty side salad; the asparagus adds a surprise element..	Shrimp is an easy protein to add; this also has boiled eggs. Makes 2-3 meal-sized portions.	Save your carbs for something else and make this mock version of potato salad.

Continued from www.PrimaveraKitchen.com:

			
<u>Easy Mediterranean Chopped Salad</u>	<u>Simple Kale Salad with Avocado Dressing</u>	<u>Avocado Cucumber Tomato Salad</u>	<u>Chopped Red Cabbage Kale Salad</u>
Try this as an easy side to go with roasted salmon or another protein.	A different way to use kale; avocado dressing recipe included.	An easy lunch; should travel well. Add avocado just before eating.	This would make a tasty side to go with roasted pork tenderloin.

Here are some options taken from www.TasteofHome.com.

→ Use this link: [20 Low-Carb Keto Salad Recipes We Love](#) to view all of these and more.

			
<u>Flat Iron Steak Salad</u>	<u>BLT Chicken Salad</u>	<u>Strawberry Kale Salad</u>	<u>Wedge Salad with Blue Cheese Dressing</u>
Try with some leftover steak or quality deli roast beef to keep it simple.	Use the lowest carb barbeque sauce you can or make your own.	Top with grilled chicken or salmon for a satisfying dinner option.	This would be a simple salad to go alongside any protein, including steak.
			
<u>Tarragon Tuna Salad</u>	<u>Shrimp Scampi Spinach Salad</u>	<u>Sausage Cobb Lettuce Wraps</u>	<u>Grilled Steak and Mushroom Salad</u>
Fresh herbs complement the tuna; serve over mixed greens.	Very simple preparation; add cheese and chopped almonds if desired.	Easy prep, loaded with flavor.	Add crumbled blue cheese, feta or goat cheese!!

Here are some options taken from www.WholesomeYum.com.

→ Use this link: [LOW CARB KETO SALAD RECIPES](#) to view all of these and more.

			
Big Mac Salad	Cajun Shrimp Caesar Salad	Italian Marinated Artichoke Salad	Chicken Caprese Salad
The flavor you love minus the bread and unhealthy ingredients!	Swap the shrimp for chicken or other protein if desired.	Serve as a side or top with chicken or steak.	Great for dinner, take leftovers for lunch!

			
Buffalo Chicken Salad	Green Goddess Salad	Burger in a Bowl	Chef Salad
Make your own buffalo sauce without seed oil.	Primal Kitchen makes a Green Goddess Dressing you can substitute.	Another tasty dinner meal; take leftovers for lunch!	A classic salad option for lunch or for dinner.

			
Kale and Brussels Sprouts Salad with Bacon and Cranberries	Creamy Cucumber Salad	Salmon Kale Superfood Salad with Creamy Lemon Vinaigrette	Strawberry Spinach Salad with Poppyseed Dressing
Try this one for the holidays or any festive occasion!	Use as a side with any grilled protein.	Add extra smoked salmon; makes 3-4 lunch-sized portions.	A tasty summer salad; serve with grilled protein.

SALAD FOR LUNCH

Salad can be a good lunch option for many reasons. They are **easy to prepare ahead of time** for one thing. They are very **transportable** too. Salads help you get some **low-carb veggies** into your day all in one fell swoop. And as long as you include some quality **protein**, it can make a balanced and satisfying meal. It's also important to include some **healthy fats**; but make sure the salad dressing isn't full of inflammatory fats (soybean oil and others named in "**Healthy and Unhealthy Fats**" handout).

Check the "**Meal Prep Lunches**" PDFs to find options other than what is shown here. Examples below will fit nicely into a "**portable lunch**" strategy, whereas some of the ones found above or in other sections of this PDF may be more suitable for a dinner meal or a situation where you can prepare and eat it immediately. **Feel free to swap out the protein source** (chicken vs tuna vs salmon, etc) - but avoid having tuna more than a couple times per week; the **mercury level** is too high for more than that. Several of these options below could also be placed in a wrap. Suit yourself!

PORTABLE SALADS: VERY LOW CARB

				
<u>Easy and Healthy Tuna Salad</u>	<u>Easy Keto Chicken Salad</u>	<u>Keto Whole 30 Chicken Salad Bowl</u>	<u>Creamy Chicken Salad w/Cilantro Ranch Dressing</u>	<u>Mediterranean Chicken Salad</u>

PORTABLE SALADS: MODERATE CARB

				
<u>White Bean Salad with Bacon</u>	<u>Cold Lentil Salad with Cucumbers and Olives</u>	<u>The Best Easy Taco Salad</u>	<u>Tomato Chickpea Salad</u>	<u>Chickpea Waldorf Salad</u>
Increase cheese amount for more protein; honey is optional in the dressing.	To increase the protein, add ¼ to ½ cup cottage cheese. Julie's favorite: <u>Good Culture</u> .	Calories are a bit high but fine for a 2-meal-per-day strategy; or modify ingredients.	Make in bulk; add rotisserie chicken and/or feta to increase protein amount.	Add chicken to increase protein amount; recipe includes a creamy yogurt dressing.

FAST FOOD AND RESTAURANT SALADS: Are they ok?

You can find a variety of salad options at any restaurant. Pick one that suits your taste buds. There are some strategies you can use to **optimize your salad**, if you are willing to do so. Restaurants are used to accommodating people with food allergies and other health issues, so speak up!

Ways to optimize your salad:

- ❖ Get **grilled** chicken rather than **breaded and fried** options; same goes for other protein items.
- ❖ Ask if it comes with **fried onions, wontons** or any other little **fried tidbits**; these add up quickly!
- ❖ It's ok to have a little **fresh fruit** on your salad - but avoid salads that are **MOSTLY** fruit (too many carbs, not enough protein)- and **leave off any dried fruit** options (concentrated sugar source).
- ❖ Watch out for **candied/flavored nuts/seeds**. These are sugar bombs!
- ❖ Commercial salad dressings are made from **soybean and other unfavorable oils**. It doesn't matter if it's a "vinaigrette" or something creamier, soybean oil is the main one used in the food industry. Ask what the dressing is made from. **Bring your own if you can, or learn to use the LEAST amount possible**. Or take your salad home or to work where you have a better salad dressing stashed.

Here are a few of my other favorite salad options!

BEST COBB SALAD

By Delish Editors @ www.delish.com. Link to original recipe [here](#).

Modified by Julie Cottrell, MS, RD, LD.

Serves: 1

Per Serving (salad only): 486 calories, 45 g protein, 12 g carb (6 g fiber), 29 g fat

Per Serving (w/dressing): 730 calories, 45 g protein, 12 g carb (6 g fiber), 56 g fat



Salad Ingredients:

- 2 cups Romaine lettuce, washed and chopped
- 1 1/2 slices bacon, cooked and crumbled
- 1/4 medium avocado, sliced
- 5 cherry tomatoes, halved
- 1 boiled egg, quartered
- 3 oz cooked chicken, diced
- 1 ounce blue cheese, crumbled
- Sea salt and ground pepper, to taste

Dressing Ingredients:

- 2 Tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 1 Tbsp red wine vinegar
- 1 tsp dijon mustard

Directions:

1. For the chicken, you may use rotisserie chicken or cook your own. To bake in the oven, pat chicken dry, season with olive oil, salt and pepper, and bake in a 450 degree oven ~20 minutes.
2. Boil eggs (~10 minutes) and cook bacon.
3. Wash and dry the lettuce, then place on a dinner plate.
4. To a small bowl, add dressing ingredients and beat with a fork, then pour over the lettuce and toss.
5. Assemble salad from left to right as follows: egg quarters, tomato halves, diced chicken, avocado slices and crumbled bacon. Distribute blue cheese over the chicken. Add extra salt and pepper as desired.

Note: Ingredients are listed for a single serving so you may assemble it neatly on your plate, knowing how much to cook/prep just for one. Adjust ingredient amounts as needed to make additional salads or if you prefer more or less of any ingredient. I like this salad without even adding a dressing to it!

BEST GREEK SALAD WITH CHICKEN

By Jaclyn @ www.cookingclassy.com; link to original recipe is [here](#).

Modified by Julie Cottrell, MS, RD. LD

Serves: 4

Per Serving: Salad w/chicken + dressing: 548 calories, 38 g protein, 15 g carb (7 g fiber), 39 g fat

With feta included: 623 calories, 42 g protein, 16 g carb (7 g fiber), 45 g fat



<p><u>Ingredients:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 4 Roma tomatoes (214 grams), diced ● 1 1/2 cups cucumber, sliced into half moons ● 1 small red onion (70 grams), thinly sliced or diced ● 1 medium green pepper, seeds and ribs removed, chopped ● 1 cup sliced black olives, drained ● 200 grams (or 1 medium) avocado, not too soft, diced ● 16 oz chicken breast ● 1/2 Tbsp olive oil ● Greek seasoning blend ● Sea salt and pepper ● 4 oz feta (optional) 	<p><u>Directions:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Preheat the oven to 400 degrees. Rinse chicken and pat dry, then place on a baking sheet. Spray generously with olive oil then add Greek seasoning blend, plus salt and pepper. Place in the oven and bake for 20 minutes or longer, until chicken is cooked through. Remove from the oven and allow to cool. Once cool, slice into bite sized pieces. 2. Prep veggies and add to a large bowl. Alternatively, portion out into (4) servings as you go, to take for lunches. 3. If eating immediately, add chicken to the bowl of veggies and toss to distribute. Alternatively, portion out and add to the “to go” salads. 4. Make dressing according to the recipe below. 5. Add dressing to a large bowl of veggies and chicken if eating immediately. Toss to combine. If saving for future meals, portion dressing into 4 servings and save separately. Add to salad later, just before eating. 6. For dairy-free, do not add feta. If consuming dairy, feta may be added to the entire salad or to individual servings.
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BEST GREEK DRESSING

By Jaclyn @ www.cookingclassy.com; link to original recipe is [here](#).

Serves: 4

Per Serving: 186 calories, 0.2 g protein, 1.8 g carbs, 20 g fat



<p><u>Ingredients:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 6 Tbsp olive oil ● Juice from 1 1/2 lemons ● 1 Tbsp red wine vinegar ● 1 clove garlic, minced ● 1 1/2 Tbsp minced parsley ● 1 tsp oregano ● Salt to taste 	<p><u>Directions:</u></p> <p>Add all ingredients to a small mixing bowl and mix to combine. Alternatively, add all ingredients to a small blender and blend.</p> <p>Note: If desired, you may substitute Herbs De Provence seasoning blend for the parsley and oregano. Use about 1 tsp and adjust to taste.</p>
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BLUE STRAW SALAD WITH CHICKEN OR SALMON*Salad served at Common Table Restaurant @ Calvary Chapel Chattanooga*

Serves: 1

Per Serving (without dressing): 469 calories, 44 g protein, 9 g carb (4 g fiber), 29 g fat

<p>Ingredients:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 2 cups spinach or mixed green lettuces ● 1/3 cup cucumber, sliced into thin half-moons ● 3 medium-sized fresh strawberries ● 8 pecan halves, chopped ● 1 ounce blue cheese, crumbled ● 4 ounces grilled or baked chicken (salmon may be substituted) ● 1/2 Tbsp olive oil (for cooking the chicken) ● White balsamic dressing (see recipe below) 	<p>Directions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prepare chicken or salmon by baking in the oven at 425 degrees x 15-20 minutes, with olive oil and salt and pepper, plus a squeeze of fresh lemon juice. 2. Add spinach or greens to a serving dish. Slice cucumber and strawberries, and add to the plate. Add chopped pecans and blue cheese crumbles. 3. Add chicken or salmon to the top of the salad (it's nice to go ahead and slice the chicken into strips). 4. Add dressing.
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WHITE BALSAMIC VINAIGRETTE*Recipe @ www.afamilyfeast.com. Link to recipe [here](#).*

Makes 1 cup dressing (16 Tablespoons)

Per Tablespoon: 64 calories, 0 g protein, 1 g carb, 7 g fat

<p>Ingredients:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 1 Tbsp dijon mustard ● 4 Tbsp white balsamic vinegar ● 1 tsp Swerve granulated or powdered sugar ● 1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil ● 1/2 tsp sea salt ● 1/2 tsp freshly ground pepper 	<p>Directions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In a tall cup (ideally one that comes with an immersion blender) add the mustard, vinegar, sugar substitute, salt and pepper. Whisk with a fork to combine slightly. 2. Add olive oil and blend with an immersion blender, if you have one; otherwise use a small blender. Blend until combined and thickened. 3. Adjust seasonings to taste. Cover until ready to use. Store leftover dressing in the refrigerator. To use later, remove from the refrigerator and allow it to rest on the counter for 30 minutes. Blend in the blender if needed, to emulsify the oil and vinegar.
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SPINACH OR KALE SALAD WITH CHICKEN, GOAT CHEESE, NUTS AND BERRIES

By Julie Cottrell, MS, RD



Makes 1 serving

Per Serving: 598 calories, 44 g protein, 11 g carb (4 g fiber), 44 g fat

<p><u>Ingredients:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 2 cups fresh spinach or kale ● 4 oz chicken breast ● 1 oz crumbled goat cheese ● 6 walnut halves, broken into smaller pieces ● 7 blackberries ● 1 1/2 Tbsp olive oil ● 1 tsp balsamic vinegar ● ● 1 tsp butter ● Sea salt and pepper 	<p><u>To prepare chicken breast:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Rinse and pat dry with paper towels. If breast is thick, slice lengthwise before you begin cooking. Season both sides with salt and pepper. 2. Add butter to a skillet and turn to medium high. When hot, add chicken and sear each side 2-3 minutes, being careful that it doesn't burn. Turn down heat and cover with a lid to keep warm and allow cooking to continue for several minutes. <p><u>For the salad:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Rinse and dry the spinach (or kale), then add to a dinner plate. Drizzle with olive oil and balsamic vinegar and toss. Add goat cheese, pecan pieces and blackberries, distributing them over the entire salad. 2. Check the chicken to be sure it is cooked through, then slice into smaller pieces and add to the salad. 3. Season with salt and pepper, and a touch more balsamic, if desired.
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BROCCOLI SALAD

Recipe by Julie Cottrell, MS, RD



Makes 2 servings

Per serving: 400 calories, 16 g protein, 11 g carb (4 g fiber), 34 g fat

<p><u>Ingredients:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 200 grams broccoli (~3 cups, small, bite-sized pieces) ● 1/2 cup shredded cheddar cheese ● 4 slices bacon, cooked and diced ● 2 Tbsp slivered almonds, divided ● 1 Tbsp red onion, diced ● 2 Tbsp MCT oil (or mayo) ● 1 Tbsp white wine vinegar ● 2 Tbsp sour cream 	<p><u>Directions:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Wash broccoli and cut florets into small bites. Add to a medium-sized, microwavable bowl. Cover and heat 1 to 1 1/2 minutes (it should still be somewhat crispy, not mushy). Drain, if needed, and set aside. 2. Cook bacon in a skillet over medium heat until crispy on both sides. Remove from heat to cool, then crumble. 3. Add cheese, bacon, diced onion and slivered almonds to the broccoli and toss. 3. In a small bowl, stir together the MCT oil, white wine vinegar and sour cream, then add to broccoli mixture and toss to combine. 4. Divide between 2 plates or serving bowls.
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Julie's Tips: If using this salad as a meal, add an extra source of protein (1 or 2 boiled eggs work well!). This would also be great as a side dish with grilled chicken or pork chops. And this is an easy item to take to outings/events; double or triple the recipe and share it with a crowd!

CREAMY KETO SLAW

Recipe adapted from "The KetoDiet Cookbook" by Martina Slajerova, p 105

Serves: 4 large servings or 8 smaller servings

Per Serving (large): 241 calories, 2 g protein, 9 g carb (3 g fiber), 22 g fat

(small): 120 calories, 1 g protein, 4 g carb (1 g fiber), 11 g fat

**Ingredients:**

- 1/2 head green or white cabbage (400 g)
- 1/4 medium-sized red onion, sliced (50 g)
- 1/2 medium red bell pepper, thinly sliced
- 1/2 cup mayonnaise (or 1/4 cup mayo +
- 1/4 cup sour cream)
- 1 Tbsp lemon juice
- 1 Tbsp apple cider vinegar
- 1/2 tsp celery seeds
- 1 tsp Dijon or wholegrain mustard
- Sea salt and ground pepper to taste

Directions:

1. Remove outer leaves of cabbage. Remove the hard stem, then finely slice the cabbage. Place in a large bowl. Thinly slice the onion and bell pepper and add to the cabbage. Toss to combine.
2. For the dressing, in a small mixing bowl, combine the mayo, sour cream (if using), lemon juice, apple cider vinegar, celery seeds, and mustard. Season with salt and pepper. Add the dressing to the bowl with the veggies and toss well. Allow to sit for 20-30 minutes to allow flavors to meld.
3. Serve or store in an airtight container. Use within 5-7 days.