



Microcooking

Upgrade reheating to a whole new (and delicious!) level



NAVY AND MARINE CORPS PUBLIC HEALTH CENTER
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Objectives

1. Discuss microcooking techniques vice using a microwave oven for only reheating or packaged microwave meals.
2. Motivate educators to encourage patients to experiment with new recipes.

Resources: Link to Barracks Cookbook

<http://www.navy-prt.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/Navy-Bachelor-Housing-Barracks-Cookbook.pdf>



Current common uses

- Popcorn: Purchased popcorn bags typically made with partially hydrogenated soybean oil, palm oil, and/or artificial flavors.
- Reheating meals: Great way to heat up leftovers.
- Microwave meals: Processed meals in many forms that are typically high in sodium and fat, with questionable ingredients.



Why?

1/3 of people who own microwave ovens use their microwaves for cooking beyond reheating food.
Panasonic Home Appliance Group

Microwave can:

Simmer
Reduce

Steam
Poach

Boil
Braise

reheat

What is the best thing to cook in the microwave from scratch?

A. Meat B. Eggs C. Vegetables D. Grains



Best thing to microwave

Vegetables!

- Steam them in their own water
- Become aromatic and tender
- Retain sweetness
- Don't need to add much fat or salt
- Easy!



Best Microwave Know-How

- Read the manual! Tip: can “Google it” if not available.
- Know your oven’s wattage.
- The size and shape of food affects cook time.
- More food equals more cooking time.
- Food temperature affects cooking time.
- Salt food after cooking.
- It’s better to undercook than overcook.
- Standing time is important.
- For best results, cook foods at the power level directed.



Levels to Know

Cooking	Power %
High	100
Medium-High	70
Medium	50
Medium- Low	30
Low	10



Microwave Cooking Techniques

- Covering
- Arranging food in the oven – leave space
- Arranging food on baking dish – spoke or round best
- Rearranging food
- Stirring – once or twice is all
- Rotating



Be aware of safety

- Do not use metal
- Avoid thin plastic bags
- Avoid one time use plastic
- Avoid recycled paper
- Do not use non heat resistant plates or stemware
- Do not deep fry
- Whole eggs, tough skinned fruit or veggies, hot dogs, should not be cooked without piercing or cutting.
- Don't overheat water – doesn't always boil
- Don't overheat dry sponges
- Don't melt paraffin wax – no water or fat
- No wireless devices near it



Cooking techniques that DO NOT work

- Saute'ing
- Broiling
- Roast – does not cook evenly
- Boil pasta – unless you have bought a specialized piece
- Toast – yeast breads toughen (baking quick breads does work)
- Brown



Essential Microwave Cookware

- Glass approved for microwave ovens
- Polycarbonate thermoplastic cookware
- Ceramic baking dishes

Types:

- Different sizes measuring cups
- Batter bowl
- Round Casserole dishes
- Pie plates
- Custard cups
- etc



Adjusting Conventional Oven Recipes

- Do not double
- Use half the liquid
- Cook time -75%

If cooking more than one item – say potato – that cooks for 3-5 minutes, if you cook two, double the time, etc



Wattage

- Most 1100-1300 watts: most recipes use this range
- 950 watts: cook relatively same amount of time
- 750-850 watts: increase time by $\frac{1}{3}$
- 500-700 watts: increase time by $\frac{1}{2}$



Handy Microwave How-To's

- Melt Chocolate: 50% or defrost, 30 second intervals, stir.
- Toast nuts/coconut: high, 2 ½ minutes for each half cup, stir each minute.
- Rewarm baked goods: wrap in paper towel, low, 10 second intervals.
- Toasted bread crumbs: 4-6 pieces of bread, high, uncovered, 1 ½-2 ½ minutes, cool, place in food processor and pulse.
- Peel tomatoes: High, 14 seconds, let stand 10-15 minutes.
- Peel peaches: Place up to 4 peaches in dish, add ½ cup hot water, cover (pierced), high, 1-1 ½ minutes, let stand 5-10 minutes, peel.
- Ripen an avocado: place on paper towel, pierce skin, defrost, 2 minutes, turn avocado, defrost, 30-60 seconds.



Additional How- to: Dry fresh herbs!

- Rinse and pat dry herbs (drier the better).
- Remove leaves.
- Place no more than one cup of leaves on paper towel in microwave.
- Cover with two paper towels.
- Place 1 cup measuring cup with $\frac{3}{4}$ cup hot water in oven with herbs.
- High for 1-2 minutes (depends on herb)
- Check and turn each minute.
- Done when herbs are brittle and dry.
- Allow leaves to cool, then place in clean glass jar.

Good for up to one year!!



Popcorn

- 2 heaping tablespoons of unpopped corn makes 3-4 cups of popped corn (depending on size of unpopped).
- Place in paper lunch bag, fold down twice
- “Popcorn” button or high for 2-3 minutes. Stop when 2-4 seconds between pops.
- Top with:
salt butter parmesan nutritional yeast nut butter
garlic powder wasabi powder curry powder taco seasoning
etc!!!



Tips for Veggies

- Do not overcook – if you can smell them, they are usually done.
- Check for doneness in the shortest cook time.
- Cook most on high.
- Cover – turn large ones half way through cook time.
- Cook thicker parts on the outside of the dish.
- When cooking a variety, cut them so they cook evenly.
- Clean leafy greens, and cook when wet.
- Salt after cooking.
- Fresh taste best, but all will work. Add frozen veggies to any meal to amp up the nutritional value!



Risotto Recipe – yes, really!

Ingredients:

- 2 Tbls unsalted butter
- 2 Tbls olive oil
- 3 Tbls minced shallots
- 1 ½ cups Arborio or Carnaroli Rice (no substitutes)
- 3 ¾ cups hot low sodium chicken broth
(plus more as needed)
- 6 oz mushrooms your choice
- 12 oz asparagus spears, cut into 2" pieces
- Salt and pepper to taste
- ¾ cup Parmigiana-Reggiano cheese



Risotto – simple steps

- Place butter and oil in casserole dish, uncovered, high, 1-2 minutes until melted and warm. Add shallots, stir to coat, high, 2 minutes.
- Add rice and stir to coat all grains. High, 2 minutes.
- Pour in hot broth, high, 6-7 minutes.
- Add mushrooms and asparagus. High, 6 minutes. If rice is not yet tender, High, 2 minute intervals, stir, add broth if necessary.
- Stir in cheese and serve

- Serves 4



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and let us know you completed it so we can send you a certificate. Our survey is anonymous.

