

PENNY SAVER NEWS

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Store Bought, Home Baked Breads?

Do you find yourself wishing for Mom's home made bread or Grandmother's biscuits, but know you have no time at all to make them yourself? Have you looked at all the 'ready to bake' or 'heat and serve' breads, rolls or biscuits in the freezer case or refrigerated sections of the grocery recently? Some are miles ahead of the good old standby tubes of dough. Have you tried any of them? They're so quick and easy, all ready kneaded, shaped and risen. Some are even partly baked. So tempting!

Of course you'll pay for the convenience. Letting someone else do all the kneading, shaping, rising and packaging means you have shell the dough out of your pocket for their work. The cost of those rolls or biscuits will be much higher than if you made them yourself. Even starting with a box of biscuit mix costs less than refrigerated ready to bake dough. So, first question to ask is whether you want to pay that much for the convenience and aroma.

If you decide you can afford it, go ahead. But before you toss the package in the grocery cart, stop and **read the label**. That's the only way to know whether your health can afford the one you've chosen. Unfortunately, a lot of the quick and easy bread products in the store are also high in fat, especially saturated fat (the bad kind) and high in sodium. And many of them are very high in calories too. What should you look for in the nutrition facts box?

Start with sodium. All of us middle-aged and more experienced people should aim to keep the sodium in our diets below 1500 mg a day. Some refrigerated biscuits

put half that amount in one biscuit! Ouch! Can your blood pressure afford that? Yeast breads always need a little bit of sodium to help the yeast grow, so you won't find many sodium-free products. But at least look for something that has less than 270 mg per serving.

Usually a plain bread product will have less sodium than anything with a cheese flavor. Some herb flavored breads and rolls use more salt than herbs to provide their flavor too. If you want something with herbs or seeds on it, buy a plain flavor at the store. When you're ready to stick it in the oven give it a spray of pan spray then sprinkle on your own, real, herbs or seeds. You can add lots of flavor with a sprinkle of Italian mixed herbs or pizza seasoning.

Look at the calories and portion size. Unless you promise, and stick to your promise, of splitting those humongous biscuits with someone else, buy products with smaller portion sizes. Fifteen grams of carbohydrate is considered a serving, so choose products with a total portion size of 30 to 45 g.

Choose lower fat products. It doesn't have to claim low fat on the label, but it helps to choose products with only 2 or 3 g of fat per serving. That allows you to have more flavorful fats in the rest of meal. Cheesy breads and biscuits are likely to be higher in fat too. Sprinkle the tops of plain rolls or biscuits with low fat grated Parmesan for more flavor if you want.

Look for 0 trans fats. If you want to keep your total daily trans fat below 3 g, a healthy level, then don't choose breads or rolls with trans fat. There are trans-free versions available.

Select whole grain or whole wheat products. Whole grain products provide healthful fiber as well as more vitamins, minerals, antioxidants and other beneficial

ingredients that go with the fiber. Even the white whole wheat bread is better than plain white.

Here's a French toast recipe for Sunday morning, stuffed with strawberries. Use delicious Plant City berries, ripe right now, for absolutely top flavor. Enjoy!

Berry Delicious Stuffed Toast

2 C halved strawberries	2 Tbsp powdered sugar
1/3 C fat-free sweetened condensed milk	3/4 C low fat vanilla yogurt
1 10-oz loaf French or Cuban bread	1 egg
1 egg white	1 tsp sugar
1/3 C low fat or skim milk	1 tsp vanilla extract
1/4 tsp cinnamon	

Mix berries and powdered sugar in bowl. Measure ½ cup of sweetened berries, condensed milk and yogurt in blender and puree. Refrigerate.

Slice bread into 12 slices, each 1 ½ inches thick. Cut a small pocket slit in one side.

Stuff sweetened berries into pockets. Blend rest of ingredients in bowl. Dip stuffed bread slices to coat in egg mixture. Preheat nonstick skillet and cook dipped slices until light brown, turning once. Serve with any remaining berries and refrigerated sauce.

Serves 6.

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