



South Carolina Family and Community Leaders

Affiliated with National Volunteer Outreach Network, Country Women's Council, U.S.A., Associated Country Women of the World and in partnership with Clemson University Cooperative Extension Service
SCFCL website: <http://www.scfcl.com>

Leader Training Guide

Microwave Mug Muffins and Cakes

Objectives:

Participants will demonstrate how to use pantry staples to make mug muffins/cakes.
Participants will identify how to use mug muffins for portion control and reduce food waste.
Participants will identify how mug muffins can fit into a healthy eating plan.

Lesson Overview/Introduction: One of the current trends in home food preparation is mug muffins and mug cakes. There are some definite advantages and disadvantages to these recipes.

Lesson:

Mug cakes (or mug muffins) have become more popular in recent years. These recipes are fast and easy. This lesson will cover the basic information related to these recipes and offer an opportunity for cooking and sampling.

Advantages of these recipes:

The required ingredients are typically items you already have on hand. You can use pantry staple foods to make these items which require minimal prep time and minimal cook time. Most mug muffin recipes require a limited number of staple ingredients. Flour, sugar (or sugar substitute), egg, and fat are the typical components. Note, however, that there are many specialized recipes that omit these ingredients and still achieve satisfactory results.

Since the recipe makes only 1-2 servings, you eat a smaller portion. These recipes are a great way to exercise portion control and reduce food waste for households with 1 or 2 people. Almost every household in America has made or purchased an entire cake. Despite the strongest will power, few people can resist the temptation of daily cake if it is sitting on their counter. When you cook only 1-2 portions, the daily temptation of a full-sized cake is removed. Also, if you dislike the idea of throwing away uneaten portions of a full-sized cake, these recipes are an option for reducing your food waste.

They are fast to make and create almost no dirty dishes. Mug muffin recipes require minimal time to mix and cook. The majority of the recipes can be assembled and cooked within 5 minutes. They are often mixed together and then cooked in the same mug (so there are almost no dirty dishes.) Many people opt to eat the muffin from the same mug used to cook it.

If you have dietary restrictions, there's probably a specialized recipe to suit your needs.

Thanks to Pinterest and Facebook, there are videos and written instructions for every recipe imaginable. Do a quick Pinterest search for “mug cakes” or “mug muffins” and you will be amazed at how many options there are. Sugar free (or low sugar), egg free, dairy free, gluten free, etc. versions of mug cakes are available. Exercise caution, however. None of these specialized recipes are calorie free.

Disadvantages of these recipes:

They are not pretty. Do not expect photo-worthy results when your recipe is cooked. Any home cook with experience in microwave cooking knows that browning and crisping is difficult (often impossible) when microwaving foods. This is definitely true of mug recipes. But if you remove the cooked product from the mug and dress it with fruit or sauce, the final product can be very attractive.

Don't trick yourself into believing this is everyday food that offers high quality nutrition.

These recipes are a good choice for an occasional treat. They are not good daily choices. Banana muffins are not and will never be a nutritional substitute for bananas. Plan your food intake on the basic tenants of sound nutrition: whole grains, fruits and vegetables, lean meats and dairy. Limit your intake of sugar and saturated fat. If you are trying to reduce your daily sugar intake and you are a fan of daily desserts, mug cakes/muffins might be a reasonable option for you to help with portion control. If there are two in your household, split the recipe between you.

If you find that you enjoy the ease of making these recipes, consider favoring the recipes that contain less sugar, more whole grain/fiber, and less saturated fat. Also, you might find that with a few alterations to the recipe, you can convert it into a healthier version.

The texture is sometimes different. Depending on the ingredients called for in your recipe, you might experience a chewy texture or an eggy flavor. Gluten, fat, and leavening are key ingredients for tenderness. When any of these components are omitted or out of proportion, the texture can be affected negatively.

Reminders for successful recipes:

Use a microwave safe mug. No metal should ever be placed in the microwave. Metal creates sparks and possibly fire when microwaved. Opt for ceramic, plastic, glass or crockery. If you have no mug handy, you can use a small microwave-safe dish with high sides. Even a paper cup will work in a pinch. NO STYROFOAM!

Do not grease the mug in any way unless the recipe specifically says to do so. Resist the urge to grease and flour the mug. Likewise, do not use non-stick spray. The batter will adhere to the sides of the mug to rise (similar to an angel food cake) and as the cook time progresses, the cake normally pulls away from the sides.

Half is best. Do not fill your mug more than half full. When mugs are more than half full, you run a true risk of the recipe spilling over the top while cooking.

All purpose mix for mug cakes: If you prefer to have a mix on hand to simplify mug cakes even more, here are the instructions:

Mix together in one box of Angel Food Cake mix (approx. 15 oz.) and one box of any cake mix flavor of your choice (approx. 15 oz.)

Store this dry mixture in an air tight container for long term storage.

When ready to make mug cake, add 3 tablespoons dry mix with 2 tablespoons water and cook for 1 minute on high in the microwave. Weight Watchers is often credited with these instructions but it is easy to find these instructions on many websites. It is commonly referred to as the 3-2-1 mug cake.

3 Ingredient Peanut Butter Muffin (1-2 servings)

3 Tablespoons peanut butter
1 Tablespoon + 1 teaspoon sugar
1 large egg

Whisk all ingredients into an oversized, microwave-safe mug until batter is smooth and egg is fully incorporated. Microwave for about 1 minute. Let cake cool a few moments before eating, but best when eaten while still slightly warm.

Baked Oatmeal in a mug (serves 2)

½ cup quick cooking oats
1 Tablespoon ground flax seed (or any type ground nut/seed)-optional
1 egg
½ cup milk (or water)
¼ teaspoon cinnamon
2 teaspoons honey (or any sugar or sugar substitute)
2 Tablespoons any chopped fruit or nut (optional)

Mix all ingredients well until egg is completely incorporated. Microwave on high 2 minutes. Cook an additional 1 minute if needed. Cool one minute before eating. This recipe has texture somewhere between normally cooked oatmeal and oatmeal cake.

Lesson Summary:

Mug Cakes and Mug Muffins are an easy and fast way to enjoy a dessert treat. Make sure to choose recipes that are lower in sugar and saturated fat.

Suggested Activities:

Leader prepares samples of mug recipes during the meeting and members sample the recipes. Have recipes available for members to take home.

OR, Leader instructs each member to bring a large microwave safe mug to the meeting. Have recipe ingredients available for each member to make a mug recipe during the meeting.

Suggested Materials: If you plan on cooking mug cakes during your meeting, make sure you have:

Microwave

Suitable mug (or similar container)

Recipe Ingredients

Measuring spoons

Measuring cups

Spoon for stirring ingredients

Spoons for eating cooked recipe

Copies of recipe for members to take home (or tell them to arrive with pen/paper so they can copy the recipe)

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Sources/References:

www.foodwhine.com

www.pinterest.com