10 Steps to Healthier Lasagne

Instead of spending time searching for healthy recipes and running out to the store for missing ingredients, teach yourself how to modify existing recipes AND use food you have available.

Take the recipe right off the lasagne noodle box and modify

1. No need to cook the noodles, trust me they will cook in the oven
2. Instead of ground beef try ground turkey or chicken or a meat alternative
3. Don't have any "pasta sauce"? Neither did our grandparents! Open a can of crushed or stewed tomatoes and put them in the blender or cook up some REAL tomatoes. Short on sauce? Add more stuff – tomato paste and water, pizza sauce, even ketchup as a last resort
4. After you brown your protein throw in some veggies (onion, green pepper, celery, carrots, garlic cloves) add some of your sauce to cook until the veggies are soft.
5. Instead of ricotta cheese for your middle layer just use cottage cheese. Add spinach, even if it is wilted, red peppers, green onions, or kale if you enjoy that. This increases your veggie consumption
6. You do not need salt. Repeat, you do not need salt. Try other spices. See what you have such as basil, oregano, ground pepper or mixed spices (I had something called "Italian seasoning" and once I added dill and people raved about that lasagne
7. You do not need 2 cups of cheese! Save all those calories by using half the cheese suggested in the recipe. You can however use up all those little bits of cheese hiding in your fridge (even if they are stale) and grate them together to sprinkle on the top. Can't have cheese? Try breadcrumbs
8. Make sure your lasagne it wet with sauce if the noodles are uncooked. Just pour more water over the top, don't stress, it will be delicious. 400 degrees for 45 mins, cover with foil if you put cheese on top. If you have a convection oven, lower the temperature to 375 degrees and check on it a bit early
9. Let the lasagne sit for 10 mins (good time to whip up a salad)
10. Serve and enjoy. Leftovers will freeze up beautifully (if there are any leftovers)

Lasagne is difficult to mess up and like soup, is great to practice your creativity and ingenuity to modify a recipe. Be confident and adventurous in the kitchen and next time you are out of an ingredient just "wing it". * NOTE - The one place the substitution and wing it modifications fail are with baking. The proportions need to be right with baking, or you can end up with something inedible.