

## Helpful Hints

**Dry Bread Crumbs:** These are easy to make using Ezekiel or whole-grain bread. Tear slices into pieces. Leave out overnight or place in 200° oven for 20 to 30 minutes. Finely grind dry pieces in mini food processor, alternating between chop and grind buttons.

**Do-Ahead Tips.** Prepare any of the following in advance:

- Bread crumbs
- Breading mixture (this is Step 2)
- Steps 1, 2, 3 and 4. Refrigerate until ready to cook (do this no more than 24 hours in advance).
- Chicken can be breaded and frozen. Bake straight from freezer in preheated oven, allowing approximately 5 minutes extra baking time or thaw and bake.

## Gluten-Free

Replace bread crumbs with  $\frac{2}{3}$  cup puffed brown rice cereal (finely chopped in food processor).

## Pecan Crusted Chicken Salad

S→O: 20 minutes    Bake: 20–25 minutes

**1 lb. boneless, skinless chicken breasts/tenders**

**Breading Mixture:**

**$\frac{1}{2}$  cup pecans, finely chopped**

**$\frac{1}{2}$  cup dry bread crumbs** (see sidebar)

**$\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. each: dried oregano, dried thyme**

**$\frac{1}{4}$  tsp. salt**

**$\frac{1}{4}$  tsp. each: garlic powder, onion powder, dry mustard, paprika**

**1 shake cayenne pepper**

**Freshly ground black pepper**

**Dipping Mixture:** (choose one)

1 egg, lightly beaten

OR 1 Tbsp. Medium-Heat oil (see Step 3)

**Romaine lettuce** (3 cups per salad)

**Dijon Salad Dressing** (1 tablespoon per salad)

**Preheat oven—375°** (convection or conventional).

Baking pan

1. Cut breasts into strips and then crosswise or cut tenders in half crosswise, making finger-length pieces. Rinse. Dry with paper towels.
2. In bowl, stir together breading ingredients, crushing oregano and thyme with fingers. Lay a piece of waxed paper on kitchen counter; pour some breading on it.
3. Dipping mixture:  
In separate shallow dish, whisk egg. Dip dry chicken strips, turning to coat all sides.  
Or dip dry chicken strips into a small amount of oil, turning to coat all sides.
4. Breading: Transfer each "dipped" chicken strip to breading mixture. Roll and press the breading onto chicken to coat all sides. Place single layer on baking pan (tucking under any small pieces).
5. Bake for 20–25 minutes in preheated oven, or until 180° internal temperature.

Slice chicken on the diagonal and lay fanned over romaine lettuce. Drizzle Dijon Dressing over salad.

Yield: 4 meal servings

## Dijon Salad Dressing

**3 Tbsp. Dijon-style mustard**

**2 Tbsp. freshly squeezed lemon juice**

**1 Tbsp. raw apple cider vinegar**

**1 Tbsp. sweetener**—agave nectar or honey

**$\frac{1}{4}$  tsp. onion powder**

**$\frac{1}{4}$  cup olive oil**

In bowl, combine all ingredients except oil. Whisk while streaming in oil; continuing to whisk until opaque. Lightly season with salt and pepper if needed.

Dijon Salad Dressing (continued)

Drizzle over Pecan Crusted Chicken Salad or any mixed greens salad.

Also, use as a dipping sauce for Oven-Fried Chicken Chunks (p. 144).

Store in refrigerator for 2–3 weeks. Empty glass jars/bottles (e.g., purchased salad dressing bottles, spice jars) make excellent containers. Allow leftover to come to room temperature before serving.

Yield: 30 (2 tsp.) servings    ~ $\frac{2}{3}$  cup