



MINDFUL EATING

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L★O★Solutions
COMPLETE NUTRITION SERVICES
PILATES & PERSONAL TRAINING

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Note from the Author

LO★Solutions

Dear Reader,

I truly hope you enjoy this compilation of **LO Solutions** Newsletters, intended to help you better understand and appreciate nutrition and food. I started writing newsletters in 2004 as a way to share my nutrition and health knowledge, as well as spread the word on new food finds (I have a pleasure/knack/hobby of looking for new healthy, flavorful foods every time I shop). Email proved to be an invaluable way to share this information with my clients, family, and friends who live all across the country.

This book would not have been possible without Carrie Weinstein, who not only put them together in this book format, but used great detail, care and thoughtfulness throughout the entire process of this project. Please be on the lookout for other compilations, as this is not a complete set of my newsletters, but most of the food related ones to date.


As you read this, please think of ways you can increase the variety in your eating, in a healthy, mindful manner. Meaning, you appreciate what you're eating, in moderate and appropriate amounts for your body, and think positive thoughts in doing so (i.e., before, after and during).

If you like this book, please pick one up for a loved one to help spread the word that food is good for you and nothing is off limits, so to speak. Remember, variety is the spice of life and your body needs and craves food to function to its optimal level.

Enjoy and Happy Eating!

Sincerely,

Lila Ojeda. MS, RD, LD, CSCS



*To all our clients, friends, and family who inspired many of
these newsletters and recipes.*

*Thank you for all your support, dedication, and
encouragement over the years!*

NUMBER 1: Carbs! *Are they really the bad guys?*

When it comes to weight loss, “a calorie is a calorie is a calorie.” Although the carbohydrates themselves aren’t the sole culprits of extra, unwanted pounds, the wrong kinds of carbohydrates and the huge portions are definitely contributing factors. Simple carbohydrates (sugars) and low-fiber complex carbohydrates are the “bad” ones—if we’re naming names! These include cookies, pastries, sugar cereals, pop, and most (non-whole wheat) bagels and bread—to name a few! In addition to eating the wrong kinds of carbohydrates, we’re eating too many of them—our portion sizes have grown. For example, a whole bagel is 4 servings of bread, and ½ cup of cooked pasta (not 3 cups) is one serving of pasta! How much do you eat?

So, what are the “good carbohydrates”? Focus on fiber! Fiber is listed under the carbohydrates on food labels. The more fiber and less sugar, the better. Most Americans eat 12-15 grams of fiber per day, and we should be eating 30-50 grams per day. Start slowly and work up to this goal, or else your stomach won’t be very happy with you.

How to increase the fiber in your diet:

- Buy whole grain bread. Look for 2-3 grams fiber per slice, or else you might just be buying white bread colored with molasses
- Whole grain cereal. Look for 4-5 grams per serving



- Eat legumes for a great source of fiber and protein. Try pinto, black, fat-free refried, lentils, soy/tofu, etc. Start slowly (e.g., 2-3 tablespoons of garbanzos and kidney beans on salads) and work up to having beans as a weekly, meat-free dinner.
- Eat a salad (with low-fat dressing) and a vegetable at dinner. You'll double, maybe even triple, your vegetable and fiber intake, plus keep your plate and stomach full on fewer calories.
- Eat 2-3 whole, medium-sized fruits per day. Try a sliced banana and/or blueberries on your cereal or yogurt, or an apple, pear or orange with your lunch or for dessert.



NUMBER 2: Why Whole Grains?

Nutrients and other substances in plant foods work together in powerful ways. It is more than the individual nutrients and phytochemicals found in whole grains that lead to health benefits. The benefits stem from the way these elements interact with each other in the "whole food."

- More nutritional value: B vitamins, trace minerals (iron, zinc, copper, magnesium), antioxidants (vitamin E and selenium), fiber (fiber alone may lack the health-promoting properties found in whole grains), phytochemicals that play a role in disease prevention.
- Lowers triglycerides and improves HDL.
- Lowers risk of diseases such as cancer, heart disease and diabetes.
- Weight loss: high fiber foods like whole grains fill you up and leave you satisfied, with fewer calories. You'll eat less and often have fewer cravings for sugary, high fat foods.
- More energy: the complex carbohydrates provide your muscles and brain with sustained glucose for energy; the simple ones give you a quick high and in return a quick low.
- Not to mention whole grains offer great variety, texture, flavor and color!

How Much To Eat?

The new Dietary Food Guidelines recommend that you eat at least half of your grain servings as whole grain and try to eat at least 3 ounces per day of whole grains. One ounce is one piece of whole grain bread, 1 cup of dry cereal, or ½ cup cooked rice, pasta or cooked cereal. One cup of Lila's Crock Pot Super



Grain Cereal (see Page 5) definitely counts as 2 whole grains! If you can do all or most of your grains as whole grains, go for it. Just work up to doing more whole grains and fiber rich foods in general or your tummy won't be happy with you!

How to Find Whole Grains?

Make sure the first ingredient listed on the label says "whole" or "whole grain" before the grain name. For example, whole oats or whole grain oats, whole grain wheat or whole wheat, whole grain barley, whole grain corn, whole rye, etc. Look for the "Whole Grain" seal on food packages. Some manufacturers are making it easy to locate whole grain foods through the use of a "Whole Grain" seal.

Look for the whole grain health claim: "Diets rich in whole grain foods and other plant foods and are low in total fat, saturated fat and cholesterol may help reduce the risk of heart disease and certain cancers".

If you don't like a whole grain product you decided to try, don't give up. Try and try again! There are some great whole grain products out there including brown rice, whole grain breads and cereals, whole wheat pastas, whole wheat tortillas, etc.



LILA'S CROCK POT SUPER GRAIN CEREAL

¼ cup red or regular quinoa
¼ cup steel cut oats
¼ cup brown rice
¼ cup raw oats or multi-grain cereal
¼ cup Bob's Red Mill Spice n' Nice Cereal
¼ cup wheat germ
2 tsp pumpkin pie spice
4 cups water
1 cup low-fat plain soymilk (or another cup of water)

¼ cup flaxseed meal
¼ cup unsweetened coconut
¼ cup dried cranberries or raisins
¼ cup dried mission figs, chopped
¼ cup hazelnuts, chopped finely

Spray 5-quart crock pot with nonstick cooking spray. Combine quinoa, steel cut oats, brown rice, oats, Bob's cereal, pumpkin spice, water and soymilk in crock pot and stir. Cook on low heat for 2 ½ hours. Stir in flaxseed meal, coconut, cranberries, figs and hazelnuts, stir well. Turn off crock pot and let sit for 10 minutes. Eat immediately or transfer to container for storage. This cereal will keep fresh for up to a week in the refrigerator. If you don't have a crock pot, simmer on the stovetop covered stirring occasionally until all grains are cooked and you achieve desired consistency.

OTHER OPTIONS: Any grains will work. For example try millet, buckwheat, kasha, red or wild rice. Try walnuts and other dried fruits such as dates, apricots, golden raisins, etc.

TO REHEAT: Combine with a little water, microwave and stir.



SERVING SUGGESTIONS: My favorite way to eat this cereal is with 1 tablespoon Designer Whey Protein Powder and 1 tablespoon nut butter (such as almond, peanut, soy, sunflower, etc). Add milk, soy, or almond milk to desired consistency and top with low-fat granola, sliced banana and a touch of maple syrup or honey. Don't be afraid to mix and make your own creation!

Per 1 cup (without serving ideas):

Calories: 260

Fat: 8.5 gm

Carbohydrates: 40.5

Fiber: 7 gm

Sugar: 11 gm

Protein: 8 gm

Cholesterol: 0 mg

Sodium: 11 mg



NUMBER 3: Low Carb Wine?!

Yes, it's out there and being advertised, just like low carbohydrate beer, bread, yogurt, pasta, you name it! So, what does this all mean...are they better?! Should you buy this instead of regular wine? Not necessarily. Sometimes it's just a matter of marketing. It might be the same exact product, but now they're saying "low carb" when it always was...you might notice that Bud Light is now advertising: "All light beers are low in carbs, choose by taste!" Yes, that's true! Have you seen these?

- fat free licorice (it always was), or
- cholesterol free nuts (only animal products have cholesterol, your nuts were always cholesterol free)

So, part of it is marketing, part of it is they are taking some of the carbs out, but is it worth sacrificing taste to save a few carbs here and there? Most likely not. Remember, if you choose the "good carbs", you get quite a few per day. You can actually have about 200-300 grams of carbohydrates per day (or 55-65% of your calories) if you eat the high fiber, healthy carbohydrates: whole grain foods, beans, fruits and vegetables!

So, if you want, enjoy the regular wine or beer if you like it better, but moderation is *key*. Moderation is one drink per day for women and 2 for men. One drink is 5-6 ounces of wine and 12 ounces of beer. And, no, you can't save them up and have all 7 on Saturday, unfortunately!

This low carbohydrate wine is called One.6 Chardonnay and One.9 Merlot. These wines are on the lower end of carb for wines, but dry wines are low carbohydrate by definition. Semi-sweet wines are higher in carbs because of the sugar, but are



still fairly low in carbohydrates. Wine has only about 3-5 grams per 5 ounce serving, so you're not saving a whole lot on calories either.

Light beer might have 4-6 grams of carbohydrates per 12 ounces, while the low carb ones might have 3 grams. Calories might be 90, compared to the typical light beer of 100-110.

So, is it worth it? You decide.

Final Thoughts:

- You save a few carbs and calories, but moderation is still *key*.
- The small calorie differences in these and other low carbohydrate products aren't enough to make a significant dent in your waistline, but they may dent your pocketbook. Most low carb products cost anywhere from 2 to 10 times more than their regular counter-parts.
- If you want to lose weight, you shouldn't be focusing on processed foods like beer, muffins and candy anyways, focus on fiber and portion control instead.



NUMBER 4: Are All Fats *Bad*?

Are all fats *bad*? I get this question often and the answer is “No!” Read on to find out which fats you should try to eat.

Saturated Fats: BAD

Saturated fats can increase LDL (the bad cholesterol). Found in full-fat dairy and red meat, and many other foods. Look on labels under fat. Keep this <7% of total calories; <5% is even better.

Trans Fatty Acids: BAD

Trans fatty acids are hydrogenated, hard fats that act like saturated fats in the body. Found in foods like chips, cookies, crackers, French fries, other fried foods, etc. Are listed on most labels but if not you can figure out how many fats are trans by adding up the saturated, polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fats on the label, and if this doesn't equal the total fat number, then the rest are trans. Keep these about 1-2 % of total calories (yes, only 1-2 grams per day) and avoid whenever possible. Make some small changes and buy baked chips and crackers and soft tub margarines. Look for “hydrogenated or partially hydrogenated” in the ingredient list and stay away from those foods.

Polyunsaturated Fats: BETTER

Polyunsaturated fats are better but not necessarily preferred. They can lower LDL, but also might lower HDL (which is the good cholesterol you don't want to lower). Found in safflower, soybean, corn and sunflower oil; in mayonnaise and salad dressings too. Up to 10% of total calories.



Monounsaturated Fats: GOOD

Monounsaturated fats are heart healthy fats that can lower LDL (the bad cholesterol) and don't affect HDL (the good cholesterol). Can have saturated fat too if you eat too much, so eat small amounts of these: nuts, olive oil, canola oil and avocado. They say about 1 ounce of nuts per day is a good amount to eat and might be beneficial to you. That's about 20-30 nuts. Up to 20% of total calories.

Omega-3 Fatty Acids: VERY GOOD

Omega-3 fatty acids keep the blood thin and less sticky making it less likely to develop clots. Found in fish (fatty fish like Salmon have more); flaxseed, canola oil, and walnuts are the vegetarian sources. Look for ground flaxseed meal and add to cereal, yogurt, protein shakes, baked goods, etc. May want to eat fish 2-3 times per week if you don't already. Warning: talk to your doctor if you want to start eating more fish and/or taking fish capsules, as too many blood thinning supplements or medications together can be dangerous (e.g., Coumadin, vitamin E, etc).

Cholesterol: NOT A FAT

Cholesterol is not a type of "fat" but still important to keep in mind. <200 mg per day (FYI: one egg has ~220 mg). Yes, you still want to stay away from egg yolks (whites and egg substitutes are just fine!), if you're trying to eat a heart healthy diet—even if you don't have high cholesterol.

BOTTOM LINE: For a low-fat, heart healthy diet, it is recommended to eat about 20-30% of your daily calories from fat (45-70 grams for a 2000 Calorie plan). Most of those grams should come from omega-3 fatty acids and monounsaturated fat.



NUMBER 5: Breakfast: Start Your Day Off Right!

Do you skip breakfast for any of the following reasons:

You're trying to lose weight?

You're not hungry in the morning?

You just don't have time?

When you do eat breakfast, you're hungry all morning?

If you said YES to *any* of the above questions, then this newsletter is for you! Dr. Michael Weintraub, an obesity expert with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, reported that the two most important predictors of successful weight loss and weight maintenance were *eating breakfast* and *exercising regularly*. A Mayo Clinic Study found that breakfast eaters started their days with significantly higher metabolic rates than breakfast-skippers. It was equivalent to burning an additional 150 Calories per day, or about as much as a 30-minute walk! Not only can it boost your metabolism, but it can give you more energy, more clarity (because much needed glucose is getting to your brain which allows you to think better), and it helps prevent muscle loss.

So, you now realize that breakfast might actually help you lose weight, but you're still thinking, *If I eat breakfast, it makes me hungry a few hours later and then I'll just eat more!*. Don't worry, it's ok, actually preferred, to feel hungry not long after eating breakfast. This means that your metabolism has kicked in and you're probably ready for a mid-morning snack to keep your metabolism up and running. You want to make sure your breakfast is well balanced too, i.e., it has some protein and/or fat along with those "good carbohydrates" (see Page 1).



Assuming you're doing this and getting hungry in about 2-3 hours, then just plan ahead and bring a mid-morning snack. Eating several times throughout the day will keep your metabolism up, and will also help you to avoid the headache, upset stomach and afternoon fatigue that often occurs around 3pm (see Page 18). If you avoid eating, and ignore your hunger, this can lead to a suppressed metabolism and possible overeating at your next meal or later in the day (have you ever experienced a feeding frenzy when you arrive home from work?).

If you're not hungry first thing in the morning, make sure you're not eating too late at night, and then start with something small in the morning like fruit or juice to get your body used to eating. Something small will gear your metabolism up and pretty soon, you'll be hungry in the morning and can start eating a bigger breakfast. If you feel sick after you eat in the morning, eat anything that sits well with you (fruit, juice or milk is better than nothing) and then try to eat a little more within 1-2 hours, (pack a piece of fruit along with a breakfast bar, a nonfat yogurt and nuts, or a bagel with peanut butter).

So, now that you're convinced you should eat breakfast, what should you eat?

Here are some breakfast ideas:

- A whole wheat bagel or whole grain toast with flavored low-fat or nonfat cream cheese, apple butter, all-fruit spread, or peanut butter, honey and sliced bananas.
- On weekends make your own whole grain pancakes, waffles, or French toast and freeze them for the week. Reheat, add low-fat cream cheese, nut butter and/or fruit. Grab and go!



- Breakfast smoothies: Blend yogurt or low-fat buttermilk with your favorite fruit, milk or juice, some protein powder (I like Designer Whey Natural Flavor because it goes with any drink) and ice (or frozen fruit like strawberries or banana chunks).
- Yogurt parfait: Enjoy low-fat or nonfat yogurt with a crunchy whole grain cereal and fresh fruit.
- Cold cereal and fat-free milk or soymilk with fruit: Try Kashi Cereals which are high in fiber and protein (I like Kashi Cinna-Crunch). What if you like the sweeter not-so-healthy cereals? Try mixing a “hearty” one with your favorite until you get used to the healthier cereals.
- Try hot cereals this winter: Oatmeal, Cream of Wheat, or Bob’s Red Mill Spice n’ Nice which is my newest favorite!
- Low-fat or nonfat cottage cheese and fruit—have you tried Knudsen Cottage Doubles®? Top with low-fat granola or nuts for an added treat.
- Egg white or egg substitute omelet with veggies and a little cheese.
- Breakfast burrito: Whole-wheat tortilla with scrambled egg substitute or egg whites, veggies and a sprinkle of low-fat cheese, a few slices of avocado and salsa. Delicious!
- Egg McLila: Mix 1/3 cup egg beaters in a small bowl with black pepper and any combination of finely chopped veggies (e.g., onion, garlic, red bell pepper, spinach, black olives, artichoke hearts, etc.). Microwave for 2 minutes. Top with a whole wheat English muffin and finish with ½ ounce of low-fat grated cheese, 2 teaspoons of fat free cream cheese or 1/8 of a mashed avocado. Add Tabasco and/or salsa

and enjoy! This is about a 300 Calorie breakfast packed with lean protein and “good fats” (if you use the olives and avocado).

Time-Saving Tips:

- Grab your favorite yogurt out of the fridge and add cereal from a baggie you filled the night before. You might like the “tubes” of yogurt that can be eaten without utensils.
- Pack fruits and veggies in small plastic baggies to grab out of the fridge.
- Set out bowls, spoons and cereal the night before.
- Have all your smoothie ingredients in the blender in the refrigerator. Add ice, blend and go. Many blenders come with cups that you can blend the smoothie in—no blender mess to clean up!
- Make oatmeal the night before and microwave in the morning, or have it in the pot or bowl ready to microwave or cook.
- Have your egg beater and veggie combination ready to microwave so you can zap it and add it to your English muffin for the Egg McLila!

NUMBER 6: How to Pack a Healthy Lunch?

With childhood obesity on the rise—according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 16 percent of kids age 6 to 19 years are considered overweight—it's more important than ever to teach your child healthy eating habits.

8 Tips to Pack a Healthy Lunch:

- ① Avoid "bad fats" like potato chips, and include "good fats" like nuts, avocado, nut butter and tuna (see Page 9).
- ② Kids love dairy, so try to include non-fat yogurt, low-fat chocolate milk, low-fat cottage cheese or string cheese.
- ③ Fruit is important—pack one or two servings. Include a variety in every lunch. Kids will be more likely to eat it, and they'll get different nutrients. Wondering which fruits are best? Don't sweat it. All fruits are good for different reasons.
- ④ Limit sugar and soda; instead pack water or 100-percent juice. Watch out for labels that say 'fruit-juice sweetened' or 10-percent juice.
- ⑤ Don't forget about food safety: Keep hot items like soup in a thermos, or use an ice pack to keep food cold.
- ⑥ Buy snack baggies or little plastic storage containers, and pre-portion everything out. Have kids help with those types of things. It gets them involved and limits waste.
- ⑦ Be sure to include a lean protein source—chicken, lean deli meat, string cheese, hard-boiled egg, nuts or low-fat dairy.



⑧ Choose whole grain when it comes to bread, cereal, tortillas, crackers, bagels or English muffins.

If you're afraid your kids will get bored with the same ol' sandwiches, you're probably right. Try these easy meals to spice up their lunchboxes.

5 Yummy Lunchbox Meals:

① Bean and cheese burrito on a whole-wheat tortilla. You can add chicken and/or rice to it, and serve it with low-fat sour cream or salsa.

② Homemade soup with half a turkey sandwich on whole wheat.

③ Yogurt, nut mix, and half a peanut butter sandwich with fresh fruit spread instead of high-sugar jelly or jam. Include a piece of fruit on the side.

④ Tuna or egg salad to use as a dip with whole-grain crackers, whole-wheat pita bread or baked chips. Tofu pate or hummus is a great substitute. Include fruit salad or a cereal bar on the side.

⑤ Leftover homemade pizza on mini Boboli or whole-wheat pita. Have your child help make it so it's personalized. Toppings could include onions, olives, tomatoes, bell peppers, veggie or lean pepperoni, and low-fat mozzarella.

Just like with lunches, get the kids involved with making snacks so they take ownership and want to eat them.



Fun and Creative Snacks:

- Ants on a Log: Spread peanut butter on celery sticks and top with raisin "ants." Another version is the Apple Smiley—apple slices topped with peanut butter and raisins.
- Mini-sandwiches: Cut the bread with fun-shaped cookie cutters. The sandwiches can be any kind—turkey and cheese, peanut butter, etc.
- Nut mix: Put out raisins, pretzels, popcorn, healthy cereals and nuts, and let the kids make their own mix. You can throw in a few M&Ms or mini chocolate chips, too.
- Peanut butter balls: Start with peanut butter, and add items such as honey, nuts, raisins, coconut or flaxseed meal, roll into bite-sized balls and keep in the fridge.
- Mini pizzas: Put different toppings on whole-wheat English muffins or mini pitas, and bake in toaster oven.
- Dips: Take a scoop of tofu spread, hummus, tuna or egg salad, and eat with veggies or crackers.

NUMBER 7: Are You Hungry at 3pm?

If you're hungry at 3pm, it probably means you need a little something to get you through the afternoon; and I don't mean a soda or candy bar from the vending machine, but some real food! Remember, your body likes to eat at least every 3-4 hours. So, if you're thinking dinner is just around the corner at 5 or 6 pm, but you ate at 12 or 1 pm, you could be going 5, 6 or even 7 hours without some real food. Plus, if you exercise after work, you'll definitely need some energy to get you through your workout. If you're prone to munch while you're cooking dinner, this might help you control that intense hunger when you walk through the door.

A snack should be like a mini-meal with some "good carbohydrates" along with a little protein and/or fat; anywhere from 100-400 Calories, depending on what you're doing after you eat, and how much you need to eat throughout the day. Bring snacks to work each day, or keep some there so you're always prepared!

Here are 10 snack ideas to get you started:

- Toby's Lite Tofu Pate (tastes like egg salad, really!). Found in the natural food section of Oregon stores. Try it with baked whole grain crackers, a slice of whole grain bread, or vegetables.
- 10-15 peanut butter filled pretzels and 10-20 low-fat animal crackers (I like Cat Cookies found at Trader Joe's; chocolate and vanilla are both great)
- Bars: Luna, Clif, Balance, Apex Cookies (look for one with less than 2 grams of saturated fat, and at least 10 grams of protein), with a piece of fruit



- A piece of fruit with 10-30 of your favorite nuts (they're all good for you!)
- Water packed tuna with vegetables or baked crackers
- Nonfat or low-fat yogurt or cottage cheese, with fruit and/or nut mix
- Small bowl of whole grain cereal with fruit (add wheat germ and/or flaxseed meal if you want)
- ½ sandwich with fruit (try peanut butter and honey, turkey and avocado, or vegetable and hummus)
- Need some caffeine? Try a soymilk latte for some good fat and added protein (add a fruit if you get a small size). If you're not used to soy yet, try ½ nonfat and ½ soymilk latte.

One of my favorite protein packed snacks is quinoa breakfast cereal. Quinoa (keen-wah) is an ancient grain of the Incas which is naturally high in protein and wheat and is gluten free (found in the natural foods section of grocery stores). Cook ½ cup or 1 cup dry quinoa according to directions. Mix ½ -1 cup cooked with:

- Enough milk to cover the cereal (about equal parts quinoa and milk): nonfat works great, or be creative and try soy, almond, hazelnut, or flavored versions of these milks like vanilla, chocolate and coffee, which are just decadent!
- 1 scoop protein powder (I like to use a little natural Designer Whey and Trader Joe's egg and milk protein powder; can also use chocolate or vanilla flavors, or soy protein powder)
- 1 tablespoon of your favorite nut butter (peanut butter, sunflower is great, cashew, or almond)
- 10-15 raisins or other dried fruit like cranberries



NUMBER 8: Eating Late At Night...

I can't tell you how many times I've gotten this question: "Will eating late at night cause me to gain weight?", or tell you how many times I've heard, "Well, I don't eat anything after 6 pm, even if I'm hungry, because I'm trying to lose weight."

Short Answer:

Late night eating does *NOT* cause weight gain.

Let the truth be known that it's not the timing of your food consumption that really counts, but rather the total number of calories you consume in a given day. What this means is that if you need 2300 Calories per day to maintain your weight, and you eat 2000 throughout the day, and then you're hungry at say 10pm so you eat a 300 Calorie snack, you won't gain weight because it's still within your calorie parameters. However, I often see people who consume very little during the day, say 1000 Calories, then they're starving and in an eating frenzy when they arrive home from work, and eat (overeate) well into the evening. In this case you could gain weight.

Of course the types of foods you choose to eat late at night can make a difference too. Often people choose snack foods like chips, cookies, chocolate or ice cream to eat as an evening snack. These foods often don't fill you up, and these are foods you might tend to eat in larger amounts, which can lead to a large intake of fat and calories in a short amount of time. Thus, you might end up eating more calories than your body needs, which over time, can lead to weight gain.

BOTTOM LINE: So, you *CAN* eat late at night and not gain weight, as long as you don't exceed your daily caloric needs.



NUMBER 9: What's a Food Bar?

If I had said *energy* or *protein bar*, you wouldn't be confused, right? Even if you've heard this word tossed around lately, you still might be wondering what they are.

By my definition, a food bar is an alternative to the normal energy bars (e.g., Clif, Luna, Apex, etc) that are made up of *food*. Some defining characteristics:

- You will usually recognize all of the ingredients on the label
- There are very few ingredients listed on the label
- It might have some of the following words on the package: organic, food, not processed, raw/uncooked, no sugar added, dairy free, vegan, wheat or gluten free, etc.

What's in them?

They're mostly nuts, seeds and dried fruits. No processed/added sugars. The sweetness is usually from the natural fruit, or more natural sweet sources like agave or brown rice syrup, and it's all held together with the nuts. Some have as little as two ingredients. The Lara Bar Cashew Cookie flavor is simply cashews and dates, that's it! This bar is: 190 Calories, 9 grams fat, 0 saturated and trans fat (the "not so good fats"), 4 grams fiber and 5 grams protein.

Are these better than protein bars?

They're different. They might not have as much protein as the other bars, but 5 grams per 200 Calories isn't bad and depending on why you're eating it, it might be just fine. Protein bars are often eaten after a workout to refuel muscles



with protein and carbohydrates. Food bars would be perfect pre-workout or during the day for a snack or meal.

Do they taste good?

Depends on your taste buds, but I and many of clients think YES! Remember to try and try again. You can adjust your taste buds slowly to like healthier tasting food. There are many flavors and brands so don't give up if you don't like the first one you try.

Why would I want to work this into my life?

We all need quick, convenient foods these days and these bars are just that. When compared to the regular bars out there, they contain less sugar, they're more natural, and can be a way to get the "good fats" into your eating plan. The simple fact that you *CAN* recognize all of the ingredients is reason enough for me to give these bars a try!

What about all the fat?

My clients often notice these bars are greasier than regular protein/energy bars, or you might notice the label lists 10-15 grams of fat per bar. Well, you're allotted anywhere from 50-80 grams fat per DAY based on your needs, so depending on the rest of your day, these bars might work in just fine. Remember, these bars will be primarily monounsaturated fats from all the nuts, and many are loaded with omega-3 fatty acids too, like the Organic Food Bar Omega 3 flavor. These are the "good fats"!



What are some brands of food bars?

- Lara Bars: www.larabar.com
- Organic Food Bars: www.organicfoodbar.com, I like the Vegan, Omega 3 and Chocolate Chip Flavors
- Organic Clif Nectar Bars
- Many others out there...look at the ingredient labels to see if they're food bars (Remember: look for mostly nuts, seeds and dried fruit).

Where can I find them?

Trader Joe's has them cheapest of course and you might find the "many other brands" more readily at Wild Oats, New Seasons, Whole Foods, etc.

How can I fit them into my day?

- Snack (key snack times are often at 10am and 3pm)
- On the go meal (e.g., the Organic Food Bars are 300 Calories)
- Go slow with these bars because they might be more fiber and nuts than you're used to. I have had clients complain of stomach irritation and cramping. Start with ½ a bar and drink more water to adjust your stomach to these.
- See a Registered Dietitian to find out how and why you should specifically incorporate these into your current eating plan www.eatright.org Enjoy!



NUMBER 10: How Much Water is Enough?

Many of my clients tell me that they heard they don't need to drink those infamous 8 glasses of water per day. Unfortunately, that is just not true. Your body needs water and yes you really should be drinking at least 64 ounces of water per day, minimum! For men, the average need is 13 cups per day, and for women the need is about 9 cups per day.

Those needs increase with exercise and with heat. Water makes up about 70% of your body so it just makes sense that water needs to be part of a healthy lifestyle to help overall well being. It's not food or exercise, but it's vital to both of these! The average diet can supply about 20% of your water needs, so eating an even healthier diet full of those water laden fruits and veggies that I always talk about, can provide even more water to your body. However, it's always best to strive for those 9-13 glasses per day because that won't by any means be too much water for your body.

Remember, by the time you are thirsty, you are already dehydrated. Most people walk around mildly dehydrated and even mild dehydration can cause fatigue and headaches, which are many of my clients' primary complaints. Other signs of dehydration include excessive thirst, dry mouth, little or no urination, muscle weakness, dizziness and lightheadedness.

Yes, caffeine and alcoholic beverages do supply some of your water needs, but the plain ol' stuff is better to drink every day! If you just HATE the plain stuff, add some lemon and ice or a splash or 100% pure fruit juice like cranberry for some added flavor. Water goes down easy with a little flavor. Carry a



water bottle with you at all times so you're not stuck for hours on end without water, and keep a water glass in plain sight. Be leery of the sports waters, many have added sugars and caffeine, so check the labels carefully.

If these next 10 reasons to drink water don't change your mind, the way you feel after you start drinking water regularly should just about do it! Trust me—water can be your next best friend! If you're one to often complain of fatigue and headaches, try water first! Oh, and your bladder will adjust to the increased fluid. In the mean time, enjoy the added bathroom breaks as a way to get up and move more during the day, and eventually your bladder will get used to it.

10 Reasons to Drink Water:

- ① **GET HEALTHY SKIN.** Drinking water moisturizes your skin from the inside out. Water is essential to maintaining elasticity and suppleness and helps prevent dryness.
- ② **LOSE WEIGHT.** Increased water consumption can help you control weight by preventing you from confusing hunger with thirst. Water will also keep your body systems working properly, including metabolism and digestion, and give you the energy (and hydration) necessary for exercise.
- ③ **FLUSH TOXINS.** By helping to flush toxins, appropriate water intake lessens the burden on your kidneys and liver.
- ④ **REDUCE YOUR RISK OF A HEART ATTACK.** Researchers at Loma Linda University in California studied more than 20,000 healthy men and women and found that people who drink more than five glasses of water a day were less likely to die from heart disease than those who drank fewer than two.



- ⑤ CUSHION AND LUBE YOUR JOINTS AND MUSCLES. Water makes up a large part of the fluid that lubricates and cushions your joints and muscles. Drinking water before, during, and after exercise can also help reduce muscle cramping and premature fatigue.
- ⑥ STAY REGULAR. Water helps prevent constipation by adding fluid to the colon and bulk to stools, making bowel movements softer and easier to pass.
- ⑦ STAY HYDRATED, GET ENERGIZED, AND BE ALERT. On average, most adults lose about 10 cups of fluid a day through sweating, exhaling, urinating, and bowel movements. Even minor dehydration can cause impaired concentration, headaches, irritability, and fatigue.
- ⑧ REGULATE YOUR BODY TEMPERATURE. Perspiration is your body's natural mechanism to control body temperature. And to sweat, you need plenty of water.
- ⑨ REDUCE YOUR RISK OF DISEASE AND INFECTION. Water can help prevent kidney stones and reduce your chances of getting bladder, kidney, and urinary tract infections. One study found that women who drank more than five glasses of water a day had a risk of colon cancer that was 45 percent less than those who drank two or fewer glasses a day.
- ⑩ GET WELL. The traditional prescription to "drink plenty of fluids" when you're sick still holds strong. Water can help control a fever, replace lost fluids, and thin out mucus.

NUMBER 11: Satisfying Soft Drink Alternatives

Top 5 reasons why to find a soft drink alternative:

- ① **DECREASE CALORIES:** Eating or drinking more calories than your body needs causes weight gain or keeps your weight absolutely steady. Can't lose those last 5#? Kick your regular soda habit and you might just start losing. If you drink one regular soda every single day and decided to stop, in one year you would lose 15 pounds!
- ② **DECREASE SUGAR.** We all know sugar doesn't provide the nutrition our bodies crave. Sodas can create big spikes in blood sugar, followed by crashes. This can cause our emotions and energy to crash along with it. Most of us know that sugar can lead to tooth decay, weight gain (due to added calories), and unstable blood sugars. But, did you know that it is recommended to have only about 40 grams of added sugar per day? One regular pop has 40 grams of sugar which is equal to 10 teaspoons. You choose where you want your sugar allotment to come from.
- ③ **DECREASE CAFFEINE.** Don't want to rely on caffeine to get you through your day? Sick of the crash and headaches when the caffeine wears off? Wean yourself off slowly and then try one of the alternatives below. You don't need to give it up all together. Moderate caffeine intake (which has been linked to some health benefits) is equal to ~300 mg of caffeine per day (a pop has about 50 mg and an average cup of 6-8 oz coffee has about 140 mg).



④ INCREASE CALCIUM INTAKE. The research is not conclusive that sodas actually decrease bone density but we do know that sodas often replace calcium rich fluids such as nonfat milk and fortified orange juice. Not getting enough calcium can lead to a greater risk of broken bones and osteoporosis in later years. The average teenage girl consumes 40 percent less calcium than she needs!

⑤ INCREASE THE NUTRIENT DENSITY OF YOUR DIET. Soft drinks often replace water and nutrient-rich beverages and foods, which we all need to stay healthy and look and feel good.

BOTTOM LINE: enjoy soft drinks in moderation and remember that variety and color are the spice of life when it comes to eating! Did you know the average American takes in >65% of their calories from non nutrient dense foods such as pop. You can change your taste buds to prefer more natural flavors like fruits (packed with flavor and nutrients), just go slow and steady.

What can you drink instead?

No Calories and No Sugar

- Water: Does yours taste bad? Invest in a Brita filter and then be creative. Add a splash of 100% juice such as cranberry juice and/or fresh lemon, lime or cucumber slices.
- Talking Rain sparkling flavored waters or Mineral waters: non-flavored and flavored.
- Potenza: no calorie, clean spring water enhanced with 100 mg of natural caffeine. This is an Oregon product created by Jeff Epstein. For more information: www.drinkPotenza.com



- Diet pops: contain Aspartame or Sucralose (your call!). But remember artificial sweeteners keep your taste buds preferring sweet flavors...Yes, you can retrain your taste buds.
- Hot black or Sun tea: all kinds of flavors available.

No Caffeine

- Diet caffeine-free pops: contain artificial sweeteners and keep your taste buds liking sweet flavors and foods.
- Herbal hot teas/Sun teas: Herbal means no caffeine.
- Juice: make sure it's 100% juice. Check labels for added sugar. To lower caloric intake, simply dilute the juice by adding more water or sparkling calorie free waters.
- More natural sodas: Must have a soda? Try Blue Sky and Hansen's brands, which are still loaded with sugar, but don't have the caffeine, preservatives, additives, artificial colors, or artificial flavors included in many of the mainstream brands.

BOTTOM LINE: Soft drinks often bump more nutrient dense foods and water out of your diet. Next time you reach for a soda out of boredom or habit, rethink your options. Before you drink and grab, why are you doing that? Experiment with drinking 8 oz of water before your soda. Do you still want/need it? If so, have it, enjoy it and savor it. Be mindful and non-judgmental of your choices! If you're reaching for a soda because you're tired or hungry right about 3pm, it's probably time for a nutrient dense snack! Next time you feel sluggish and are about to grab a pop, try a good tasting snack with a little protein to help satisfy you.



And don't skimp on the water! It is still important to strive for those 8 glasses of water per day because most Americans are slightly dehydrated. We need more in the summer time, when we're more active, and if we're taller or weigh more. Water is important because it can help flush toxins out of your body during stressful times, it can keep you regular, help you to feel better by decreasing fatigue and headaches and thus give you more energy, satisfy a hunger craving when you're bored, and more! Just make it taste good and drink up.



NUMBER 12: Healthy Travels

I just returned from a crazy road trip weekend, where we *tried* to eat healthy, and I thought it would be useful to share this information now, while many others are planning and going on summer travels! Our “snack pack” as we called it was a life saver! We all contributed to it and it helped keep us energized throughout our trip!

So, we didn't get in too many pedometer steps these driving days, but we still tried to eat semi-healthy and enjoy our trip! Our “snack pack” allowed us to eat first thing in the morning if we couldn't get to breakfast right away, so we fed our hungry bellies and got our metabolism going! Plus, we could eat while we were driving so we didn't have to stop as much, and when we did, we didn't end up overeating at our next fast food or gas station destination because we weren't starving!

Our “snack pack” contained:

- Nut mix: nuts, raisins, chocolate chips, dried fruit, Kashi crunch cereal, etc.
- Dried apricots
- Bars: Luna, Balance, Genisoy, Apex protein cookies, and Rising Dough low-fat cookies
- Real, yummy cookies for treats
- Unsalted peanut butter pretzels and chocolate low-fat animal cookies from Trader Joe's

I definitely recommend planning ahead when you travel and brining a “snack pack” such as ours...and lots of water! Water, water, water, and fewer soda pops will help give you energy! Don't get me wrong, my sisters enjoyed an occasional diet



soda, and we all enjoyed a soy mocha to keep us going, but we asked for light chocolate and less whipped cream, and didn't order the biggest size.

Plus, we tried to be semi-healthy at fast food places. We ordered bean burritos with less cheese and added lettuce and tomato, or a tostado with extra lettuce, or a McFlurry with fewer goodies in it! So, our “snack pack” allowed us to stick to one thing at a take out window and stop less along the way! But don't worry, once we got to the wedding, we enjoyed the open bar, and tried the wedding cake along with at least 5 or 6 of the other gourmet delicious special desserts! Then, we hit the dance floor into the night!

Before you head out, plan ahead! Fast food restaurants have all their nutritional information on-line, so you can see what healthier options are available before you leave, and you can even take a cooler with you to have more options. You could bring: string cheese, cut up fruit, yogurts, tuna and crackers, etc. Try to bring fresh food on your first day (maybe make sandwiches), and then go to fast food when you must!



NUMBER 13: Fuel for the Trip

Traveling by: PLANE

Don't just pack snacks for *on* the plane, also pack a lunch and eat breakfast before you head out for an early morning flight. Have a plan! Depending on where you're going you might want to pack snacks for your trip too. I have a client heading to Europe, which I hope to be doing this fall, so into her suitcase goes at least 10 different bars for emergency food (try Luna, Clif, Balance, Lara bars) and maybe some nut mix. Once you get to your destination go shopping for staples: fruit, veggies, yogurts, cereal, etc. Don't be stuck in or out of your hotel without food! Walking and being a tourist takes a lot of energy so make sure you fuel your body properly to keep going, going, going....

Traveling by: CAR

Do all of the above plus bring a small cooler. No excuses for McDonalds or Dairy Queen, ok maybe Dairy Queen but keep it to a kid's size or small...or split your "treat". No reason to go crazy because you're on vacation! Have fun, just don't give up! Bring along: sandwiches, tuna, hummus, yogurts, string cheese, etc.

Traveling by: FOOT

Walking a lot? Bring a backpack and bring your food with you. Don't go out for a long walk or hike, or even "just a tourist day" and be stuck out for 3, 4 or maybe even 6 hours without food or water. Bring your water, nuts, fruit, light lunch and then head out for the day.



So, if you wake up every morning and say, “Today I will eat healthy” and then you leave the house without breakfast and/or any food then you need to reevaluate and make a change!

BOTTOM LINE: Think ahead! I don't work 10-15 hour days without food. I spend ~1/2 an hour the night before getting all of my food ready, while I cook my salad for that night. No time for that? Then get up early and don't leave the house without your food! Ok, have I stressed that enough—If I can do it, you can do it. My food is what allows me to keep going all day and it allows me to help my clients get fit and healthy. It's my fuel for my day and I couldn't do my 4 “jobs” right now without being healthy and properly fueled first.

Now, go home and plan out your snacks for tomorrow and let me know how you feel! Some of the common themes I hear once people start pre-planning and eating healthier: less headaches, more energy and stamina, think more clearly, feel better and probably look better!

So, GET EATIN'! Yes, I'm telling you to eat more often, just plan it out and eat less at each meal to keep your metabolism and energy up.



NUMBER 14: Healthy Camping

Yes really, healthy camping can be done! Camping doesn't have to be all about potato chips, hamburgers, hotdogs, and S'mores. Okay, maybe you want it to be all about those favorite camping foods, but you can do it healthier too! It just takes some pre-planning and preparing of foods ahead of time.

Don't worry, you can still enjoy some of your favorite camping foods guilt-free (like S'mores), as long as you add in some healthy snacks and meals. Here are some tips to get you started on healthy camping:

Snacks:

- Fruit! Bring bananas, pre-washed apples, oranges, and pre-cut/washed watermelon, cantaloupe and strawberries.
- Cherry tomatoes—wholesome and refreshing
- Baked chips or pretzels along with your favorite dip, like hummus
- Air popped or low-fat popcorn, pre-popped and put into a Ziploc bag; add the butter and spices at the campground so it stays crispy.
- *GORP* (like nut-mix but lower in fat). Make your own by adding any of your favorite nuts (cashews, peanuts, almonds, sunflower seeds, etc), raisins, pretzels, dry cereal like Kashi Crunch, mini chocolate chips & cut-up dried fruit.
- Peanut butter pretzels and low-fat cookies

Breakfast:

- Whole wheat pancakes with bananas or blueberries: bring the mix pre-measured in a Tupperware container so you just need to add the liquid. I like to start with Krusteaz whole wheat honey mix, and then I add some wheat germ, flaxseed meal and protein powder to the mix. At the campground I just need to add the water and egg whites. Add the fruit to each pancake individually then you can make different kinds: blueberry, banana or chocolate chip.
- Oatmeal with raisins and bananas
- Cold cereal with nonfat milk and cut-up strawberries.
- Egg beaters with grilled vegetables (chop the vegetables ahead of time and put them in a Ziploc bag), serve with pre-cooked chicken or veggie sausage, and toast with jam.

Lunch/Dinner:

- Peanut butter and jelly sandwiches with fruit
- Cottage cheese or yogurt with fruit and GORP
- Sandwiches with the works: low-fat cheese, lean deli meat or baked tofu, tomatoes, lettuce (pre-washed), a bit of avocado, pickles, low-fat mayonnaise/cream cheese, and mustard. Bring bagels, bread or pita bread for a variety of choices. Be creative!
- Hummus with pita bread, baked crackers and/or pre-cut and washed vegetables
- Potato salad or egg salad made ahead of time
- A pre-made cold pasta dish is great and can last the weekend to enjoy with sandwiches later on. Toss cooked pasta or tortellini with a little pesto, sliced



kalamata olives, artichoke hearts, red bell peppers and fat free or low-fat feta. Perfect to serve cold or set out at room temperature. Keeps great in a cooler!

- Garden burgers or very lean hamburgers with the works. Serve with pre-washed corn on the cob.
- Veggie or turkey hotdogs with whole-wheat buns; serve with leftover pasta salad or potato salad
- Burritos (just heat up the beans and/or chicken and add low-fat cheese, salsa, lettuce, tomato, avocado, to your favorite corn or whole wheat tortilla.)
- Freshly caught fish with lemon and garlic, served with precooked rice

Dessert:

- S'mores with low-fat graham crackers, mini marshmallows and just a bit of dark chocolate.
- Some of that yummy cut-up fruit with lemon yogurt and GORP on top.
- Peanut butter pretzels and low-fat cookies
- Low-fat cookie or graham crackers and sugar free hot chocolate (add a little Kahlua or Bailey's to keep you warm and cozy!)

How do I do all this while camping? Pre-plan, pre-portion (into Tupperware and zip-lock bags) and prepare. Write out your meals for each day and then pack just enough food for the trip. For example, take a little container of peanut butter instead of the whole jar, and put cereal, crackers and chips in smaller bags, as you probably don't need whole boxes and bags of these items. By doing this you'll save a ton of space and not waste food if it gets dirty or spoiled on your trip.



Most of all have fun with it! You can bring along a Dutch oven and make just about anything in that right at the campground. But pre-plan for that too. If you're going to make lasagna for example, sauté the vegetables ahead of time and then you just need to throw it all together at the site.



NUMBER 15: Do You Let Food Go to Waste?

I often hear from clients, friends and family, that they throw a lot of food out each week. Or, it sits in there for weeks, and then they throw it out....or they don't buy fruits and vegetables because they KNOW they won't eat them....Well, here are some tips to help you eat your food and stop throwing away food and money!

Pre-plan what you're going to make for the week and then buy ingredients you can use in multiple dishes. Plan out several dishes: burritos, vegetable chicken or tofu stir fry, and a pasta that can all use the same vegetables.

Buy in smaller quantities. Only buy what you can eat in a week. Buy just 4 bananas and maybe 2 ripe ones and 2 greener ones. Don't buy in bulk, even if it's a good deal, because it's not a good deal if you don't use it. Or you might eat too much of it just because you have it around.

Prepare it before you refrigerate it:

- Pre-wash and pre-cut fruit like melons and put a note on the door that it's in there for your spouse or kids (don't pre-wash berries, but wash apples or other hard fruits)
- Cut-up vegetables for salad or stir fry: carrots, peppers, broccoli, celery, whatever you like! Only cut the hard ones and do the soft ones right before eating, like tomatoes and cucumbers.
- Wash and completely dry lettuce so you'll use it, or buy Trader Joe's completely dry Just Greens or Romaine,



then just rinse before you use it (it lasts for over a week this way).

- While you're making your lunch the night before (ya right, huh?), get other foods ready for snacks and dinners, like the veggies and fruits

Look for recipes on-line for left over food you have. One of my clients *Googles* what she has on hand, like "leftover salmon", or go to www.epicurious.com, find a great recipe that fits your food, and then be sure to try to make it healthier (this is a gourmet, not health conscious website).

Along these same lines, think through what you'll do with leftovers. If you make too much rice to go with that salmon, you can use it in stir fry the next night.

Don't eat out as much. Set a goal to eat at home more often. If you currently eat out 3 times per week, shoot for 2 and you'll be able to cook more and eat more of your own, delicious food!

So, remember:

- Pre-plan
- Pre-cut and pre-wash
- Buy in smaller quantities
- Freeze food
- Buy a FoodSaver
- Make everything, big salads
- Pre-portion leftovers before you put them away
- Make more food on purpose so you can have leftovers to eat for lunch or dinner later!



Are evening meals and/or snacks a source of excess calories for you? If so:

Have a light snack in the afternoon, like around 3pm. For a healthy quick snack try an apple or banana with peanut butter, nonfat yogurt with 10 almonds, 15 Kashi Crackers with 2-4 tablespoons hummus, or a Luna bar with fruit. Choose a snack with a little protein or fat to satisfy that hunger.

Remember, the longer you wait to eat between meals, the more likely you are to overeat. Think of your body as needing fuel, and don't forget to fill it up with a little something to keep you going every 3-4 hours. If you're going longer than 4 hours without food, it's a sign you need to adjust your eating pattern.

Use your body's hunger signals to determine whether you really need to eat in the evening (or, for that matter, any time of day). If your sleep will be interrupted because your stomach is growling, eat something! It's not good to go to bed hungry. Often a late snack will help you sleep, but too much of a snack can keep you up. However, if you eat a bowl of ice cream every night while watching TV just because it's part of your routine, you might need to break an eating habit. Try establishing new habits: call a friend, write in a journal, stretch or do some push-ups and sit ups and then see if you still want that treat.



NUMBER 16: Time Saving Kitchen Tips

We're all in a pinch for time these days and what I often hear from my clients is "I don't cook because I don't have the time." Research shows that people want their meals to take about five minutes to prepare, which means you'll definitely need some time saving tips if this is the case.

Here are 10 tips to help you ease your way back into the kitchen and be better at eating and preparing your meals at home.

- ① Chop away: When you're chopping veggies for dinner, go ahead and chop them all! You can put them in plastic containers for the rest of the week and have easy access for salads, stir fries, soups, pastas, salads, sandwiches, snacks, etc.
- ② Does your lettuce get soggy quick? Wash, dry and cut lettuce as soon as you get home, so salads will be a snap to prepare at dinnertime, and lettuce won't go bad. Another option is to buy pre-washed lettuces. They're completely dry so they don't get soggy! For quick salads, add some of those pre-chopped veggies and *Voile!*
- ③ For a quick, light salad dressing—put your salad in a large Tupperware container, add 4-8 shakes of seasoned rice vinegar (depending on taste and the size of your salad), use a little (~1 tablespoon) of your favorite dressing (I like Trader Joe's low-fat blue cheese with real chunks of blue cheese), and shake vigorously. This will leave your salad full of flavor, without coating your arteries full of fat.



④ Hate cooking? Cook *for* the leftovers and freeze, freeze, freeze! Try:

- Spaghetti Sauce: Make a large pot of sauce and freeze in several small containers. Defrost only what you need.
- Soups: Freeze great in individual portions.
- Pre-cooked Chicken and Fish: Make your own “frozen meals”

⑤ Look for pre-chopped items: I enjoy Trader Joe’s pre-chopped onions. I add them to omelets (egg white of course), pastas, soups/stews, stir fries and casseroles. You’ll save on time *and* tears.

⑥ Another find: frozen chopped fresh basil, parsley & garlic! They are packaged in teaspoon sized frozen squares, with 20 cubes to a pack. They don’t need to be defrosted before use; in fact, they are easier to “pop out” if completely frozen. Where? Trader Joe’s of course!

⑦ Do you find yourself throwing out “black”, over-ripe bananas? Waste no more! Slice ‘em up, put in small plastic baggies and freeze for later use in fruit smoothies or banana bread. They can replace the ice cubes in fruit smoothies. The riper they are, the sweeter the taste.

⑧ Cook batches of your favorite hot cereal for the week, like old fashioned oatmeal or Lila’s Crock Pot Super Grain Cereal (see Page 5). If you don’t eat it in a week, freeze in individual portions (form balls, wrap in plastic wrap and put in a zip lock bag). Thaws and reheats perfectly!



⑨ Shop for the week and plan your meals so you're not going to the grocery store 2-3 times per week, often when you're hungry and need dinner ASAP. You'll save on time because you'll arrive home to a full fridge with a plan!

⑩ Run out the door without breakfast because you have no time? Get your breakfast ready the night before—put cereal out on the counter, have your oatmeal pre-cooked or ready to cook (just add the water), make a peanut butter sandwich on whole grain bread and eat it on the way to work, put all your smoothie ingredients in the blender and just add ice or those pre-chopped frozen bananas, blend and go! Do any little thing that will save you time in the morning.

I hope these tips encourage and help you to get back in the kitchen so you know what, where and when you're going to eat next! A little pre-planning will not only save you time in the kitchen, but will also help cut down on your take out bill *and* move you towards healthier, life long eating *and* cooking habits!



NUMBER 17: All About Yogurt

You can find all sorts of yogurts these days: whipped, low-fat, soy, not to mention different containers, from squeezable tubes to drinkable forms. So, with all these choices, which one is right for you? I get many questions about yogurt. Some folks try to stay away from it, while others love it but want an alternative to their Yoplait standby...that's where I come in!

First, yogurts are great for many occasions: snacks, lunches, meals and even dessert items! They can be found low in fat and cholesterol, and not only are they high in calcium (which we all know) but they contain those "good" cultures you've been hearing about, along with protein, magnesium, and some B vitamins. I hope this newsletter answers some of your questions and gives you some new yogurts to try, along with new ideas for incorporating yogurt into your eating style!

What if I'm lactose intolerant?

Yogurt is generally tolerated if you're lactose intolerant because it contains the natural enzyme lactase, which breaks down lactose, which you have trouble digesting in other dairy foods like milk. If you noticed you can handle yogurt but not milk, you can also probably tolerate more aged cheeses as well. So, if you're eliminating dairy these days for any other reason, and you're not allergic to it, you might want to read this newsletter and decide to give it another shot. It can be quite good for you if you buy the right ones!

What about all the sugar in yogurt?

Yogurt contains natural milk sugar, so just like fruits and vegetables you don't have to worry about it. Many yogurts might add sweeteners or natural fruit to sweeten them up, so



look at the ingredient label to find out if your yogurt has *added* sugar, otherwise, don't worry about it. No need to buy low carb yogurts. The carbs in yogurt are just fine to eat. You're not going to save many calories by buying the low carb yogurts, but you might sacrifice flavor. To make sure you get yogurts without added sugar, look for the plain kind, yes, quite sour! Then you can add your own fruit to sweeten it up.

Will yogurt really help me lose weight or burn more fat?

That's all the rage these days, huh? Sorry to burst your bubble, but the studies are really stretching it by making this claim. The bottom line according to a recent article in The Journal of the American Dietetic Association (105, 2005): "the role of calcium and dairy product intake in obesity and weight management remains uncertain". But Yoplait says you'll burn more fat, what's up with that? Well, the studies were small and more recent studies found no difference in weight loss when overweight people on lower calorie diets added three daily servings of dairy. Three, small, contradictory studies aren't reason enough to claim yogurt will burn fat. Sorry, but the best way to lose weight and burn fat is still consistently eating healthy and getting regular exercise. Dang-it, huh?! Well, is yogurt still a good thing to add into a healthy diet? Definitely! Dig in!

What are these probiotics anyways?

These are the "good" cultures which help to restore the depleted intestine with new healthful bacteria that keep the bad bugs from attacking the intestinal wall. You may have heard you should eat yogurt if you're taking antibiotics. This is because antibiotics kill the bad *and* good gut bacteria, which can lead to stomach troubles. There are some studies showing it might help Crohn's disease and Irritable Bowl Syndrome (IBS),

as well as urinary tract and vaginal infections. They may also play a role in helping people digest the lactose in dairy. Once again, the food is often recommended over the supplements unless you need a big dose for some reason, (e.g., traveling to a foreign country where you might want some added stomach coverage, or you're on antibiotics for an extended time).

What should I look for on a label?

- CALORIES: Aim for 80-200 Calories per serving, depending on what size your snack or meal should be.
- FAT: Choose nonfat whenever you can. The fat in dairy is not the “good” kind. They do NOT add anything in there by taking out the fat, despite what you might have heard.
- SATURATED FAT: This is the kind that raises the bad cholesterol so shoot for 0-2 grams per serving.
- SUGAR: To keep it lowest, choose yogurts that are unsweetened or fruit-juice sweetened.
- ARTIFICIAL SWEETENERS: You might find Splenda/Sucralose, Aspartame/NutraSweet or Acesulfame Potassium in your yogurt. If you don't want to eat any of these, search for these names on the label. No research showing these will cause you any harm as of yet.
- CALCIUM: At least 20% on the label. Soy will probably have less.
- POTASSIUM: Might be listed. If so, 300 mg per 6 oz is good.
- ACTIVE CULTURES: These are the probiotics, and the label will say live and active cultures like *Lactobacillus bulgaricus* and/or *Streptococcus thermophilus*.



NUMBER 18: Ten Ways to Reduce 100 Calories

Here are 10 easy ways to cut 100 Calories a day. These tips will not only help you get healthier but did you know that you could lose up to ten pounds a year by simply cutting 100 calories per day?

- ① Replace one cup of milk, juice or pop with water. You may be consuming more than 100 Calories of liquid, which usually does not fill you up as much as food.
- ② Do you eat ice cream after dinner? Replace it with a piece of fresh fruit. Gain on fiber, lose on fat and calories.
- ③ Leave some food on your plate. A few bites left throughout the day could add up to more than 100 Calories.
- ④ Replace your morning latte or mocha with black coffee and a splash of milk or soymilk. If that's too much to shoot for, order your coffee drink with nonfat or soymilk to save on calories.
- ⑤ Use nonstick cooking spray instead of oil or butter for cooking. Cooking spray is just finely misted oil and water. Remember, just one tablespoon of oil contains about 120 Calories.



- ⑥ Switch to nonfat or low-fat dairy products: milk, yogurt, cheese, cottage cheese, ice cream, etc. This can save *you more than* 100 Calories per day, and don't worry; they don't add sugar when they take out the fat! Dairy fat is *not* the kind of fat you want in your diet so switch to nonfat and low-fat products wherever you can.
- ⑦ Eat a large salad before dinner. Studies have shown that this can help reduce the calories of your overall meal size, even after taking into account the added calories of the salad. Add LOTS of vegetables and fruits to your salad. NOTHING is off limits when it comes to fruits and veggies. They all have different, great nutrients added to them.
- ⑧ If you use salad dressing, switch to vinegars such as balsamic or rice vinegar. They taste so good that you won't miss the dressing, and you'll save on calories. Look for flavored ones for an extra treat, like raspberry balsamic.
- ⑨ Eat a healthy snack between meals so that you can eat less at lunch and dinner, which are often too big. Choose healthy snacks like fruit, yogurt and nuts.
- ⑩ Walk more. On average, walking 1 mile will burn 100 Calories. You're not actually "cutting" from your diet, but you're adding a great activity to your life. You don't have to do all your walking at once; try taking two 10- to 15-minute walk breaks.

NUMBER 19: What is Metabolic Rate?

Simply put, it is the rate at which your body burns calories. The higher your metabolic rate, the faster you burn calories and thus lose weight. There is a direct correlation between your basal metabolic rate and the amount of muscle you have, or lean body mass. According to Dr. Kerry Kuehl of Oregon Health & Science University, our muscle mass naturally decreases over time (about 10% per decade, or 1% per year after age 30). After age 70, this speeds up to 30% per decade (or 3% per year) due to less activity, co-morbidities (illness), and the aging process. This is the reason that people often complain “I’m eating the same amount of food that I’ve always eaten but I’m gaining weight.” Her point exactly! If metabolic rate decreases with time, then we must actually decrease our caloric intake with time to avoid weight gain. Or better yet, our suggestion would be to stay active in order to preserve lean body mass with age, and possibly even build it. Plus, staying active during weight loss will help you preserve your muscle mass and lose primary fat.

Our metabolism is affected primarily by three things:

- ① Lean body mass
- ② Eating pattern
- ③ Physical activity

Lift Weights

Lifting weights (strength training) helps prevent muscle loss and you may even gain muscle. According to Dr. Kuehl, “For every 1 pound of muscle, an individual burns approximately 50 Calories/pound (range = 35-75 Calories per pound). Thus, if an individual gains 10 pounds of muscle through strength training



(ex: weight lifting 30-45 min, 3 times per wk for one year), their basal metabolic rate will increase 500 Calories per day (i.e., 10 lbs muscle x 50 cal per lb = 500 cal). This is the only healthy way to naturally increase metabolism.” Remember, 500 Calories more per day burned, will equal 1 pound of weight loss per week! Now we’re talkin’.

Eat Regular Meals and Snacks

You’ve all heard this from me over and over and over again! Start your day off right and eat breakfast! A Mayo Clinic Study found that breakfast eaters started their days with significantly higher metabolic rates than breakfast-skippers. It was equivalent to burning an additional 150 Calories per day, or about as much as a 30-minute walk! In fact, research has shown that skipping breakfast is strongly correlated with obesity. Recent research from the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition (81:16-24, 2005) found that eating 6 meals per day at regular time intervals (compared to eating 3-9 meals per day at irregular time patterns), was associated with lower energy intake, greater postprandial (after meal) energy expenditure, along with lower fasting lipid levels; all good things!

BOTTOM LINE: Eat 5-6 small meals or snacks throughout the day, at regular times, starting with breakfast. This will slightly increase your metabolic rate all day long and burn more calories than if you eat 1-3 more sporadic, larger meals each day. Remember, it takes calories to metabolize the food you eat. Eating is good!

Don’t even think about skipping meals! Not eating will actually slow down your metabolic rate. You should never go longer than 4 hours without food.



Avoid “starvation” diets that result in rapid weight loss. With these, you generally lose muscle, which results in you burning few calories (remember what Dr. Kuehl just taught us). You end up having to eat less than ever before to prevent gaining more weight.

Don’t Sit Still!

Science magazine (307, 2005) did a study on lean and overweight folks and found that movement (standing, walking, talking, fidgeting, etc.) actually kept some folks lean. The overweight folks sat 2 ½ more hours per day, which translates into burning 350 Calories LESS per day, or 33 pounds per year!

BOTTOM LINE: Why sit, when you can move? Take breaks, walk down the hall instead of emailing someone, walk around while you’re on the phone, lift weights or do sit ups while you watch TV, keep on moving whenever you can because it all makes a difference in your metabolism! Any activity burns calories and helps keep your metabolic rate high. Just 10 minutes of exercise a few times a day will increase your metabolic rate.

Eat to Fuel Your Body!



NUMBER 20: Top 10 *Smart Foods*

There is a lot of hype these days about “smart foods.” Many folks want to eat the best fruit, the best vegetable, the best of everything for their brain and body. Before we get to those, it’s very important to eat smart in general. Before you focus on specific foods that might be beneficial for different reasons, it’s vital to:

EAT BREAKFAST: Break the 8-12 hour fast with some food to get your metabolism going and brain functioning!

EAT SMALL PORTIONS THROUGHOUT THE DAY: Ideally equal sized breakfast, lunch and dinner and snacks in between in order to keep your blood sugars and mood stable. This will keep your energy more stable and higher.

NEVER GO LONGER THAN 4 HOURS WITHOUT FOOD: Long gaps without food means your brain won’t get enough glucose, not to mention your body. Your body needs food to fuel your body with energy!

DRINK WATER: Vital for all parts of your body, including your brain! Might even help with weight loss.

MOVE MORE: This will increase circulation, oxygenate your brain and body, and help you feel better all around!

So, with those key ideas in mind, here are some healthy brain foods. Remember, it’s also very important to eat a variety of healthy foods and get plenty of fiber (30-50 grams/day) so that you’re eating a nutrient dense, healthy diet!



Top 10 “Smart Foods”:

- ① BLUEBERRIES: For their bursting antioxidant properties. Might help lower blood pressure, which may mean fewer strokes because strokes are often caused by damaged blood vessels in the brain.
- ② DARK LEAFY GREENS (Collard Greens and Swiss Chard): They help regulate homocysteine levels with their high levels of folate and vitamins B12 and B6. High levels of homocysteine are linked to dementia and cognitive decline.
- ③ SPINACH: Full of antioxidants and 3 times more folate than iceberg lettuce
- ④ FATTY FISH (like Salmon and Sardines): The omega-3 fatty acids keep our blood less sticky, which means less heart attacks and strokes, not to mention there is more research coming out that they might help with mild depression and Alzheimer’s.
- ⑤ NUTS & SEEDS: Source of “good fats” and rich in antioxidants and omega-3 fatty acids, which can help lower cholesterol levels and keep weight under control too.
- ⑥ OLIVE OIL: Another “good fat” that contains antioxidants. Better choice over vegetable oil.
- ⑦ GARLIC: Been around for centuries and still touted to help with stress-induced colds and infections and benefit the cardiovascular system.



⑧ **WHOLE GRAINS & BROWN RICE:** Contain many B vitamins, which help reduce homocysteine levels. Also high in fiber, which helps ward off cancer, heart disease and lower cholesterol levels.

⑨ **RED WINE & GRAPE JUICE:** Antioxidants once again to help with memory and cardiovascular disease.

⑩ **DARK CHOCOLATE:** In moderation, there is more and more research supporting that the health benefits of the antioxidants found in dark chocolate which have been linked to improved brain and cardiovascular function.

Other healthy brain foods to keep in mind: avocados, bananas, brewer's yeast, broccoli, brussel sprouts, cantaloupe, flaxseed meal and oil, legumes and beans, oranges, oatmeal, peanut butter, peas, potatoes (especially sweet potatoes), romaine lettuce, soybeans, tuna, wheat germ, nonfat plain yogurt.

On the flip side, brain "drainers" that we often forget: alcohol, artificial food colorings, artificial sweeteners, colas, corn syrup, high-sugar drinks, hydrogenated fats, nicotine, overeating, white bread.

When you incorporate new "smart foods" into your diet, remember to replace the "not-so-good foods" so you're not simply adding more calories, which most of us don't need.

NUMBER 21: Diet Saboteurs & Mindful Eating

When you're trying to lose weight and eat healthy, sometimes your friends and family are your greatest obstacles.

Do any of these sound familiar?

But you're doing so great, just have one little bite.

Oh come on, you don't need to lose weight, you're already beautiful.

I like you just the way you are, don't change!

Other things that might happen:

- Leave food around. They put food or candy on your desk when they know you're trying to be healthier.
- They say discouraging things. "I'm so proud of you but you know most people just gain all the weight back."
- They make you an outsider. "Well, you can't eat that food so I guess you won't be coming with us."
- They make up special rules. "Come on, I made this myself, you must eat some."

Why would loved ones try to keep you from being healthy? Here are some reasons:

- Your spouse may be afraid you won't want them anymore if you lose weight.
- A friend or co-worker might be competitive.
- Family members might feel that it's their responsibility that you be happy in the body you are in now.
- Control. They don't want you making changes on your own or being a stronger person than them.



- They feel threatened. They are overweight themselves and now you make them feel uncomfortable for not trying to be healthy too.

But, before you blame your friends and family for you not being able to succeed, first make sure that you are not a self-saboteur. Why would you do that?

- Afraid you actually don't deserve to be thin.
- Afraid you cannot succeed.
- The unknown is a scary place.

If you think you might be sabotaging your loved one:

- Get on board and try to be healthier with your spouse or friend.
- If you notice you are saying something negative or discouraging, stop and ask yourself why.
- Plan a fun outing or activity when different goals are met, not focused around food.
- Offer to take a walk at lunchtime or bring healthy snacks to the next outing.

What if they just don't know they're doing it?

- *Be direct.* "I'm actually trying to be healthier right now. Nothing against you or your food, I just want to be a healthier person." Who can argue with that?
- *Be sincere.* "It looks great, can I take some for later." You decide when and if you want to eat it.
- *Be real.* Let folks know you're still the same person: "It's me, just a thinner, healthier me!"



So, once your friends and family are on board, take charge and be mindful of your eating! Mindful Eating is paying attention to how food tastes, enjoying the sensations of eating without distraction, and noticing what and how you are eating.

How to Eat Mindfully:

- Take a few deep breaths before starting to eat.
- Eat slowly, savor and enjoy your food.
- Always sit down to eat, preferably at a table.
- Avoid eating and watching TV at the same time.
- Always put food on a plate, in a bowl or glass.
- Change destructive habits: cleaning your plate, ordering larger portions because they are “cost saving”, or getting seconds before allowing yourself to feel full.

Emotional Eaters: If you think you are an emotional eater, observe when and how this occurs. Once identified, try to find some other satisfying activities to do instead of eating: e.g., walk, knit, call a friend, write in a journal, read, etc. Work on identifying physical versus emotional hunger.

Healthy Eating Reminders:

- Be MINDFUL of your eating and physical activity habits. BE HONEST with yourself.
- Eat within 1-2 hours of waking up.
- Do not skip meals—never go longer than 4 hours without food.
- Eat at least 3 meals per day and work up to small, frequent meals 4-6 times per day for more energy, even blood sugar, stabilize mood.



- Strive for 30-50 grams fiber per day: fruits, vegetables, whole grains, beans and nuts.
- No foods are off limits! Work your favorite foods into your day, while maintaining balance.
- Eat a variety of foods throughout the week to get more nutrients and experience the joy of food and eating.
- Focus on “better” fats including fish, flaxseed meal, avocados, all nuts, soy.
- Focus on lean proteins including fish, chicken, beans, soy/tofu, nuts, egg whites, protein powders, nonfat and low-fat dairy products.
- Limit full fat dairy products, red meat (including pork), alcohol, STRESS, soda, etc.
- DRINK UP! 60-100 oz water per day to flush toxins, increase energy, decrease headaches, decrease fatigue, weight loss, feel good!

NUMBER 22: Eight Tips to Portion Control

We all know portions are bigger than ever, and unfortunately so are our waist lines! So, how can you learn to control portions when restaurants are now buying 12-inch plates instead of 10 or 11-inch plates? Some restaurant portions are 2-3x the size that they were in the 70's which makes for portion distortion when you arrive home and try to eat a reasonable sized meal. What is a normal sized meal these days? Few of us really know the answer to this, so here are 8 ways to help you control portions.

First, learn some basic serving sizes.

Did you know this is one serving of the following food items?

- 1 serving meat = 3 oz (size of deck of cards)
- 1 serving of cheese = 1 oz (size of one dice)
- 1 serving cooked pasta and rice = $\frac{1}{2}$ cup ($\frac{1}{2}$ a tennis ball)
- 1 serving bread = 1 slice (FYI: a bagel is 4 servings!)

① This doesn't mean this is all you get to eat at meal time. This is just an exercise in learning portions, and from there you'll learn how to create a reasonable sized meal. The number of servings you get depends on what else you're eating at that meal and your individual daily needs.

② Make your main dish a side dish. Fill your plate with salad and veggies primarily and dish a small serving out of your main meal. Then, you're ready to create leftovers.



- ③ Break down leftovers right away. Now that your main dish has become a side dish, you're bound to have leftovers, so put them in small containers. This will allow you to have the correct number of servings in each so you're not tempted to just "eat the rest" from one big container.
- ④ Out of mind, out of site. Break down those leftovers before you even sit down to your meal. Your meal will wait a few minutes and then you won't be tempted to go back for seconds and third, and then eat the rest because it's almost gone. Sound familiar?
- ⑤ Master mini meals. With all those great leftovers pre-portioned out for the week, it's now time to learn how to master eating small, frequent meals throughout the day. This will prevent you from overindulging at one meal and thus keep blood sugars stabilized, which will normalize your energy and create a more stable mood. This will also allow you to incorporate all the foods you enjoy in moderation!
- ⑥ When eating out, ask for a box right away. You can even ask your server to box up half your meal before it comes out. Warning: sometimes you might need to box up 2/3 of your meal with today's ever-growing portions.
- ⑦ Stay away from buffets. Buffets are not our friend! We feel like we want to get our \$9.99 worth of food and thus end up overeating.
- ⑧ Learn to say "No, thank you." When someone asks, "Will you have a pastry with your coffee?", "Would you like the bigger size for just 50 cents more?", "What will you be having for dessert?"...learn to simply say no thank you! What about the



family member that always catches you off guard with, “Don’t you like it?” or “Don’t you want more?” Here’s a great come back: “I loved it but I just can’t eat another bite. Can I please take some home with me if there are leftovers so I can enjoy it tomorrow?” They’ll know you like it and they won’t feel offended that you didn’t have seconds.



NUMBER 23: When Healthy Foods Go Bad

We all know we've been there. We had good intentions and bought something that looked healthy and might have even said the word healthy right on the package. However, once we tasted it and really took a good look at it, we wondered, "Is this actually good for my body?"

Here are 10 foods that demonstrate when healthy foods can go oh so bad and unhealthy:

① **FLAVORED WATER:** You hear you should drink more water, so you picked up some of those flavored or vitamin enhanced waters. Did you know most of those contain calories and sometimes up to 4 servings per bottle? Even calorie free sweetened waters will keep your taste buds wanting more sweet stuff. So, better yet, opt to flavor your own water with a lemon slice or splash of your favorite 100% all natural fruit juice.

② **100% FRUIT JUICE COCKTAIL:** Speaking of fruit juice, many that say 100% on the label are still loaded with sugar. There should be NO added sugars, just the fruit and some concentrated whole fruits for flavor. Remember to keep juice to a minimum because it can be added calories that don't fill you up. Better yet, water it down to make it last.

③ **SPORTS/ENERGY DRINKS:** They sound like they're healthy and chalked full of vitamins and minerals, plus they claim to give you energy; but what's in your energy drink? Most are loaded with calories, high fructose corn syrup and caffeine. Need a natural energy booster? Drink a glass of water, grab a healthy high fiber snack, and/or go for a 5 minute walk outside to perk you up!



- ④ **PROTEIN/ENERGY BARS:** Many of these contain little fiber and nutrients, and are packed with calories, too much saturated fat, and sugar in more than one form. Look for bars that have >3 grams of fiber, >5 grams of protein and just a little saturated fat. A few recommendations: Lara, Organic Maya by Lara, Organic Food Bars, Luna Bar, Clif Nectar, Clif Z bar, Clif regular bars.
- ⑤ **SALADS:** Oh so healthy but not when they're made with iceberg lettuce and topped with croutons, cheese, too many nuts and olives (yes, usually ok in moderation) and then smothered in regular dressing. Recommendation: opt for low-cal dressing on the side, hold the fatty items, and top with lean protein (like baked chicken or black beans) to make it a healthy, balanced meal.
- ⑥ **NUT MIX:** You hear nuts are good to eat now and it seems like nut mixes would be a good way to get those in. So, you grab a few handfuls a day....Watch out! Check your nut mix for added oils, added sodium, too many chocolate treat items, dried fruit with added sugar, and then check the calories per serving. You should usually stick with 1/4 cup for a healthy snack. Recommendation: make your own nut mix with your favorite raw or roasted nuts without added oils and low to no salt (yes, they're all good so choose a variety and choose your favorite nuts). Add mini chocolate chips, raisins, dried fruits without added sugar and your favorite whole grain cereal for fiber and crunch (I like Kashi Crunch). Store in the refrigerator for freshness and eat in controlled portions.
- ⑦ **100 CALORIE PRE-PACKED SNACK ITEMS:** You're probably thinking, "But that sounds healthy". Well, the serving size might be about right for some folks, but where are the



nutrients? Most are lacking in nutrition and thus won't fill you up for long, if at all. Recommendation: create your own controlled portion snacks (e.g., small fruit and 10 nuts, 15 almonds, ¼ cup healthy home made nut mix, 1 cup low-fat or nonfat yogurt or cottage cheese, celery or apple and 1 Tbs peanut butter, 10 whole grain crackers and string cheese, etc.)

⑧ NO TRANS FAT SNACKS: They might have taken the trans out of many foods since it has to be reported on the food label these days, but many companies are replacing the hydrogenated fats with the high saturated fat oils, which isn't good either! They're swapping one bad fat for another. Recommendation: check the labels for the amount of saturated fat, look for "baked" chips without much added oil, look for higher fiber food items and remember all of these items are "treats" to savor and enjoy! Try: Guiltless Gourmet chips, Trader Joe's Spicy Soy Flax Chips, Kashi Honey Wheat Crackers.

⑨ FROZEN "DIET-TYPE" MEALS: You buy them for convenience and portion control but they're often high in sodium and low in fiber. Many might leave you hungry too. Recommendation: Try Amy's meals which are higher fiber, healthier meals (now low-sodium), or make larger portions when you cook and freeze your own meals. Remember to round any meal out with a vegetable and/or salad, or a piece of fruit.

⑩ BAGELS: You buy the whole grain ones now but even so, did you know most bagels are equal to 4 slices of bread? Recommendation: do buy whole grain higher fiber bagels, try the mini bagels, eat ½ of a regular sized bagel, or better yet, eat a whole grain bread sandwich with at least 2-5 grams fiber/slice of bread.



NUMBER 24: Crazy Fun Food Tips

As a dietitian with a passion for food, I try to buy new items every week so that I can pass on new great food finds to my clients! Because of this, the top statements I hear from my clients are:

Wow, I don't feel like I'm on a diet at all.

I'm never hungry!

I feel like you're telling me it's ok to eat food, enjoy food, and try new foods. Is that right?

My answer: “Yes, yes and YES!”

If you’re one of my clients, you have probably heard many of these items already, but if not, here are some of my favorite food finds and kitchen staples. Remember, eat what you crave, just figure out what that is and then decide how much and when you’re going to eat it. I’m here to help you learn how to eat healthy for life and enjoy food again, without the guilt!

So, what’s in this dietitian’s house?

In the Fridge:

- Fage 0% Greek yogurt. Mix with your favorite flavored yogurt to make it creamy, use as a dip, eat with fruit, nuts and/or cereal, enjoy with Apple Crisp recipe, eat solo!
- Salad concoction ready to go. Cut up all your favorite, hard, salad fixings and keep in the fridge for 2-3 days: peas, corn, cabbage, carrots, apples, cucumbers, etc. Then, it’s easy to just toss in the “soft” stuff and lettuce.



- Cereal mixture. A big bag-o-all your favorite cereals with flaxseed meal, wheat germ, oat bran, raisins, etc...Keep adding to it and then scoop it out for a healthy, tasty, always different cereal mixture. Try Nature's Path Flaxseed Granola or Barbara's Peanut Butter Puffs for a real treat.
- Nut Mix. All kinds of nuts (roasted and raw, lightly or no salt) with hard cereal like Kashi Crunch, raisins, mini chocolate chips, peanut butter chips, etc. (scoop out only what you need, not by the handful).
- Lettuce. Washed, dried and bagged every week
- Pre-washed veggies and fruits
- Leftovers in containers

In the Freezer:

- Trader Joe's organic frozen brown rice: nothing in it but brown rice!
- Frozen veggies, all kinds, organic when I can
- Leftovers in individual portion sized containers
- Trader Joe's healthy frozen meals (e.g., Black Bean Enchiladas and Baked Eggplant)
- Frozen seasonal fruits
- Nuts: all kinds in the freezer until I need them

In the Pantry:

- Organic beans
- Healthy Instant Oatmeal
- Grains: rice, quinoa, oats, etc.
- Soy flax chips
- Peanut butter filled pretzels



- For salads: seasoned rice vinegars, spray balsamic vinegar and other flavored vinegars (without sugar)

Treats on Hand:

- Trader Joe's mini peanut butter cups: a couple will do you!
- Trader Joe's dark chocolate soy nuts: 10 at a time please...
- Enjoy Life Snicker doodle cookies
- Organic chocolate flavored Maya bars
- Trader Joe's pumpkin granola: used in moderation as a topping for yogurt, etc.
- Trader Joe's Vegan cookies: one a day keeps the RD away, not the whole package....



NUMBER 25: What Your Diet May be Telling You About Your Body!

“Diet” in this case refers to a way of eating, or a lifestyle. As a dietitian, I promote an intuitive way of eating to create a healthy life long eating style, or “diet”. Often times, I hear complaints from my clients that might be helped with some diet tips. There are many other factors to take into account too, and I recommend that my clients see a primary physician if symptoms persist. Here are some recommendations that might help 5 common diet complaints I hear.

① **CRAVINGS:** Many people ask me if cravings mean that they’re missing something in their diet. In general this is not true, but once in a while this might be true. For example, after a hard workout you’re craving salt. You may have sweated quite a bit and need some salt and electrolytes. On the whole however, cravings are usually due to emotional or psychological reasons, like stress. Unfortunately, we rarely crave healthy foods but hopefully you can change your taste buds so you desire healthier foods. We usually crave calorically dense high fat, salty or sugary foods and it may help decrease these cravings if you eat a variety of foods so you don’t eat the same thing day in and day out. Of course, you’ll get more nutrients that way as well. The biggest mistake I see that leads to cravings is telling yourself certain foods are off limits. I recommend you strive to eat in moderation all along, every day, so you don’t rebound and overeat or eat around your craving until you eventually eat it. Be mindful of course and try to be honest with yourself about your craving and how much you’re eating.



② **FATIGUE:** First, are you truly getting enough sleep? Most people really do need 8 or more hours of sleep to feel rested. Try to have a set schedule and then if you're doing all this, let's look at some diet no-no's. These eating behaviors can lead one to feel sluggish and tired:

- Skipping meals
- Eating large, high fat meals
- Not eating enough and/or not eating much protein or fat at meals
- Eating simple carbohydrates vs. those filling complex carbohydrates like fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and beans/lentils.

③ **HEADACHES:** Headaches can come from other lifestyle behaviors such as stress, work, not enough sleep, dehydration, etc. However, many foods can also cause headaches, such as certain kinds of cheese, meats, caffeine, wine, chocolate, etc. Often times, it can help to do a test by eliminating some foods and slowly adding them back in one at a time to see how you feel. Analyze your diet and see if you might want to try that. Here are some other eating tips that can help with headaches:

- Drink plenty of water and try to include high water foods like fruits and vegetables. Limit pop, caffeine and alcohol.
- Limit high saturated fat foods (full fat dairy, red meat, pork, bacon, etc), trans fats, salt, MSG and foods that you think might trigger your headaches.
- Eat at regular times with healthy snacks; never go longer than 4 hours without food
- Eat foods that can actually limit headaches; you guessed it, those pesky complex carbohydrates again.



Other foods that might help: fish, flaxseed meal, nuts (without added oil or salt).

- Work with a Naturopath and Registered Dietitian together to help you figure out what may be causing your headache.

④ HUNGER: This is a very common complaint I hear and why most people go “off their diets”. After folks see me, they almost always say they’re not hungry at all. Plus, they’re getting healthier while losing weight! How? Try to do the following:

- Eat 3 small meals and 2-3 snacks every day.
- Eat within 1-2 hours of waking up so your hunger doesn’t build as the day does.
- Make sure every meal and snack contains a complex carbohydrate, along with a healthy fat and/or some lean protein. For example: banana with 1tablespoon natural peanut butter; piece of whole grain toast with avocado and low-fat cottage cheese or lean deli meat; whole grain cereal with nonfat/low-fat milk or soy milk and fruit.
- Listen to your body and really decide when you’re hungry and when you’re not
- Never get to the point of starving or too full; that can set you up for failure.

⑤ DISCOURAGEMENT: Feel like you're exercising and eating properly but not losing weight? Here are key eating tips:

- Eat within 1-2 hours of waking up.
- Don’t skip meals.
- Don’t save calories for later.
- Don’t eat the bulk of your food from 3pm to whenever.



- Eat small, even sized and even spaced meals throughout the day.
- Eat enough! See a Registered Dietitian to help you figure this out. Tip: Most women need 1300-1500 Calories per day just to survive. This means that if you were to lie in bed all day and not eat or move, you would burn this many calories. So, if you eat less than this amount, you'll lose weight at first and then come to a stand still because you actually aren't eating enough to support your body.
- Be active every day to boost your metabolism and eat to fuel your body. Eat before and after you're active and feed yourself the way your body craves and deserves!

BOTTOM LINE: Often times the way you are feeling is really true. It's not in your head so think about your entire lifestyle and then really analyze what you're putting into your body. Are you fueling your body, starving your body, or stuffing your body? Try some of these diet tips and then be sure to see a physician if symptoms persist.



NUMBER 26: How to Sneak Fruits & Veggies Into Your Diet

Here are some simple ideas on how to sneak fruits and veggies into you and your family's eating plan.

Fruits:

- BLEND 'EM: Make a breakfast smoothie. Try frozen strawberries, any kind of juice, your favorite nonfat or low-fat yogurt and ice. Another favorite: banana, ice, low-fat chocolate milk or chocolate soymilk, and peanut butter (protein powder is optional). Tip: very ripe bananas are perfect to chop and freeze for smoothies.
- FREEZE 'EM: Freeze any of your favorite fruits to eat by the bite (great for blender drinks too). Try: melon, berries, grapes, etc.
- BREAKFAST: Fresh or thawed berries on cold cereal, bananas, cranberries and/or raisins in oatmeal, sliced peaches or bananas in oatmeal, blueberries or bananas in pancakes, bananas and raisins with peanut butter on a whole wheat bagel. Don't eat breakfast without a fruit!
- DESSERT: Drizzle lemon yogurt over banana and strawberry slices and top with granola, dip your own frozen bananas in chocolate sauce, make your own fresh fruit popsicles.
- SALADS: Of course a fruit salad is always a great option but try these fruit combinations in your next green salads: 1) pears, blue cheese, cranberries and walnuts, 2) red apples, cranberries, fat free feta cheese and pecans, 3) strawberries and greens in a sweet dressing.



- SNACKS: Mix dried fruit with nuts and your favorite cereal for a snack mix (eat solo or add to yogurt), slice pears, apples and/or banana chunks and dip in peanut butter or drizzle melted chocolate chips over them for a real treat.

Vegetables:

- TWO IS BETTER THAN ONE: Eat a vegetable and a salad at dinner to help you reach 5 vegetables per day faster. Eat your salad first so you can eat a smaller dinner portion.
- SNACK ON 'EM: Hummus and baby carrots, celery and natural peanut butter, zucchini, broccoli and red peppers with low-fat ranch dip. Mix it up! What's your favorite combination?
- IN YOUR ENTREE: Sauté your favorite vegetable mixture and add to burritos, pasta, stir fry, pizza, casserole, over fish or chicken, etc. Start with onions, garlic, and then add your favorite combination. Depending on the dish, choose from mushrooms, broccoli, carrots, red bell peppers, zucchini, cauliflower, corn, peas, black olives, etc. Be creative.
- START SLOW & SMALL: Take tried and true recipes and slowly start to add vegetables to those dishes. Chop them small or finely grate them to start so you won't notice such a change. Gradually add more and bigger chunks.
- PUT 'EM IN THE MIDDLE: Of your favorite sandwich. Turkey with romaine, tomato & cucumber, hummus with avocado, tomato & sprouts, baked tofu with avocado, low-fat cream cheese, spinach & olives, etc.



- WARM SALAD: Start with leafy greens then sauté any vegetables (I like olive oil, onions, garlic, zucchini and mushrooms with a splash of lime juice). Toss with the leafy greens and then add a low-fat cheese and your choice of protein: grilled chicken, baked tofu, garbanzo and/or kidney beans.

Goals:

- Women: 2-3 fruits/day and 3-5 vegetables per day
- Men: 3-4 fruits/day and 4-5 vegetables per day
- Fiber Goal: 25-40 grams per day

Other Tips:

- Eat a variety of fruits and vegetables & mix it up to get different nutrients
- NO fruits or vegetables are off limits
- Start Slow!
- Be persistent
- Don't give up
- Try and try again until you find what works for you



NUMBER 27: Pesto

This delicious new recipe has been added to my never ending cookbook, but was inspired by my friend giving me some great, fresh basil from her garden, and an old recipe called Sandy's Lemon Pesto. This version has been revised to add some olive and flaxseed oil (both "good fats"), and then altered further into the Sun-dried Tomato version.

SUMMER LEMON PESTO & SUN-DRIED TOMATO PESTO

2 cups fresh basil leaves
¼ cup pine nuts
¼ cup grated Parmesan cheese
3 Tbs lemon juice
2 tsp extra virgin olive oil
2 tsp flaxseed oil
5 to 7 cloves garlic, minced
1 ea tomato, chopped and less seeds
6 ea sun-dried tomatoes, re-hydrated and slightly chopped

Combine basil, pine nuts, Parmesan, lemon juice, oils and garlic in food processor and pulse until combined to consistency you like. Take half out and set aside (this is the delicious Lemon Pesto). Add tomato and sun-dried tomatoes and pulse again until all is combined.

You now have two great pestos! You can make vegetable pasta or add them to lasagna and sandwiches. Be creative! I just made a veggie sandwich with a little of the sun-dried tomato pesto, avocado, hummus, baked tofu, salsa, low-fat spicy cheese, tomatoes and cucumbers. Mmmm good!!



Lemon Pesto
(1/6 of recipe)
Calories: 52
Fat: 5 gm
Carbohydrates: 1.5 gm
Fiber: trace
Protein: 1.5 gm
Cholesterol: 2 mg
Sodium: 34 mg

Sun-dried Tomato Pesto
(1/6 of recipe)
Calories: 63
Fat: 5 gm
Carbohydrates: 4 gm
Fiber: 1 gm
Protein: 2 gm
Cholesterol: 2 mg
Sodium: 78 mg



NUMBER 28: To Organic or Not To Organic?

Many of you have probably wondered at one time or another, “Should I be buying organic produce?” Is there really any difference between organic and non-organic produce? Well, the answer is not a simple yes or no.

First, just what, exactly, does “organic” mean? According to the USDA, organic food is grown by farmers who use methods that conserve soil and water and enhance environmental quality. Fruits and vegetables are grown without using most conventional pesticides, synthetic fertilizers, bioengineering or radiation. Farms that label their food as “organic” are inspected by a government-approved certifier to make sure they are following all of USDA’s rules to meet organic standards.

More Nutritious?

There’s no scientific evidence that shows organic produce is safer or healthier. But UC Davis has done studies recently that have found higher amounts of certain nutrients in some organic berries.

When it comes to taste, many people believe that you can’t beat organic. I personally think organic tastes different—sweeter and better. Especially something like tomatoes. There’s just no comparison. But one caveat is that organic produce can also go bad faster.

Does washing your produce get rid of pesticides?

Not all pesticides can be washed off, but washing does help. Washing produce in cold water and using a brush to clean more solid items, or even soaking your produce in cold water. Some

pesticides can get into fruits and veggies—even ones you peel. But it's impossible to know how much.

So far, there haven't been any conclusive studies on the long-term affects of pesticides. What it really comes down to is personal choice. If you want to support local farmers and sustainable farming methods, shopping at your local farmers market is a great way to do so. And if you want to limit your exposure to pesticides, you can avoid certain conventionally grown foods that are known to contain higher amounts of pesticides, and substitute them with organic.

Highest in Pesticides

- Apples
- Bell Peppers
- Celery
- Cherries
- Grapes (imported)
- Nectarines
- Peaches
- Pears
- Potatoes
- Red Raspberries
- Spinach
- Strawberries

Lowest in Pesticides

- Asparagus
- Avocados
- Bananas
- Broccoli
- Cauliflower
- Corn (sweet)
- Kiwi
- Mangos
- Onions
- Papaya
- Pineapples
- Peas (sweet)

BOTTOM LINE: The benefits of eating a variety of fruits and vegetables far outweigh the risks. You might think about trying to buy produce that is in season. Have you always hated nectarines? Maybe you bought them at the beginning or end of the season when they weren't quite in season yet. Give them another try!

