

Healthy Recipes

for Every Meal of the Day!

by Sarah Muntel, RD

What's for dinner?

This is the question that haunts many people every day. The daily dread is finding a great meal option that fits into your schedule and is also something your family will eat. Many of us find ourselves in a cooking rut and choose the same meals each week. Without variety, you can get bored and find yourself straying to some not-so-healthy alternatives.

The struggle is real. Americans these days lack time and options. Some find it quicker to run through a fast food restaurant or throw a pan of pizza rolls in the oven and call it a night. It's time to change your tune and begin planning for a healthy mealtime option.

Don't change everything over night. Begin slowly. Here are some easy meal options for breakfast, lunch and dinner. Some may look great, and others may not be an option for you. Pick one or two to start and see what you think!

BREAKFAST

The most important meal of the day. The meal that most often gets skipped and your body's first shot at great nutrition for the day. Many people feel they don't have time, but take a look at the meals below for some simple and delicious options.

Lowfat Protein Cottage Cheese Yogurt Berry Smoothie

For the "I'm running late for my meeting" day:

Ingredients:

- 2 tbsp. lowfat plain yogurt (2 heaping tablespoons)
- 2 tbsp. lowfat 2 percent or lower cottage cheese (2 heaping tablespoons)
- 1/2 cups frozen dark berries (raspberries, blackberries, blueberries, strawberries)
- 1/2 cups water
- 28 grams of vanilla or plain whey protein powder

Directions:

1. Pour in yogurt, water and cottage cheese in bottom of blender.
2. Add frozen berries and protein powder.
3. Blend until smooth.

Source: www.sparkrecipes.com

Quick Tip: Swap out any fruit you would like to change the taste!

Loaded Baked Egg Omelet Muffins

For the "I have some extra time, so I will make breakfast and save the rest for a crazy morning" day:

Makes 12 muffins

Ingredients:

- Nonstick cooking spray
- 6 large whole eggs
- 6 large egg whites
- 1/4 tsp. kosher salt
- Black pepper
- 3 strips cooked chopped bacon
- 3 tbsp. thawed frozen spinach, drained
- 3 tbsp. diced tomatoes
- 3 tbsp. diced onion
- 3 tbsp. cup diced bell pepper
- 2 oz. shredded cheddar

Directions:

1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit. Spray the muffin tins with cooking spray.
2. In a large bowl, whisk the eggs and egg whites, then season with salt and pepper.
3. Mix in the remaining ingredients.
4. Place tins on a cookie sheet and bake 20 to 25 minutes, until set.

Source: www.skinnytaste.com

Quick Tip: Balance out the meal with a cup of fresh berries.



Blueberry Oatmeal Breakfast Bars

For the "I can make these ahead so I can grab one anytime I need it" day:

Ingredients:

- 1 cup whole oats
- 1 cup oat flour
- 1/2 cup brown sugar
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1/2 tsp. baking soda
- 1/2 cup almond milk
- 2 eggs
- 1/4 cup melted butter
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract

- 1 cup fresh blueberries
- 1/2 cup chopped walnuts
- 1/3 cup shredded coconut

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit. Grease an 8-inch square pan.
2. Combine whole oats, oat flour, brown sugar, salt and baking soda together in a bowl. Stir in almond milk, eggs, butter, and vanilla extract until well combined. Fold in blueberries and walnuts. Spread mixture into prepared square pan. Top with coconut.
3. Bake in the preheated oven until edges are golden and coconut is brown, about 35 minutes. Cool in the pan for 10 minutes before cutting into squares.

Source: www.allrecipes.com

Quick Tip: Wash down your breakfast with a glass of milk for extra calcium and protein!

Whole Grain Waffles with Strawberries and Almonds

For the “my kids want something healthy, but I want to make it nutritious” day:

Ingredients:

- 1/2 cup rolled oats
- 1/2 cup whole-wheat flour
- 1 tbsp. ground flaxseed
- 2 tsp. baking powder
- 1/4 tsp. pumpkin pie spice
- 1/4 tsp. salt
- 1 egg, separated
- 3/4 cup skim milk
- 1/4 cup mashed banana
- 1 tbsp. canola oil
- Vegetable oil cooking spray
- 3/4 cup nonfat plain Greek yogurt, divided
- 1 1/2 cups sliced strawberries, divided
- 3 tbsp. sliced almonds, divided
- 6 tsp. maple syrup, divided



Directions:

1. Heat waffle iron. In a blender, process oats until flourlike in texture.
2. In a bowl, combine oats with flour, flaxseed, baking powder, pumpkin pie spice and salt. In a second bowl, beat egg white until stiff peaks form. In a third bowl, mix milk, banana, oil and egg yolk. Gently stir milk-banana mixture into dry ingredients; gently fold in egg white until just combined.
3. Coat waffle iron with cooking spray; pour 1/3 cup batter onto iron, and cook until waffle is crispy and pale gold, about 4 minutes. Repeat twice. Top each waffle with 1/4 cup yogurt, 1/2 cup strawberries, 1 tablespoon almonds and 2 teaspoon syrup.

Source: www.epicurious.com

Quick Tip: For extra protein serve with low fat turkey sausage.

LUNCH

It's time to refuel for the second part of the day. No matter where you are, at work, running errands or with your kids, take a break, mindfully eat and choose a nutritious packed meal for the rest of your day.

Cheddar and Apple Sandwich

For the "I am tired of peanut butter and jelly" day:

Ingredients:

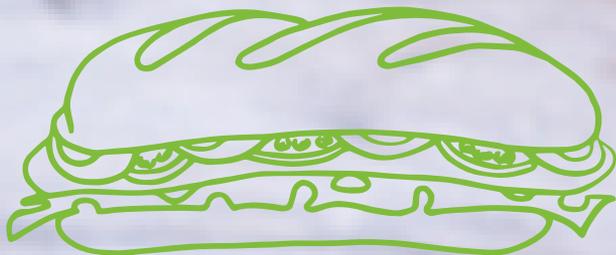
- 2 slices of bread (preferably multigrain, Italian, or French)
- 1 tsp. whole-grain mustard
- 1 oz. thinly sliced Cheddar
- Several pieces of thinly sliced apple

Directions:

1. Spread each slice of bread with mustard.
2. Top 1 slice with the Cheddar and the apple slices.
3. Sandwich with the remaining bread.

Source: www.myrecipes.com

Quick Tip: Add a serving of low fat Greek yogurt as a side dish!



Avocado Egg White Salad Sandwich

For the "I need something to do with this healthy avocado" day:

Makes 1 serving

Ingredients:

- One 100-calorie flat sandwich bun or 2 slices light bread
- 1 1/2 oz. (about 3 tbsp.) mashed avocado
- 2 tbsp. plain fat-free Greek yogurt
- 1/4 tsp. garlic powder
- 1/8 tsp. black pepper
- 5 hard-boiled egg whites, chopped
- 1 tbsp. real crumbled bacon
- 1 tbsp. finely chopped red onion



Directions:

1. Lightly toast bun halves or bread slices. Once cool, place in a sealable bag or wrap in foil.
2. In a medium bowl, combine avocado, yogurt, and seasonings. Mix until smooth and uniform. Gently stir in chopped egg whites, bacon and onion. Place in a sealable container, and pack with an ice pack.
3. Just before eating, divide egg white salad between the toasted sandwich bun halves/bread slices, and enjoy open-faced.

Source: www.hungrygirl.com

Quick Tip: When choosing chips, choose the baked ones to decrease your fat intake — or better yet — try veggies and low fat dip.

Grilled Raspberry Chicken Salad

For the "I have some extra chicken I need to use" day:

Ingredients:

- 2-3 chicken breasts
- 1/2 cup raspberry vinaigrette dressing
- 1/2 tsp. garlic powder
- 1/2 tsp. rosemary
- 4 cups lettuce (torn)
- 1 cup cucumber (sliced)
- 1/2 cup mandarin orange (drained)
- 1/2 cup raspberries
- 1/4 cup red onion (chopped)
- 1/2 cup pecans (chopped)

Directions:

1. Mix 1/2 cup dressing with garlic powder and rosemary. Place chicken breasts in a plastic zip-top bag and add dressing, then marinate in the fridge for 30 minutes to 8 hours.
2. Grill chicken 4 to 5 minutes over medium high heat. Remove from heat and cover. Allow to rest for 10 minutes to come to temperature.
3. Meanwhile, place lettuce on 4 plates. Divide other ingredients equally among the 4 plates. Slice each chicken breast and put equal amount of chicken on each plate. Add additional dressing and enjoy.

Source: www.food.com

Quick Tip: Add a serving of whole grain crackers or a whole grain roll to boost your whole grain intake for the day!



Easy Tortilla Pizzas

For the “I am looking for a healthy option for frozen pizza” day:

Ingredients:

- Tortilla(s)
- Cooking spray
- Tomato sauce or pizza sauce
- Shredded cheese (mozzarella and Parmesan, for example)
- Desired toppings

Directions:

1. Preheat the oven to 375 degrees Fahrenheit.
2. Spray your tortilla(s) with cooking spray.
3. Spread a thin layer of tomato or pizza sauce over the tortilla.
4. Sprinkle shredded cheese over the pizza sauce.
5. Add the desired toppings.
6. Place the tortilla pizza onto a baking sheet, and bake for 8 to 10 minutes.

Source: www.momables.com

Quick Tip: Don't forget your veggies! Add a side salad to this lunch.



DINNERS

For many, this is where the struggle begins. After a full day, it can be difficult to find a meal that works into your schedule. You may need a variety of meals, which may vary from crock-pot meals, make ahead casseroles, or a traditional meal.

Turkey Santa Fe Zucchini Boats

For the "I am looking for a healthy Mexican option that my family will still eat" day:

Ingredients:

For the filling:

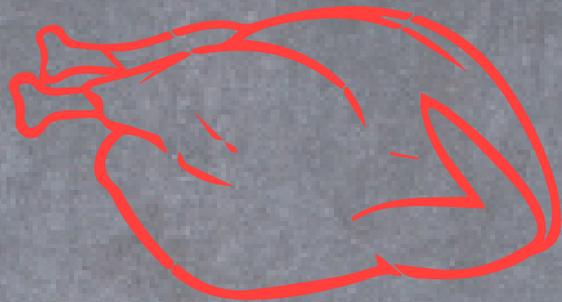
- 12 oz 93 percent lean ground turkey
- 3/4 cups canned black beans, rinsed and drained
- 3/4 cups corn kernels, fresh or frozen
- 1 hot pickled serrano pepper, chopped (or jalapeño) more to taste
- 1 large diced tomato
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1/4 cup chopped onion
- 2 tbsp. chopped cilantro
- 1 tsp. cumin
- Kosher salt to taste

For the zucchini:

- 5 medium zucchini (7 oz each), cut in half lengthwise
- 1/2 cup jarred mild salsa
- 15 tbsp. shredded reduced-fat Mexican blend cheese

Directions:

1. Bring a large pot of salted water to boil. Preheat oven to 400 degrees Fahrenheit.
2. Using a small spoon or melon baller, hollow out the center of the zucchini halves, leaving 1/4-inch thick shell on each half.
3. Chop the scooped out flesh of the zucchini in small pieces and set aside 3/4 of a cup to add to the turkey filling, (squeeze excess water with a paper towel) discarding the rest or save to use in another recipe.
4. Drop zucchini halves in boiling water and cook 1 minute. Remove from water.
5. In a large skillet brown the turkey and season with salt. When the turkey is browned, add onion, garlic, black beans, cilantro, serrano pepper, diced tomatoes, reserved zucchini and cumin.
6. Mix well and simmer on low, covered for 20 minutes. Remove lid, add corn and simmer an additional 5 minutes or until all the liquid reduces.
7. Place the salsa in the bottom of a large baking dish (or two medium size dishes) and place the hollowed-out zucchini cut-side-up in the dish.
8. Using a spoon, fill the hollowed zucchini boats dividing the filling equally, about 1/3 cup in each, pressing firmly.
9. Top each with 1 1/2 tablespoons of shredded cheese. Cover with foil and bake 35 minutes until cheese is melted and zucchini is cooked through.



Source: www.skinnytaste.com

Quick Tip: Serve with baked tortilla chips and salsa for added crunch.

Stuffed Pepper Soup with Quinoa

For the "I need a meal for tonight and maybe tomorrow" day:

Ingredients:

- 2 large green bell peppers, cut into 1/2 inch dice
- 1 large onion, diced
- 3 garlic cloves, chopped
- 2 tsp. olive oil
- 1 and 1/4 lb. ground sirloin or round - use lean so there is very little fat to drain
- One 28 oz. can petite diced tomatoes
- One 16 oz. can tomato sauce
- One 32 oz. carton beef stock
- 1/2 tsp. dried marjoram
- 2 tsp. Worcestershire sauce
- 2 tsp. soy sauce
- 2 tsp. Truvia Brown Sugar replacer - or 4 teaspoons Splenda
- Sea salt and fresh pepper to taste
- 2 cup cooked quinoa, optional

Directions:

1. In a large, heavy pot, sauté the peppers, onions and garlic in the olive oil until very soft and lightly golden at edges.
2. Add the beef and cook until browned, breaking up with a wooden spoon. Add tomatoes, tomato sauce, beef stock, marjoram, Worcestershire, soy sauce, and sugar replacer.
3. Add 1-teaspoon salt and 1/2 teaspoon black pepper and add more to taste. Bring to a boil, lower heat and simmer for 25 to 30 minutes, until peppers are very soft and soup has thickened.
4. This soup is better the next day as with most soups or stews. Serve in shallow bowls with a scoop of cooked quinoa.

Source: www.bariatricating.com

Quick Tip: Pack this up for lunch tomorrow or serve it again!

Weeknight Lemon Chicken Skillet Dinner

For the "I had a long day at work, let's eat something healthy and quick" day:

Ingredients :

- 12 oz. baby red potatoes, halved
- 1 tbsp. olive oil, divided
- 4 (6-ounce) skinless, boneless chicken breast halves, pounded to 3/4-inch thickness
- 3/4 tsp. kosher salt, divided
- 1/2 tsp. freshly ground black pepper, divided
- 2 thyme sprigs
- 4 oz. cremini mushrooms, quartered
- 1 tbsp. chopped fresh thyme
- 1/4 cup whole milk
- 5 tsp. all-purpose flour
- 1 and 3/4 cups unsalted chicken stock (such as Swanson)
- 8 very thin lemon slices
- 1 (8-ounce) package trimmed haricots verts (French green beans)
- 2 tbsp. chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 450 degrees Fahrenheit.
2. Place potatoes in a medium saucepan; cover with water. Bring to a boil, and simmer 12 minutes or until tender. Drain.

3. Heat a large ovenproof skillet over medium-high heat. Add 1 teaspoon oil to pan.
4. Sprinkle chicken with 1/4 teaspoon salt and 1/4 teaspoon pepper.
5. Add chicken and thyme sprigs to pan; cook 5 minutes or until chicken is browned.
6. Turn chicken over. Place pan in oven; bake at 450 degrees Fahrenheit for 10 minutes or until chicken is done. Remove chicken from pan.
7. Return pan to medium-high heat. Add remaining 2 teaspoons oil. Add potatoes, cut sides down; mushrooms; and 1 tablespoon thyme; cook 3 minutes or until browned, stirring once.
8. Combine milk and flour in a small bowl, stirring with a whisk. Add remaining salt, remaining pepper, flour mixture, stock, lemon, and beans to pan; simmer 1 minute or until slightly thickened. Add chicken; cover, reduce heat, and simmer 3 minutes or until beans are crisp-tender.
9. Sprinkle with parsley.

Source: www.cookinglight.com

Quick Tip: Serve with a side of fresh veggies and a whole grain roll for a balanced dinner!

Roasted Cheddar Broccoli

For the "I have some leftover meat and I just need a good side" day:

Ingredients:

- 1 head of broccoli
- 3 tbsp. olive oil
- Salt
- 1/2 cup panko breadcrumbs
- 1 cup grated sharp cheddar cheese
- 1 bunch of scallions
- Pinch of nutmeg

Directions:

1. Cut 1 large head broccoli into long spears. Toss with 2 tablespoons of olive oil on a baking sheet; season with salt. Roast at 450 degrees Fahrenheit until almost tender, about 15 minutes.
2. Toss 1/2 cup breadcrumbs (preferably panko) with 1 cup grated sharp cheddar, 1 bunch sliced scallions, 1 tablespoon of olive oil and a pinch of nutmeg.
3. Sprinkle on the broccoli and roast for 15 more minutes.

Source: www.foodnetwork.com

Quick Tip: To lower the fat content, use reduced fat cheddar cheese. Add a cup of fresh fruit to balance out the meal.



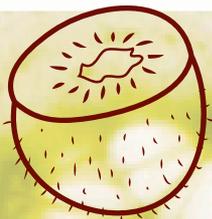
Conclusion

Your mouth is probably watering after reading so many great recipes. Pick a few to try this week, or if you need other ideas, choose any of the great Web sites listed to find thousands of recipes and meal ideas. Remember, the old saying is true — "You are what you eat." Spend a little time in the kitchen for a lifetime of good health!

About the Author:

Sarah Muntel, RD, is the Bariatric Coordinator at Community Bariatric Surgeons in Indianapolis, IN. She has 15 years of experience working with bariatric patients and loves to work with people as they change their lives and improve their health. Her favorite part of her job is her weekly support group. In her free time, Sarah enjoys spending time with her husband and three children.

Ms. Muntel will also be presenting at the 5th Annual Your Weight Matters National Convention in the session "Sifting through Nutrition Advice: The Best of the Best."



Want to discover even more great recipes?
There are many great websites to choose from for healthy meal options!

www.sparkrecipes.com

www.hungrygirl.com

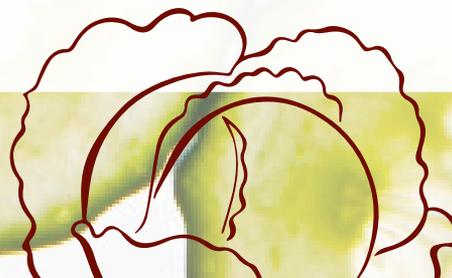
www.cookinglight.com

www.bariatriceating.com

www.skinnytaste.com

www.epicurious.com

www.foodnetwork.com





ABOUT THE OBESITY ACTION COALITION (OAC)

The Obesity Action Coalition (OAC) is a National non-profit organization dedicated to giving a voice to individuals affected by obesity and helping them along their journey toward better health. Our core focuses are to elevate the conversation of weight and its impact on health, improve access to obesity care, provide science-based education on obesity and its treatments, and fight to eliminate weight bias and discrimination.



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The OAC knows that the journey with weight can be challenging but we also know that great things happen when we learn, connect and engage. That is why the OAC Community exists. Our Community is designed to provide quality education, ongoing support programs, an opportunity to connect, and a place to take action on important issues.

Through the OAC Community, you can get access to:

- Weight & Health Education • Community Blogs
 - Community Discussion Forum
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