

2019

Recipes for Success



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15-Bean Soup with Veggies

With Fall in the air, it's a great time to be thinking about soups! They are so easy to prepare and are usually full of nutrition. This soup is high in fiber thanks to the beans. ½ cup cooked of the 15-bean mix used in this recipe has 20 grams of carbs and 9 grams of fiber, leaving only 11 grams for you to count. Mix in some onions, carrots, and tomatoes and you've got a bowl of wonderful flavors. To make this recipe healthier, omit the seasoning packet that comes with the beans and spice it up yourself using chicken broth (instead of water) and your own seasonings. I added organic ground pork to increase the protein content, but you could use ham or omit the meat. This recipe makes several servings, enough to freeze for another day when you don't have time to cook!

Ingredients:

- 20 oz bag 15 Bean Soup mix (dried beans plus seasoning packet). This mixture has northern, pinto, lima, yelloweye, garbanzo, kidney, branberry, white, pink, red, lentil, and black beans. So colorful!
- 2 x 32 oz cartons chicken broth
- 20 baby carrots, cut in half
- 1 can (14.5 oz) stewed tomatoes (with onion, celery, and bell pepper)
- 2-3 tsp chili powder
- 1 tsp pepper
- 1 TBS garlic salt
- 2 x 5.5 oz can V8 juice
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 pound ground pork, cooked

Directions:

Rinse beans and place in large pot with the chicken broth. Add baby carrots. Bring to boil. Reduce heat, cover, and continue to boil about 2 hours, stirring occasionally.

While beans are boiling, sauté sausage (or use meat of your choice) with onions. Set aside.

After 2 hours of boiling, add the sausage, onions, and the rest of the ingredients and mix well. Simmer another 30 minutes.

I boil the beans in the morning and then add the rest of the ingredients at night when I get home from work to save time.

Fruit with Kefir and Chia Seeds

Kefir is a fermented milk product (cow, goat or sheep milk) that is one of the most probiotic rich foods on the planet. It comes in liquid form, so think drinkable yogurt with superpowers! Kefir contains high levels of vitamin B12 and K, calcium, magnesium, biotin, and folate. Probiotics are the healthy bacteria our bodies need for all sorts of functions, including digestion. And a healthy gut can also improve your immune response, so drink up! Choose the unflavored variety to avoid added sugars.

Ingredients (per person):

- 1 small banana, sliced
- 1 cup strawberries, sliced
- 2 TBS chia seeds
- ½ cup kefir

Directions:

Place all ingredients in a bowl and mix well. Enjoy knowing that you're nourishing your body with foods that are serving you well!

This breakfast has everything you need for a healthy start to your day. The fruit provides healthy carbs and fiber; the chia seeds are packed with healthy fats, fiber, and protein; and the kefir offers protein along with the probiotics.

Super-Easy Fish Taco Wraps

These wraps are delicious and very easy to make and using Romaine leaves as wraps helps keep the carbs on the lower side. I used tilapia, but any kind of fish will do. You could bread it yourself, but to save time I purchased it ready to go! Top the wraps with your choice of veggies and condiments.

Ingredients:

- Panko Breaded Tilapia (available at most stores in the freezer section).
- Romaine Lettuce Leaves
- Cilantro
- Salsa
- Shredded Cheese
- Lemon or Lime Juice
- Avocado, sliced

Directions:

Bake tilapia according to package directions, about 20-25 minutes. In the meantime, wash the lettuce leaves and set out to dry.

When tilapia is done, cut into strips (halves or thirds) and assemble into wraps, using toppings of your choice.

Three Chicken Dinners in a Flash!

Cook Vegetable Chicken Potatoes Food Cooking

Sometimes the hardest part of making dinner is the cooking time for the protein. Here's how you can "disguise" chicken to make 3 very distinct meals! Add your favorite veggie and you're good to go!

Ingredients (for 2 salads):

Figure out how many boneless, skinless chicken breasts you need for you and/or your family for 3 dinners. Plan extra if you want leftovers.

- 1st night – Bake the chicken breasts in the oven until just barely done. Remove from heat. Season 1/3 of the chicken with your favorite spice. I like Mrs. Dash Garlic and Herb but you can use whatever you prefer.
- 2nd night – Top each chicken breast with a slice of Swiss or Mozzarella cheese. Cover with spaghetti sauce. Bake about 20 minutes at 325 until all ingredients are heated through and the cheese is melted.
- 3rd night – Cut chicken breast into strips. Place in large skillet. Add 1 small carton or jar of Pesto. Cook over medium heat until heated though.

Comments:

There you go! 3 dinners in a flash!

Chickpea Cookie Dough

True confessions! I love raw cookie dough! Always have and probably always will. But I really don't like the way it makes me feel. My digestive system goes crazy when I indulge and it also triggers even more sugar cravings. Needless to say, I was thrilled to find several healthy alternatives, and many of them use garbanzo beans in the recipe. And, while I do love garbanzo beans, the thought of using them to make cookies seemed weird but it was worth a try. I tweaked a couple of recipes I found online and came up with my own version. I was pleasantly surprised! These taste REALLY good! They are also packed with protein, fiber, healthy fats, and antioxidants. Even the raw honey offers health benefits. And because they aren't just carbs, they don't spike my blood sugar or increase my cravings. As Mikey would say "try it, you'll like it!"

Ingredients:

- One, 15-oz can garbanzo beans, drained
- 1 1/3 cup walnuts
- ½ cup raw honey (buy the "real" raw honey for more health benefits)
- 2 tsp cinnamon
- 2 tsp vanilla extract
- ½ cup old fashioned oats. (Use regular rolled oats that take about 5 minutes to cook, not quick oats or steel cut oats)
- ½ cup cacao nibs. (You can find these in the bulk food section at Fred Meyer. They are expensive, but they are very light in weight so they really don't cost that much for ½ cup).

Directions:

In a food processor or blender, puree the garbanzo beans, walnuts, honey, cinnamon, and vanilla. It ends up kind of a sticky mess but it's worth it! Spoon this mixture into a mixing bowl. Add the oats and cacao nibs. Stir well to mix. Form into 1-inch balls.

Place on baking sheet and put in refrigerator for a few hours or overnight to help them set up. Transfer to a zip-lock bag the next day and store in the freezer.

Comments:

Enjoy 1 or 2 as a mid-morning or evening snack, especially when that sweet tooth shows up!

Easy Peasy Chicken Salad – 4 servings

This chicken salad is so easy – and so healthy! Start with organic rotisserie chicken and use plain Greek yogurt instead of mayo. Add in some fruits and veggies and nuts and you've got a complete meal in minutes! The apple and grapes provide healthy carbs and the rest of the ingredients offer protein, healthy fats, and fiber.

Ingredients:

For the salad:

- One, organic Rotisserie, skin removed and meat shredded
- 1 cup celery, chopped
- 1 green apple, chopped
- 1 cup red, seedless grapes, halved
- 4 green onions, chopped
- 1 cup chopped walnuts

For the dressing:

- ¾ cup plain Greek yogurt
- 1 tsp Dijon mustard
- 2 TBS lemon juice or the juice from one fresh lemon
- ½ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp pepper

Directions:

Combine salad ingredients in large bowl and mix well.

Combine dressing ingredients in small bowl and mix well.

Add dressing to salad and mix well again. Serve over a bed of salad greens for a beautiful meal.

Easy Curry Stir-Fry

Stir-fry recipes can be SO easy when you don't have to make the sauce! And if you cook up some extra rice at the beginning of the week you can use it to add to this recipe, saving even more time. Chop up your veggies the night before or in the morning and save even more time in the evening.

Ingredients:

- 6 boneless, skinless chicken breasts
- 1 small head purple cabbage, sliced and chopped
- 1 medium onion, chopped into medium chunks
- 1 jar (about 6 oz) Curry Dipping Sauce (There are many delicious options available at the store. Pick one that looks good and go for it!)
- 2 cups cooked Jasmine rice (leftover, refrigerated)
- 3 TBS coconut oil

Directions:

Chop veggies and chicken into bite-sized pieces.

Heat 1 TBS coconut oil in large skillet. Add chicken and cook 3-5 minutes over medium heat, until cooked through. Set cooked chicken aside in large bowl.

Add 1 TBS coconut oil to skillet and stir-fry veggies over medium heat, about 3 minutes.

Add the remaining 1 TBS coconut oil to the skillet and stir-fry the rice until warmed.

Add the chicken and veggies back to the skillet and add in the Curry Dipping Sauce. Mix well and heat about 5 – 10 minutes before serving.

Comments:

Delicious!!

Fast and Healthy Breakfast Alternative Ingredients

So often I hear that people don't have time to prepare breakfast – and I get that! Time is a valuable commodity. But instead of popping a frozen breakfast sandwich in the microwave, try this really fast AND healthy breakfast idea.

Here's the nutrition comparison: Breakfast Sandwich – 410 calories; 12 grams protein; 24 grams carbs – 2 grams fiber = 22 carbs to count; and 830 mg sodium.

Karen's Fast and Healthy Alternative – 372 calories; 21 grams protein; 46 grams carbs – 10 grams fiber = 36 grams to count (just over 2 carb servings); negligible sodium.

Ingredients:

- 3 hard-boiled eggs (make the night before if you're rushed in the morning)
- 2 small pears, sliced
- Sprinkle of cinnamon (optional)
- 1/8 tsp vanilla (optional)
- Sprinkle of Stevia (optional)

Directions:

Eat the pears "as is" or mix in the cinnamon, vanilla, and Stevia for a spicier taste!

Comments:

Wow! You get MORE protein, MORE fiber, LESS sodium, and just over two carb servings. This really is a better option.

Healthy Hot Chocolate

There's nothing like a cup of hot chocolate on a cold, snowy day – and we've had plenty of those lately! Unfortunately, an average cup of hot chocolate is loaded with about 25 grams of sugar and nearly 200 calories.

For an extremely healthy – and still delicious – alternative, try the recipe below. It's made with organic cocoa powder, which has tremendous health benefits. Cocoa is rich in minerals such as iron, magnesium, calcium, phosphorous, copper and manganese and it's also a good source of selenium, potassium. WebMD cites studies that show that cocoa can help improve cholesterol, diabetes, and heart disease and the mood-enhancing properties of chocolate are well known!

1 tablespoon of dry, unsweetened powder has just 12 calories and 3 grams of carbs, 2 of which come from fiber. Try adding it to your coffee or yogurt or make the hot chocolate drink below and enjoy!

Ingredients:

- 2 tsp coconut oil
- 2 tsp cocoa powder
- 1 tsp stevia
- ¼ tsp vanilla extract
- 12 oz boiling water
- Milk or cream to taste (optional)

Directions:

Place coconut oil and cocoa powder in bottom of mug. Add boiling water and mix well. Stir in the stevia, vanilla and milk or cream. Let cool slightly then sip slowly and enjoy.

Pork Tenderloin with Rice and Peas

Dinner doesn't have to be complicated to be good. Start with pre-seasoned pork tenderloins. You can choose from lemon-garlic flavor, teriyaki, peppercorn, and more. They often come two per package, so bake both of them so you'll have plenty for leftovers. Add in some veggies and rice and you've got a meal that is sure to please most. I used Thai Jasmine Rice and cooked it in vegetable broth to add more flavor. And if someone in the house doesn't like peas, just choose another veggie!

Ingredients:

- 2, pre-seasoned pork tenderloins
- 3 cups Long Grain Thai Jasmine Rice
- 4.5 cups vegetable broth
- 1 bag frozen peas (or other veggies)

Directions:

Bake tenderloins according to package directions. They usually cook in about an hour.

About 30 minutes before dinnertime, follow package directions and prep the rice. It needs to simmer for about 20 minutes and sit for about 5 minutes before serving.

About 10 minutes before serving, prep the frozen veggies according to package directions. Most of them take just a few minutes to heat on the stove.

Serve and enjoy!

Super Power Breakfast Smoothie

If you're trying to lose weight, what you put into your body is as important as what you leave out. Supercharge your smoothies by adding the right "stuff". This recipe features plain kefir as part of the liquid. Kefir is a fermented beverage, kind of like a liquid yogurt. It's made by fermenting several types of bacteria and yeast, which leads to a very high probiotic count. Probiotics are important for the health of your gut and may also boost your immune system and aid in weight loss. Choose an unsweetened, organic kefir and each 1 cup serving provides 11 grams of protein, 40% of the RDA for calcium, and several B vitamins including B12 (for your blood and nervous system), B1 (for stress) and biotin, a B vitamin that helps your body use other B vitamins.

Ingredients:

- ½ cup plain kefir
- ½ cup vanilla almond milk, unsweetened
- 1 scoop protein powder with greens (you can find this in this health food section)
- 1 cup organic berries, fresh or frozen
- ½ cup organic kale, frozen
- ½ cucumber
- 1 TBS coconut oil

Directions:

Place all ingredients in blender and blend until mixed. Adjust consistency with water.

Comments:

Enjoy this smoothie knowing that you are worth it!

An Avocado a Day . . .

If you're looking for a food that may help fight cancers, prevent osteoporosis, lower your risk of depression, improve your digestion, and prevent constipation, look no further than the avocado. Many people still shy away from it because they believe it contains too much fat and too many calories but the reality is quite different. Calorie-wise they contain the same number as an average candy, but with tons of nutrition. Avocados offer vitamin K which can improve bone health by increasing calcium absorption. They also contain folate, which has shown promise in protecting against certain cancers and may help with depression, and the fiber is associated with lower risks of developing coronary heart disease, stroke, hypertension, and insulin resistance. Today's tip is to use avocados anywhere and everywhere! Spread them on toast instead of butter. Use avocados instead of mayo in chicken or egg salad or as a spread on a sandwich. Add them to your salads. Eat them with your chips and salsa. Scoop one out and cook an egg inside!

Zucchini Chips

This works great as a veggie side dish or a holiday appetizer! Easy to make, low in carbs, and healthy!

Ingredients:

4 medium zucchinis, washed well and sliced about 1/8 inch thick

3 tsp olive oil, divided

Salt and pepper (or other seasoning) to taste

Directions:

Preheat oven to 230-250 degrees.

Lay the sliced zucchini out on paper towels for about 20 minutes, to soak up moisture. Pat dry with additional paper towels.

In a large bowl, lightly toss the zucchini with 2 tsp of the olive oil.

Spread zucchini on baking sheet that has been coated with the remaining 1 tsp of olive oil.

Sprinkle with salt and pepper or seasoning of your choice.

Bake for about 2 ½ hours or until crisp.

Sausage and Potato Skillet Dish

Bake some extra potatoes ahead of time to make this meal come together fast! This works great for breakfast but is also a nice change for dinner. Serve with red apple slices for a colorful plate.

Ingredients:

- 8 red potatoes, baked then chopped into bite-sized pieces
- 2 TBS olive oil
- 1-pound Italian sausage
- ½ onion, chopped
- 1-2 cups shredded cheese (Mexican blend works well)
- 1 avocado chopped
- 2 apples, sliced
- Garlic salt and pepper to taste

Directions:

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Wash potatoes well. Coat the potatoes with about 2 TBS olive oil and wrap in foil. Bake about 1 hour. If preparing ahead of time, let cool a bit and then store in the refrigerator until ready to use.

In large skillet, cook sausage over medium heat until done (about 20 minutes). Remove from skillet and sauté the onions until soft.

Combine potatoes, sausage, and onion in the skillet and heat until all ingredients are warmed.

Top with shredded cheese and avocado.

Serve with apple slices for a healthy source of carbs and fiber.

Open Faced Italian Sandwich

With just a few ingredients, this recipe is super easy!

Cook up some extra hamburger for another recipe and it's a time saver too!

Ingredients:

- 3-4 lb ground beef
- 1 24-oz bottle spaghetti sauce
- Sourdough bread (or bread of your choice)
- Swiss cheese (or cheese of your choice)

Directions:

Preheat oven to 400 degrees.

In large skillet, cook ground beef over medium heat until done. Remove half and freeze for another recipe. Add spaghetti sauce to remaining beef and mix well, heating thoroughly.

Top bread with cheese and bake 5-10 minutes until cheese is melted and bread is a bit crusty. Top with meat sauce and serve.

Serve with raw veggies (cauliflower, broccoli, and carrots).

Comments:

Super easy and very yummy!

Pomegranates

Pomegranates are one of today's "super foods" thanks to their amazingly high levels of antioxidants, vitamin C, potassium and fiber. 1/2 cup of the arils (seeds) has about 5 grams, effectively lowering the carb count. For a quick and easy meal, add 1/2 cup to breakfast, lunch, or dinner.

Pomegranate ideas:

- Add 1/2 cup to 1 cup Greek vanilla yogurt for breakfast. Stir in 2 TBS chia seeds and you've got a meal rich in fiber, protein, and healthy fats.
- Mix in 1/2 cup with your favorite green salad. Add to spinach or arugula leaves to sweeten up the flavor.
- For a yummy and filling snack, top 1 slice of toast with 2 TBS peanut butter and 1/4 cup pomegranate arils.

Comments:

Fast, easy, and delicious!

Hummus Wraps

You can use store-bought hummus or easily make your own for this delicious and healthy recipe. Hummus is made with chickpeas which are high in fiber and protein as well as tahini (ground sesame seeds), garlic, and healthy oils. Use it as a dip or make a wrap using Romaine leaves. I added some whole cashews for a bit of crunchy goodness!

Ingredients:

- 1 can chickpeas (garbanzo beans)
- ¼ cup tahini
- 2 gloves garlic, crushed
- 2 TBS olive oil
- 1 TBS lemon juice
- Romaine lettuce leaves
- Salted cashews

Directions:

Blend all ingredients in a blender or food processor. Spoon about 2 tablespoons of the hummus onto each Romaine leaf. Top with about 5 or 6 cashews. Eat and enjoy!

Beet Salad

Who knew it was so easy to grow beets?! This was the first year I planted them in my garden and I'm so glad I did. Whether you grow them or buy them, beets are a breeze to prep and they're a nutrition powerhouse. Each 2-inch beet has just 35 calories, 7 grams of carbs, and lots of potassium and vitamin C. Their colors are beautiful and they taste delicious!

Ingredients:

- 4 beet roots, leaves and stems removed and washed thoroughly
- 1 TBS olive oil
- 1 head of lettuce or greens of your choice, chopped
- 1 cup walnuts, chopped
- 4 oz Feta cheese, crumbled
- Orange Poppyseed Dressing to taste (or dressing of your choice)

Directions:

Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Coat the beet roots with olive oil and place in small baking dish. Cover and bake for 50 minutes. When done, remove from heat, let cool, and chop into small, bite-sized pieces.

Combine lettuce, walnuts, Feta cheese, and chopped beets in large bowl. Toss with dressing and serve. Makes 4 servings.

Comments:

Mindfully enjoy by savoring the flavors, textures, and colors.

White Bean Crockpot Chili

This chili is so easy – especially if you use your slow cooker! How wonderful to come home to dinner that's all ready to eat.

Ingredients:

- 4 skinless, boneless chicken breasts
- 1 carton (32 oz) chicken broth
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 medium onion, diced
- Two 4-oz cans diced green chili, not drained
- Four 15-oz can white beans, drained
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- 1 tsp ground cumin
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp pepper
- ½ tsp dried oregano

Directions:

Add all ingredients except the white beans to slow cooker. Cook for 8 hours on low. Remove the chicken and shred with two forks. Add chicken back to the crock pot along with the beans. Mix well. Cook for another 30 minutes to heat the beans. Serve and enjoy!

Moms Meatloaf

This recipe conjures up great memories of my mom, Lana Collins. The directions are even written in her handwriting! Make a pan or two and enjoy the good times with your family. I double the recipe so there would be plenty of leftovers.

Ingredients for the meatloaf:

- 1 ½ pounds ground beef
- 2 cups soft bread cubes
- ½ cup celery, finely chopped
- 1/2 cup onion, finely chopped
- 1 green pepper, finely chopped
- 1 ½ tsp salt
- 1 egg
- ½ cup catsup

Ingredients for the sauce:

- One, 16-oz jar of salsa, mild or medium – your choice
- ½ cup catsup
- 1 tsp dry mustard
- 3 TBS brown sugar

Directions:

In large mixing bowl, combine ingredients for the meatloaf, mixing well. Use your hands to squish and blend if needed – that's what mom always did!

Spray 9 x 5-inch glass baking pan with non-stick cooking spray and pat the meatloaf mixture evenly into the pan.

In medium bowl, combine ingredients for sauce. Mix well. Spread sauce evenly over the meatloaf.

Bake 60-90 minutes at 350 degrees. Test for doneness with meat thermometer.

Comments:

As always, this recipe is easy and delicious. Love 'ya Mom.

Pumpkin Breakfast Cookies

'Tis the season! If you love the taste of pumpkin, you'll love these breakfast cookies. They are easy to make and high in nutrition – and they taste great!

Ingredients:

- ¼ cup coconut oil, melted
- ¼ cup honey
- 2 cups rolled old-fashioned oats
- 2/3 cup pumpkin seeds
- 1/3 cup dried blueberries
- 1/3 cup dark chocolate chips
- ¼ cup ground flaxseed
- 1 tsp pumpkin pie spice
- ½ tsp salt
- ½ cup canned pumpkin
- 2 eggs, beaten

Directions:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Lightly grease baking sheet.

In small bowl, melt the coconut oil (on the stove top or in the microwave). Stir in the honey.

In large bowl, combine the oats, blueberries, chocolate chips, ground flax, pumpkin pie spice, and salt. Add the canned pumpkin, eggs, and warmed coconut oil and honey.

Drop about ¼ cup of the mixture onto the cookie sheet and flatten with the bottom of a glass or small bowl.

Bake 15-20 minutes until edges are lightly browned.

Crock Pot Stew

Start with frozen veggies and you have a fabulously easy and delicious meal waiting for you at the end of the day!

Ingredients:

- 2 lbs. extra lean ground beef
- 2 bags frozen stew vegetables (potatoes, onion, carrots, celery)
- 2, 15-oz cans diced tomatoes
- 2, 6-oz cans tomato paste
- 3 TBS Mrs. Dash Garlic and Herb blend
- 2 -3 cups water
- Salt and pepper to taste

Directions:

Place frozen veggies in crock-pot. Add diced tomatoes, water, and seasoning. Add ground beef (uncooked) on top of veggies. Spread hamburger with the tomato paste.

Cook on low about 8-9 hours. About an hour before serving, mix well to blend the hamburger with the rest of the ingredients.

Comments:

SO good and SO easy!

Beet and Arugula Salad

Arugula is an extremely healthy and nutritious veggie that many people have never heard of. You can find it near the lettuce and spinach at the grocery store. It's great in salads and has many health benefits. It's a good source of many B vitamins, vitamins C and K, and also calcium. Try the salad below for some amazing flavors!

Ingredients (for 2 salads):

- 6-8 cups arugula
- 1 can beets, sliced,
- 4 TBS walnut pieces
- 1 avocado, sliced
- 2 TBS goat cheese, crumbled

Dressing of your choice – I tried a citrus mango variety but a raspberry vinaigrette would be delicious too!

Combine all ingredients in a large bowl. Split into 2 or 3 servings.

Spiced Almonds

If you're craving some "zest" in your diet, but don't want the carbs, try making some spiced almonds. A ¼ cup serving has only five grams of carbs, and three of them are fiber, leaving you with just two grams you have to "count". Almonds are also rich in vitamin E, manganese, biotin, copper, magnesium, molybdenum, riboflavin and phosphorus. And did you know that the almond we think of as a nut is technically the seed of the fruit of the almond tree. Like its cousins, the peach, cherry, and apricot trees, the almond tree bears fruits with the seeds (or pits) inside. Spice them up with the recipe below and you've got a tasty treat that is really good for you!

Ingredients:

- 2 cups whole, unsalted almonds
- 1 tsp cumin
- ¼ tsp garlic powder
- ¼ tsp cayenne pepper
- ½ tsp salt
- 1 TBS coconut oil
- ¼ tsp hot pepper sauce (optional)

Directions:

Preheat oven to 325 degrees. Spread the almonds on an ungreased, shallow baking pan. Roast the almonds for about 5-7 minutes, turning once. Watch closely to make sure they don't burn. Roasting is not required, but it does enhance the flavor of the almonds.

In a small bowl, mix together the dry spices. Melt the coconut oil in a skillet over medium heat. Stir in the spices and mix well, about 30 seconds. Add the almonds and mix well, stirring frequently until the spices are evenly distributed. Cook just a few minutes until the nuts are warm. Add the hot pepper sauce if desired. Remove from heat and allow to cool before serving.

Crispy Chicken Salad with Garden Vegetables

I love the crispy, crunchiness of breaded chicken in a salad, but I don't like the mess or the carbs. To improvise, I start with organic Rotisserie chicken (haha – it's like a staple in my house!) and "bread" it with some Jiffy Corn Muffin mix. Toss with tomatoes and lettuce from the garden and you've got a delicious meal!

Ingredients:

- One Rotisserie chicken, cubed
- 1/3 package Jiffy Corn Muffin mix
- ½ tsp salt
- 1 tsp Mrs. Dash Original Seasoning
- Olive oil
- Veggies for salad – lettuce, tomatoes, onions – whatever you like!

Directions:

Combine corn muffin mix with salt and Mrs. Dash seasoning. Heat olive oil over medium heat in large frying pan. Moisten cubed chicken with water. Gently mix the chicken with the corn muffin mix to coat evenly.

Cook over medium heat about 3-4 minutes on each side, to lightly brown. The chicken is already cooked, so this is FAST!

Combine with veggies and serve!

Super-Easy Fish Taco Wraps

These wraps are delicious and very easy to make and using Romaine leaves as wraps helps keep the carbs on the lower side. I used tilapia, but any kind of fish will do. You could bread it yourself, but to save time I purchased it ready to go! Top the wraps with your choice of veggies and condiments.

Ingredients:

- Panko Breaded Tilapia (available at most stores in the freezer section).
- Romaine Lettuce Leaves
- Cilantro
- Salsa
- Shredded Cheese
- Lemon or Lime Juice
- Avocado, sliced

Directions:

Bake tilapia according to package directions, about 20-25 minutes. In the meantime, wash the lettuce leaves and set out to dry.

When tilapia is done, cut into strips (halves or thirds) and assemble into wraps, using toppings of your choice.

Lower Carb Strawberry Rhubarb Crisp

This recipe is SUPER delicious and very low in carbohydrates and high in fiber and heart-healthy fats and the crushed cashews or almonds add just the right crunchiness.

Serve as part of your breakfast or enjoy as a treat that is truly good for you.

Ingredients:

- 2 cups strawberries, diced
- 2 cups rhubarb, diced
- 1 cup almond flour
- 4 TBS sugar, divided (white, organic, or coconut sugar)
- ¼ cup coconut oil, melted
- 1 TBS chia seeds
- 1 TBS hemp hearts
- 1/3 cup cashews or almonds, crushed. (Place the cashews or almonds in a resealable bag and use a rolling pin or glass to crush them).

Directions:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

Combine the strawberries and rhubarb with 2 TBS of the sugar and layer the bottom of a 1-quart baking dish with this mixture.

In medium bowl, combine the almond flour, chia seeds, hems heart, melted coconut oil, and the rest of the sugar (2 TBS). Stir until all the ingredients are moist from the coconut oil. Spread this mixture evenly over the top of the strawberry rhubarb mixture. Sprinkle with the crushed cashews or almonds.

Bake for about 30 minutes, until the top starts to brown and the juices are bubbling around the edges.

Easy Avocado Dressing

This dressing is full of amazingly healthy ingredients and very easy to make. Just one avocado provides about 8 grams of fiber plus heart-healthy fats. Use it to top a salad or chicken or fish.

Ingredients:

- 1 avocado
- 1 small clove garlic, crushed
- 2 TBS lime juice
- ¼ cup olive oil
- ½ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp pepper

Directions:

Combine all ingredients in a blender or food processor and blend until creamy.

Comments:

You might want to double the recipe it's so yummy!

Mediterranean Orzo Pasta Salad with Roasted Garlic and Gruyere Cheese Sausage

Here's one of my favorite things to do for meals. Start with a salad from the deli and "doctor it up" to make it a meal. You still get all the yummy flavors without as much work. The salad came with sundried tomatoes, Kalamata olives, artichoke hearts and spinach leaves. I added some arugula and pine nuts and served with protein on the side to make it a complete meal. The name sounds fancy but the prep was easy

Ingredients:

- 1 ½ pounds Mediterranean Orzo Pasta salad (I got mine from Fred Meyer)
- 5 or 6 cups arugula (in the produce section)
- ½ cup pine nuts (almonds would work as well)
- 2 packages Aidell's Brand Chicken Sausage – Roasted Garlic and Gruyere Cheese Flavor

Directions:

Combine the pasta salad, arugula and nuts in a large bowl. Mix well.

Slice the chicken sausage into bite-sized pieces. Place in a large skillet with about ½ inch of water. Simmer over medium-low heat about 8 minutes to heat through. Let the water evaporate to brown the sausages.

Comments:

Aaaah! A yummy dinner in a short amount of time. This beats the drive-thru any day!

Turkey Tenderloin with Raw Carrots & Toasted Sour Dough

Turkey tenderloins are the tender strip of white meat hidden under the turkey breast. You can buy them “as is” or seasoned. Because they are low in fat, they can dry out quickly if not cooked properly. I sliced mine and simmered in chicken broth to keep it moist, but apparently using a dry rub and grilling works great. Next time! Serve with raw organic carrots (yummy flavor) and toasted sourdough with garlic butter for an easy summertime meal.

Ingredients:

- Turkey tenderloins
- Mrs. Dash seasoning (or seasoning of your choice)
- Chicken broth
- Fresh carrots
- Sourdough bread
- Butter (get the real stuff!)
- Fresh garlic, crushed

Directions:

Slice the turkey into ¼ inch slices. Pour chicken broth into large skillet until broth is about 1 inch in height. Use more or less broth depending on your pan size and the amount of turkey you are cooking. Simmer over medium-low heat about 30 minutes. Use meat thermometer to make sure final temperature is at least 165 degrees.

Melt butter and combine with crushed garlic. Toast the sourdough and spread butter/garlic mixture over it when done. No need to turn on the oven when it's hot!

Comments:

Now.... Breathe, relax, and mindfully enjoy this meal. Give thanks and express gratitude for the food that nourishes your body.

Avocado and Garbanzo Bean Spread

Another fast, versatile, and super delicious meal or snack. This recipe boasts tons of fiber from the avocado and beans, as well as protein. Use it as a spread on toast or crackers, or wrap it up in a Romaine lettuce leaf for a wrap. You'll probably want to double the recipe it's so good!

Ingredients:

- 1 can garbanzo beans, drained
- 1 avocado, seed removed and peeled
- 2 tsp lemon juice
- 1 tsp minced garlic
- Salt and pepper to taste

Directions:

Blend all ingredients in a food processor. That's it!

Serve as a spread or in a lettuce wrap.

Comments:

This recipe is very versatile and yummy.

Cucumber, Tomato, Avocado, and Garbanzo Bean Salad

This salad is not only tasty, it's beautiful! And it's full of protein, healthy fats, fiber, and just a few carbs. The addition of the garbanzo beans makes it a complete meal. Consider using organic beans in a non-BPA lined can to make it even healthier.

Ingredients:

- Two, 15 oz cans garbanzo beans, drained and rinsed
- 6 large tomatoes (Romas work well or use tomatoes of your choice), chopped into small bite-sized pieces
- 2 cucumbers, chopped into small bite-sized pieces
- 2 avocados, diced
- 1 small purple onion, thinly sliced into bite-sized pieces
- ½ cup Balsamic Vinaigrette dressing

Directions:

Combine all ingredients in a large bowl. Mix well and then enjoy mindfully!

Mozzarella Grilled Cheese Sandwiches

Ingredients:

- Sourdough bread
- Sliced mozzarella
- Tomato, thinly sliced
- Purple onion, thinly sliced
- Pesto
- Butter

Directions:

Butter one side of bread. Spread pesto on the other side and add cheese, tomato, and onion. Cook in non-stick skillet over medium heat until cheese is melted and bread is brown and crispy. Delicious!!

Comments:

These sandwiches are SO easy to make and SO yummy!

Alfredo Chicken & Spaghetti Squash

If you're watching your carbs, you don't have to give up your Alfredo. Substitute spaghetti squash and enjoy the flavor! 1 cup of cooked spaghetti squash has about 75 calories, 10 grams of carbs, and 2 grams of fiber. 1 cup of cooked spaghetti pasta has about 220 calories, 43 grams of carbs, and 3 grams of fiber.

Ingredients:

- 1 jar Bertolli Garlic Alfredo sauce
- 1 large spaghetti squash, cooked
- 2-3 boneless, skinless chicken breasts, chopped into bite-sized pieces
- 2 TBS olive or coconut oil
- 1 onion, chopped
- Fresh Parmesan cheese, to taste

Directions:

Wash the outside of the spaghetti squash and cut about 4-5 small slits in it with a sharp knife. Place on a foil-lined baking pan. Bake at 425 degrees for about 30 minutes. Remove from oven. Turn the squash over onto its other side and return to oven. Bake for another 30 minutes. Remove from oven. Carefully slice the ends off and allow it to cool about 5 minutes before cutting it half, lengthwise. Once cut, use a spoon to remove seeds and then use a fork to "shred" into strands.

While squash is baking, sauté chicken breasts and onions in the oil until chicken is cooked thru and onions are tender. Add the Alfredo sauce and simmer on low, keeping warm until the squash is cooked. Add extra Parmesan if desired.

Comments:

Reducing your refined carbohydrate intake can help lower your triglycerides.

Minestrone Soup

Ingredients:

- Leftover roast, chopped in small pieces (or whatever cooked meat you prefer or have on hand)
- 4 cups organic vegetable broth (one, 32-oz carton)
- 2 (14.5 oz) cans stewed tomatoes (or several fresh)
- 1 onion, chopped
- 3-4 stalks celery, chopped
- 4 carrots, chopped
- 1 large head cabbage, shredded
- 4 cups spinach, finely chopped
- 1 large zucchini, sliced
- 2 cans garbanzo beans, drained
- 2 cans kidney beans, drained
- 2 TBS Italian seasoning

Combine all ingredients in large pot or crock pot. Simmer several hours then serve.

Comments:

This makes LOTS. Freeze leftovers!

Black Bean Breakfast Burritos

I found these versatile *Don Lee Farms* brand Chipotle Black Bean Burgers at Costco and they come in handy for breakfast, lunch or dinner. Each “burger” has 200 calories, 28 grams of carbs (5 of which come from fiber), and 10 grams of protein. They are also gluten free and organic.

Ingredients:

- 1 black bean burger
- 1 small flour tortilla
- Cheese, to taste
- Salsa, to taste
- Avocado (if desired)

Directions:

Cook burger according to package directions. They can be microwaved, but I like to pan-fry them in a bit of oil to get them crispy on the outside. You can cut the burger in half and stuff in a tortilla with salsa and cheese or leave “as is” to reduce the carbs. Top with cheese if desired and a few slices of heart-healthy avocado.

Convenient Superfood Salad Recipe

This recipe is EXTREMELY easy and fast and VERY healthy. Look for the superfoods salad at your local deli. It usually contains kale, tomatoes, grapes, and purple onions. Add some protein and fat and you've got a complete meal.

Ingredients:

- 1-2 pounds superfood salad mix
- 1 rotisserie chicken, chopped into bite-sized pieces
- 1 avocado, chopped into bite-sized pieces

Combine all ingredients in a large bowl and mix well.

Comments:

Super delicious, nutritious, and fast!

Teriyaki & Pineapple Chicken Meatballs

Another great find at Costco to make dinner fast, easy, and healthy! Start with Aidells Brand chicken meatballs. They are antibiotic free with no nitrites and no added hormones and they come in the family size so you'll have lots of leftovers! I used the Teriyaki & Pineapple flavored ones for an Asian flavor. Simmer with a sauce of your choice and add some veggies for a quick entrée that you can serve over rice or in a wrap.

Ingredients:

- 1 large package Aidells Chicken Meatballs, Teriyaki & Pineapple flavor
- 1 bottle sweet and sour sauce of your choice
- 2 yellow peppers, chopped into bite-sized pieces
- 1 onion, chopped into bite-sized pieces
- Cooked rice or Romaine leaves for a wrap

Directions:

Combine chicken meatballs and sauce in a large skillet. Cook over medium heat about 10 minutes. The meatballs are precooked so they don't take much time. Towards the end of the cooking time, add the chopped veggies and mix well. Cook another 5 minutes to heat thoroughly. Serve over rice or in a lettuce wrap.

BLT Salad

Use quality bacon (nitrite free) and plenty of veggies. The flavors and colors are amazing. Be sure to save this recipe and use again when you have tomatoes straight from the vine!

Ingredients (per salad):

- 2-3 slices cooked bacon, chopped
- 2 cups salad greens (Romaine, spinach, iceberg – whatever you have!)
- 1 tomato, chopped
- ½ avocado, chopped
- Purple onion, thinly sliced and chopped

For the dressing:

- ½ cup mayo
- 2 TBS milk
- ½ tsp garlic powder
- Dash of pepper

Directions:

Cook bacon over medium heat until desired doneness.

While bacon is cooking, combine dressing ingredients and mix well.

Combine salad ingredients. Add cooked bacon and desired amount of dressing.

Comments:

Fabulous!!

Super Easy Creek Chicken Pitas with Ranch

Ingredients:

- 2 pounds boneless, skinless chicken breast fillets
- Garlic salt and pepper to taste (for chicken)
- 1 TBS olive or coconut oil
- One, 12-oz carton Greek Yogurt Dip, Cucumber Dill flavored
- 1 package Uncle Dan's Creamy Ranch Seasoning and Dressing Mix
- 8 pita pocket halves
- 1 tomato, thinly sliced
- ½ red onion, thinly sliced
- Shredded lettuce
- Feta cheese

Directions:

In large skillet, sauté the chicken tenderloins with the oil, over medium heat, until cooked through (about 5 minutes). Season with garlic salt and pepper. Add Ranch Seasoning to Greek Yogurt Dip and mix well.

Open pita pocket half and spread a layer of the Dip mixture inside. Add chicken, veggies, and cheese to taste. Eat and enjoy!

Thai Stir Fry with Steak and Broccoli

Ingredients:

- 11.5 oz bottle Thai Peanut Sauce (whatever brand is available at your store)
- 1-pound sirloin steak, cut into bite-size pieces
- 14-oz package Thai Kitchen Stir Fry Rice Noodles
- 3 eggs
- 1 onion, chopped into bite-sized pieces
- 1 head broccoli, chopped into bite-sized pieces
- 3 TBS olive or coconut oil

Directions:

Soak rice noodles according to package directions, about 10 minutes. While noodles are soaking, wash and prep veggies and slice the meat into bite-sized pieces.

Add 1 TBS oil to large skillet and stir-fry the meat until done, about 4-5 minutes. Remove cooked meat from pan. Add the rest of the olive oil and stir-fry the veggies until just warmed. Add the cooked meat back to the pan along with the peanut sauce and stir well. Keep warm.

In a large skillet, scramble the eggs in 1 TBS oil. Add the rice noodles and mix well, stir-frying for about 4-5 minutes.

Combine all ingredients or let people serve themselves, topping the noodles with the meat and veggie stir-fry mixture.

Comments:

Fabulous flavors and textures! Enjoy.

Sour Cream Chicken Enchilada

When you're looking for that warm, creamy entrée for those cold winter nights, this recipe is great. I made it easier by layering the tortillas instead of rolling them. Double the recipe and freeze a pan for later!

Ingredients:

- 1 lb boneless, skinless chicken breasts
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 TBS olive or coconut oil
- 9 corn tortillas
- 2 cups grated cheese (Mexican blend or other)
- ¼ cup butter
- ¼ cup flour
- 15 oz chicken broth
- 1 cup sour cream
- 4 oz can diced green chilies
- 1 TBS Mrs. Dash Extra Spicy Seasoning Blend
- Salt and pepper to taste

Directions:

Preheat oven to 400 degrees.

In frying pan, sauté the chicken with the oil over medium-high heat until done. Remove from heat and shred or cut into small pieces. Add a bit more oil to the pan and cook the onions a couple of minutes until soft. Set onions and chicken aside.

In a medium sauce pan, melt the butter and then stir in the flour to make a roux (trust me, this isn't hard)! Stir and cook until bubbly and thickened. Gradually whisk in chicken broth and bring to a boil, stirring frequently. This mixture will be slightly thick. Remove from heat and add the sour cream, chilis and spices.

Spray a baking dish with non-stick spray. Place about 3 tortillas on the bottom of the dish. Tear into pieces if necessary to fit the pan. Add a layer of cooked chicken and 1/3 of the cheese. Repeat this layering two more times with the remaining chicken and cheese.

Pour the chicken broth mixture over the layers and cover with foil. Bake about 20-30 minutes until heated through and bubbly.

Serve with a side salad and enjoy!

The Veggie Express

I love it when I try to make something I saw online – and it turns out great! This veggie “train” was easy (relatively!) to make and was a big hit with the little ones at Christmas. Consider making it for a New Year celebration or anytime you want to make your veggies more fun.

Ingredients:

- 2 cucumbers, sliced into circles
- 9 or 10 bell peppers, assorted colors, cut as directed below
- 1-2 yellow squash, cut into thin “sticks”
- Baby carrots
- 3-4 celery stalks, cut into thin “sticks”
- ½ head broccoli, cut into individual stalks
- ½ head cauliflower, cut into individual pieces
- One large baking sheet or piece of cardboard, covered with foil.
- Toothpicks
- Black licorice (optional)

Directions:

This “Veggie Express” is easy to make. Line the baking sheet or cardboard with foil. Use the licorice to make the train tracks. Cut the licorice as needed to make the inside of the track.

Wash and prep the veggies as described above. The peppers are the cars of the “train” and the cucumbers are the wheels. To prep the peppers, cut in half length-wise, leaving the stem. Remove the seeds and slice the rest of the pepper into thin strips.

Using toothpicks, attach 4 cucumbers “wheels” to each of the peppers. Stuff each car of the train with a different veggie. Place the pepper “cars” on the baking sheet/cardboard, on the licorice “tracks”.

Serve with dip of your choice.

Comments:

Yummy, colorful, fun, and delicious!

Tri Tip Roast

The tri-tip is a triangular shaped cut of the sirloin. It can be used as an oven roast or cut into steaks. However, it can become very tough if cooked improperly or too long. I started with a 3-pound roast and turned it into a delicious meat gravy and served it over mashed potatoes. The spices make the flavor amazing! For an interesting twist, you can thicken the gravy with chia seeds instead of flour.

Ingredients:

- 2-3 lb. tri-tip roast
- 1 TBS dried thyme
- 1 TBS dried basil
- 1 TBS dried marjoram
- 1 TBS dry mustard
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 2 TBS olive oil plus extra for coating the baking pan
- 1 large onion, sliced into rings
- 1 cup red wine (or beef broth or other wine substitute)
- 1-2 cup beef broth (for extra gravy)
- 2 TBS chia seeds

Directions:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

Combine the seasonings with the olive oil. Rub the roast all over with this mixture and place in a sealable plastic bag and refrigerate 8 hours to overnight. Pour the 1 cup of red wine or beef broth into this bag about 4 hours before cooking and continue to marinate in the refrigerator.

Drizzle olive oil in bottom of large baking pan and place sliced onions on top. Place seasoned roast on top of onions and pour any liquid into the pan as well. Cover with foil.

Bake at 350 degrees for about 45 minutes. Do not over bake.

Remove roast from oven and slice, against the grain, into thin, bite-sized pieces and transfer these pieces, plus the onions and any liquid into a large skillet. Add the extra beef broth and chia seeds and let simmer about 5-10 minutes to thicken. Serve over mashed potatoes, steamed cauliflower or toasted whole-grain bread.

Comments:

Eat mindfully and slowly and enjoy.

Blueberry Banana Pancakes

These “paleo-style” pancakes have no flour or added sugars and are super-easy to make. High in protein and healthy fats, they make a good Thanksgiving Day breakfast!

Ingredients: (makes about 6-8 pancakes, depending on size)

- 3 small (4-5”) bananas
- 3 eggs
- ½ cup sunflower seed butter (or nut butter or your choice)
- 2 tsp ground cinnamon
- Coconut oil
- Blueberries (or berries of your choice for topping)

Directions:

Place the bananas, eggs, sunflower seed butter, and cinnamon in a food processor or high-speed blender. Blend/process until smooth and pourable. This mixture makes a nice batter.

Heat about 1 tsp coconut oil in skillet. Pour batter (about ¼ cup) into skillet and cook over medium-low about 3-4 minutes each side until cooked through and browned.

Serve topped with fresh berries. For added fiber sprinkle with chia seeds.

Comments:

Eat mindfully, giving thanks for this meal.

Brussels Sprouts and Cashew Salad

Before you and/or someone in your family gags and turns their nose up, keep this in mind. According to the World's Healthiest Foods (whfoods.com), Brussels sprouts are now at the top of the list for commonly eaten cruciferous vegetables. Their total glucosinolate (an important phytonutrient) content has been shown to be greater than the amount found in mustard greens, turnip greens, cabbage, kale, cauliflower, or broccoli. This recipe features them raw, which may be a great way to reintroduce them to yourself and/or your family! They're also in season right now and you can buy them as a big stalk, which can add to the fun of preparation.

Ingredients:

- Raw Brussels sprouts (buy the stalk or buy them individually, based on your household needs), cut into quarters
- Honey Mustard salad dressing
- Cashews, salted

Directions:

Snap off the Brussels sprouts from the stalk. Trim the bottoms off if too bulky. Cut into halves, then quarters. If you're not sure how to do this, there are several YouTube videos online that can help you! Place cut Brussels sprouts in salad bowl. Add about 1 tsp Honey Mustard dressing per serving. Top with 1/3 cup cashews.

That's it! Enjoy

Toast with Peanut Butter, Fruit, & Chia Seeds

When you're looking for something a bit different for breakfast, but you don't have much time, try this easy recipe. It's a healthier version of toast with peanut butter and jelly. The peanut butter provides protein and healthy fats, the chia seeds add fiber and more healthy fats, and the berries offer tons of phytonutrients and fiber. The result is delicious – and pretty to look at!

Ingredients (per person):

- 1 slice whole wheat bread, toasted
- 1-2 TBS peanut butter – use generously
- ½ cup berries (sliced strawberries, raspberries or blueberries)
- 1 tsp chia seeds

Directions:

Toast the bread. Top with peanut butter and berries and then sprinkle with the chia seeds.

Comments:

Eat mindfully and enjoy all the amazing textures. Nurture yourself with the knowledge that you are choosing foods that serve your body well.

Spiralized Zucchini Salad

If you're looking to save on carbs AND increase your veggie consumption, you'll want to try a Spiralizer. It's one of the better contraptions I've seen in a long time when it comes to kitchen tools! It turns veggies into "noodles" and makes cooking a bit more fun. The recipe below is very basic, but yummy, and is a good place to start practicing using your new gadget!

Ingredients:

- Balsamic Vinaigrette Dressing
- 2-4 medium zucchinis
- 1 cup cherry tomatoes, halved
- 1 large ripe avocado, peeled, pitted, and sliced into bite sized pieces
- Feta cheese to taste
- Cooked chicken or salami (optional)

Directions:

Spiralize the zucchini according to directions and desired thickness. Cut the zucchini into shorter strands to make them easier to eat. Add the cherry tomatoes and avocado and mix well. Add dressing and feta cheese to taste. To make a complete meal, add cooked chicken or salami to the salad.

Oatmeal with Chia Seeds

I'm often asked the question "Is oatmeal good for me?". The answer is yes – and no. Oatmeal does provide fiber, which can help reduce cholesterol, but it also provides a fair number of non-fiber carbohydrates. ¼ cup of dry steel cut oats has 27 grams of carbs, but only 4 of them are fiber. After you subtract the fiber, you're still left with 23 grams of carbs in ¼ cup dry (1/2 cup cooked).

To make your oatmeal healthier, try adding some chia seeds. 2 TBS have 12 grams of carbs, but 10 of them come from fiber. This same serving offers 5 grams of protein, making it's "staying power" even greater. Add some high fiber berries instead of sugar and you've got a much-improved oatmeal!

Ingredients:

- ¼ cup dry steel cut oats
- 2 TBS Chia Seeds
- ¾ cup water
- 1 cup berries

Directions:

Combine oats, chia seeds, and water in sauce pan. Heat to just boiling and then let simmer on a low boil about 5 minutes. Stir occasionally to prevent sticking. You may also need to add some extra water. Remove from heat and add berries. Stir well and enjoy!

Comments:

For mindful eating . . . place a small bite in your mouth and notice the many different textures. The oats and seeds and berries are all different. Let the food sit in your mouth for several seconds to notice the flavors. Set the spoon down between bites. Eat without distraction.

Italian Sausage Chili

Flavor up your traditional chili recipe by using Italian sausage instead of ground beef. I used tomatoes from my garden (the ones that were ripening on the counter!) but canned tomatoes work too. The chia seeds are optional, but they do add omega-3 fats and fiber and make the chili nice and thick. Hint – when buying canned goods, look for BPA-free cans to reduce your exposure to this chemical.

Ingredients:

- 1-2 pounds Italian sausage (mild or hot – your choice)
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 10-12 tomatoes (or canned)
- 4 can kidney beans
- 1 small can V-8 juice
- 2 x 4.5 oz can chopped green chilis
- 6 TBS chia seeds
- 2-3 TBS chili powder (season to taste)
- Garlic salt and pepper to taste

Directions:

Sauté sausage and onion in large skillet, over medium heat, until sausage is cooked through. Transfer to large pot. Add the rest of the ingredients and bring to a boil. Gently boil over medium heat for about 1 hour, stirring occasionally. Add water or more V-8 juice to bring to desired consistency if too thick. Serve as is or with corn bread.

Greek Salad with Chicken & Tomatoes & Feta

With the beautiful fall season, tomatoes from the garden are still plentiful. I still have 2 big bowls of green ones ripening on the kitchen counter. (Hint – there are a zillion ways to ripen green tomatoes from the garden, but I’m what I lovingly call myself a “relaxed gardener” which basically means my gardening and harvesting methods have to be easy so that gardening remains fun for me. That said, I pick mine off the vine before it gets too cold and let them ripen in a bowl on the counter. Other methods work, but mine is REALLY easy!) Use whatever tomatoes you have available to make this recipe and savor the flavors and colors.

Ingredients for Salad:

- 2 boneless, skinless chicken breasts
- 1 TBS coconut or olive (to sauté chicken)
- About 10 medium to large tomatoes, chopped into large chunks
- 4-8 cups baby spinach
- 1-2 can black olives, drained
- Crumbled feta cheese

Ingredients for Dressing:

- 3 TBS red wine vinegar
- ¼ cup olive oil
- 1-2 cloves garlic, crushed
- 1 tsp salt
- ½ tsp pepper
- 1 tsp basil (or 2-3 TBS fresh basil)
- 1 tsp parsley flakes (or 2-3 TBS fresh parsley)

Directions:

In large skillet, sauté the chicken in the coconut or olive oil and cook about 5-8 minutes until done. Remove from heat and chop into small pieces.

In small bowl, combine ingredients for dressing. Mix well.

In large bowl, combine chicken, tomatoes, and black olives. Add dressing and mix well. Sprinkle with feta cheese.

Serve over spinach and enjoy mindfully. Take your time. Set your fork down between bites. Breathe.

Chicken Black Bean Quesadillas

These quesadillas taste like you ordered them in a restaurant! They are SO delicious – and easy too!

Ingredients:

- 6-8 flour tortillas (or use ½ flour, ½ corn) , about 6-10" in size
- 2 x 15-ounce cans black beans, drained
- 1 x 10 oz can chicken breast (cooked chicken)
- 1 x 15 oz can corn
- 1 bunch cilantro, chopped
- 3-4 cups shredded Mexican cheese
- Cooking spray

Directions:

Preheat oven to 400 degrees.

Combine beans, chicken, corn, cilantro, and cheese in a large bowl. Mix well.

Spray baking sheet with cooking spray. Place tortillas on sheet and top with a few big spoonfuls of the bean mixture. Spread bean mixture on tortilla to cover completely.

Bake open-faced about 10 minutes, until cheese starts to melt and ingredients are heated. Remove from oven and carefully fold in half, using a spatula to assist with folding. Turn oven up to broil. Place tortillas back in oven and broil until they start to brown and get a bit crispy. Remove from oven and turn the tortillas over. Return to oven and broil until they start to turn brown.

Remove from oven. Allow to cool slightly and then cut into triangle-shaped pieces. Serve with salsa and enjoy mindfully.

Comments:

If you find that you just can't stop eating, even if you are physically full, you may be eating for reasons other than hunger. Give our office a call to get help with cravings and emotional eating issues.

Alfredo Tortellini and Vegetables

If you're craving the taste of pasta Alfredo but prefer fewer carbs, you'll love this recipe! I used more veggies than pasta and made sure to add adequate protein. Still full of flavor but not nearly as devastating to blood sugar and insulin levels. It's also fast and easy to prepare!

Ingredients:

- 1 jar Bertolli Garlic Alfredo sauce
- 1 small bag cheese or chicken tortellini
- 1 TBS olive oil or coconut oil
- 3 bell peppers – 1 red, 1 orange, 1 yellow – chopped into bite-sized pieces
- 2 zucchinis, chopped into bite-sized pieces
- 1 large purple onion, chopped into bite-sized pieces
- 1 large can cooked chicken
- Fresh Parmesan cheese, to taste

Directions:

Boil tortellini according to package directions, about 7 minutes. Drain and return to pan. Add Alfredo sauce and chicken, mix well, and keep warm over low heat.

Heat olive in large frying pan. Add veggies and cook over medium heat about 5-8 minutes, until veggies are just tender.

Combine veggies with tortellini and chicken. Mix well. Top with Parmesan as desired.

Comments:

Savor each bite and enjoy mindfully! You'll probably be surprised at how satisfied you are when you allow yourself to taste the flavors.

Open Faced Italian Sandwich

With just a few ingredients, this recipe is super easy!

Cook up some extra hamburger for another recipe and it's a time saver too!

Ingredients:

- 3-4 lb ground beef
- 1 24-oz bottle spaghetti sauce
- Sourdough bread (or bread of your choice)
- Swiss cheese (or cheese of your choice)

Directions:

Preheat oven to 400 degrees.

In large skillet, cook ground beef over medium heat until done. Remove half and freeze for another recipe. Add spaghetti sauce to remaining beef and mix well, heating thoroughly.

Top bread with cheese and bake 5-10 minutes until cheese is melted and bread is a bit crusty. Top with meat sauce and serve.

Serve with raw veggies (cauliflower, broccoli, and carrots).

Comments:

Super easy and very yummy!

Shrimp & Black Bean Salsa Salad

This recipe is ridiculously easy and amazingly yummy. With just 4 ingredients, you can serve it up in no time. Shrimp is a great source of protein, with nearly 26 grams per 4-ounce serving. Shrimp also provides selenium, an important mineral. Deficiencies have been shown to increase our risk of cardiovascular disease and heart failure as well as type 2 diabetes, depression and compromised cognitive function. The beans provide high fiber carbs and the spinach protein loads of phytonutrients and color.

Ingredients:

- 2 lb bag frozen shrimp, no tails, thawed
- 2-3 cans black beans, drained
- 24 oz jar Mellow Black Bean & Corn Salsa (Private Selection Brand at Fred Meyer) or salsa of your choice
- 6-8 cups fresh spinach leaves

Directions:

Thaw shrimp in refrigerator according to package directions. Combine shrimp, black beans, and the entire jar of salsa in large skillet. Heat over medium high about 8 minutes, allowing the liquid part of the salsa to warm the shrimp and beans.

This mixture will look like a bit like a soup because of all of the liquid in the salsa. When the mixture is thoroughly heated, pour the mixture into a large colander to drain the liquid. Return to skillet to keep warm. Serve over spinach to make a salad.

Coconut Shrimp with Stir Fry Veggies

If you're looking for the yummy taste of coconut shrimp, without the cost of eating out, I love the Coconut Shrimp with Thai Chili Dipping Sauce from Costco. The shrimp bake up nice and crispy and the sauce adds a flavorful kick. Pair it with some stir-fry veggies and you've got a great meal that's fast and easy.

Ingredients:

- 1 package Coconut Shrimp with Thai Chili Dipping Sauce (cook as many as you need)
- 1 onion, chopped into large pieces
- 2 yellow bell peppers, chopped into large pieces
- 1 head of broccoli, chopped into large pieces
- 1 TBS coconut oil or olive oil
- 1 clove garlic, crushed

Directions:

Cook shrimp according to package directions.

About 10 minutes before the shrimp is done, start cooking the veggies. Melt oil in large skillet. Add chopped peppers, onion, and broccoli. Stir-fry for about 5 minutes, until veggies are tender but still crisp. Add garlic and mix well.

Open faced Bacon Tomato & Avocado Sandwich

What a great way to use up some of those delicious tomatoes from the garden.

This recipe is basic but feel free to add whatever appeals to you. I enjoyed mine for breakfast this week and I'll probably have another one for dinner this weekend!

Ingredients – per sandwich:

- 2-3 slices cooked bacon (I use Hempler's Applewood Smoked Uncured Bacon – no antibiotics, no added hormones, no nitrite or nitrate added, no MSG added)
- 2-3 tomato slices
- ¼ avocado, sliced
- 1 slice bread, toasted (I like sourdough for this recipe)
- Mayo or butter as spread for the toast
- Other optional yummy ingredients: Swiss cheese, lettuce or spinach, onion

Directions:

Toast bread. Spread with mayo or butter or spread of your choice. Top with cooked bacon, tomato, and avocado.

Comments:

Take a moment to really enjoy the flavors, textures, and colors of this sandwich and enjoy!

Super Easy Chicken Enchiladas

These enchiladas take about 5 minutes to prep and only 30 minutes to bake, making this 5-ingredient recipe super easy and very fast. Start with some rotisserie chicken (I use the organic brand available at Fred Meyer) and layer the ingredients and you've got a tasty meal in minutes! Serve with a green salad or some raw veggies and enjoy.

Ingredients:

- 28 oz can green chili enchilada sauce, divided into 4 portions
- 10 count package yellow corn tortillas (about 5-6 inches), each torn in half
- 2-3 cups shredded Mexican style cheese, divided into 3 portions
- 1 cup salsa, divided into 3 portions
- 2 cups shredded or finely chopped cooked chicken (use rotisserie chicken for faster prep), divided into 3 portions

Directions:

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Spray a large baking pan with non-stick cooking spray. Pour $\frac{1}{4}$ of the enchilada sauce into pan. Layer 3 of the tortillas on top of the sauce. Layer $\frac{1}{3}$ of the chicken, salsa and cheese on top. Cover with $\frac{1}{4}$ of the enchilada sauce. Repeat this layering 2 more times, making sure to cover with cheese as the last layer.

Cover pan with foil and bake about 30 minutes, until cheese is melted and enchiladas are bubbling.

Comments:

Eat mindfully so you can enjoy the flavors and textures.

Swiss Chard & Black Bean Salad

As an excellent source of vitamin C, vitamin E, vitamin A (in the form of beta-carotene) and the mineral manganese, and a good source of the mineral zinc, Swiss chard is one of the most nutritious vegetables around. And the amazing variety of phytonutrients is observable by its vibrant colors including dark green leaves and red, purple, and yellow stalks and veins. The stems are often woody and not eaten, so cut those away and use the leaves for this recipe. If you're not sure how to do this, simply google a YouTube video for prepping tips!

Ingredients:

- 2 x 15.5 oz cans spicy black beans
- 2 x 15.5 oz regular black beans, drained
- 2 large bunches Swiss Chard, stems removed and leaves chopped into large pieces
- 2 TBS olive or coconut oil
- 1 large onion, chopped
- Shredded mozzarella or Mexican cheese
- Salt/pepper to taste

Directions:

Sauté the onions and the Swiss chard with the oil for about 3-4 minutes, over medium heat, until the leaves are wilted. Add in the black beans and stir thoroughly. Heat on medium heat until all ingredients are warmed. Top with shredded mozzarella cheese.

Comments:

Fast, delicious, and super-healthy!

Spinach Dip with Hummus & Chicken

If you're in the mood for a less traditional dinner, try turning this appetizer into a meal – at home! Add in some fresh veggies and extra protein from the cheese and chicken, and you've got dinner. Serve with some chips or gluten-free crackers or roll up in a Romaine leaf for fewer carbs. Decadently good!

Ingredients:

- 17 oz (family size) container of hummus (I like Sabra brand Roasted Red Pepper for this recipe)
- 4 cups baby spinach leaves (or regular spinach leaves, torn into smaller pieces)
- ½ onion, chopped
- 2 tsp coconut or olive oil, separated
- ½ – 1 cup fresh Parmesan (or shredded cheese of your choice)
- ½-1 cup cooked chicken, finely chopped or shredded (about 1 large boneless, skinless breast)
- Chips, gluten-free crackers, or Romaine leaves

Directions:

Sauté onions in 1 tsp coconut or olive oil in large skillet over medium heat. Set aside. Cook chicken in same skillet with the rest of the oil, about 5 minutes, until cooked through.

Remove from heat and finely chop or shred. Combine the hummus, cheese, onions, and chicken in the skillet and stir well.

Add the spinach and continue to blend and heat until the spinach is slightly wilted and all ingredients are thoroughly warmed. Enjoy!

Healthier Cobb Salad

I've shied away from Cobb salad in the past because I didn't want to ingest all of the "junk" that is typically found in processed meats. But thanks to consumer demand, there are better choices on the market today. For example, the *simple truth* brand of lunch meat available at Fred Meyer offers ham and turkey raised with no antibiotics, added hormones, or added nitrates (*except for those nitrates naturally occurring in sea salt and celery juice powder). And Hempler's makes an uncured bacon with similar properties. As always, all things in moderation. But if you love Cobb salad, you now have some better options!

Ingredients:

- 8-10 cups torn lettuce (Romaine or iceberg)
- 1-2 large tomato, chopped
- 1-2 avocados, halved, pitted, peeled, and chopped
- 4 slices bacon, cooked and crumbled (Hempler's brand)
- 1, 7-oz package *simple truth* Uncured Black Forest Ham, cut in strips
- 1, 7-oz package *simple truth* Oven Roasted Turkey, cut in strips
- 2-4 hard-boiled eggs, chopped
- 2-4 TBS crumbled blue cheese
- Salad dressing of your choice

Directions:

Combine all ingredients in a large bowl and serve. Or, if you're feeling ambitious, top the lettuce with rows of each of the ingredients for a fancier look! Serve as is or with a side of crusty Sourdough bread with butter or olive oil.

Comments:

Eat without distraction (like the TV) and enjoy!