

Lunch On the Run

By Cynthia Love

It's 12:15 pm, you're on the run, your energy is starting to drop and you don't have a clue what to eat. Sound familiar? For many, lunch can be the most difficult meal of the day because we're often on-the-go and think we don't have time to stop and eat. Make time, or you risk becoming hyperglycemic which can make you cranky, irritable and tired.

Contrary to popular belief, delicious and nourishing lunches can be had, daily, it all comes down to being organized.

The best way to approach lunch is with a clear plan. Decide what you are going to eat for the week, buy your food on the weekend, then prepare, cook and freeze in individual portions. All it takes is 1 day a month and you can organize lunch for the entire month!

When you take time to eat a healthy lunch, it provides the extra energy you need to meet that looming deadline, pick the kids up from school, have a workout and get dinner on the table. It's no hidden secret that food is what fills up the tank and fuels us for our daily activities.

Personally I love soup's versatility. Soups are nourishing, fill you up and thanks to Thermos' technology you can even take them on the road. A proper lunch will get your through the afternoon blues and keep you energized until dinner. Make sure that your lunches contain healthy carbs, protein and a bit of healthy fats, for example: extra virgin olive oil on salad.

Whether you're a meat lover, conscious of calories or a vegan, there are lots of choices. Remember: you can't win the race if the gas tank is empty, so make sure to make time everyday to fill up on a wholesome lunch. Here are some easy-to-make or easy-to-buy nutrient filled lunch idea that won't break the bank. Bon Appetit!

DELICIOUS + NUTRICIOUS LUNCH MENUS

Calorie Counter

Tuna or sockeye salmon between lettuce leaves
Soups with a side of multigrain crackers
Hummus with a side of whole wheat pita bread

Chicken Lover

Grilled chicken, shredded lettuce, organic cheese & salsa in a pita pocket
Multigrain pizza topped w/grilled chicken, roasted red peppers and goat cheese
Kamut penne with chicken cubes

Must-Have Meat

Bowl or mug of chili with a side of whole wheat pita
Beef barley soup
Spaghetti w/meat sauce

Vegetarian & Vegan

Bean salads or pasta salads w/choice toppings: peppers, avocado, sesame or hemp seeds
Veggie & tofu stir-fry
Avocado-Cucumber Maki Sushi Rolls
Hemp pancakes with maple syrup

Snacks

Whole almonds
Dried fruit: apricots, mango, figs, cranberries
Yogurt
Apples and bananas
Sweet Potato Corn Bread (see recipe here)

Cynthia Love, BA., RNCP is a Registered Nutritional Consultant, dedicated to health and wellness. She has been in the healthcare field for the past 12 years and provides nutritional consulting services to both corporations and individuals. As a certified member of the International Organizational Consultants, Cynthia guides her clients to make nutrition and lifestyle choices such that they can achieve their 'optimal health'. Visit her at www.naturalexpectations.com

Sweet Potato Corn Bread

A sweet, savory bread to accompany soups.

1 cup flour
1 tsp baking powder
1/2 tsp baking soda
1/2 tsp salt
1/8 tsp allspice
1/2 cup cornmeal
1 cup sweet potatoes, cooked and mashed
4 tbsp oil
1/4 cup sweetener*
egg replacer** (to equal 2 eggs)
1/2 cup sour soy milk (soy milk + 1/2 tsp vinegar)

Preheat oven to 375F. In a large bowl, sift together the flour, baking powder, baking soda, salt, and allspice. Stir in the cornmeal. Add the mashed sweet potatoes, oil, sweetener, egg replacer, and sour milk. Mix together gently until "just mixed." Spoon into lightly oiled square or round loaf pan and bake for 30 minutes. Test with a knife to see if done.

Makes 1 loaf.

* Maple syrup or cane sugar

** 3 tbsp apple sauce or 1/4 cup soft tofu

Re-printed with permission from *How it all Vegan!* by Sarah Kramer (www.GoVegan.net) Arsenal Pulp Press.

