



POWER LUNCHES

STEP AWAY FROM THE VENDING MACHINE...
BESTFIT'S EMMA KIRKE IS HERE TO HELP YOU
TACKLE THE AFTERNOON [@DREKIRKEOSTM](#)

SOMETIMES ESTABLISHING A FULL LUNCH HOUR CAN BE A TASK IN ITSELF SUCH IS THE GROWING RIGOUR OF THE 9-5, BUT ENSURING YOU BEAT THE INEVITABLE AFTERNOON SLUMP IS A DIFFERENT SKILL.

Keeping lunch healthy, taking plenty of snacks so that the devilish vending machine doesn't draw you in and keeping a balance of lean meats, fibre and blood sugar balancing foods is the way you need to plan.

It is all too tempting to fall into the trap of pre-packaged and ready-made options. They may seem easier, but in fact they're likely to be high in saturated fat, salt and sugar. The key to avoiding a crash of any kind is to have a bulging lunchbox to prevent you from running short of food, and with plenty of blood sugar balancing items. The B group of vitamins, as well as chromium, are paramount. Tomatoes and onions combined with lean meats, sweet potato, protein, fibre and carbs will power you through the second half of your shift.

AVOID SARNIES

Fill up on fibre by including lentils in some soup, slash salt levels by using low sodium stock for soups and opt for rice or sweet potato instead of sandwiches. If you really love your sarnies and cannot possibly face life without one, try to have at least 2-3 days a week where you abstain. When you do succumb, try to vary the bread you use and include gluten free, granary, rye, pumpernickel or seeded varieties, wraps, rolls, bagels or pitta. Omitting the butter or spread when using moist fillings in your sarnie will help keep the calories down, as will lower salt fillings such as chicken or turkey salad.

RECYCLE YOUR DINNER

Make the most of leftovers to save time, money and provide a healthier choice. If you purposefully make too much when cooking your tea you can ensure there is an adequate amount for lunch the next day. If you can be really organized, weekly food prepping could mean you're never short of a tempting lunch menu. For example, a slice of deep oven omelette or frittata can pack all your nutrients in one easy meal and they can be frozen and reheated. Be good to your heart and include oily fish once a week, so sardines, salmon, trout or mackerel. Ensure you have handy healthy snacks such as unsalted nuts and seeds; they're full of stress-busting nutrients.

WAVE GOODBYE TO THE SUGAR

There are definitely some foods to avoid like the plague, including sweets, chocolate and biscuits. Instead, try to use fruit as an option to satisfy your sweet tooth. Also bear in mind that too much tea and coffee is detrimental, although initially you may feel you need the buzz you will undoubtedly suffer a bigger slump. Try to opt for water, coconut water, a homemade smoothie or Nutri bullet, green or herbal tea.

The key is to make sure that whatever you make is easy enough for you to do – that way you are more likely to stick to it. If the menu is too complex or time consuming you are likely to stray and reach for the pre-packed options. Ultimately, the healthiest lunch is the one you pack yourself. To make this easier for you, we've concocted a few ideas that are healthy, can be made in no time and which come with some snack add on's for those of you needing a little more fuel. So, no more slaving in the kitchen, no more going hungry or being unhealthy. As long as you have access to a microwave you're good to go.

RECIPES

GSN CHICKEN & COURGETTE CARBONARA

This particular dish provides two portions: 2 or 3 GSN chicken breasts, 1 courgette, ½ a green and red pepper, a medium white onion diced, 6 or 7 button mushrooms sliced, garlic, black onion seeds, fenugreek, coconut milk (1 can) and 2 tsps of xanthum gum (gluten free). Chives for decoration.



METHOD

Melt a little coconut oil in your wok. Chop your defrosted chicken breasts into bite-size pieces. When the oil is hot, pop in the chicken and sprinkle 1 tsp fenugreek, 2 tsps garlic, 1 tsp black onion seeds and the diced onion. When the chicken starts to brown, turn down the heat to low and add the diced peppers and slice mushrooms. Add ½ of the can of coconut milk. Slice the courgette length ways to make long ribbons and place them into boiling water. For the sauce, pour the remainder of the coconut milk into a pan, bring to the boil and sprinkle in 2 tsps of xanthum gum, ½ tsp garlic powder and a tsp of chopped dried chives. The sauce will thicken quickly, so keep stirring.

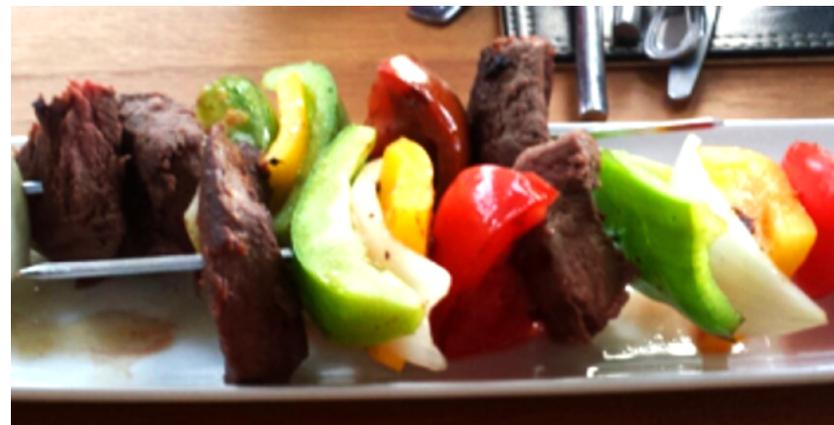
SWEET POTATO CRISPS

Tasty, and help to control blood sugar. Slice a sweet potato thinly and lay in a baking tray. Spray with a little avocado oil and cook for 15 minutes in a pre-heated oven on 180 degrees. You can flavour them with different spices, including hot paprika.



GSN OSTRICH STEAK KEBAB

1 ostrich steak for 2 kebabs, large pieces of onion, peppers (in mixed colours), large tomatoes, a little coconut oil and a sprinkle of garlic.



METHOD

Melt your coconut oil in your griddle pan and insert your chopped vegetables and sprinkle with garlic powder. As they brown turn them over with your tongs so both sides are cooked. Place to one side and add your ostrich steaks to the griddle pan. Once cooked to your liking, add the meat and veg onto your skewer in even patterns to create a fabulously easy and impressive meal. Serve with sweet potato crisps and a lime dip.

PUERTO RICAN MINCE WITH BARENAKED RICE

500g minced beef, ½ a green, red, and yellow pepper sliced, 1 white onion sliced, 3 tbsps. coconut oil, ½ tsp ground cumin, 1 tsp ground coriander, ½ tbsp turmeric powder, 1 tbsp dried oregano, pinch of saffron threads, 1 bunch of kale or spinach, 1 tub black olives, 1 ripe avocado, 1 cup cherry tomatoes and 100g Barenaked foods rice.



METHOD

In a wok, brown the beef then add the peppers, onions and coconut oil. Cook until onion is tender. Add all the spices and mix well. Add the kale and olives and cook for approximately five minutes until the kale is tender. Add the sliced avocado, cherry tomatoes and cook the rice as instructed.

EGG WHITE MUFFIN

In a shallow frying pan place metal biscuit cutters and pre heat your oven to 180 degrees. For this particularly version I separated the egg yolk from the white. In a wok, place a handful of kale and spinach and gently cook in a tsp of coconut oil [so it doesn't stick] and add the egg yolk. Mix well and ensure its thoroughly cooked. The mix should be sticky enough to press it into a ball shape. Place the ball in the centre of your biscuit/scone cutter, then pour the egg white around and over the ball of mix. Cook the egg white in the cutter for a little while in the frying pan and as the egg white solidifies place the frying pan in the oven (you need to make sure the frying pan handle is metal).

After 5-10 minutes the egg white will be cooked solid. When browned on top remove the frying pan from the oven (be careful as the handle will be very hot) and allow to cool enough to touch the cutter with an oven glove. Cut around the edge with a knife and press the egg white breakfast cake onto your plate to eat immediately, box up for your lunch the next day, or for snacks hot or cold.



SPICY MEXICAN EGG WHITE BURRITO

The egg white needs to be separated from the yolk. If you want a snack use just one egg, more if you want a meal/s and mix the egg whites together to make a bigger wrap. In a frying pan mix a handful of kale and spinach with the egg yolk or yolks. Cook through with ¼ tsp of paprika picante, ¼ tsp crushed chilli flakes and a sprinkle of cayenne pepper (this is the quantity for 1 egg, multiply the quantities per egg, Eg. 4 eggs would mean 1 tsp of spice).

Once cooked, pour the egg white into the pan on a low heat and spread with the back of a spoon into a round shape. Whilst the egg white is cooking sprinkle some paprika on top. Cover with a lid and cover for a couple of minutes. Loosen the wrap and carefully flip it over to cook the paprika-spiced side. Cover with a lid for a further 2 minutes. When the wrap is cooked, put it on a plate and place your spinach, kale and egg yolk mix to one edge and fold the wrap over. You could use whatever fillings you like to add variety.



EGG NOODLES

Melt a tsp. of coconut oil in a wok. Add the noodles with 1 tsp. of Chinese 5 spice, and 1 tsp. of crushed chilli flakes. Cook the Barenaked noodles as instructed and just before they're cooked add the spinach and Kale (1 handful of each) to the wok to gently cook. Turn off the heat and toss with the scrambled egg to thoroughly mix through. Serve hot or cold.

