



Class 8: Tips for healthy lunches & Salads

1. Tips for eating a quick and healthy lunch

- Stock up on lunch possibilities when you shop for groceries. Think simple
 - a loaf of whole wheat bread and a jar of peanut butter;
 - a package of corn tortillas, a can of black beans, and some fresh tomatoes;
 - frozen veggie burgers, whole grain hamburger buns, and a jar of roasted sweet peppers.
- On days when you buy a sandwich, go to a place that'll make one to order.
 - Ask for turkey or roast beef, extra tomatoes and onions, and only a smidge of mayonnaise. Better yet, opt for mustard.
 - Don't get tuna if it's mixed with lots of mayo.
 - By skipping that mayonnaise and salad dressings, you'll cut back the fat and cholesterol significantly.
- Prepare lunch items the night before right after dinner. This saves on clean-up time. Store food properly if you carry a lunch.

- Don't forget food safety. If refrigeration is not available, use insulated lunch boxes or bags with frozen ice or gel packs.
- Make your dessert a nutritious part of your lunch. Use fresh fruits (melon, grapes, apple slices) instead of candy bars or high fat cookies.

Salads: The Green Light, Yellow Light and Red Light Salad Strategy

1. Fill your salad bowl with as much as you want of the green-light items. These include greens and most vegetables and fruits.
2. Use a bit of caution with yellow-light items, which may be good nutrition values but are higher in fat, such as salmon, avocado and nuts.
3. Red-light items, which can be weak nutrition values, should be like wild cards that you play sparingly and strategically for flavor spikes or crunch. These include bacon bits, most cheeses and ready-made concoctions such as tuna salad and pasta salad.
4. Add protein to make it an entree: 2 to 3 ounces is plenty. This includes meat, poultry, fish and cheese.

GREEN LIGHT

- Go, go, go
- Use as much as you want of these nutrient-dense ingredients:
- Apples, Artichoke hearts (not in oil), Beans, Beets, Bell peppers, Berries, Broccoli, Cabbage, Cantaloupe, Carrots, Cauliflower, Celery, Corn, Cucumber, Ginger (pickled), Green beans (cooked), Greens (the darker, the better: arugula, watercress, romaine, butter lettuce, spinach, red and green leaf lettuce), Herbs (snipped), Honeydew, Mango, Mushrooms, Onions, Papaya, Peas, Pears, Radishes, Raisins, Red peppers (roasted), Snow peas, Sprouts, Sugar-snap peas, Tomatoes, Water chestnuts, Watermelon

YELLOW LIGHT

- Proceed with caution
- Add only moderate amounts of these. They're nutrient-dense but high in fat, although it's good fat. A few have other nutrition issues, such as high sodium.
- Almonds, Artichoke hearts (marinated in oil), Avocado, Capers, Croutons, Goat or sheep's milk cheeses, Hummus, Olives (kalamata and others), Peanuts, Pepitas, Pine nuts, Sardines, Sesame seeds, Soy nuts, Sunflower seeds, Walnuts

RED LIGHT

- Put on the brakes
- Use these sparingly because they quickly add excess calories and fat.
- Bacon, Most cheeses (including blue, cheddar, Parmesan and Monterey Jack), Chicken salad, Egg salad, Meats (processed), Pasta salad, Tortilla strips (fried), Tuna salad
- SOURCE: USDA National Nutrient Database for Standard Reference; calorie-count.com; product labels

NOT ALL PROTEIN IS CREATED EQUAL

- Here's a snapshot of common add-in proteins:
- **Grilled salmon:** Higher in fat than some other fish, but it's the good kind that we don't get enough of, omega-3 fatty acids.
- **White-meat, skinless chicken or turkey:** Lean and packed with nutrients.
- **Grilled steak:** High in iron, but also high in saturated fat, which can raise blood cholesterol. If you use it, keep portions small.
- **Hard-cooked eggs:** High in cholesterol, but this doesn't translate to higher blood cholesterol the way saturated fat does. Still, add in moderation.
- **Tofu:** Rich in protein, low in fat, also high in iron and healthy isoflavones.
- **Shrimp or crab:** Lean and rich in protein.

Salad Recipes

Lunch Box Taco Salad

Ingredients

- 2 cups shredded romaine or iceberg lettuce
- 1/4 cup chopped tomato
- 1/2 cup canned kidney or pinto beans, rinsed and drained
- 1/2 cup salsa
- 1/2 cup shredded low-fat Monterey Jack or low-fat Cheddar cheese
- 1/4 cup low-fat sour cream
- 1 cup baked tortilla chips

Instructions

1. In a plastic container big enough to use as a bowl for the finished salad, toss together lettuce and tomato.
2. In a small plastic container with a tight-fitting lid, stir together beans and salsa.
3. Pack shredded cheese and sour cream in separate plastic containers.
4. Pack tortilla chips in a zip-top plastic bag.
5. At lunchtime, open the container of lettuce. Dump bean mixture on top, add a dollop of sour cream and sprinkle with shredded cheese. Finally, crumble tortilla chips on top and lunch is served!

Black Bean and Couscous Salad

Ingredients

- 1-1/4 cups low-sodium chicken broth
- 1 cup uncooked couscous
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 tablespoons fresh lime juice
- 1 teaspoon red wine vinegar
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cumin
- 8 green onions, chopped
- 1 red bell pepper, seeded and chopped
- 1/4 cup chopped fresh cilantro
- 1 cup frozen corn kernels, thawed
- 2 (15 ounce) cans black beans, drained and rinsed
- salt and pepper to taste

Instructions

1. Bring chicken broth to a boil in a 2 quart or larger sauce pan and stir in the couscous. Cover the pot and remove from heat. Let stand for 5 minutes.
2. In a large bowl, whisk together the olive oil, lime juice, vinegar and cumin. Add green onions, red pepper, cilantro, corn and beans and toss to coat.
3. Fluff the couscous well, breaking up any chunks. Add to the bowl with the vegetables and mix well. Season with salt and pepper to taste and serve at once or refrigerate until ready to serve.

Also good topped with leftover cooked chicken, tuna or grilled salmon

Pasta and Bean Salad

Ingredients

- 2 cups small seashell pasta
- 1/3 cup low-fat or fat-free Italian-style salad dressing
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1 (15 ounce) can pinto beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 (15 ounce) can black beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 (15 ounce) can whole kernel corn, drained
- 3 tomatoes, chopped
- 1 1/2 tablespoons ground cumin
- 1/2 tablespoon chili powder
- 1/2 teaspoon onion powder
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/4 teaspoon dried red pepper flakes (optional)
- salt and pepper to taste

Instructions

1. Bring a large pot of lightly salted water to a boil. Add pasta and cook for 8 to 10 minutes or until al dente; drain and rinse pasta in cold water. Place in a large mixing bowl and add dressing and salt; mix well.
2. Combine pinto beans and black beans in a colander; rinse with cold water, then add to pasta. Add corn, tomatoes, cumin, chili powder, onion powder, garlic powder, dried red pepper flakes and salt and pepper to taste; toss lightly.

3. Chill salad in refrigerator until ready to serve.

Layered Fruit and Cheese Salad

Ingredients

1/2 cup lite mayonnaise

1/2 cup low-fat sour cream

1 tablespoon honey

1-1/2 cups shredded low-fat Cheddar cheese, divided

4 cups chopped Romaine lettuce

3 cups fresh peaches - peeled, pitted and sliced or juice packed canned, drained

3 cups sliced fresh strawberries

3 cups seedless grapes, red, green or a combination

Instructions

1. In a small bowl whisk the mayonnaise, sour cream and honey together.
2. In a large bowl toss 1 cup of the cheese with the lettuce.
3. In a 2-1/2 quart glass bowl, layer half of the lettuce mixture, peaches, remaining lettuce mixture, strawberries, grapes, and remaining cheese. Spread mayonnaise mixture over the top or serve on the side. Chill well before serving.

Fabulous Fruit Salad

Ingredients

2 cups diced apples

1 cup sliced banana

1 cup sliced fresh strawberries

1 cup chopped walnuts

1 cup fat-free vanilla yogurt

3/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon

Instructions: In a bowl, mix the apples, banana, strawberries, and walnuts. Fold in the yogurt. Sprinkle with cinnamon. Gently stir just before serving.

