



## **Mindful Eating and Nutrition**

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During this time of heightened stress and worry, many people turn to comfort foods, emotional/stress eating behaviors and even intoxication. This might be you, right now. So, the first thing you need to do is **BREATHE**.

Seriously! Stop what you are doing right now: take a big inhale to fill your belly then lungs, and exhale out completely with a big sigh out of your mouth. Go ahead, I'll wait.....

Welcome back 😊

Before you reach for food, alcohol, or other mind-altering concoctions (**Which, I hope you do not have**), ask yourself these questions:

What is my emotional status right now?

Am I bored?

Am I craving a sugary or a high salty snack or foods that have no nutritional value or alcohol?

If so:

- **STOP** for just a moment and decide if there was something that occurred that made you want this item?

Is this an emotional response related to stress or some other trigger?

If so:

- **Make peace with yourself.** Know that enjoying these items are absolutely fine and an acceptable food when consuming an overall healthful diet. But, it should not be consumed if to excess, out of self-loathing or related to a high stress occurrence. If you discover that food may be a trigger to emotions, consider journaling or just writing out your feelings at that time. If you don't want to or can't do that, then ask yourself, "Why?" Why do I want this food right now? How will this benefit me currently? Will this hurt me?" **If it's to hurt or punish yourself, STOP and WALK AWAY!** Find (or call) a family member, friend or pet to turn to for emotional support.

Finally, ask yourself:

- Is this my body's natural desire? Because sometimes it's physiological and you are *just plain hungry*. Also, the body is very intuitive of what it needs. Sometimes, the

body craves nutrients it's lacking: i.e. salt if dehydrated or low blood pressure; crunchy or non-food items such as clay, if anemic.

Once you have assessed the situation, go about your meal or snack or walk away.

Being that I am a chef and a dietitian, you know I'm not going to end this without some food and recipes!! Here are nutrients and foods that are anti-inflammatory and boost immunity:

- **Vitamin A:** Carrots, sweet potatoes, broccoli, spinach, red bell peppers, eggs. Vitamin A helps to regulate the immune system and protect against infections by keeping skin, stomach, intestines and respiratory system healthy.
- **Vitamin C:** Strawberries, tomato juice, papaya, citrus fruits and bell peppers. Vitamin C helps by stimulating formation of antibodies and boosting immunity.
- **Vitamin E:** Avocado, almonds, hazelnuts, peanut butter, sunflower oil and safflower oil. Vitamin E is an antioxidant and has been thought to maybe improve immune function.
- **Zinc:** Lean meat (chicken, poultry, seafood), milk, whole grains, beans, seeds and nuts. Zinc help the immune system to function properly and helps to heal wounds and skin.

Here's some recipes that includes ALL of the above! One is vegan, the other is carnivore.

Bon Appetit!

~~ Chef Jen

## **Breakfast Burrito**

### **Ingredients:**

- ½ cup black beans
- ½ cup chopped spinach
- ¼ cup chopped red bell pepper
- ¼ cup diced onion
- ¼ cup diced sweet potato
- ½ tsp cumin
- 2 eggs (omit if vegan and add tofu or increase beans to 1 cup)
- Dash of salt and pepper to taste
- 1-2, Whole wheat fajita or burrito tortilla
- 1 Tbsp olive, safflower or canola oil
- ½ avocado, sliced

### **Preparation:**

1. Heat medium-sized skillet over medium heat, pour 1 tbsp oil in pan. Add bell pepper, onion and sweet potato, sprinkle with cumin and sauté until onions are translucent and potatoes are softened. (Alternately, you can heat the sweet potato separately in the microwave and add at end.)

2. Add spinach and sauté until wilted. Then add black beans and toss to warm. Set veggie mixture aside and keep warm. Wipe out skillet then add eggs (or tofu) and scramble.

3. Heat tortilla in microwave for 10 seconds. Add all ingredients and sliced avocado to the center of the tortilla. Fold bottom up to cover ingredients, then fold side flaps in and roll up to top.

\*\* Can add additional ingredients into or on top of burrito: avocado slices, guacamole, salsa, 2% milk cheese blends, hot sauce, cilantro.

\*\* Depending on size of tortilla, may make 1 or 2 servings.

\*\*\* Tofu scramble: Add ½ Tbsp turmeric and 1 tbsp oil. Crumble and sauté.

## **Three Bean Salad**

### **Ingredients:**

(1) 15-oz can reduced sodium cannellini beans, rinsed and drained

(1) 15-oz can reduced sodium kidney beans, rinsed and drained

(1) 15-oz can reduced sodium garbanzo beans, rinsed and drained

2 celery stalks, chopped

2 medium carrots, peeled and chopped

½ red onion, chopped

3 roma tomatoes, deseeded and chopped

1 cup fresh, finely chopped flat-leaf parsley

1/3 cup apple cider vinegar

1/3 cup granulated sugar

¼ cup olive or safflower oil

1 ½ teaspoons salt

¼ teaspoon black pepper

1 diced, ripe avocado

\*\*\* Optional: Add 3 cups cooked, chopped chicken breast

### **Instructions:**

**1** In a large bowl, mix the beans, celery, onion, parsley.

**2** In a separate small bowl, whisk together the vinegar, sugar, olive oil, salt, and pepper. Add the dressing to the beans. Toss to coat. Gently fold in avocado, if desired.

**3** Chill salad in the refrigerator for several hours

\*\* Can serve along side grilled, baked or sautéed chicken, salmon or steak.