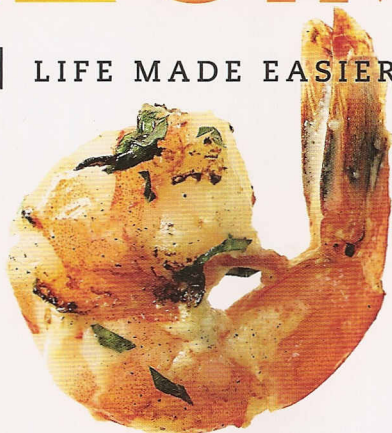
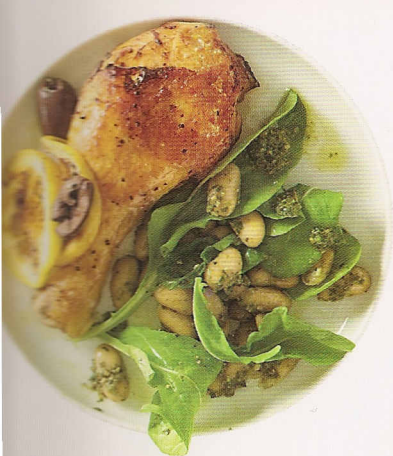


REAL SIMPLE

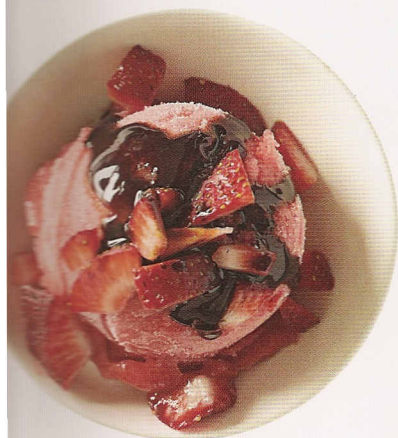
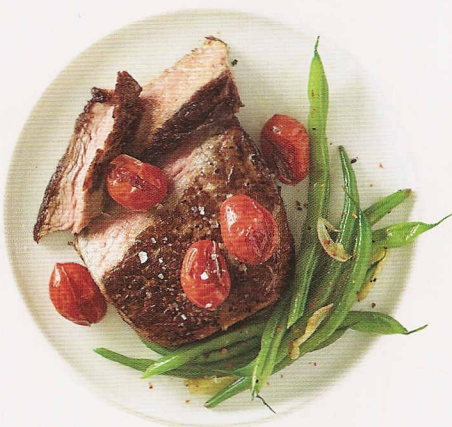
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JULY 2011

**FROZEN GRAPES**

"If I crave ice cream at night, I have a handful of these instead," says Lacey Stone, a fitness professional in New York City. "They're so sweet, they do the job."

ALMOND BUTTER

"When I need a boost after a workout, I'll eat a small spoonful right out of the jar," says Kathy Kaehler, a fitness expert in Los Angeles. A bonus: Studies show that eating almonds can help reduce your risk of cardiovascular disease.

SARDINES

"Believe it or not, I've loved them since I was a kid," says Elisa Zied, a registered dietitian in New York City and the author of *Nutrition at Your Fingertips*. "They're in heart-healthy omega-3 fatty acids." She eats them straight from the can: "But no heads or tails, please!"

what health experts *really* eat

Food and fitness pros insist a healthy diet can be delicious. But what's so delicious about lettuce and skinless chicken? (It's enough to make you head for the M&M's.) To show you how a nutritious and tasty diet is done, six top experts revealed what's actually in their kitchens. Get ready to expand your repertoire of good-tasting, good-for-you staples and snacks—and feel better about those M&M's.



staples

GREEK YOGURT

"It's one of my favorite foods," says Yvonne Castaneda, a fitness manager at the Sports Club/LA, in Miami, who eats it with berries, honey, and almonds. Plain Greek yogurt is generally higher in protein and lower in sugar than regular yogurt, so it helps keep blood sugar stable and staves off a midmorning crash.

SALMON

"The healthy fats help me focus and perform better," says Tiffany Boucher, a trainer at Equinox in New York City. "I'll put a few fillets in a Ziploc Zip'n Steam bag, throw it in the microwave, and have dinner for several nights—no need to prep food after a long workday."

SHREDDED WHEAT

"It provides fiber, which fills me up, and I have it with fruit for even more nutrients," says Zied, who adds a sliced banana to her bowl before pouring on skim milk. "Shredded wheat is a great choice because it has very little added sodium. That's rare when it comes to ready-to-eat cereals."

PARMESAN CHEESE

"You don't need much to get a lot of taste power," says Lisa Drayer, a registered dietitian in New York City and the author of *The Beauty Diet*. She sprinkles it on pasta, salads, and soups. Parmesan packs more calcium than many other cheeses. One ounce provides over 30 percent of most women's daily recommended intake.

SELTZER

Naturally, every expert extolled the virtues of plain water. But, yes, even they get bored with it sometimes.

Drayer switches it up with seltzer: "I add a splash of cranberry or orange juice—sweet, easy, and refreshing."

Those not watching calories should feel free to go with up to a 50/50 mix, says Drayer.

APPLES

"I eat one almost every day," says Michael Kaplan, a doctor of osteopathic medicine and the chief medical officer of the Center for Medical Weight Loss, headquartered in Tarrytown, New York. They're full of fiber and antioxidants and may help reduce your risk of developing colon and liver cancers. "A Brazilian study even found that eating three apples daily may aid in weight loss," says Kaplan.

WHOLE-GRAIN CEREALS

Several experts like the cholesterol-lowering benefits of whole-grain cereals, such as classic Cheerios and steel-cut oats. Drayer mixes Newman's Sweet Enough Cinnamon Fiber Flakes with Kashi Heart to Heart to add variety. "It makes for a more interesting breakfast," she says.



snacks

ENERGY BARS

"If I don't get to sit down for a proper breakfast, this is a good substitute," says Boucher, who likes Luna Blueberry Bliss and Vanilla Almond bars. "These have 8 to 10 grams of protein and provide one-third of my daily calcium." New York City trainer David Kirsch loves the ease of bars so much that he created his own, called the Kirschbar. "It contains whey protein and six grams of fiber," he says. "And best of all, it tastes like real food."



HARD-BOILED EGGS

"Eggs have an undeserved bad reputation," says Kaplan, who enjoys up to two daily.

In fact, eggs contain nutrients that can benefit your eyes, brain, and hair. And according to one study, they may help prevent blood clots, which could lower the risk of a stroke or a heart attack. Chicago trainer Don Scott, at Jim Karas Personal Training, calls them "my no-fuss, easy-transport snack."



CHOCOLATE MILK

"Some foodie friends may be shocked to hear this, but I drink eight ounces of organic chocolate skim milk most mornings, with breakfast or after my workout," says Zied. (Research suggests that the mix of protein and carbohydrates in chocolate milk can make it an effective postexercise recovery drink.) The childhood favorite is loaded with calcium and vitamin D. Zied counts it as a nutritious treat. "I just cut back on added sugar elsewhere," she says.



UNSALTED NUTS

"I stash them in my bag, my car—they're great for on-the-go," says Sara Haley, a trainer in Los Angeles, who likes nuts for their protein and good fats. They can help lower cholesterol, and one study showed that walnuts in particular have strong antioxidant benefits. Haley buys them in single-serving packets at Whole Foods to keep portions in check: "Even healthy calories can add up."

DRIED APPLES

"I love to carry these in my bag for a good, quick source of energy," says Castaneda, who mixes them with a handful of nuts for a balanced snack. Chewy and sweet, "they stay fresh much longer than a whole apple," she says.



surprises

TWIZZLERS

"They're my non-chocolate candy of choice," says Zied. "My husband and I split a pack at the movies, or I keep them in the pantry and indulge every few days." Zied's key to fitting these into her diet? "I limit myself to about three at a time," she says. (A "health" benefit: They're low in fat.)

CARAMELS

"When I want something sweet after a meal, I reach for these," says Haley. Since caramels take a while to eat, you can stop at one or two and still be satisfied. (Of course, a tooth brushing afterward is required.)

YOGURT-COVERED PRETZELS

When she's not in the mood for caramels, Haley grabs a handful as dessert. But only a small handful, since one cup contains nearly 400 calories. "I need to hide these in the back of my refrigerator or else I eat too many," Haley admits.

SKINNY COW ICE CREAM CONES

"These are fun, satisfying, low-fat, and only 150 calories," says Drayer. (Her favorite flavor: Chocolate With Fudge.) She eats one a few times a week and even OKs them for weight-loss clients: "They're portion-controlled, so you don't lose sight of how much you're eating, the way you can with a carton of ice cream."

PEANUT M&M'S

"I love my peanut M&M's," says Zied. And as far as candy is concerned, she says, they're a decent choice: "Peanuts are packed with healthy unsaturated fats and protein." Zied prefers them over other goodies, such as cookies, and doles out one serving of 10 to 12 pieces. "At Halloween I buy the kid-size packs for an even more controlled portion."