

POWER LUNCHES

Energizing Foods on the Go

BY LAUREN FOSTER

2pm. It's that time during your workday when everything seems to slow down. Your caffeine buzz has worn off, the clock is slowly ticking by and you're ready for a nap. But while Italians and Spaniards are closing up for a siesta you're gearing up for at least three more hours of work. So, what's the solution to mid-day fatigue? It can be eating healthier lunches. We asked nutritionist Deborah Enos, The One-Minute Wellness Coach, to map out power lunches to fuel you for success. "When you picture your lunch half of your plate should be veggies or veggies and fruit, 25 percent should be carbs and 25 percent protein," said Enos. Whether you're glued to your desk or running out for a quick bite, we've got the tips to keep you eating healthy and staying energized during the last hours of the day.

IT'S NOT ALL IN A LUNCH

Part of maintaining your energy is starting the day out right.

TIP Drink water throughout the day. If you're not hydrated, it's really easy to become tired.

TIP Within a half hour of waking up you need to be eating at least 100 calories. People who eat breakfast will have higher energy and are less likely to have diabetes.

TIP Get some exercise. Whether that means running 3 miles after work or taking a stroll in the afternoon, make sure you're not sitting throughout the day.

Vegetarian Delight



LUNCH Salad with ½ cup brown rice and black beans or garbanzo beans (rinse canned beans under water to remove 20-40 percent of the sodium) and ¼ avocado. Add salsa or olive oil and vinegar for dressing.

REASONING Leafy greens full of vitamin A will keep you feeling great. The darker the leaf the more nutritious it is. Black beans and garbanzo beans are low in fat and are an excellent source of fiber and protein. Adding a whole grain to the meal (the brown rice) will give you a boost of energy. The avocado adds extra antioxidants. "Avocados boost the amount of nutrition you're going to get from your food, I always put a ¼ of an avocado on all my salads," said Enos.



SNACK Edamame
A serving of edamame has 12 grams of protein. It can also lower cholesterol.

Surrendering to Pasta Cravings



LUNCH Pasta primavera with extra veggies

REASONING Eating healthy doesn't mean you have to cut out all your carbs. For pasta dishes, Enos matches her noodle portion with the same amount of veggies for a much healthier meal that won't leave you feeling tired. Enos says that consuming too many carbs is like taking "God's valium. It will make you absolutely exhausted." Adding some ground turkey or lean sausage to the mix will give you a good source of protein to last you throughout the day.



SNACK Trail Mix

Do you get a sweet tooth in the afternoon? Go ahead and satisfy it with a little trail mix with dried fruits and a few chocolates. Keep a 1-ounce shot glass in your bag of mix to measure it.

With Only 5 Minutes to Eat



LUNCH A serving of Greek yogurt with a handful of berries and sliced almonds

REASONING It's not a glamorous lunch, we'll admit that, but for a working woman who is juggling kids, work, appointments and everyday crises, a quick and easy lunch is sometimes just what you need to keep going. "Sometimes you just have to eat to maintain your energy level and your health," said Enos. Greek yogurt has 40 percent more protein than other kinds of yogurt and far less sugar. Almonds will add some crunch and are full of healthy fats, fiber and vitamins. Berries will add a natural sweetness and vitamins.



SNACK Bell Peppers

Sweet and crunchy, bell peppers are full of vitamins A and C and are 10 percent fiber. They're considered a fat-burning food.

Protein Boost from the Leanest Meat



LUNCH Sautéed veggies with 4 to 5 prawns on top

REASONING Enos is a big believer in making a dish once and eating it twice. For dinner, sauté fresh veggies, then bring them for lunch the next day. You can use a variety of tasty greens but be sure to add some broccoli and/or cauliflower. "Think of them as a giant broom sweeping out your insides along with a huge dose of cancer prevention," said Enos. Prawns also are a great source of low-fat, low-calorie protein and are healthier than beef and poultry.



SNACK Green Tea

For a boost of caffeine stay away from Frappuccinos. Some studies suggest that green tea can speed up your metabolism, prevent cancer, cardiovascular diseases and high cholesterol.

Fast Food that will Burn Fat?



LUNCH Chicken Fit-Hit Bowl at Taco Time NW (ask for extra veggies!)

REASONING During some of the busiest weeks, you forget to pack a lunch or simply run out of time. Enos, who also is Taco Time's Heath Coach, helped develop the restaurant's Fit-Hits menu for healthy eating on the go. Fit-Hit Bowls combine rice, black beans, chicken and veggies for a meal that has 3 grams of fat and 26 grams of protein. The added pico de gallo brings a healthy kick of spice to this well-rounded dish and the beans and rice are energy boosters. It's also gluten-friendly!



SNACK Apple

Washing an apple, cutting it up and packing it in your lunch might seem like too much work but it's well worth it. Apples contain no saturated fats or cholesterol. 