

[IMAGE]

## Healthy Doesn't Have to Be Hard

By Editorial Staff

Interested in healthier eating, but don't want to sacrifice your favorite foods? It doesn't have to be hard if you know how to do it. In many cases, all it takes are a few simple ingredient substitutions / inclusions to dramatically increase the nutrient / health value throughout your day. Let's consider popular menu items from breakfast, lunch and dinner as examples (pancakes, salad and tacos):

- Breakfast: Turn white-flour, low-nutrient pancakes into a more balanced, nutrient-dense start to your day by replacing the white flour with whole wheat / whole grains. Mix in a scoop of pea protein to increase the protein content (which also balances out some of the carbohydrates in terms of its impact on blood sugar). You also can add your favorite fruit into the mix (or as a topping) and blend pureed vegetables to make your breakfast a powerhouse that tastes great and is great for you.
- Lunch: Salad on your menu for lunch during the week? Replace full-fat dressing with lower-fat yogurt options to keep the flavor while reducing the impact on your waistline. Don't care about the fat? Go with a few slices of avocado, which deliver heart-healthy monounsaturated fat and loads of micronutrients. Finally, add grilled chicken, shrimp or fish to turn your salad into a protein-packed meal.
- Dinner: Tacos are your favorite meal of all time – but you worry about the health value. Here are three easy swaps that will change your opinion: 1) Replace flour tortillas with corn, which deliver more nutrient content and less calories / carbs (make sure to grill them on the stove top, rather than deep frying); 2) Swap out ground beef / steak for lean or extra-lean turkey – again, less fat, particularly the saturated variety; and 3) try brown rice and black beans in lieu of refried beans and Spanish / white rice. You won't lose the flavor; you'll gain the nutritional advantage!

Healthy eating doesn't have to be flavorless, boring or a chore; consider the above meal options, which require little effort and don't force you to sacrifice. It's all about making wise choices that give your body the sustained nutrients it needs to survive your busy day.

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