**Better Brain Recipes**

**Steven’s Morning Shake**

Here is the shake I enjoy several days a week. It includes many of the dozen brain-boosting foods, is quick and easy to make and drink, and tastes great. Except for the protein powder and a fluid (I prefer unsweetened almond milk), you can drop or substitute the ingredients freely.

**Prep Time:** 2 minutes

**Serves:** 1

½ cup organic kefir (I prefer low fat)

1 cup frozen organic cherries

½ cup frozen spinach or kale

20 grams whey protein powder, vanilla or chocolate (or pea-rice protein if you avoid dairy)

8 ounces unsweetened almond milk

**Optional**

1 tablespoon unprocessed unsweetened cocoa powder

**Directions:**

Combine all the ingredients in a blender. Purée until smooth. Enjoy.

**Tip:** Create your own smoothie-making station to make this prep go quickly every morning. I store a mix of frozen raw spinach and kale leaves together, next to a tub of frozen fruit. I keep the dry ingredients together in a cupboard next to my blender. There is never any searching for ingredients.

**Eggs Benedict with Smoked Salmon and Spinach**

I really like this breakfast because it tastes wonderful, and it’s loaded with brain-healthy fats and plant pigments. If you don’t have an egg poacher, having an assistant to help serve is useful.

**Prep Time:** 25 minutes

**Serves:** 2

2 cups chopped frozen spinach, thawed

4 ounces smoked salmon, thinly sliced

4 large organic, cage-free eggs

2 teaspoons salt (if not using an egg poacher)

4 teaspoons white vinegar (if not using an egg poacher)

½ cup Hollandaise Sauce (page 310, or use store-bought)

**Directions:**

Cook the spinach, drain well, and return to pan. Place the salmon in the pan next to the spinach.

**Eggs Benedict** (cont.)

If you have an egg poacher, follow the directions for poaching 4 eggs at once.

If you don’t have an egg poacher, add enough water to two medium saucepans to fill them about 2 inches deep. Add 1 teaspoon of the salt and 2 teaspoons of the white vinegar to each pan and bring to a gently bubbling simmer. Meanwhile, crack 2 eggs into two separate small bowls, keeping the yolks intact. When the water is simmering, use the handle of a spatula or spoon to quickly swirl the water (one pan at a time) in one direction until the water is swirling in the pan. Gently drop 1 egg at a time into the center of the whirlpool—the swirling water will help prevent the white from feathering or spreading out in the pan. Cover and let the eggs poach, setting your timer for 5 minutes; leave the eggs untouched while poaching. Repeat for the second serving of eggs; this is why it’s useful to have an extra pair of hands if you’re making more than one serving.

While the eggs are poaching, gently warm the spinach, smoked salmon, and hollandaise sauce.

On two plates, divide the warm spinach into two mounds on each plate. Next add a layer of sliced salmon. When the eggs are ready, remove them from the water with a slotted spoon, place each poached egg on top of each spinach and salmon mound, and drizzle with the hollandaise sauce. Serve immediately.

**Chicken Wings with Buffalo Sauce**

Serve these wings at your next party or sports-themed event. The ingredients in this buffalo sauce support your brain with healthy fats, herbs, and plant pigments.

**Prep Time:** 10 to 15 minutes

**Baking Time:** 45 to 55 minutes

**Serves:** 4

24 organic, cage-free chicken wings

1 tablespoon aluminum-free baking powder

½ teaspoon fine sea salt

¼ teaspoon ground black pepper

¼ cup extra virgin olive oil

½ cup tomato sauce

6 medium garlic cloves, crushed and minced

1 teaspoon Italian herb seasoning

1 teaspoon ground paprika

1/8 to ½ teaspoon cayenne pepper (to taste)

**Directions:**

Preheat the oven to 400ºF. In a bowl, combine the chicken with the baking powder, salt, and black pepper and place on a roasting tray. Bake for 35 to 40 minutes, until the chicken is browned.

Meanwhile, combine the oil, tomato sauce, garlic, Italian herbs, paprika, and cayenne in a separate large bowl.

Reduce oven heat to 350°F. Stir the browned chicken into the bowl of sauce until the wings are well covered. Return to the roasting tray and bake for another 12 minutes.

**Black Bean Soup**

This soup is especially good with home-cooked beans, although using canned beans is both quicker and easier. Some cooks get into the habit of making a batch of beans once or twice a week, so the beans are always on hand. With precooked beans, you can have this velvety soup on the table in less than thirty minutes. This soup is absolutely loaded with brain-supporting plant pigments, fiber, nutrients, and probiotics.

**Prep Time:** 15 to 20 minutes

**Simmering Time:** 10 minutes

**Serves: 6**

8 cups black beans (or four 15-ounce cans), cooked, rinsed, and drained

1 tablespoon avocado oil

1 medium sweet onion, chopped

2 medium celery stalks, diced

1 teaspoon sea salt

1 teaspoon dried oregano

1 teaspoon ground paprika

½ teaspoon red pepper flakes

1 medium red bell pepper, chopped

1 medium green bell pepper, chopped

4 medium garlic cloves, crushed and diced

15 ounces chopped tomatoes (about 2 cups)

2 cups low-sodium vegetable broth

**Garnish**

2 tablespoons organic sour cream

2 tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro

**Directions:**

When the beans are ready, heat a large pot to medium-high heat. Add the oil, onion, celery, salt, oregano, and paprika and sauté for 2 to 3 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the onion softens. Add the red pepper flakes and bell peppers, and heat for another 2 minutes, continuing to stir occasionally.

Add the garlic, tomatoes, vegetable broth, and beans to the pot and bring to a gentle boil. Reduce the heat to medium and simmer for 10 minutes. Divide among the soup bowls and garnish with the sour cream (1 teaspoon in each bowl) and cilantro.

**Shrimp with Thai Curry Sauce**

In a restaurant this would be served over rice, but with all the flavors here you won’t miss it (nor will your brain miss its high glycemic load). You can easily substitute chicken, bay scallops, or tofu for shrimp and use any type of nut butter in the curry sauce. If using chicken, make sure it is fully cooked before adding it to the sauce.

**Prep and simmering time:** 30 minutes

**Serves:** 4

**Curry Sauce**

15 ounces canned coconut milk (from a BPA-free can, if possible)

2 tablespoons almond butter

2 tablespoons red chili sauce (to taste, 1 to 3 tablespoons; such as sriracha)

1 tablespoon fish sauce (or oyster sauce, or skip it if you don’t have either)

2 tablespoons fresh lime juice

¾ cup fresh pineapple chunks (or 8-ounce can unsweetened, drained)

2 medium garlic cloves, crushed and minced

1 tablespoon chopped fresh basil (or Thai basil)

2 lemongrass stalks, cut 1 inch from the base into 2-inch pieces

½ cup low-sodium vegetable broth

**Sauté**

2 tablespoons macadamia oil (or avocado, almond, or other nut oil)

2 pounds wild extra-large shrimp

1 medium onion, slivered lengthwise

2 medium carrots, thinly sliced

½ cup low-sodium vegetable broth

2 cups sliced broccoli

1 medium red bell pepper, cut into bite-size pieces

1 cup snow pea pods

**Garnish**

2 tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro

**Directions:**

Whisk together the coconut milk, almond butter, chili sauce, fish sauce, lime juice, pineapple, garlic, basil, lemongrass, and vegetable broth in a saucepan. Bring to a gentle boil, then reduce the heat to a simmer to let the sauce thicken.

Meanwhile, heat a wok or large sauté pan to medium-high heat. Add the oil, shrimp, and salt and sauté for a few minutes, stirring often, until cooked through. Remove the shrimp from the wok and set aside.

To the same wok over medium-high heat, add onion and carrots and sauté for 2 to 3 minutes, until the onions soften. Add the vegetable broth mixture and broccoli, stirring occasionally, and sauté for another 3 minutes. Add the bell pepper and snow peas, continue to stir frequently, and cook until the vegetables are al dente. Remove the lemongrass stalks from the curry sauce and discard. Return the shrimp to the simmering curry sauce, reduce the heat to medium-low, and simmer for 3 to 4 minutes. Serve in bowls and garnish with fresh cilantro.

**Sautéed Teriyaki-Pineapple Salmon**

Most people broil or grill salmon, but it is really easy, and quicker, to sauté it. I typically prepare wild, frozen, vacuum-packed salmon, available year-round. King (Chinook), red (sockeye), or silver (coho) salmon are my favorites, and all are loaded with brain-nourishing omega-3 fats. If frozen, thaw the packs, rinse, and marinate the fillets in orange juice for 5 to 10 minutes, which removes any fishy flavor (even with fresh fish, you may prefer to soak the fillets). You can also use pineapple juice.

**Prep Time**: 20 minutes

**Serves**: 2

1 pound wild salmon fillet, cut into 1-inch-wide strips

1½ tablespoons tamari sauce

2 medium garlic cloves, crushed and minced

¼ teaspoon ground black pepper

1 tablespoon rice vinegar

1 cup pineapple chunks, cut into small pieces (if canned, 8oz, unsweetened & drained well)

1 tablespoon avocado oil

**Directions:**

Soak the salmon strips for 5 minutes in orange or pineapple juice to freshen, then discard the juice. Marinate the salmon strips in a bowl with the tamari sauce, garlic, pepper, vinegar, and pineapple chunks for 20 minutes, turning occasionally. Remove the salmon, pat dry with paper towels, and set aside. Reserve the marinade.

Heat a sauté pan to medium-high heat. Add the oil and then the salmon. Spoon remaining marinade and pineapple on top of the fish. Sauté on each side for 4 to 5 minutes, until lightly browned. Serve immediately.

**Italian Turkey Meatloaf**

It’s often easier to find organic, cage-free ground turkey than grass-fed beef or pork, and the turkey tastes terrific in this recipe. Rolled oats offer a very nice gluten-free and low glycemic load alternative to bread crumbs.

**Prep Time**: 15 minutes

**Baking Time**: 50 minutes

**Serves**: 4

1 tablespoon avocado oil, plus more for the pans

1 medium white onion, chopped

2 cups chopped mushrooms

1 pound organic, cage-free ground turkey

2 large organic, cage-free eggs

1 cup rolled oats

½ cup dry red wine

1 tablespoon Italian herb seasoning

4 medium garlic cloves, crushed and diced

½ teaspoon sea salt

1¼ cups marinara sauce

2 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese

**Directions:**

Preheat the oven to 375°F. Grease an 8 × 4-inch loaf pan with avocado oil.

Heat a sauté pan to medium-high heat. Add the oil, onion, and mushrooms and sauté, stirring occasionally, for about 2 to 3 minutes until the onions are translucent.

Meanwhile, in a large bowl, combine the ground turkey, eggs, oats, red wine, Italian herbs, garlic, salt, and ¼ cup of the marinara sauce, mixing well. Pour the mixture into the loaf pan. Next, pour the remaining 1 cup marinara sauce over the mixture, then sprinkle with the Parmesan cheese. Bake for 50 minutes (the internal temperature should reach at least 165°F). Let sit for about 10 minutes before serving.

**Kale with Red Bell Pepper and Garlic**

Nutrient-rich kale is very good cooked, particularly when paired with mushrooms and bell peppers. You can make this recipe with spinach or Swiss chard, as well.

**Prep Time**: 10 to 15 minutes

**Serves**: 2

1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil

2 cups sliced mushrooms (such as baby portobello’s)

1 teaspoon Italian herb seasoning

¼ teaspoon sea salt

1 medium red bell pepper, sliced

4 cups kale, chopped

2 medium garlic cloves, crushed and minced

¼ cup low-sodium vegetable broth (or water)

**Directions:**

Heat a large sauté pan to medium heat. Add the oil, mushrooms, Italian herbs, and salt, and sauté for 3 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the mushrooms soften. Add the bell pepper and cook for an additional 2 minutes. Then add the kale, garlic, and vegetable broth and cover. Remove from the heat when the kale has wilted, 2 to 3 minutes. Serve immediately.

**Spinach, Beet, and Goat Cheese Salad**

The beets improve blood flow to your brain; the spinach and walnuts provide additional cognitive benefits—and taste great with the beets and goat cheese.

**Prep Time:** 15 minutes

**Baking Time:** 40 minutes

**Serves:** 4

4 medium beets, unsightly skin peeled, cut into ¾-inch cubes

4 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

¼ teaspoon fine sea salt

¼ teaspoon ground black pepper

1 teaspoon Italian herb seasoning

4 cups raw, pre-rinsed, and drained baby spinach

2 teaspoons balsamic vinegar

4 ounces organic goat cheese

2 ounces walnuts, shelled, toasted

**Spinach salad** (cont.)

**Directions:**

Preheat the oven to 375°F. Toss the beets with 2 tablespoons of the oil, the salt, pepper, and Italian herbs in an ovenproof baking dish and roast for about 40 minutes, until the beets are tender but not overcooked.

When the beets are cooked, remove them from the oven and let cool a few minutes. Toss the spinach with the remaining 2 tablespoons oil and the vinegar and spoon onto individual serving plates. To each portion, add beets, then garnish with the goat cheese and walnuts.

**Fruit Crumble**

Here is a dessert I look forward to serving. You can combine a variety of fruits (apples, pears, peaches, and berries), and it is loaded with brain-promoting pigments, fiber, and fat, yet it still has a low glycemic load. Be sure to pick organic fruit if they are on the Environmental Working Group’s “Dirty Dozen” list (see page 217).

**Prep Time:** 20 minutes

**Baking Time:** 15 minutes

**Serves:** 4

¼ cup port wine

¼ cup fresh lemon juice

1 tablespoon organic lemon zest

2 tablespoons quick-cooking tapioca

¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon

2 medium organic apples, cut into small cubes

2 medium pears, cut into small cubes

2 cups organic blueberries (frozen or fresh)

½ cup sliced almonds

**Directions:**

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Combine the port, lemon juice, lemon zest, tapioca, and cinnamon in a saucepan over medium heat and bring to a gentle boil. Add the apples and pears. Stir occasionally for 5 minutes, add the blueberries, remove from the heat, and pour into a pie plate.

While the fruit is cooking, heat a sauté pan to medium heat. Toast the sliced almonds until warm and fragrant, but stop before they brown. Top the fruit mixture in the pie plate with the sliced almonds. Bake for 15 minutes. Serve in small bowls.