

Blend a Better Breakfast Smoothie

Smoothies seem super healthy but they may not be all that nutritious. Add too much fruit and the sugar calories will add up quickly. Add too little protein and you will lack energy and feel hungry in no time.

Use these tips to make a nutritious and filling smoothie.

MEASURE YOUR FRUIT

- Fruit is an excellent source of vitamins, minerals, fiber, and heart-healthy anti-oxidants.
- Add about 1 cup of fruit (not juice) to your smoothie such as cut-up apple, berries, or orange.
- Freeze fruit or use frozen store-bought fruit instead of ice.

POWER UP WITH PROTEIN

- Protein will help to stabilize your blood sugar and keep you feeling full longer.
- Unsweetened whey protein isolate powder and plain tofu blend well.
- Greek yogurt is an excellent source of protein and has almost double the protein of other yogurts. For less calories and saturated fat, choose non-fat or low fat plain.
- Almond milk is very low in protein.
- Seeds, nuts, or nut butter will add extra fiber and healthy fat. (Try chia, flax or hemp seeds.)

SLIP IN SOME VEGGIES

- Vegetables are an outstanding source of vitamins, mineral, and fiber; fresh or cooked.
- They will make your smoothie taste less sweet – still delicious and even better for you.
- Add leafy greens, celery, cucumbers, carrots, parsley, zucchini, beets, and pumpkin.

CHOOSE LIQUIDS WISELY

- Dairy and unsweetened non-dairy beverages may provide protein, calcium, and vitamin D.
- Juice is high in sugar; avoid or limit.
- Avoid canned coconut milk as it is very high in saturated fat.
- Ice provides no nutritional value; skip it and chill your smoothie with frozen fruit.

ADD SOME PIZZAZZ

- Spices add flavor to smoothies without the calories of honey and other sweeteners.
- Sprinkle in some cinnamon, nutmeg, or pumpkin pie spice for a natural sweetness.
- Add grated fresh ginger or turmeric for a punch of flavor and the anti-inflammatory benefits.
- Add fresh mint or basil leaves ***
- A few drops of vanilla and almond extract add a subtle sweetness.