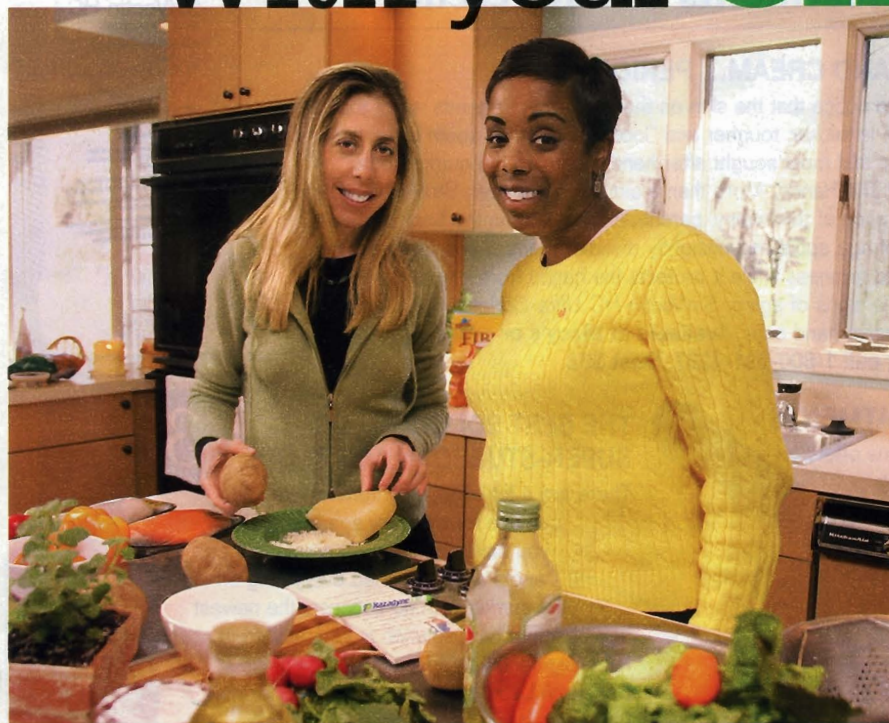


bored with your diet?



22 ways to make eating exciting again, from nutritionist Lisa R. Young, Ph.D.

You want to eat healthfully. You plan your meals, you stock your fridge with light fare, and you do all right for a few weeks. Then, *blammo!* You have a vision of the future as an endless parade of plain chicken breasts... and you throw up the white flag and order pizza.

Nothing kills a commitment to healthy eating faster than boredom. If you're battling meal monotony, you've come to the right place. This month, REDBOOK's Real-Life, Healthy Life nutrition expert, Lisa R. Young, Ph.D., author of *The Portion Teller*, reveals supersimple ways to enhance the flavor of your food so that it's nutritious *and* delicious—with no extra time in the kitchen required. Young's first stop: the home of RLHL participant Julie, who admits she's in a food rut and wants out!

by Nancy Rones

Easy Makeovers for Julie's Healthy Meals

[BORING BREAKFAST]

● **Julie:** "Every morning, I choose between two meals: plain oatmeal with a little brown sugar and cinnamon, or two pieces of dry wheat toast with one egg, cooked over-easy. At this point, I could fix breakfast—and eat it!—in my sleep."

● **Meal makeover:** Some of us are so bored with breakfast we skip it altogether—not ideal, since eating a morning meal has been proved to facilitate weight-loss success. To mix it up, Julie can sweeten her oatmeal with **honey or applesauce**, or add raisins and chopped nuts. And rather than an egg, Julie can top wheat toast with one slice each of **part-skim cheese and tomato** (then broil until bubbly). Or, she can spread



sweetener oatmeal with honey

a tablespoon each of **peanut butter** and jelly on toast. Another alternative: frozen whole-grain waffles topped with fresh berries and low-fat yogurt. The goal is to combine fiber and protein, which deliver long-term energy and fullness.

[LIFELESS LUNCH]

● **Julie:** "I'm usually on the road at lunchtime, and I always get a chicken breast sandwich from a fast-food restaurant. I toss the bun, pat the grease off the chicken patty, then wrap it in the wilted iceberg lettuce. It doesn't taste great, but cooked food is more satisfying to me."

● **Meal makeover:** Julie should try grilling up a few *fresh* chicken cutlets on Sundays for weekday sandwiches (she already keeps a cooler in her car). Seasoning each cutlet with a different **spice rub, marinade, or sauce** will make for a daily flavor changeup without adding significant

calories or fat. And forget the wilted lettuce "bun"! Putting the chicken on fiber-rich whole-wheat bread or pita is a tasty way to get a serving of whole grains. Julie can also

dipping sauces help add variety

bring a dressing, such as **barbecue sauce or fat-free honey mustard**, and pile on grilled veggies like zucchini and peppers. To switch things up even more, she can substitute grilled **portobello mushrooms** for chicken.

[DRAB DINNER]

● **Julie:** "So many nights I look at my plate and think, I am sooo tired of this meal. I don't have time to explore new food ideas, so I eat the same thing over and over again, which feels a lot like a diet."

JULIE'S DULL DINNER #1

Grilled chicken over spinach sautéed in garlic

● **Meal makeover:** Stir-fry a chicken breast in sesame oil (for a nutty flavor) with colorful chopped vegetables such as orange pepper and baby corn. Serve over brown rice.

JULIE'S DULL DINNER #2

Baked salmon fillets drizzled with lemon, canned seasoned turnip greens, and cornbread

● **Meal makeover:** Serve baked tilapia fillets over whole-wheat pasta tossed with marinara sauce, fresh oregano, and grated Parmesan. Add salad as a side.

whole grains are hearty & healthy



JULIE'S DULL DINNER #3

Marinated roasted pork tenderloin, steamed broccoli, and rice with a seasoning packet

● **Meal makeover:** Top pork tenderloin with fruit chutney, a relish found in the ethnic-foods aisle of the grocery store. Serve with baked potato skins: Cut baked potatoes in half, then scoop out the insides and discard; top with a favorite low-fat dressing, like light ranch, then broil until crisp.



WAS: 178 pounds

NOW: 178 pounds

Julie Graves, 40

pharmaceutical sales rep, married with two children, ages 10 and 8, Indianapolis

"Before RLHL, I was eating protein bars for breakfast, lunch, or as a snack because I felt they were healthy and more convenient than real meals. Now, I realize that I could've been eating same-calorie meals and felt a lot more satisfied."

| | STARTING STATS | CURRENT STATS |
|-----------------|----------------|---------------|
| HEIGHT, WEIGHT: | 5'4", 178 lbs | 178 lbs |
| BODY FAT: | 34% | 34.5% |
| WAIST: | 33" | 33¼" |
| HIPS: | 44" | 43" |
| BUST: | 38¾" | 38¾" |

THE SMALL CHANGE THAT'S ALREADY PAID OFF FOR HER:

"I love salty snacks like Doritos. But these days, I keep myself in check by asking, Do I want to bother with these Doritos if I have to spend more time on the treadmill working them off? I usually decide that it's not even worth it."

HER BIGGEST WEEKNIGHT MEAL HURDLE:

"When I cook dinner for my family, I usually eat a scaled-back version, which leaves me feeling deprived. For example, they'll have spaghetti with meatballs and garlic bread, and I'll have a huge salad with a side of spaghetti—no meatballs or garlic bread."

HOW TO JUMP OVER IT:

Julie shouldn't completely give up foods to lose weight, reminds Young, because feelings of deprivation can result in overeating. As long as she watches portion size and hasn't made a lot of other calorie-laden choices that day, Julie can have spaghetti and meatballs as her main dish, with salad as a side. It would help for her to plan the week's menus ahead of time to figure out which dinners will be heavier, so she makes lower-calorie choices during the day.

Miss those milk shakes?

Adrienne and Jennifer told us which foods they wish they could indulge in more often. Wish granted! REDBOOK's test kitchen wizards share fat-reducing recipe tweaks that deliver the flavors they crave.

JENNIFER'S 3 MOST-MISSED FOODS

#1 Wendy's crispy Spicy Chicken Sandwich

● **Lower-fat, full-flavor fix:** Soak a chicken cutlet in nonfat butter-milk mixed with a few drops of hot sauce. Coat the cutlet in panko (Japanese breadcrumbs) and bake.

#2 Meatloaf smothered in barbecue sauce

● **Lower-fat, full-flavor fix:** Replace ground beef with ground turkey; mix with nonfat mayo (in place of egg) to keep it moist. Top with barbecue sauce (it's virtually fat-free!).

#3 Popcorn doused in melted butter

● **Lower-fat, full-flavor fix:** Microwave a *mini* bag of light popcorn. Mini bags contain only about 2 grams of fat, but they still deliver that buttery flavor.

healthy choice:
microwave popcorn

ADRIENNE'S 3 MOST-MISSED FOODS

#1 French fries

● **Lower-fat, full-flavor fix:** Cut up an unpeeled potato, toss with olive oil, salt, pepper, and even paprika or garlic powder, and bake. The skins keep them crisp outside, and flaky inside.

#2 Chocolate malt milk shakes

● **Lower-fat, full-flavor fix:** Blend together low-fat frozen yogurt, 1 teaspoon malt powder, nonfat chocolate syrup, and chocolate soy milk.

#3 Chocolate-chip cookies

● **Lower-fat, full-flavor fix:** Use your regular cookie recipe, but cut the number of chocolate chips by half, and use mini chips: This disperses the chocolate more so there's some in every bite.

fixing a shake?
use frozen yogurt



WAS:
211
pounds

NOW:
200
pounds

Jennifer Strange, 28

housing specialist for parolees and part-time graduate student, single mom of a 2-year-old son, Traverse City, MI

"At fast-food restaurants, I figured I was making the better choice by choosing a chicken entrée. I always ordered the crispy chicken salad or sandwich. When REDBOOK's experts suggested I start reading labels, I discovered that I wasn't making as good a choice as I thought. Since then, I've switched to grilled chicken options!"

| | STARTING STATS | CURRENT STATS |
|-----------------|----------------|---------------|
| HEIGHT, WEIGHT: | 5'10", 211 lbs | 200 lbs |
| BODY FAT: | 33% | 31.7% |
| WAIST: | 43 1/4" | 38 1/2" |
| HIPS: | 47 1/4" | 46" |
| BUST: | 41" | 41" |

THE SMALL CHANGE THAT'S ALREADY PAID OFF FOR HER:

"To satisfy my sweet cravings after dinner, I used to have a king-size candy bar. But I've discovered that one frozen mini Peppermint Pattie can do the trick with a lot fewer calories."

HER BIGGEST WEEKNIGHT MEAL HURDLE:

"On Tuesdays, I'm in class from 3 p.m. to 9 p.m. Since we only get 10-minute breaks, I have to pack my dinner, which is always a turkey sandwich on a bagel. I'm so bored with it that sometimes I wait until I get home to eat—but then I wind up eating everything in sight."

HOW TO JUMP OVER IT: Jennifer needs to make sandwiches that satisfy her and prevent late-night bingeing. Since she's a fan of spicy foods, she can switch from plain deli-sliced turkey to Cajun-style or cracked-pepper smoked turkey, suggests Young. Another "sandwich" that travels well: a wrap with spicy hummus and diced tomatoes and cucumbers.

GETTING A GRIP ON PORTIONS

Breaking out measuring spoons and food scales in a restaurant isn't exactly practical. Here, from Young's book, *The Portion Teller*, a hand-y guide for guesstimating proper portion sizes.



▲ **tight fist**
= 1 cup
veggies,
berries



▲ **1 finger**
= 1 ounce
meat, cheese
(1 fingertip
= 1/2 tsp fats)



▲ **2 cupped hands** = 1 cup
popcorn, cereal
(1 cupped hand
= 1/2 cup cooked
pasta)



▲ **palm of hand**
= 3 ounces
meat, fish,
or poultry

continued from p. 108 ►

ADD EXCITEMENT TO YOUR EATS

Still bored? Young shares her cheat sheet of simple tricks for enhancing any meal.

DIP YOUR FOOD.

Set out a couple of bowls with different sauces to liven up regular menu items. For instance, pair veggies or grilled chicken tenders with hummus, teriyaki or jerk sauce, or peach or mango salsa.

DEDICATE ONE ROW ON YOUR FRIDGE DOOR TO SAUCES,

spice rubs, and marinades. These days, supermarket shelves are exploding with options—just browse the ethnic-foods aisle. Also, remember that low-fat dressings make for great condiments and marinades.

BUY A HAND-CRANK CHEESE GRATER to shred flavorful part-skim cheeses, such as sharp cheddar and Parmesan. Sprinkle cheese over cooked veggies, poultry, or whole-wheat pasta. A grater that's easy to rotate and clean: the Zyliss Classic Rotary Cheese Grater (\$14.99, cutleryandmore.com).

ASK YOURSELF, "Do any of the foods that I regularly eat come in other varieties?" For instance, instead of your usual romaine lettuce, buy some curly red leaf. Pick up grape tomatoes rather than regular slicing tomatoes. Or try wild or shitake mushrooms instead of white button ones.

COOK WITH FLAVORFUL OILS, such as sesame oil and flavored olive oil, instead of plain olive oil. To control the amount of oil you use, buy a Misto sprayer (available at misto.com).

INSTEAD OF EATING PLAIN-LOOKING PRODUCE, USE A MANDOLINE SLICER

to create julienne or crinkle-cut vegetables for a change of shape. This kitchen tool is also great for shredding potatoes or making waffle-cut baked fries. One to try: the Hoffritz Stainless-Steel Mandoline Slicer (\$24.99, amazon.com).



GET BARBECUE-HAPPY. Perk up boring foods by adding a chargrilled flavor. Possibilities include shrimp, tuna, veggie kebabs, or even peaches. (See "Low-Fat Grilling" on page 162 for recipe ideas.)

USE FRESH INGREDIENTS.

Toss out the canned Parmesan cheese, dried oregano, and jarred garlic and switch them for their fresh counterparts. And consider a windowsill herb garden: Use a small snippet of oregano or rosemary in sauces or as a garnish. You will be amazed by how much more flavorful fresh is.

ADD COLOR OR TEXTURE. For example, throw diced orange pepper or crunchy watercress into salads, and sprinkle soup with nonfat croutons.



Adrienne Schiffer, 34

stay-at-home mom, married with two children, ages 7 and 4, Powell, OH

"Whenever I tried to eat healthy at a restaurant, I'd get a salad and watch the amount of dressing I used. But I never thought twice about the fattening ingredients in the salad, like tortilla strips and cheese. Now, I know everything adds up."

| | STARTING STATS | CURRENT STATS |
|-----------------|----------------|---------------|
| HEIGHT, WEIGHT: | 5'3", 244 lbs | 204 lbs |
| BODY FAT: | 34% | 23.9% |
| WAIST: | 47" | 39¾" |
| HIPS: | 57" | 46¾" |
| BUST: | 47¼" | 41¼" |

THE SMALL CHANGE THAT'S ALREADY PAID OFF FOR HER:

"In the past, I blew off exercise on school holidays, using the excuse that my kids were home. But recently, my son, Hagen, had a week off and instead of making up excuses, I asked myself, How am I going to squeeze my workouts in? I wound up doing my exercise DVDs and felt really proud!"

HER BIGGEST WEEKNIGHT MEAL HURDLE:

"My kids never want anything but chicken nuggets, and they really don't like when everything is mixed together, like in a stir-fry. I'm trying to find a balance between eating healthy and fixing meals that everyone likes."

HOW TO JUMP OVER IT: Adrienne should get the kids involved in planning meals, says Young. Every week, she should ask the kids for three chicken nugget-free dinner ideas. She should also encourage them to help her cook. Adrienne already has make-your-own-taco nights, which are a hit. She might try make-your-own pizza (on whole-wheat pitas) or subs, offering a mix of toppings such as shredded carrots, sliced apple, and avocado.

10 BEST FOODS TO HAVE ON HAND

Scott Uehlein, Canyon Ranch corporate chef, spends his days making good-for-you fare yummy. Here, 10 secret-weapon ingredients he suggests keeping in your kitchen, plus ways to use them.

[1] Jarred roasted red peppers

- Chop peppers; toss with fresh basil, olive oil, and balsamic vinegar for a quick salad.
- Top turkey burgers and sandwiches.

[2] Canned diced chile peppers

- Toss into a low-sodium vegetable soup for zip.
- Melt low-fat cheese over baked tortilla chips and top with black beans, salsa, and a sprinkle of chile peppers.

[3] Canned artichoke hearts in water

- Chop and mix with herbs and low-fat cream cheese to spread on whole-grain breads.
- Rinse; toss with olive oil, garlic, salt, and pepper; roast at 425°F until crisp on edges.

[4] Frozen berries

- Blend with low-fat yogurt for fruit smoothies.
- Sprinkle over pancake batter in the skillet.

[5] Frozen raw peeled shrimp

- Sauté with vegetables until cooked through.
- Cook, chop, and add to an omelet.



[6] Dried cranberries

- Add to a stir-fry.
- Stir into chocolate-chip cookie dough before baking.

[7] Capers

- Sprinkle over fish with a squeeze of lemon.
- Make a pasta sauce with tomato sauce, capers, olives, garlic, and lemon zest.

[8] Canned beans

- Process garbanzo beans (a.k.a. chickpeas) with sesame tahini, lemon juice, and garlic for a quick hummus.
- Add black beans to a low-fat cheese quesadilla.

[9] Salsa

- Mix with brown rice for a zesty side.
- Use as pizza sauce.

[10] Couscous

- Use in stuffed peppers.
- Cook a few minutes longer than instructed, add minced onion, garlic, parsley, and rosemary, and form into 3-inch cakes. Sauté and serve with low-fat sour cream.



Dr. Roizen's lifestyle tips for July

RLHL GENERAL-MEDICINE GURU

Michael F. Roizen, M.D.,

is the coauthor of *You: The Owner's Manual*.

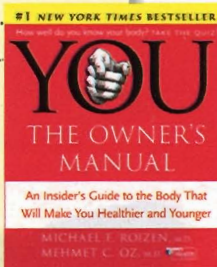
Rx DATE today
FOR you

1. Retrain your palate. If only you could convince your taste buds to like the healthier versions of foods (baked chips versus regular, skim milk instead of whole). Wait—you can! It takes about eight weeks of eating the better choices (and a little patience) to learn to enjoy and actually prefer them over their heavier counterparts.

2. Eat 10 tablespoons of tomato sauce a week. Tomatoes are rich in lycopene, an antioxidant linked with arterial health and reduced risk of breast and prostate cancers. But lightly cooking them in a healthy oil—as with pasta sauces—boosts lycopene concentrations in the bloodstream up to threefold, delivering a more powerful immune-boosting punch. The reason: The combination of heat and fat make lycopene more bioavailable.

3. Take a lesson. To make sure you're maximizing your workout, or to inject some excitement into a monotonous routine, treat yourself to an hour with an expert—whether it's a personal trainer, tennis pro, or swim instructor. Bonus: A skilled fitness professional will teach you proper ways to perform certain moves and prevent injury.

PHYSICIAN *Dr. Roizen*



msn

CHECK US OUT ONLINE

Go to lifestyle.msn.com/redbook, where you can:

- Get simple swaps from REDBOOK's food editor that cut fat and calories—without sacrificing flavor.
- Discover the healthiest dishes to order at your local takeout joints.
- Learn waist-friendly ways to navigate summer barbecues.
- Read Adrienne's, Jennifer's, and Julie's blogs about their successes and their struggles.

■ **Coming next month:** Bored to tears with the same old fitness DVD? Feel like tossing out those hand weights? Don't throw in the towel just yet! Our experts reveal how to make your workouts more fun while seeing faster results.