

Summertime Smoothies: Easy As 1-2-3

PHILADELPHIA — Smoothies are one of the hottest trends in one-fisted foods. Maybe one reason for their popularity is that smoothies are versatile enough to be a grab-n-go breakfast, a refreshing afternoon snack or a luscious, good-for-you dessert.

Yes, smoothies are America's power drink and they are everywhere — in airports, at health clubs, in restaurants and at the mall.

Maybe the best thing about smoothies, though, is how easily they can be made at home. Take advantage of the season's freshest, ripest fruits. Pull out your blender: At just a whirl away, eating better is an easy as 1-2-3!

1. For consistency and a creamy texture, start with a cup of milk.

Pour the milk directly into your blender to save on clean-up, measuring by the marks on the side of the blender.

You can also add:

- 1 carton of yogurt, any flavor
- ½ cup frozen yogurt, sorbet or sherbet

• milk cubes-freeze milk in ice trays. Milk cubes don't dilute the flavor like ice cubes can.

2. Add fresh or frozen fruit.

Studies show that people who consume more fruit are at less risk of many diseases. Yet, even though fruits are a powerhouse of vitamins, minerals and phytochemicals, most of us fall short of

getting the fruit we need daily. Smoothies are a simple solution. And since smoothies use the whole fruit instead of just the juice, they also are a delicious way to boost the fiber in your diet.

Choose your favorite fruits or use your imagination to develop new combinations! Freezing fruit before use will make your smoothie thicker. Simply peel and cut up fruit. Freeze in individual portions in self-sealing freezer bags. Here's some ideas to get you started:

medium orange, seeds removed, half or whole banana, 1 cup melon, 1 mango, 1 cup papaya, 1 peach, ½-1 cup fresh or canned pineapple, 1 kiwi-don't overblend, and 1 cup berries.

3. Add flavors or fiber, if desired. Blend and enjoy!

For flavor try:

- Extracts like vanilla, almond, cherry and lemon
- Zest of lemon, lime or orange
- Peanut butter or ground almonds

• Spices such as cinnamon or nutmeg

• Syrups like chocolate or strawberry

For fiber, add:

- Wheat germ
- Oat bran
- Flaxseeds

These smoothies thicken upon standing so consume immediately

ly or adjust the liquid accordingly.

To receive a free copy of the "Shake Up Your Shape Up Plan" recipe brochure plus a cool curly straw, call 1-888-799-6455 (MILK).

BLUEBERRY SMOOTHIE

1 can (8 ounces) crushed pineapple, drained
 ½ small banana
 1 cup fat-free milk
 1 cup fresh or frozen blueberries
 1 cup blueberry yogurt
 Combine pineapple, banana, milk, blueberries and yogurt in the blender.

Cover; blend until thick and smooth.

Serve immediately. Garnish with banana, strawberry or mint, if desired.

Nutrition Facts per serving: calories 150, protein 5 g, fat 1 g, vitamin C 20 mg, folate 15 mg, potassium 430 mg, calcium 155 mg, magnesium 33 mg, dietary fiber 1.6 g.

CHOCOLATE BANANA BLAST

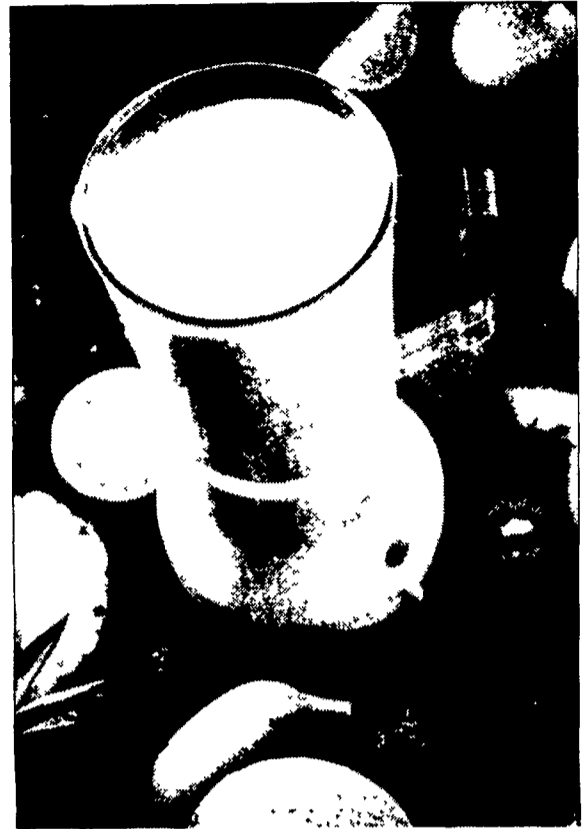
Yield 3 (8-ounce) servings
 2 cups fat free milk
 1 large, peeled and sliced banana, frozen
 ¼ cup chocolate flavored syrup
 1 tsp. vanilla extract
 Combine all ingredients in a blender.

Cover; blend until thick and smooth.

Garnish with a cherry.

Serve immediately.

Nutrition Facts per serving: calories 145, protein 7 g, fat 0 g, vitamin C 4.6 mg, folate 16 mg, potassium 450 mg, calcium 170 mg, magnesium 38 mg, dietary fiber 1 g.



TROPICAL FRUIT SMOOTHIE

Yield 4 (12-ounce) servings
 1 cup fat free milk
 2 small, peeled and sliced bananas
 ½ cup fresh or canned pineapple chunks
 ½ cup mango sorbet
 ½ cup papaya, peeled and seeded
 Combine all ingredients in a blender.

Cover; blend until thick, creamy and smooth.

Garnish with a slice of mango and a wedge of pineapple.

Serve immediately.

Nutrition Facts per serving: calories 150, protein 3.3 g, fat 0 g, vitamin C 8 mg, folate 30 mg, potassium 500 mg, calcium 80 mg, magnesium 23 mg, dietary

STRAWBERRY BANANA SIPPER

Yield 3 (6-ounce) servings
 1 cup fat free milk
 1 cup fresh strawberries
 1 small, peeled banana
 2 Tbsp. honey
 1 tsp. vanilla extract
 Combine all ingredients in a blender.

Cover; blend until thick and smooth.

Garnish with a strawberry.

Serve immediately.

Nutrition Facts per serving: calories 145, protein 6 g, fat 0 g, vitamin C 30 mg, folate 20 mg, potassium 415 mg, calcium 170 mg, magnesium 27 mg, dietary fiber 2 g.

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