Newsletter October 2013 Issue

This month, the Smart Life Newsletter includes even more information about making smarter choices about nutrition and lifestyle that will help you live the life you want. A blog by guest contributor, Doron Kahana, M.D., PCNS, founder of Center for Digestive Health & Nutritional Excellence, shares with Smart Life readers how Prebiotics and Probiotics boost our immune system, aid digestion, and promote regularity.

This month, I share with Smart Life readers my vision for a Smart Life and how the Smart Life logo, created by TLVD, captures everything about my approach to health coaching.

Looking for tips on getting what you want? Read my blog You Want it? Get Smart and Make it Happen and learn how to set your intention and make your goals a reality.

Two great recipes this month feature my favorite super green, Kale, which is high in fiber, acts as a powerful detoxifier, and is packed with nutrients. Try my Super Healthy Kale Salad and the nourishing fall Kale & Lentil Soup that makes me feel good any time of year.

Did I mention that the early bird catches the free gifts? Be one of the first 10 to sign up for Smart Life's Monthly Newsletter, and you'll receive 10% off of your Smart Life Health Coaching program of choice.

By signing up for the Smart Life Newsletter you can receive the latest tips, tricks and tools for weight loss, fitness and overall wellness delivered right to your inbox. In each edition to follow, you'll find more seasonal recipes, strategies for helping you reach your health goals and the latest information you need to help you live a happier, healthier life you love.

After you've read the October Edition of the Smart Life

Newsletter, ask questions, send comments, and share your feedback on our Smart Life Facebook page or Smart Life website. The Smart Life Newsletter is designed to be a resource you can truly use to improve your health.

Get it today and get smarter about your life!

Stay healthy,

Ronit

Roasted Eggplant Bruschetta

This is a perfect dinner appetizer or platter for a brunch buffet. It’s becoming a favorite in my house so I thought I would share:

- 2 medium sized eggplants, cut into 1-inch rounds
- 3 cups cherry tomatoes, chopped (I mix red and orange)
- 1/2 small red onion, finely diced
- 2 tablespoons capers
- 4 tablespoons mint leaves, chopped
- 2 tablespoons parsley, chopped
- 3 tablespoons grated parmesan
- 3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 tablespoon red wine vinegar
- Pinch of salt
- Black pepper to taste

Preheat oven to 425 degrees

Brush olive oil on a baking sheet. Layer the eggplant rounds on the baking sheet and roast for 15 minutes. Flip and roast

for 12-15 minutes.

In the meantime, combine cherry tomatoes, onion, capers, herbs, oil, vinegar, a pinch of sea salt and pepper in a bowl.

When eggplants are roasted, top each round with a sprinkle of Parmesan cheese and leave in the oven for 2-3 minutes.

Take out of the oven and top with the tomato and herbs mixture. Arrange on a platter and serve.

Tip: You can roast the eggplants and make the tomato mixture in advance and save them in the fridge. Just before serving, warm the eggplants, add the grated cheese and then top with tomato mixture and serve.

Meatless Monday Veggie Bake

This is a great way to use leftover veggies in your fridge. Or, a great option for a main dish on Meatless Monday!

- All leftover veggies in your fridge that need to be used up (carrots, zucchini, squash, eggplant, etc.)
- 1 large can chopped tomatoes
- 1 can tomato puree
- 1 can chickpeas or white beans
- 1 cup vegetable broth
- 6 large yams, sliced into 1/4-inch-thick slices
- Extra-virgin olive oil
- Sea salt and pepper to taste
- 2 cloves garlic, chopped
- 2 tablespoons parsley (optional)
- 1 teaspoon turmeric (optional)

Preheat oven to 375 degrees.

Chop veggies (not yams) and sauté in a bit of olive oil until soft, 8-10 minutes.

Add tomatoes, tomato puree, vegetable broth, spices, garlic and herbs.

Add chickpeas or white beans and mix well.

Cook vegetables and beans in tomato sauce for 15 minutes on low to medium heat.

Remove veggie mixture from heat.

Slice yams into thin sheets.

Spread a little olive oil on the bottom of a square dish and cover with a layer of yams.

Spoon out veggie mix and spread evenly on top of yams.

Finish with a layer of yams and lightly brush the yams with olive oil.

Bake covered for 40 minutes.

Take off the cover and turn up the temperature to 450 degrees for 10 minutes to crisp up the top layer.

Newsletter September 2013 Issue

This month I am launching the first Smart Life Newsletter. The launch edition includes timesaving tips for streamlining your kitchen for your busier fall lifestyle, fun lunch box options for picky eaters (they won't even know it's brain food!), on-the-go snacks that are good for you and take minutes to prepare, and a warm seasonal salad so flavorful it can stand alone as a meal (think Meatless Mondays!).

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Enjoy the beginning of Fall and stay healthy,

Ronit

Quinoa-and-Apple Salad with Curry Dressing

Welcome autumn into your kitchen: Try new recipes for fall featuring the season's freshest crop of apples and root vegetables. This will help you maximize nutrients by eating fresh local produce ,while also keeping dinners exciting and new.

Quinoa-and-Apple Salad with Curry Dressing

I love this salad because it's rich with flavor as well as nutrients. Quinoa is packed with protein so this recipe makes a great vegetarian meal, or can serve as a side dish when paired with a lean healthy protein like organic chicken. And if you're busy like me, you'll love the fact that quinoa cooks fast and stays fresh in the refrigerator for three to four days.

- 1/4 cup raw whole almonds
- 1 cup white quinoa
- 1 teaspoon honey
- 1 tablespoon shallot, finely chopped
- 1 teaspoon curry powder
- 1/4 teaspoon coarse salt
- 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- Freshly ground pepper
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 tablespoons dried currants
- 1 small McIntosh apple, cut into 1/8-inch-thick wedges
- 1/4 cup loosely packed fresh mint leaves, coarsely

chopped, plus more for garnish

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Spread almonds on a rimmed baking sheet; toast until lightly toasted and fragrant, about 7 minutes. Let cool; coarsely chop nuts.

Rinse quinoa thoroughly in a fine sieve; drain. Bring 2 cups water to a boil in a medium saucepan. Add quinoa; return to a boil. Stir quinoa, cover and reduce heat. Simmer until quinoa is tender but still chewy, about 15 minutes. Fluff quinoa with a fork and let cool.

Whisk together honey, shallot, curry powder, salt and lemon juice in a large bowl. Season with pepper. Whisking constantly, pour in oil in a slow, steady stream; whisk until dressing is emulsified. Add quinoa, currants, apple, mint and nuts; toss well. Garnish with mint.

Source: MSL Cookbook Vol. 2; The New Classics
Per serving: 304 calories, 14g fat, 0mg cholesterol, 38g carbs, 154mg sodium, 8g protein, 5g fiber

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8 Fast, Easy Snacks for On-the-Go

When your schedule gets hectic, it’s tempting to reach for the vending machine or whatever’s nearby to satisfy your hunger, but that’s often the worst thing you can do. My rule for snacks is combine protein with carbs to help manage blood sugar levels, and to avoid dairy.

Here is a round up of portable healthy snacks that feed your hunger, not your waistline:

1. Raw nuts mix. Whether store-bought or homemade, a nut mix that includes raw varieties is better than roasted ones, which lowers the nutrients. Make a batch on Sunday and store them in the refrigerator for the week. If you have a sweet tooth, add dried, unsweetened fruit. If your palate leans to savory, sprinkle with spices like rosemary or cayenne.

2. Mason jar dips. You know those glass containers you're saving when you clean out your kitchen (see "9 Ways to Get Organized for Fall")? Fill the bottom with two tablespoons of nut or seed butters or all-natural hummus, then add vegetable sticks, like carrots, celery, zucchini, jicama or peppers. Pop on the top and you're ready to go.

3. Smoothies to go. On Sunday night, make twice your normal amount of breakfast smoothie. Pour the drink into 8-ounce glass jars and freeze. Store them in the fridge at the office and by the time you're ready to drink, it's thawed.

4. Seasoned kale chips. If you're the domestic type, making these at home is a cinch, or if you haven't used your oven in years, don't worry, store-bought varieties can be just as healthy. To make, trim kale stems, make sure they're completely dry and sprinkle with your favorite seasoning. Personally, sea salt does the trick for our family. Bake at 275 degrees for 20 minutes, or until crisp and dry.

5. Homemade granola bars. Often I'll read snack bar recipes that sound a lot like candy bars, but when made with the right ingredients, you'll have a energy powerhouse that will get you through an afternoon. Most granola bar recipes, especially the raw ones, take less than a half an hour to make and can last your family a week. Even better, they're highly portable and don't require refrigeration. I love this one from Food 52. The biggest challenge you'll have making these is keeping up with the demand.

6. two-ingredient bites. I love pairing two ingredients –

sweet and savory or sweet and salty – for an easy quick fix that satisfies hunger and sugar cravings. My favorite combinations:

- organic dates stuffed with almond butter
- sliced green apple with nut butter
- organic brown rice cakes drizzled with brown rice syrup.

7. Salty crunches. On afternoons when stress is high and time is short, the only thing that does the trick are snacks with crunch. I love:

- *roasted chickpeas*. Drizzle in olive oil and toss with your favorite ground spices, then bake 30 to 40 minutes at 400 degrees. If you buy them pre-made, read the nutrition label to know what you're getting.
- a handful (5 to 8) of *whole-grain or sprouted chips*, such as Garden of Eatin' brand, with freshly made salsa, pico de gallo or guacamole.
- *hummus and baby carrots or celery sticks*. Note: read the nutrition label on hummus to be sure the brand contains no preservatives or additives.
- *nori chips*. Cut these seaweed sheets into strips, drizzle with olive oil and top with seasonings. Bake for 20 minutes or until crispy. If you've got more time, create mini "sushi" bites with leftover brown rice or quinoa and vegetable sticks, no refrigeration required.

8. Healthy pudding. Chia seeds aren't just for smoothies anymore. Make them into a creamy and sweet (or savory, depending on your add-ins) treat in minutes with this delicious and highly addictive pudding recipe:

Chia Pudding:

- 3 tablespoons chia seeds

- ¾ cup unsweetened almond milk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- Liquid stevia to taste (optional)
- Add cocoa powder or pumpkin pie spice for flavor

Combine all ingredients and let sit for 10 minutes stirring occasionally.

Cauliflower Hummus

This hummus is easy to make and tastes delicious. Enjoy with fresh cut veggies and toasted whole wheat pita bread.

- 1 cauliflower
- 2 tablespoons tahini
- 1/4 cup of extra virgin olive oil
- juice of 1 lemon
- handful parsely
- pinch cumin
- pinch sea salt
- Freshly ground pepper

Steam the cauliflower for approximately 10 minutes. Add the cauliflower to the food processor with all other ingredients and mix.

Ronit’s Twist on Dos Caminos Traditional Guacamole

Many New Yorkers love the guacamole served at Dos Caminos. The best tip I got from their traditional recipe is to mash the seasonings with the lime together and let the juices develop before I add in the avocados. My family and friends love my guacamole with more of a kick, so I add a bit more jalapeños and I leave the membranes and seeds. To keep your waistline trim, serve with platter of raw vegetables instead of the traditional tortilla chips.

- 3 tablespoons cilantro leaves, finely chopped
- 2 teaspoons jalapeño chilies, minced (remove seeds and membranes for less kick)
- ½ teaspoon Himalayan or sea salt
- 2 large ripe avocados, preferably Haas, peeled and seeded
- 1 small plum tomato, cored, seeded and finely chopped
- 2 teaspoons freshly squeezed lime juice

In a medium-size bowl, use a masher to mash together the cilantro, jalapeño, salt and lime juice. Let stand for a few minutes.

Add avocados and gently mash them with a fork. Stir in the chopped tomato.

Taste to adjust seasonings (typically I add more salt, more lime, more cilantro).

Serve with a platter of fresh cut veggies.

Quick Summer Slaw

This makes a fantastic side dish or topping on simple grilled fish or chicken. Great addition to your summer BBQ.

- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 tablespoons rice vinegar
- 1 tablespoon soy sauce
- 1/2 teaspoon brown sugar
- 1 mini green cabbage, chopped
- 1 garlic scape, thinly sliced
- 1/4 cup cilantro, basil or mint, chopped
- Freshly ground pepper
- Sprouted sunflower seeds

In a bowl, mix the oil, vinegar, soy sauce and brown sugar. Add cabbage, garlic scape and fresh herbs. Toss. Mix in the sunflower seeds and season with pepper. Toss again and serve.

Vegetable Sauté

This dish is super simple and tasty! Time saver: Start quinoa before chopping and cooking vegetables, so the grain cooks at the same time.

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 zucchini, chopped
- 1 yellow squash, chopped
- 1 red sweet pepper, chopped
- 1 celery stalk, chopped
- Black pepper to taste
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 teaspoon turmeric

In your favorite skillet, add olive oil and heat over a medium setting. Add chopped vegetables and sauté until they begin to soften.

Top them over brown rice or quinoa, or put in a gluten-free wrap.