

21 easy ways to eat healthier today!

Food Network's Ellie Krieger, author of *So Easy* (Wiley, 2010), shares her "delicious first!" tips to help you kick off the year right

1 Put veggie "discards" to good use. Instead of chopping off the stalks and tossing them, Krieger suggests grating them into slaws, salads, stews or soups. You'll get a huge hit of satiating fiber, plus crunch and flavor.



2 Get energized with a morning "lunch." Eating a turkey sandwich or other protein-packed lunch item for breakfast wards off hunger and delivers lasting energy.

3 Whip up guilt-free pizza. "I really like premade pizza crust—the kind that's already baked for you," says Krieger, who advises opting for healthier whole-wheat thin crust. "You can put loads of veggies or whatever on your pizza, and it's fun to make with your family—it's just a healthier way to have pizza night."



4 Impart zip with low-calorie mustard. "I have all types of mustard—grainy, plain... I love mustard," raves Krieger. Finish off pan sauces for meats and chicken by incorporating a little of the spicy stuff into the mix instead of using butter.

5 Boost flavor with espresso. "If you're baking chocolate cookies, cake or brownies, add some espresso

or concentrated coffee to help it taste fudgier and make it more decadent," says Krieger. The upside of that flavor infusion: You will be satisfied on less, plus you'll get a heap of antioxidants.

6 Swap in Greek-style yogurt. Replacing at least half the mayo in dressing and dip recipes with low-fat Greek-style yogurt is one of Krieger's tricks for getting creamy richness with less fat. Studies show that yogurt's probiotics boost immunity, making it a great add-in for winter comfort foods.

7 Make fresh herbs a staple. This is an easy, tasty way to boost your intake of phytochemicals, which are proven to help fend off infection, heart disease and cancer. For an exotic twist, Krieger adds mint to meat rubs and savory salads and pastas.

8 Take advantage of no-stress convenience. Prepackaged foods can be a lifesaver—Krieger's favorite healthy, ready-made offerings include 90-second brown rice, tuna in a pouch and prewashed salad greens.

9 Skip the nonstick skillet. When making meat with a pan sauce, use a regular skillet instead of the nonstick type. As Krieger explains, "The caramelized bits of meat at the bottom of the pan will dissolve into the sauce—it's a great flavor builder."

10 Sub in mushrooms. Swapping mushrooms for meat in chilis, stews and casseroles delivers major flavor and nutrients for fewer calories. And mushrooms enhanced with vitamin D (a boon for mood, energy and focus) are now available in many supermarkets.



11 Sprinkle on wheat germ. "It's a good source of fiber, vitamin E and B vitamins like folic acid, plus it has a wonderful toasty taste and a lovely grainy texture," says Krieger. "I put a tablespoon or two in my pancake or waffle batter, or sprinkle it right on my morning cereal—hot or cold."

12 Sweeten without sugar. "I try to use the least-refined sweeteners, such as molasses, maple syrup and honey," says Krieger. "They give you a slower blood sugar rise than sugar." And when it comes to honey, she advises selecting a dark variety to up your antioxidant intake.



13 Go Canadian. Canadian bacon contains 80 percent less fat than regular pork bacon, but Krieger promises that it tastes just as good in dishes.

14 Pour measure for measure. "I always measure my olive oil when cooking," says Krieger. "It's easy to think, *Well, it's healthy oil*, and glug it into the pan. But you can sauté a large onion in just a tablespoon of oil."

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15 Favor thin-sliced chicken. “You can purchase it already sliced, or just pound out chicken cutlets,” suggests Krieger. “The pieces will cook faster and more evenly. Plus, they act as instant portion control, giving you just the right amount of protein.”

16 Keep frozen fruit on hand. Adding frozen fruit to smoothies is the secret to an extra-cool and frothy drink, says Krieger. Plus, frozen fruit is packed at its peak, so it can be even richer in nutrients than fresh fruit.



17 Brush on a zesty-sweet glaze. Combine tangy mustard and pure maple syrup to brush on chicken or salmon before baking. “This gives depth of flavor with few calories and little effort,” raves Krieger. And maple syrup helps prevent blood sugar spikes, energy crashes and cravings.

18 Treat yourself to sweet wonton crisps. For an easy sweet-tooth satisfier, Krieger brushes wonton wrappers with oil, bakes them and sprinkles with powdered sugar and cinnamon or cocoa. She says, “It’s a crunchy treat that’s great with ice cream or frozen yogurt.”

19 Toss in a splash of color. “Whenever I cook, I always think, *What color can I add to that?*” Krieger says. “It can be as simple as adding chopped tomato and dill to scrambled eggs.”

20 Squeeze on citrus. “I use citrus zest and juice a lot,” says Krieger. “Their acid tricks taste buds into wanting less salt, so you’ll love a recipe just as much without the salt.”



21 Stir up a pudding parfait. “I fold whipped cream into Greek-style yogurt and add a touch of cinnamon, plus vanilla or almond extract,” says Krieger, who serves it with fruit and nuts for a healthy treat.