- Muscles / Nutrition



NUTRITION

FEED YOUR MUSCLES

Tasty ways to strengthen your body's literal support system

BY ALYSSA JUNG • RECIPES BY TINA MARTINEZ

MIKE GARTEN. FOOD STYLING: SIMON ANDREWS. PROP STYLING: PAIGE HICKS.

YOUR MUSCLES ARE one big key to staying vibrant and active in life, but their mass is naturally depleted as we age—so it's super important to take care of them now and forever. "Many people don't think about the importance of muscle health to our quality of life until they develop pain or mobility issues," says Laura Iu, R.D., a certified intuitive eating counselor in New York City.

Don't be one of those people! Strength training a few times a week is a fantastic way to build or maintain lean muscle mass, and you can maximize those benefits by staying properly hydrated and regularly padding your diet with foods that contain muscle-friendly nutrients such as protein, calcium, omega-3 fatty acids, and vitamin D.

Stay strong (and get even stronger!) by adding these picks to your plate.

SOFT SCRAMBLED EGGS WITH SPINACH ON SWEET POTATOES

ACTIVE **20 MIN.**
TOTAL **30 MIN.**
SERVES **4**

Heat oven to 450°F. Prick 2 medium **sweet potatoes** (about 9 oz each) all over with fork and place on large plate. Microwave on High, flipping halfway through, until fork-tender, 6 to 7 min. Transfer to cutting board and halve lengthwise. Brush cut sides with 1 Tbsp **oil**, season with ¼ tsp each **kosher salt** and **pepper**, and place, cut sides down, on small rimmed baking sheet. Roast until tender and golden brown, 15 to 18 min. In large bowl, whisk together 8 large **eggs**, ¾ cup **low-fat cottage cheese**, and ¼ tsp each salt and pepper. Heat 1 Tbsp oil in large nonstick skillet on medium. Add eggs and cook, stirring often, until nearly set, 3 to 4 min. Remove from heat and fold in 1 cup **baby spinach** and ¼ cup **basil leaves** (both roughly chopped). Spoon over sweet potatoes.

EGGS

"They're often referred to as 'the perfect protein,' since they contain all nine essential amino acids that the body needs but can't produce, and eggs also provide choline, a nutrient that influences muscle control," says Bonnie Taub-Dix, R.D.N., author of *Read It Before You Eat It—Taking You From Label to Table*.

SPINACH

This leafy green is a source of magnesium, which is a requirement for muscle contraction and relaxation, says Taub-Dix, and it also provides iron to help transport oxygen to muscles. You'll get a bit of calcium and vitamin C as well.

PER SERVING *About 313 cal, 17.5 g fat (4.5 g sat), 377 mg chol, 555 mg sodium, 19 g carb, 3 g fiber, 7 g sugar (0 g added sugar), 19 g pro*

COMMERCIAL DISTRIBUTION IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED • PRINTED FROM PRESSREADER • NOT FOR SALE • periodicalqcpublicl.brary@gmail.com • PERSONAL COPY

CEDAR PLANK SALMON WITH PINEAPPLE SALSA

ACTIVE **25 MIN.**
TOTAL **35 MIN.**
PLUS SOAKING
SERVES **4**

Soak large cedar grilling plank (about 11 by 5 in.) in water for 30 min. Heat grill to medium. In medium bowl, stir together ¼ medium **white onion** (finely chopped) and 1½ Tbsp **fresh lime juice**. Peel and slice 1 small **pineapple** (about 3¼ lbs) crosswise, ½ in. thick, and grill, covered, until grill marks appear, 4 to 5 min. per side; transfer to cutting board. Place one 1¼-lb **skin-on salmon fillet** on soaked plank, skin side down; season with ½ tsp **kosher salt**; and grill, covered, until nearly opaque throughout, 13 to 15 min. Meanwhile, cut pineapple into ½-in. pieces (discarding core) and add to onion mixture along with 1 **serrano chile** (seeded and finely chopped), ¼ cup **cilantro leaves** (roughly chopped), and ¼ tsp salt. Toss to combine, then serve over salmon.

PER SERVING *About 269 cal, 5.5 g fat (1.5 g sat), 66 mg chol, 433 mg sodium, 27 g carb, 0 g fiber, 18 g sugar (0 g added sugar), 30 g pro*

PINEAPPLE

This tropical fruit contains the digestive enzyme bromelain, which aids in breaking down protein in the gut so it can be put to use. "Bromelain has also been shown to reduce exercise-induced muscle damage and inflammation to enhance recovery," Taub-Dix adds. And pineapple delivers vitamin C, which plays a role in collagen synthesis—a necessity for healthy joints.

SALMON

"This fatty fish is an excellent source of protein, a building block of muscle growth, repair, and function, as well as omega-3's, which may contribute to muscle synthesis," says Taub-Dix. It's also a source of vitamin D, which is needed for calcium absorption.



MIKE GARTEN. FOOD STYLING: SIMON ANDREWS. PROP STYLING: PAIGE HICKS.

PRINTED FROM PRESSREADER NOT FOR SALE PERSONAL COPY periodicalgcpubliclibrary@gmail.com COMMERCIAL DISTRIBUTION IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED

