

Dr. Kevin Wei's Heart-Healthy Menu

- *Chicken Kebabs*
- *Microwave-Steamed Salmon, Cantonese-Style*
- *Roasted Vegetables with Balsamic Vinegar*

Serve with a whole-grain mixture like Korean "7 mixed grains," which typically combines various types of rice, grains, and beans to add fiber and nutrients to a meal. New to whole grains? Try mixing in a 1:1 ratio with white rice before cooking.

Chicken Kebabs

Makes 2 servings

Ingredients

For marinade:

⅓ cup vegetable oil

2 tablespoons Dijon mustard

Juice of 1 lemon

2 cloves garlic, crushed (or finely minced)

2-3 bay leaves

2 tablespoons vermouth

Freshly ground black pepper, to taste

For kebabs:

3 boneless, skinless chicken thighs, trimmed of visible fat

2 bamboo or metal skewers

1 lemon, cut lengthwise into wedges (for serving)

Preparation

Combine all marinade ingredients in a medium mixing bowl, whisking or stirring well so that an emulsion forms.

Cut the chicken thighs into 1-inch wide strips. Add chicken to the marinade, stirring to thoroughly coat all of the chicken pieces. Cover the bowl. Chill in refrigerator for at least 30 minutes and up to 24 hours.

To make the kebabs, fold each strip of chicken in half and push onto the skewers, trying not to pack the meat too tightly onto the skewers. Season with pepper.

Grill the kebabs on a grill pan or grill until an instant-read thermometer reads 165° F when inserted into the thickest part of the chicken.

Serve immediately with a wedge of lemon on each plate.

Nutrition information (per serving): 312 calories, 21 grams total fat (4 grams saturated fat, 10 grams monounsaturated fat, 5 grams polyunsaturated fat, 0 grams trans fat), 135 mg cholesterol, 331 mg sodium, 407 mg potassium, 4 grams total carbohydrate, 1 gram fiber, 1 gram sugar (0 grams added sugar), 27 grams protein. 0% vitamin A, 21% vitamin C, 1% calcium, 10% iron.

Microwave-Steamed Salmon, Cantonese-Style

Makes 4 servings

Ingredients

1 pound salmon fillet, skin on, pin bones removed

1 medium-sized ginger root

3 green onions (divided – greens sliced into small rounds; whites cut into 2-inch long sections)

For the sauce:

3 tablespoons vegetable oil

2 tablespoons reduced-sodium Chinese soy sauce

1 teaspoon sugar

Note: If you like a lot of sauce or would like extra sauce to mix with rice, double the ingredients.

If you are on a sodium restriction, try the recipe for No-Sodium Soy Sauce Substitute included in this packet in place of the reduced-sodium soy sauce; this will reduce the sodium in the recipe by 230 mg per serving.

Preparation

To create a steaming vessel using 3 plates, gather a 12-inch dinner plate, 6- or 7-inch dessert plate, and 4-inch bread plate. The 12-inch plate should have a lip so that it can hold at least a ¼-inch depth of water. Begin by placing the 12-inch plate upright on your preparation area. Place the smallest 4-inch plate upside-down on the bottom plate to form a "platform." Place the 6- or 7-inch dessert plate face-up on top of the "platform." The fish and vegetables will be placed on the top dessert plate for steaming.

Slice 3 ½-inch rounds from the ginger root. Peel the remaining ginger, slice into very thin rounds, then stack the rounds and slice them lengthwise into a thin julienne; set aside. Smash the 3 ginger rounds with the flat side of a cleaver to "open them up." Place the ginger rounds and the 2-inch white portions of the green onions in a single layer on the top dessert plate of the "steamer." Place the salmon fillet skin-side down on top of the ginger-onion mixture. Place half of the green onion rounds and half of the julienned ginger on top of the salmon. Cover the whole assembly with cellophane wrap, leaving a little bit of the bottom plate uncovered to allow steam to escape.

Carefully transfer the whole assembly into the microwave. Heat on "High" for 4 minutes. *(Please note that this 4-minute method only works for a maximum of 1 pound of fish.)* Check fish for doneness – it should be opaque and flake easily.

While the fish is steaming, heat the vegetable oil in a small saucepan over medium-high heat. Dissolve the sugar into the soy sauce in a small bowl.

Once the fish is cooked, lift the salmon off the bottom layer of ginger-onion mixture and transfer to a separate serving dish. Place the remaining green onion rounds and ginger julienne on the fish. Pour the hot oil over the fish, then pour the soy sauce mixture over the fish. Serve immediately.

Nutrition information (per serving): 276 calories, 17 grams total fat (2 grams saturated fat, 8 grams monounsaturated fat, 5 grams polyunsaturated fat, 0 grams trans fat), 60 mg cholesterol, 357 mg sodium, 413 mg potassium, 3 grams total carbohydrate, 0 grams fiber, 2 grams sugar (1 gram added sugar), 24 grams protein. 4% vitamin A, 0% vitamin C, 1% calcium, 3% iron.

Roasted Vegetables with Balsamic Vinegar

Makes 4 servings

Ingredients

3 carrots, peeled and cut into ½-inch rounds

8 medium cremini or button mushrooms, stems removed

1 medium sweet onion, peeled and cut into 8 wedges

Optional: 1 small Japanese sweet potato, peeled and cut into ½-inch rounds (if the potato has a large diameter, each round can be sliced in half)

Optional: 1 small Japanese eggplant, cut into ½-inch rounds

1 small head of broccoli, separated into florets

3 tablespoons olive oil, divided

Freshly ground black pepper, to taste

2 to 4 tablespoons balsamic vinegar, to taste

Preparation

Preheat the oven to 400° F.

Place the carrots, mushrooms, onions into a large mixing bowl (along with the sweet potato and eggplant, if using). Add 2 tablespoons of olive oil; toss to coat. Place the broccoli into a separate medium mixing bowl along with the remaining 1 tablespoon of olive oil; toss to coat. Season all vegetables with black pepper.

Transfer the carrot mixture to a rimmed baking sheet or large baking dish and spread evenly into a single layer. Roast in the oven for 10 minutes. Add the broccoli to the carrot mixture, stir to combine, and return to the oven for another 30 minutes or until the carrots (and sweet potato, if using) are soft and all of the vegetables begin browning on the edges.

Remove vegetables from the oven. Add the balsamic vinegar and toss well to coat.

Nutrition information (per serving): 286 calories, 12 grams total fat (2 gram saturated fat, 8 grams monounsaturated fat, 1 gram polyunsaturated fat, 0 grams trans fat), 0 mg cholesterol, 101 mg sodium, 1281 mg potassium, 12 grams total carbohydrate, 12 grams fiber, 18 grams sugar (0 grams added sugar), 12 grams protein. 224% vitamin A, 254% vitamin C, 13% calcium, 15% iron.

No-Sodium Soy Sauce Substitute

Source: American Association of Heart Failure Nurses Patient Education

Ingredients

¾ cup garlic vinegar (make by pouring warmed vinegar over 5 cloves peeled garlic. Let stand overnight, strain and discard garlic.)
3 tablespoons dark molasses
3 teaspoons onion powder

Preparation

Combine all the ingredients and pour the mixture into a glass jar. Refrigerate and use as needed. It lasts about a month in the refrigerator. Warm and shake well before using.