

taste buds

chef Larry
JanesPoach egg
with expert
technique

See recipes on 2B

"He can't even boil an egg" is an expression usually reserved for only the most inept of cooks. But it is misleading.

In fact, the seemingly simple operations of boiling and poaching eggs require a certain basic expertise if the result is to have a molot, golden yolk and tender white that characterize the perfectly cooked egg.

Without trying to break my arm patting myself on the back, I must admit that I seem to have mastered the technique. I have friends who rely on 440 egg poaching pans, and I know of breakfast cooks working at good steak and egg joints who swear by certain procedure and special implements.

Once the necessary techniques are mastered, however, poached and boiled eggs become a wonderful focus for breakfast and brunch — eggs Benedict and eggs Florentine are two favorites.

BUT DON'T think of eggs only in connection with breakfast. Eggs play a creative role in lunches and dinners too. Let's forget hash and eggs, pate and "Easter" meatloaf.

Eggs that you plan to boil or poach should always begin at room temperature. The subtle temperature differences mean the difference between a poorly cooked white and a perfect one. To put it bluntly, cooler eggs take longer to cook. It is also very important that eggs to be poached are as fresh as possible, but those intended for boiling be about three days old. As they lose freshness, they also lose the acidity that makes them so difficult to peel.

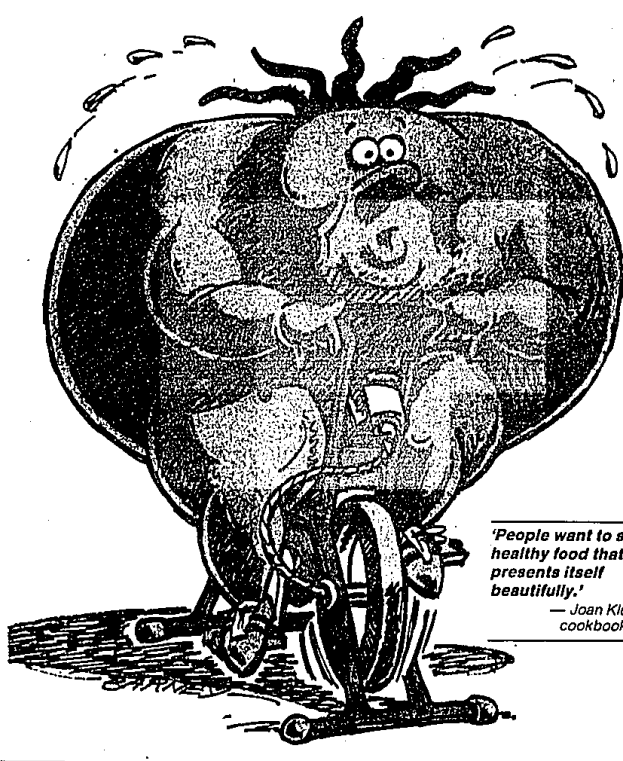
Eggs kept longer than 7 days will lose flavor. This is not saying that eggs more than a week old should be tossed but that when making singular poached, boiled or fried eggs, fresher are better. Save the older eggs for casseroles, quiches and sauces.

By the way, regarding my caustic comment earlier about egg poachers, they do work, especially for making a bunch. Just make sure that the cup inserts are well buttered. You have probably heard an old story passed down by the "grandma regime" (the neat old ladies who used to wear their nylons rolled down to their ankles with their silver-blue hair done up in pin curls), that a splash of plain vinegar added to the simmering water is best for poaching eggs.

THE ACIDIC QUALITY of vinegar does help set the whites of the poached egg and keep them from spreading. Don't use flavored or colored vinegars as the flavor from the vinegar comes through to the delicate egg. If no plain vinegar is available, in a pinch, a splash of lemon juice will do but, again, the imparting of the flavor will be noticed by true egg aficionados.

I have always found it far easier to first break the eggs into a small bowl or coffee cup, making sure they are opened properly, and then, holding onto the bowl or the cup handle, place the egg close to the simmering water as possible and edge them into the water ever so gently. (The water should be at a nice, slow rolling boil.)

After adding the eggs, reduce the heat to a simmer and cook for no more than three minutes. (Extra-large eggs might need four minutes.) With a slotted spoon, remove the egg and transfer to lightly buttered bowls or toast.



'People want to serve healthy food that presents itself beautifully.'

— Joan Klum Kaye
cookbook author

STAYING
HEALTHY
FOR LIFEBy Cathie Breidenbach
special writer

Weekends are the hardest for many of us trying to eat healthily.

Monday through Friday we may shun the salt shaker, reduce calories and cut down on those nasty low density lipoproteins known as cholesterol. Then, just when we're feeling virtuous and healthy, the weekend arrives — and we blow it.

It's hard to maintain good healthy eating when you're always cooking food for company," says Joan Klum Kaye, who entertains often in her spacious Rochester home.

In the recently published cookbook "Menu for Life," authors Kaye and L.E. Smith offer solutions to the dilemma of staying healthy and entertaining with pizzazz, or just cooking healthy food that pleases everyone in the family.

"People want to serve healthy food that presents itself beautifully," says Kaye, who spent the last two years "chained to the stove" creating recipes that are tasty, attractive and meet stringent guidelines for healthy eating. Nearly all recipes in the book are less than 20 percent fat. There are no egg yolks in any recipe, and herbs and spices substitute for salt.

IN ACCORDANCE with recent dietary studies, recipes in "Menu for Life" increase the percentage of complex carbohydrates and modify the amount of protein from animal and plant sources. For practicality, most everything can be frozen, doubled or put in portion sizes.

"We wrote it as a book for all people," says Smith, who works as a registered dietitian at the Meadow Brook Health Enhancement Institute at Oakland University in Rochester Hills and teaches a graduate class in Nutrition, Exercise and Weight Control.

'After a consultation people always ask me, "So where are the recipes? How can I get started?" There was no one book.'

— L.E. Smith
co-author, "Menu for Life"

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Recipes
to keep fit

HOT PASTA SALAD

3 cups vegetable pasta shells
1 tablespoon olive oil
1 1/2 cups thinly sliced onion
2 cloves garlic, diced
2 cups diced fresh or canned unsalted tomatoes
1 1/2 cup cooked garbanzo beans
or 2 tablespoons grated parmesan cheese
1 teaspoon basil

Recipe can be made ahead and reheated. It doubles easily, but use a wok to accommodate larger volume.

1. Cook pasta shells according to package directions.

2. Meanwhile, heat oil in 12-inch nonstick frying pan. Sauté onions and garlic in oil. When onions are soft, add tomatoes and basil.

3. Stir in drained, cooked pasta. Add beans or cheese, toss to coat. Serve or refrigerate.

Servings: 4. Yield: 5 cups.

Note: Together, beans and pasta provide a complemented protein.

Suggestions: Serve with Crusty Continental Bread and sliced fresh fruit.

CRUSTY CONTINENTAL BREAD

4-5 cups unbleached all-purpose flour
1 cup whole-wheat flour
2 packages dry yeast
2 teaspoons sugar
1 1/2 cup warm water (105-115 degrees)
1/2 cup vegetable oil
1/2 teaspoon salt

Bread can be frozen, defrosted and reheated as a whole or partial loaf. After defrosting, wrap in foil and reheat at 400 degrees for 5 minutes or until just heated through. Do not dry out.

1. Stir yeast and sugar into warm water (105-115 degrees) until dissolved. Set aside to proof.

2. In extra-large mixing bowl, combine salt, whole-wheat flour and 2 cups white flour. Add proofed yeast mixture and oil, stirring until well blended. Gradually add 2 cups flour. Batter will be stiff and sticky.

3. Turn mixture onto floured surface and sprinkle with 1/4 cup of remaining flour. Knead for 5 minutes, adding remaining flour if necessary. Dough should be sticky, but not wet. Let rest for 5 minutes.

4. Spray 2 10 X 15 baking sheets with nonstick coating.

5. Divide dough in half. Roll or pat each piece into an 8 X 12 rectangle. Starting with wide side, tightly roll up the first piece. Pinch edges together. Place on baking sheet seam side down. Repeat. Cover and let rise in a warm place until doubled. Approximately 1 hour.

6. Bake in oven preheated to 375 degrees for 25 to 30 minutes. Cool on wire rack. Serve or store.

Servings: 30 slices. Yield: 2 loaves.

RASPBERRY DELIGHT

3 cup skim milk
1 tablespoon cornstarch
1/4 cup frozen orange juice concentrate
1/4 cup raspberry conserve
2 cups unsweetened fresh or frozen raspberries
8 whole raspberries and 16 sliced almonds, if desired

Recipe can be made in advance. When using frozen raspberries, break apart while they are still in the bag.

1. Whisk together milk and cornstarch until well-blended.

2. In cup, mix raspberry conserve and orange concentrate with fork until smooth. Set aside.

3. In 2-quart sauce pot, cook milk and cornstarch over medium-high heat, stirring constantly, until thick and bubbly. Cook and stir 1 minute longer. Remove from heat.

4. Add conserve mixture and raspberries. Stir until well blended and raspberries are evenly distributed.

5. Pour into stemmed glasses. Let cool. Garnish with whole raspberries and sliced almonds, if desired. Cover and refrigerate.

Servings: 6. Yield: 4 cups.

Exercise is part of the program

By Cathie Breidenbach
special writer

Dr. Fred Stransky, director of the Meadow Brook Health Enhancement Institute at Oakland University and a Ph.D. in exercise physiology, isn't joking when he turns the tables on the outdated old warning, "See your doctor before starting an exercise program."

He says, "The research evidence on the benefits of exercise are so overwhelming that those who intend to be inactive should see their doctors to see if their health can withstand inactivity. I can't think of a patient or a person in the community who can't benefit from exercise. Those with problems should be screened and put on a program designed for them."

The overwhelming evidence confirms that

- Exercise helps control weight. "There's no doubt we're an obese nation and it's doubtful all the bad genes migrated to the U.S. to make that way. Our life style makes a difference, and we pay a price for our mechanized society."

- Exercise is one of five factors that has been clinically shown to reduce blood pressure.

- Regular aerobic exercise reduces blood lipids (cholesterol)

- Exercise improves our state of well being.

The Meadow Brook Institute uses the guidelines set by the American

College of Sports Medicine to determine who can start an exercise program immediately and who should take a treadmill test. A specialist will be able to make an exercise prescription based on the more extensive medical information about your heart that a treadmill test reveals.

This information on your heart, whether your heart skips beats, as well as your overall endurance and functionality, would be included.

The Meadow Brook Institute requires the treadmill test if you don't fit the profile and it recommends the test to people between 35-45. "Better to find out your heart has problems in the lab than while shoveling snow or changing a tire on I-75," Dr. Stransky says. Stress tests run be-

tween \$100-\$200.

Here are some guidelines for getting started and following an exercise prescription.

Mode of Activity — Choose an aerobic activity that fits your preferences and your physical condition. Walking, stationary cycling, cross country skiing and rowing are favorites. Dr. Stransky says of the popular stationary bike, "It's easier to control intensity on a stationary bike and it can be ridden year-round."

HE SETS the record straight on exercise misconceptions. "It's a common myth that jogging is better than walking. The key is the heart-rate response."

You should keep your heart rate within your target zone.

"Another myth is that jogging burns more calories than walking. If you walk a mile or jog a mile, you burn the same number of calories. Walking just takes longer."

Duration of Activity — The minimum duration that produces results is 20 uninterrupted minutes of exercise. At the institute the recommended duration is between 30 and 60 minutes of continuous aerobic exercise.

Intensity — How fast you should exercise is based on your own physiological response. You should exercise at 70 to 85 percent of your maximum heart rate.

A treadmill test will accurately determine your individual maxi-

mum, but if you haven't taken a treadmill test, use this formula to estimate your maximum heart rate, and find your target zone for exercise.

Subtract your age from 220 to get your maximum heart rate. Multiply the answer by 70 and 85 to determine the lower and upper figure of your target zone which is the range within which you should keep your pulse rate while you exercise.

A QUICK and easy way to check your pulse rate is to take your pulse for six seconds (start within moments of stopping exercise and begin counting at 0). Multiply the count you get by 10 to determine your pulse rate per minute. To get maximum health benefits and to be safe, you should exercise within your target zone.

As a practical guide to intensity, Dr. Stransky says you should feel that you're working "somewhat hard" but not "very hard" and you should be able to carry on a conversation while exercising.

Frequency — The Meadow Brook Institute recommends exercising every other day. "Those on weight loss or stress management plans can benefit from daily exercise, but for many people exercise every day leads to exertion. Three times a week is the bare-bones minimum," according to Dr. Stransky, who has seen hundreds of people respond with enthusiasm to the benefits of exercise.

