

# The Fast-Food Snack Solution

BY KIM GOSS



Practical suggestions  
on how to eat . . .

well, not perfectly,  
but better

Chloe Van Tussenbroek lectures Tasia Wuthrich (left) and Mary Beth Lofgren (center) about the importance of healthy eating.

**T**wenty years ago when I was an editor at *Runner's World*, I interviewed a registered dietitian who had written several bestselling books on how to eat well. In discussing her recommendations for healthy living, I told her that many of her meal plans appeared to be extremely time consuming to prepare. She responded by saying that everyone must set aside at least one hour a day for cooking. Hmm, I don't think so.

Maybe some people's lifestyles enable them to spend much of their free time in the kitchen chopping broccoli and arugula, but in today's fast-paced world, time is a luxury. Even middle-school children are multitasking between classes by text messaging important info like "RU FREE MV 2NGT?" into their cell phones. So what's a typical breakfast or lunch for busy kids and young adults? You know it's likely to be from the "four

food groups": McDonald's, Wendy's, Burger King and Taco Bell.

What can be done? Let's start with lunch. One interesting solution to getting adequate nutrition is not to avoid fast-food restaurants entirely but to make better menu choices. In his book *Weight Control for a Young America*, nutritionist Keith Klein calls this process "Better Bad Choices." Klein shows that by making smarter choices and planning what to eat, you can significantly reduce the amount of bad stuff these restaurant chains are known for, such as saturated fat, loads of sugar and salt. If you want to know the true risks of "supersizing," you need to own this book.

OK, let's talk about breakfast.

It's been said that breakfast is the most important meal, but most people don't know why. If you eat a fast-food breakfast that contains a high amount of

refined sugar, it will cause a rapid rise in blood sugar and then a sudden and prolonged drop that will create a cycle of sugar cravings throughout the day. The eating habits that stem from trying to satisfy these cravings, especially with foods containing refined sugar, is one reason childhood obesity has become a huge problem in America. Skipping breakfast is an even worse idea if you want to be lean: two thirds of Americans who skip breakfast are overweight.

The variety of choices available at fast-food restaurants for breakfast is much more limited than for lunch, with the "Big Four" being eggs, bacon, hash browns and orange juice. While the occasional consumption of eggs and bacon is fine, there are definite problems with the other two courses that make either of them a bad choice.

Hash browns are made from starchy potatoes that promote insulin resistance (the inability to assimilate carbohydrates) and a condition known as Syndrome X,

which encompasses a long list of chronic medical problems including obesity, cardiovascular disease and cancer. As for orange juice, much of the juice you find in fast-food restaurants is loaded with refined sugar, which will spike insulin levels and can contribute to a host of medical problems, including cavities. Fact is, sugarwise you might be better off to have a soda or one of those overpriced energy drinks!

Instead of eating breakfast at these fast-food restaurants or, even worse, skipping breakfast entirely, a method you can try occasionally is to have a healthy meal-replacement bar and a natural fruit drink. There are many excellent bars and natural juices available, among which are the BFS fast-food breakfast and snack combo: The XÔI Bar® and the G3® Superfruit Juice Pouch.

The XÔI Bar is a food-based product made with nuts, fruits and whole

grains; and the G3 Superfruit Juice Pouch contains G3, a natural juice drink high in antioxidants that will not cause the rapid spike in blood sugar that refined sugar will. Also, the minerals in G3 will promote proper hydration of the tissues, unlike caffeine drinks, which actually dehydrate the body.

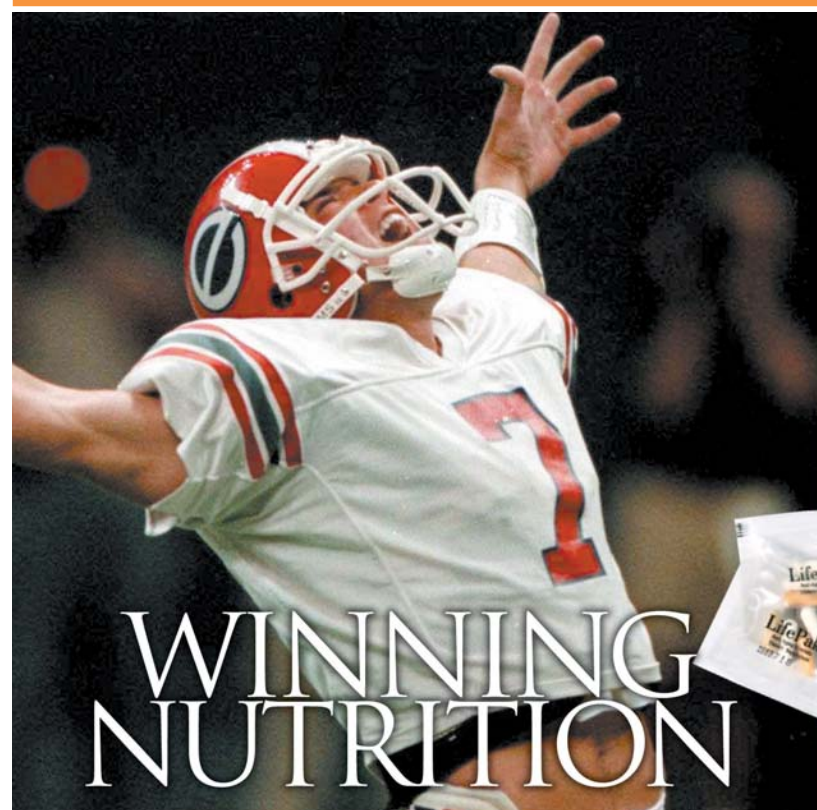
Of course, if you do manage to have a healthy breakfast, a nutrition bar/juice drink combo could make a nice snack for athletes. Athletes who participate in long practices, such as figure skaters and gymnasts, could use this mix to provide sustained

energy and keep them away from the vending machines.

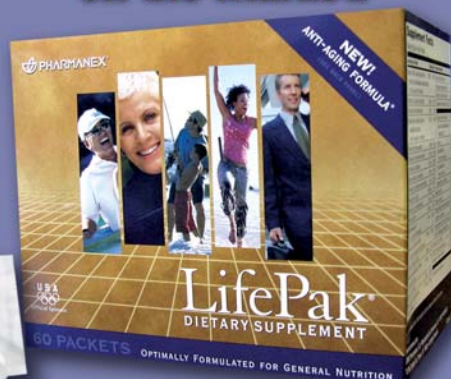
Sitting down to three home-cooked meals a day is an unlikely scenario in today's world, so a good compromise may be all you can manage and still meet life's challenges. A nutrition bar/juice drink combo might not be perfect, but it sure beats the fast-food Big Four. BFS



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