



# THE SALSA DIET

Your goal should be one-pound of weight loss a week. Weight yourself every day. Write the weight down on a calendar.

## BREAKFAST (don't skip it!!)

➤ Oatmeal- I like steel cut 1/3 C plus 2/3 C water in microwave 10 minutes at 30% power with SKIM MILK and one tsp of blackstrap molasses or a measured 3/4 cup of unsweetened cereal: Chex, Wheaties, Cheerios, Kix, bran?-

- half an orange, peach or grapefruit
- coffee with some skim milk (no cream) and a teaspoon or two of sugar if you like

## LUNCH

- english muffin or flour tortilla or 2 slices bread
- one slice of ham (thin!)
- one piece of cheese the size of your palm- also thin
- 1/2 cup of salsa
- 6 oz of skim milk
- 2 ginger snaps or similarly small portion of non-sugary dessert for your sweet tooth

## DINNER

- ☞ 2/3 cup of salsa (measure it)
- ☞ plain tortilla chips -just enough to eat the salsa
- ☞ one beer or 6 oz glass of wine

## EVENING MUNCHIES

★ one ice water— or if famished hummus with a few chips is allowed but wean off eventually

This is a 6-day repetitive diet but you will look forward to the salsa sandwich. On the seventh day you can eat normally.

You will be surprised how little you enjoy some of your old snacks. How sluggish the fat makes you feel. How empty you feel after the cookies you were dreaming of.

## VERY IMPORTANT

is that you make your own salsa. This is a balanced meal and has natural cancer fighting and artery-sparing agents in it. You will need a bunch of very clean glass jars with lids on them. Use Bell canning jars if you like. You can make a larger or smaller portion but alter the recipe now and then: making the salsa to your taste preferences. Doing



all the dicing by hand is a great labor of love! Using a food processor makes for a slightly different texture but should taste the same. Buy ingredients just before making; chill everything in the fridge before preparation, chill before and just after cutting!!!! As time went on, I stopped



heat-treating and did cold-prepare and constant refrigeration. If you do that you need to have everything, even the beans and olives very cold in the fridge. And your hands have to be impeccably clean the whole time. Stir with spoon not hands.

-One can **black beans** -refrigerated!

-Plum or homegrown **tomatoes**- a big plastic bag full! Gently chop by hand or in processor. I don't like the seeds, so this is one of the more labor-intensive parts of the preparation.

-**tomatillos** optional- makes salsa green-colored- meatier taste-they grow in garden like weeds.

-**cilantro** fresh from the garden the best but at the store a bit pricey (gone to seed=coriander)

-1 tablespoon freshly ground **coriander**-in coffee bean grinder, or keep seeds whole for a unique kick.

-2-3 large yellow **onions** (or shallots for extra flavor).

-1 cup **cider vinegar**- (you can use some balsamic but it does change the taste markedly).

-**mangos**- 2-3 chopped in 1/4" cubes (cut around the big seed with a sharp knife then use a spoon to peel the fruit away from the skin. This gives big pieces, which can be diced with a sharp knife- icky texture if you get it stringy, before removing skin you can slice crosswise like tic-tac-toe).

-**black olives**-pitted - one full can chopped up (food processor okay for this, but not the mango!)

-**corn**- frozen or canned (optional) 1 or 2 cups- make sure it isn't packed with butter!

-**jalapeño peppers** ~20 peppers- if they are very hot, wear gloves, I don't put the seeds in.

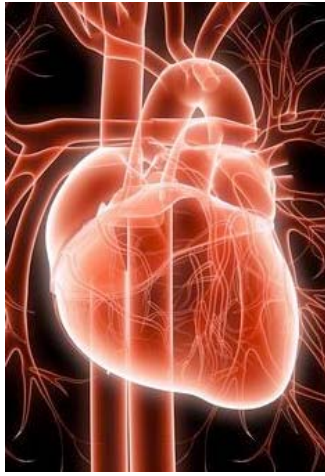
-**sweet peppers** - I like to add red and yellow for color and great nutrient value!

-**habanero or Serrano peppers** for a really hot salsa-caution! Gloves a must!

-the juice of 10 **fresh limes** (squeezing is hard work!)

-**spices**- no salt! Try cumin, pepper, I know many use garlic in their salsa, I don't though.

MIX WELL!!! Each jar should have liquid to the top, if a little shy on juice; add a little more vinegar or lime or lemon juice. This helps preserve it. To be more environmentally friendly you could use local peaches instead of mango. Other fruits just don't seem to blend for me. Can add or subtract items above. No mushrooms, though, they won't preserve well. And since I pack up quite a few jars when the garden produce is available in the fall, I leave the beans out. Every few weeks I cook beans and add to just 2 jars at a time. I think the beans contributed to early spoilage.



Most of the time I didn't heat-pack my salsa. But once I had quite a few jars spoil. That was in the middle of the summer. Now I am more careful to buy the ingredients only just before I make the salsa and to refrigerate everything before I start and in the intermediate steps. With garden produce I sometimes chop some things up and pack in cider vinegar prior to having other produce available. If a jar is leaking in the fridge it is fermenting and should be thrown out. It will smell funny if it is bad, rarely mold will form.

To heat-pack the salsa, heat the salsa to boiling, while in another pot have canning jars in boiling water. With the canning tongs take out a jar and ladle the salsa (which has been boiling hot for 15 minutes) into the jar, place the lid on, and return it to the pot with the other jars. The water with the jars full of hot salsa should boil for 15 minutes. Then take the jars out and as they cool you see the top of the lid "pop" inward. Still refrigerate the salsa for extra caution. If making large amounts, skip the beans for better storage.

My take on why this is a great diet! Humans are made to eat sporadically. Your liver stores nutrients for the time in-between meals. The American epidemic of fatty livers and fatty arteries is a consequence of your body trying to store the excess fat that your liver couldn't store. But most people eat so continuously and so well that the "storing up for a lean day" mode never ends!! The salsa diet is so rich in nutrients that your body suffers no ills while "eating away" the fat in your liver and the rest of your body.

No cheating is allowed on this diet or the weight will not come off. No two-beer days. Many people eat out in the course of travel and meetings. There's almost no way to stay on a diet if you have to eat out 4 days a week. Order a salad with the dressing on the side or better yet just straight vinegar on it. Balsamic or sherry wine vinegars are very healthy on salads, but in most places when you ask for that they have added oil to it (calling it a 'dressing') to make it more

American-familiar. Perhaps you could have a healthier and smaller appetizer brought out with your client's dinner. You will need to be more educated to pick healthy food off of menus. If you are committed to this diet it will be a source of interesting conversation and not a cross.

The astute observer will notice some fairly empty calories in the beer. Study after study has showed that one drink a day leads to longer life! If I eat sweets (empty calories) in a given day, however, I skip the beer. Presentation is important as well.

Get a nice glass for the beer. Have an aesthetically pleasing plate for the chips. Have a pretty bowl for the salsa. Take pleasure in your salsa. Savor your humble meal – eat slow- and more satisfying it will be

In the beginning it is normal to crave more protein in the middle of the week. So the beginning of the diet includes a mid-week protein "fix." Try 6 slices of ham with either cantaloupe or another melon. Nothing else! It will take about 45 minutes for you to feel like you ate something substantial. Or try beef jerky with some fruit. A crab substitute is a healthy way to get protein. Barbecued ribs from Tommy's are one of my favorites. Notice these are all low fat!!! Avoid extra carbohydrates found in pop or bread or fries you might be tempted to eat with the protein. This meat fix will eventually not be desired.

I started the diet in fall of 2002, and I am sad on the days I DON'T have my salsa. I am eating less meat, frequently skipping my meat fix; I eat a little more normally in social situations, and get more disgusted with myself when I gobble up office goodies, but do it less. I've tried skipping the chips since they are fried, but corn tortillas just annoy me after a while, and the flour ones are loaded with calories. Illness shouldn't change this diet but if you experience dizziness, excessive thirst or urination: see your doctor. Keep your weight loss reasonable and it will stay off. It is absolutely necessary to add



40 minutes of exercise daily when you find that your body is no longer losing weight. And my happiest end result of being on this diet is that I am now eating healthy fruits and vegetables every day without the pain of chopping salads, without the trauma of seeing the stuff mold in our veggie bin. And a garden in which we grow most of this! Even if I someday go off the diet, I think I will continue to crave the healthy food that is now my daily fare! †tsg 3-2011