

Eggplant Oat Burgers

Recipe by *Marla Danielson*

Yield: 15 burgers

LBClass 1

1 fresh small eggplant, peeled, diced (3 c.)

3 c. water

2 t. each: salt, Italian seasoning, sage

1 t. garlic powder

2 c. quick oats

1 c. finely chopped pecans (you can omit nuts and increase oats to 2 1/2 c.)

1 T. each: flax meal, almond flour

Cover diced eggplant with water, bring to boil, reduce heat slightly, cook about 5 minutes until tender. Drain over bowl or sink and gently mash out some of the excess water (don't mash too hard or much or the eggplant will go through!).

Bring to boil 3 c. water, salt and seasonings. Add oats, pecans, flax meal, almond flour and eggplant. Fry until golden brown. Enjoy!

Optional add-ins:

1/2 c. finely chopped fresh mushroom (cook with eggplant)

1/4 c. finely chopped fresh onion (cook with eggplant)

Did You Know? <https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/eggplant-benefits>

Eggplants, also known as aubergines, belong to the nightshade family of plants and are used in many different dishes around the world. Although often considered a vegetable, they're technically a fruit, as they grow from a flowering plant and contain seeds. There are many varieties that range in size and color. And while eggplants with a deep purple skin are most common, they can be red, green or even black. In addition to bringing a unique texture and mild flavor to recipes, eggplant brings a host of potential health benefits.

The Bottom Line

Eggplant is a high-fiber, low-calorie food that is rich in nutrients and comes with many potential health benefits. From reducing the risk of heart disease to helping with blood sugar control and weight loss, eggplants are a simple and delicious addition to any healthy diet. They're also incredibly versatile and fit well into many dishes.

Jo-Jo's

Recipe by *Tom Lewis*

The intent of our cooking class is to provide people with great recipes that have better health outcomes.

The typical "Jo-Jo" that you would purchase at any Minit Mart or deli are dipped in a batter, deep fried, and are loaded with way too much fat, calories, salt, and hidden sugars. With that in mind, this is a very simple recipe that you can do in your own oven to provide good, nutritious fries for your family.

For this recipe, we will be using Yukon Golds, or what are commonly known as yellow potatoes. They bake up quickly, and they have a nice buttery taste to them! You can actually use any other potatoes but we like this one the best!

- 1. Preheat your oven to 450 degrees. (We will use the middle rack)**
- 2. Lightly spray a deep, roasting pan or cookie sheet with a non-stick cooking spray and set aside.**
- 3. Wash and dry about 7-8 medium potatoes or 5-6 large potatoes (small potatoes work too! Just adjust) Remove any bruised, damaged or dirty spots with a paring knife. We do not peel these potatoes, we leave the skins on as this is where a lot of your nutrition is.**
- 4. Cut each potato in half, laying the flat side down on the cutting board, and then cut them in good-sized chunks as to what you think you would like your Jo-Jo's to look like. (Remember that Yukon Golds are a very soft potato, so you want to have a bigger, chunkier piece of potato which will allow them to stay firm and "golden" up more.) Set them aside in a large mixing bowl, one big enough to hold all of them or at least half of them for mixing.**
- 5. In a small bowl, add ½ t. onion powder, ½ t. garlic powder, 1 T. nutritional yeast, and 2 t. seasoned salt. (All of the above spices are optional as some people just like good old salt! So just adjust it to your taste.) Next comes the super part which makes these quick and easy to make with no frying and no mess!**

6. Pour 2-3 T. ONLY of sunflower oil (or canola or vegetable but sunflower is best!) evenly over potatoes. Mix quickly with your hands, making sure that every piece is COMPLETELY coated.

7. Sprinkle half of the dry spice mixture over the potatoes (or just the salt), giving them a quick mixing and quickly spread them evenly as possible into a roasting pan or cooking sheet. (Don't forget the 2nd half of the potatoes waiting, if your bowl wasn't big enough...adjust your technique.)

8. Sprinkle with the rest of the seasoning (or just salt) and place in oven and bake for at least 45 minutes. (Do not turn or mix them while baking. After 45 minutes, keep checking them until they get a nice "dark-golden" brown, giving you that Jo-Jo "crust" you are looking for without all the grease and calories!)

9. Serve them up immediately and enjoy!.....or turn the oven off, keeping the pan in the oven so that you can pull them in timing with your other items to be served...And BE CAREFUL!....because unlike the cold Jo-Jo's that you find in the deli, they will be super hot!

10. Serve with Ranch, Ketchup, or Fry Sauce!

They will keep nicely in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to more than a week.

To reheat, use the microwave, pop them in the oven until hot, or re-warm in a dry pan on the stovetop!

Now you can stop paying \$4.99 a lb. at the store and enjoy your own healthier version with friends and family!

Fry Sauce *Recipe by Tom Lewis*

1 can cannellini beans, drained, not rinsed (you may use any type of white bean)

1/2 t. onion powder

1/2 t. garlic powder

1/2 t. dill weed

1 t. Dijon mustard

1 T. apple cider vinegar

1/4 c. ketchup

2 T. chopped dill pickles

2 T. chopped sweet pickles (or sweet pickle relish)

Put all ingredients into a blender except for the dill pickles and the sweet pickles. Blend on low to medium speed, stopping the blender at times and scraping down the sides with a spatula.

You may have to add a small amount of water to get the consistency that you like, keeping in mind that you will add the pickles at the end which will make it more spreadable. So do not add more than a teaspoon of water at this time. You can always make it a little thinner but once you water it down too much, it's hard to get it back to the consistency that you would like. Remove the mixture from the blender by opening from the bottom and letting it free flow into a bowl, instead of trying to scrape it out with the spatula.

Then fold in all of the pickles, give it a good mix and then taste...and at this point you can add anything else that you would like to if you think it needs any salt or more spices. Adding a small amount of chopped, raw onion, if you are a fan, will also give it more zing!!

This makes a great fry sauce to dip French fries or tater tots, it's also great for sandwiches as a spread and really good on burgers!

Zesty Ranch Dip

Recipe by *Tom Lewis*

1 16 oz. package of silken tofu, drained (or firm tofu)

1/2 c. aquafaba

2 T. lemon juice

3 T. apple cider vinegar

1 T. Dijon mustard

2 t. oregano

1 1/2 t. garlic powder

1 1/2 t. onion powder

1 t. parsley

1 t. dill weed

1/2 t. seasoned salt

To start: Open 1 can of garbanzo beans. After shaking can thoroughly, drain the liquid into a bowl and microwave on high for 3 1/2 minutes (this is your aquafaba). Let this cool completely by putting in the refrigerator.

While waiting, set up your blender. Take the block of tofu and press between 2 salad plates to remove as much liquid as possible. In a small bowl, combine all the dry spices and set aside. After the aquafaba is cool, add it to the blender along with the lemon juice, apple cider vinegar and the mustard. Place the tofu in last. Blend on low to medium speed, stopping and scraping sides often. Add small amounts of the remaining aquafaba if needed, to adjust consistency.

After blending smooth, open blender from the bottom into a large bowl. Stir in the dry spices until thoroughly mixed. Place in refrigerator for at least 2 hours, then taste test and adjust spices as needed. Transfer into an airtight container and store in refrigerator.

Making this dip a day ahead before needing it will make it much more tasty. It is great for dipping fries, tots and as a salad topping or sandwich spread.

Fruit Smoothies

Recipe by *Marla Danielson*

1 banana

1 orange, peeled and quartered

1 apple, un-peeled, seeds and core removed and quartered

Fresh lemon juice (use ½ or whole small lemon or part of big lemon, use lemon squeezer to get out as much juice as possible!)

1 c. frozen fruit (use your favorite, I like Berry Cherry Medley)

½ - 1 c. fresh fruit (I like strawberries, blueberries, raspberries or pineapple)

1 T. flax meal

Plant-based milk (coconut, almond, soy, cashew, oat)

Put fruit in blender in order given (this helps to keep the harder fruit away from the blades so it's less likely to get chunks in your smoothie). Add the flax meal and pour in milk halfway below the level of fruit. Blend until smooth.

Optional add-ins: nuts, coconut, even greens (like spinach, kale) or carrots or celery to make a fruit-veggie smoothie.

Some Important Benefits of Drinking Healthy Smoothies!

<https://thatsmyjamok.com/23-important-benefits-of-drinking-healthy-smoothies/>

*Smoothies can help you lose excess body weight without skipping any meals. The fruits and berries that are used to prepare these drinks serve as excellent companions for keeping you healthy and feeling cooler on a hot summer morning. The enzymes present in several fruits help dissolve body fat and clear up your circulatory system.

*Health and nutrition experts worldwide suggest consuming liquid food for better digestion. Smoothies contain blended fruits and vegetables in liquid form that make it easier for the body to break them down.

*It is quite evident that certain fruits and vegetables increase brain power and boost memory. Mental alertness and concentration is greatly enhanced by ingredients like coconut that are rich in omega-3 fatty acids. Smoothies with these ingredients help the brain work faster.

Coconut Pecan Cookies

Recipe by *Marla Danielson*

Yield: 1 dozen+

1. $\frac{1}{4}$ c. finely chopped fresh soft dates
2. $\frac{1}{4}$ c. water
3. 1 T. flax meal
4. 2 T. vegan margarine, softened (10 seconds in microwave)
5. 2 T. applesauce
6. $\frac{1}{2}$ c. brown sugar
7. 1 t. vanilla
8. $\frac{3}{4}$ t. salt
9. $\frac{1}{2}$ t. coconut flavoring, scant
10. $\frac{1}{2}$ t. cornstarch (it helps the cookies keep their shape when baking)
11. $\frac{1}{4}$ t. cinnamon
12. $\frac{1}{4}$ c. blanched almond flour
13. $\frac{3}{4}$ c. white spelt flour (you can buy online from Amazon)
14. $\frac{1}{2}$ t. baking powder
15. $\frac{3}{4}$ c. flaked, sweetened coconut
16. $\frac{1}{4}$ c. finely chopped pecans

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Combine chopped dates and water and microwave for 30 seconds. Sprinkle flax meal on top and mash everything together with fork. Add to bowl with ingredients #4-11 and mix well. Stir in remaining ingredients and drop by teaspoonfuls onto parchment-lined cookie tray. Bake for 18 minutes.

Did You Know? <https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/nutrition-and-healthy-eating/expert-answers/flaxseed/faq-20058354>

Flaxseed's health benefits come from the fact that it's high in fiber and omega-3 fatty acids, as well as phytochemicals called lignans. One tablespoon (7 grams) of ground flaxseed contains 2 grams of polyunsaturated fatty acids (includes the omega 3s), 2 grams of dietary fiber and 37 calories.

Flaxseed is commonly used to improve digestive health or relieve constipation. Flaxseed may also help lower total blood cholesterol and low-density lipoprotein (LDL, or "bad") cholesterol levels, which may help reduce the risk of heart disease.

Most nutrition experts recommend ground over whole flaxseed because the ground form is easier to digest.