

ON TRACK WITH BARIX

Support to Keep You On Track With a Healthful Lifestyle

Creative Comfort—

Making food your fuel, not your friend

Some foods bring back warm memories, soothe our feelings, and boost our mood. Although the specific foods vary from person to person, most of us can think of at least a few comfort foods—ice cream, meatloaf, pizza, or chocolate perhaps. *What foods come to mind when you think of comfort foods?*

Many foods may have a psychological component from past associations with those foods. Eating foods that remind us of happy times, times we were comforted by another and foods we enjoyed with other people can bring back positive memories and feelings. For example, if you were given chicken noodle soup as a child when you were ill, that food may continue to comfort you as an adult.

There are physical components to the comforting effect of foods as well. Science has found that different types of food can impact our mood by affecting our brain chemistry. Serotonin and other like neurotransmitters have a calming influence on our mood. If we're feeling stressed, sad, angry or overwhelmed, we may begin to crave those foods that in the past have helped to make us feel better, looking for a little boost in our serotonin.

Finding healthy, balanced ways to comfort ourselves is an important tool to have in our toolbox of post-bariatric surgery strategies. Using this tool when we have smaller needs for comfort will

help us prepare for those times when life becomes overwhelming.

Here are some better ways to find comfort, keep serotonin levels up, and boost your mood and energy.

- **Eat six small protein-rich meals** throughout the day. Components in many protein-rich foods including milk, turkey, fish and seafood, eggs, seeds, soy and nuts help to boost serotonin production.
- **Avoid added sugar** which quickly raises blood sugar levels followed by a big drop. Instead fuel with healthy carbohydrates combined with protein-rich foods for a steady blood sugar level to keep serotonin levels on an even keel.
- **Don't cut the fat** content of your diet too far. Small amounts of nuts, seeds, and unsaturated oils are important for good health and happy moods.
- **Exercise regularly.** This helps fuel the feel-good hormones and blasts the effects of stress.
- **Get out in the sun** or use a SAD light on dreary days. Research has found a clear association between being exposed to bright light and serotonin levels.
- **Be positive.** Facing daily life with a positive outlook can boost serotonin.
- **Gather a friend or family member** to play a favorite game. You'll benefit from the memory association and interaction.
- **Find new, non-food ways** to provide comfort. Soaking in a warm tub, talking to a friend, drinking a soothing cup of tea or sugar-free hot cocoa, watching a favorite movie, re-reading a beloved book, snuggling with a pet, deep breathing, meditation, or yoga.
- **Find healthy ways** to make your favorite comfort food.



FOOD is my **FUEL**,
not my comfort, my reward
or my motivation.

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We'd love to hear from you!

QUESTIONS ABOUT FINANCING YOUR SURGERY?

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Recipes

French Toast Bake

6 whole wheat hamburger buns
2 tablespoons sugar sub
8 oz package 1/3 less-fat cream cheese
3 medium very ripe bananas, sliced
4 egg whites
2 eggs
1/2 cup sugar-free maple syrup
1 tsp cinnamon
2 cups skim milk
1 tsp banana or vanilla extract

Cut buns into 1-inch cubes. Coat a 13"X9" casserole dish with non-stick cooking spray and place half of cubes into it.

In a large bowl, beat cream cheese and sugar sub until well mixed. Drop the cream cheese mixture evenly on top of the cubes. Top with the remaining cubed hamburger buns. Layer with banana slices.

In a large bowl, add eggs and egg whites and whisk. Add in almond milk, maple syrup, cinnamon and banana or vanilla extract. Whisk together until well mixed; pour over bananas. Cover with foil and refrigerate for 7-8 hours or overnight.

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. Move the casserole dish to room temperature 15-20 minutes before baking. Bake covered for 12 minutes, rotate the casserole dish in the oven and bake for an additional 12 minutes. Uncover and bake for 12 minutes, rotate the casserole dish in the oven and bake for 12 minutes more. Casserole is done when a knife inserted in the center comes out clean. Makes 8 servings.

Nutrition information per serving:
281 calories, 13 grams protein, 9 grams fat, 39 grams carbohydrate, 397 mg sodium.



Hot Cocoa

During colder months, the warm soothing combination of protein, carbohydrates and chocolate can really hit the spot. Using **Fairlife milk** will add an extra 5 grams of protein.

1 cup skim milk
1 package no-added-sugar hot cocoa mix
1 tablespoon Cool Whip

Heat milk. In a large mug, slowly whisk in the hot cocoa mix. Top with a dollop of Cool Whip and enjoy. Makes 1 serving.

Nutrition information per serving:
157 calories, 10 grams protein, 2 grams fat, 24 mg carbohydrate, 288 mg sodium.

Get Rewarded!

*This month, you could earn a **SPECIAL GIFT** for your "It Worked For Me" tips or recipes! Just submit as many recipes and "It Worked For Me" tips as you like. The most original and creative will be awarded a special gift from our online store. Include your name and contact info with your entry — make sure your recipes follow Barix nutritional guidelines. **Tips must be submitted by February 28, 2017.** Please send comments, ideas, recipes and "It Worked For Me" tips to Deb Hart, RD, LD at dhart@foresthealth.com.*

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Recipes

Meatloaf

- 1/2 medium white onion, finely chopped
- 1 green bell pepper, finely chopped
- 1 large carrot, grated
- 1 lb extra-lean ground sirloin or turkey breast
- 1 cup tomato sauce
- 1/2 cup uncooked rolled oats
- 2 tsp dried oregano
- 1/2 tsp black pepper
- 2 egg whites
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- splash of Worcestershire sauce
- cooking spray

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Mix all ingredients in a large bowl. Spray a loaf pan with cooking spray and form meatloaf in pan. Bake for 60 minutes. Makes 6 servings.

NUTRITION INFORMATION PER

SERVING: 188 calories, 25 grams protein, 6 grams fat, 10 grams carbohydrate, 305 mg sodium.

Chili Cheese Dip

- 1 can Hormel® Turkey Chili, 99% fat free
- 4 oz cheddar cheese, shredded
- Spread cream cheese on the bottom of a 1-quart glass casserole. Top with chili.

Sprinkle shredded cheddar on top. Bake at 350 degrees Fahrenheit until cheese is bubbly and melted. Serve with baked tortilla chips. Makes 12 servings.

NUTRITION INFORMATION PER

SERVING: 100 calories; 11 grams protein; 4 grams fat; 5 grams carbohydrate; 366 mg sodium.



Crust Free Quiche

- 1 Tbsp olive oil
- 1/2 of a yellow onion, diced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 cup button mushrooms, sliced
- 3 eggs
- 2 egg whites
- 1 1/2 cups skim milk
- 3/4 cup grated Parmesan or mozzarella cheese
- Pinch of nutmeg
- 2 Tbsp flour
- 1 box frozen spinach, fully thawed; squeezed and drained of excess water
- 1/4 tsp paprika

Preheat oven to 400°F. Generously spray a pie dish with nonstick spray. Add the olive oil and diced onion to a skillet and cook on medium-high heat until translucent, 3 to 5 minutes. Reduce the heat to medium, add the garlic and mushrooms; remove from heat.

In a blender, combine the eggs, egg whites, milk, 1/2 cup of cheese, nutmeg, flour, 1/4 tsp sea salt, 1/4 tsp pepper and spinach. Pulse to mix until spinach is evenly chopped. Add the egg mixture to the pie dish and stir in the mushroom and onion mixture. Top with remaining 1/4 cup grated cheese and the paprika, and bake for 40 minutes until fully set. Makes 6 servings.

NUTRITION FACTS PER SERVING:

145 calories, 12 grams protein, 7 grams fat, 9 grams carbohydrate, 387 mg sodium.

EATING WELL
is a form of self-respect.

Pumpkin Soup

- 1 1/2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 cup chopped onion
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 3 cups solid-pack pumpkin, canned
- 2 cups low-salt vegetable broth
- 2 teaspoons sugar sub of choice
- 1/2 teaspoon ground allspice
- 1/2 teaspoon dried crushed red pepper
- 1 1/2 cups unsweetened coconut milk, divided
- Salt and pepper optional
- Pepitas, for garnish, optional

Heat the oil in a large pot over medium heat. Add the onion and garlic. Sauté until for 10 minutes. Add pumpkin, broth, sugar sub, allspice, and crushed red pepper. Bring to a boil. Reduce the heat; cover and simmer for 30 minutes. Let cool.

Using a blender, puree the soup until smooth. You'll need to do this in batches.

Return the pureed soup to the pot and heat to a simmer. Thin with coconut milk to desired consistency. Season with salt and pepper if desired. Ladle soup into bowls and garnish with pepita seeds, and teaspoon of coconut milk drizzled on top.

Makes 7 servings.

NUTRITION INFORMATION PER

SERVING: 85 calories, 2 grams protein, 4 grams fat, 11 grams carbohydrate, 18 mg sodium.

Recipes

Chicken Noodle Soup

- 1 rotisserie chicken, meat only
- 1 large onion, finely chopped
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 5 carrots, peeled and sliced
- 3 stalks celery, diced
- 2 T. unsalted butter
- 8 c. reduced--sodium chicken broth
- 1/3 c. chopped fresh parsley
- 1/4 tsp. pepper

Melt butter over medium heat in a large soup pot. Add onion and garlic and sauté for 2 minutes until softened. Add carrot and celery; cook, stirring frequently, for 5 minutes until softened.

Add rotisserie chicken, chicken broth, parsley, salt, and pepper. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat, cover, and simmer for 2 hours. Makes 8 servings.

NUTRITION INFORMATION PER SERVING: 210 calories, 20 grams protein, 11 grams fat, 9 grams carbohydrate, 323 mg sodium.



Cheesy Potato Wedges

- 1 24-ounce package frozen potato wedges with the skins on
- 2 Tbsp. vegetable oil
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tsp. paprika
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- nonstick cooking spray
- 1 cup cheddar cheese, shredded
- 2/3 cup croutons, crushed
- 1/2 cup sour cream, optional

Preheat oven according to package directions for potato wedges. Combine vegetable oil, garlic, paprika and salt. Put into a zip-lock plastic bag and add potato wedges. Seal bag and shake to coat potatoes. Spray a large cookie sheet with nonstick spray and place a single layer of potato wedges on it. Bake potato wedges according to package directions, turning once.

In another small bowl, combine crushed croutons and shredded cheese. Sprinkle over the potatoes for the last three minutes of cooking. Transfer potatoes with a spatula onto a large plate for serving, keeping them in a single layer. Serve with sour cream if desired. Makes 8 servings.

NUTRITION INFORMATION PER SERVING: 165 calories, 1 gram protein, 8 grams fat, 19 grams carbohydrate, 15 mg sodium.

Peanut Butter Cookies

Submitted by Tina McDermott

- 1 cup peanut butter (low-sugar or fresh-ground)
- 1 cup Splenda granules (not baking blend)
- 1 egg

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Mix all ingredients together. Roll into balls and push down with a fork. Bake 8-10 minutes or until the desired crispness. Makes 12 servings.

NUTRITION INFORMATION PER SERVING: 126 calories, 5 grams protein, 11 grams fat, 5 grams carbohydrate, 49 mg sodium.

“Fried” Chicken

- 1# boneless, skinless chicken breasts
- 1/2 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 4 cups cornflakes
- 2/3 cup reduced-fat buttermilk
- 2 tablespoons Dijon mustard
- 1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 1 1/2 teaspoons paprika
- 3/4 teaspoon ground sage

Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Place a rack in a roasting pan or on a baking sheet.

Rinse the chicken in cold water; pat dry. In a wide bowl season the flour with 1/4 teaspoon salt and 1/4 teaspoon pepper. Dredge each chicken piece through the flour so it's fully coated, tap against the bowl to shake off excess flour and set aside. Discard the flour.

Crush the cornflakes by placing them in a big resealable plastic bag and running over the flakes with a rolling pin. Place crushed flakes into a wide bowl.

In a large bowl, mix together buttermilk, mustard, cayenne pepper, paprika and sage. Dip each floured chicken breast in the buttermilk mixture and then roll in the cornflake crumbs.

Arrange the chicken on the rack and place in the hot oven. Cook for 15 to 20 minutes, lower the heat to 375 degrees and cook for another 25 to 30 minutes, until cooked through and crispy. The juices should run clear when the meat is pierced with a knife.

Makes 6 servings.

NUTRITION INFORMATION PER SERVING: 233 calories, 25 grams protein, 3 grams fat, 25 grams carbohydrate, 466 mg sodium.