

3 tips for a tastier, lower-fat smoothie

Written by Special to the NNPA from The Chicago Defender
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There is a huge difference between a fruit smoothie you blend up at home and the concoctions you can get at your local retail shop. Yes, smoothies are loaded with fruit, and fruit is healthy. They can also be a wonderful, incredible, delicious component of a healthy diet, containing other "good for you" ingredients and nutrients that will leave you feeling satisfied.

However, a typical smoothie can also be packed with juice, yogurt, and sometimes, even sorbet. When you blend these ingredients together with the natural sugars found in fruit, you have yourself one sugary drink. Not to mention, hidden calories.

Keep Calories Low

To keep calories low, stick to fruit, juices and nonfat dairy products. Beware when you see chocolate, heavy syrup, premium ice cream, peanut butter or whole milk on the ingredient list. Other danger flags are coconut, honey, coconut cream, fruit nectar, and protein powder. These are destined to go straight to your waistline, without passing your digestive tract.

You can increase your vitamin and mineral value by choosing a smoothie with honeydew melon, or cantaloupe, any kind of berries, kiwis, bananas, low fat yogurt or milk and orange or other fruit juices. In addition, choose whole fruit whenever possible, to increase the fiber content and increase satisfaction by giving a feeling of fullness.

One thing to keep in mind is that not every smoothie is created equally. Some are dairy free while others are packed with it. Therefore, the calorie count and nutritional content of each smoothie will differ. Also, size does matter when it comes to a smoothie!

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