

Frittata –by Paula Hendricks, Nutrition Consultant

A brief history: The egg, a wholesome, inexpensive and protein-rich food, has received a bad reputation over the last 20+ years because of its fat and cholesterol content. Doctors and other “experts” have recommended limiting and often banishing the egg from the American diet because of the presumption that saturated fat (as found in the egg) increased cholesterol levels and in turn increased ones risk for cardiac disease.

What replaced the egg for breakfast? Bagels, cereals, sugar-packed coffee drinks, granola bars, etc. – basically high carbohydrate, refined flour and sugar products. What has happened to American’s cholesterol levels and overall body size since limiting the egg from the diet? There has been an increase in cholesterol levels, in diabetes, and a continued increase in body size in both children and adults. Is the egg one of the culprits? Most likely not. As a matter of fact, the egg has many beneficial nutrients including high quality branched chain amino acid proteins and carotenoids such as lutein and choline.

In a recent 2011 Journal of Nutrition study looking at the association between branched chain amino acids (BCAAs) intake and the risk of overweight/obesity in over 4000 Asian and Western adults, the study showed that a low dietary intake of BCAAs protein (found in animal protein, including eggs) correlated with a prevalence of overweight/obesity in otherwise healthy middle aged adults. (LQ Qin t al., Journal of Nutrition, 2011,141:249-254)

Over the years, we have seen that weight loss resulting from loss of lean body muscle because of poor protein intake generally leads to weight regain because our bodies have become deficient in burning stored fat adequately. *Food for thought* - long-term success with weight management requires improving body composition through adequate animal protein intake, which includes BCAAs, and exercise which will help increase muscle mass and reduce stored fat.

We promote high quality optimum protein, fat and carbohydrate intake for optimum health and we recommend the egg be part of your diet for long-term weight management success.

Let’s get crackin’. We love breakfast for dinner. In fact, our family has frittatas for dinner at least once a week. It is a quick go-to meal that can be whipped up with just a few ingredients from the fridge and pantry. I have prepared four different styles of frittatas to give you some creative ideas on how to use the egg. Enjoy these variations on any Key Diet protocol. Each frittata has approximately 30 grams of protein.



Mexican Frittata Ingredients: 2 whole eggs + 2 egg whites, 1/4 fresh salsa, 1/4 cup diced green chilies, 1 tsp. olive oil, dash of dried oregano, 2 T. chopped cooked bacon, salt and pepper, 1 slice avocado, fresh chopped cilantro and 1/4 cup Kraft reduced fat cheddar cheese. **Instructions:** In a mixing bowl, put eggs, salsa, chilies, oregano and salt and pepper. Mix. In an 8-10 sauté pan, heat the olive oil; add the egg mixture and spread evenly over the entire pan. Cover and simmer until egg is almost cooked. Add the bacon, chopped cilantro and cheese to top. Continue to cook uncovered until cheese is melted. Remove to a plate and garnish with sliced avocado or a dollop of sour cream.

Italian Frittata Ingredients: 2 whole eggs + 2 egg whites, 1 cup tomato sauce, 2 T. diced onions, 1 minced garlic clove, 1 tsp. olive oil, 2 T. fresh chopped basil, 2 T. pancetta, prosciutto or salami strips, salt and pepper, 1/4 tsp. Italian seasoning (or Made in Napa Valley Meritage seasoning) and 1/4 cup Kraft reduced fat Italian cheese. **Instructions:** In an 8-10" sauté pan, heat the oil; add the onion and cook 2-3 minutes. Add the minced garlic and fresh chopped basil; stir and cook for another minute. Add the tomato sauce, salt and pepper, pancetta and Italian seasoning. Simmer for 2-3 minutes. Crack all the eggs in a separate bowl and pour carefully into the tomato mixture. Add the pancetta. Cover the pan and let simmer until egg whites have set. Add the cheese and cook uncovered until it melts. Remove egg mixture into a bowl and garnish with fresh basil and fresh Parmesan cheese.



English Frittata Ingredients: 2 whole eggs + 2 egg whites, 1 7-oz can chopped mushrooms, 1 T. capers, 2 T. chopped onion, 1 tsp. olive oil, 2 T. chopped cooked bacon, butter, salt and pepper, fresh parsley and 1/4 cup Kraft reduced fat sharp cheddar cheese. **Instructions:** In a bowl, whip together eggs; add mushrooms, capers and salt and pepper. Set aside. In an 8-10" sauté pan, heat the oil; add the onion and cook for 2-3 minutes. Add the egg mixture and bacon; cover and simmer until frittata is almost set. Add cheese and parsley; cook until cheese melts. Remove frittata to a plate and garnish with fresh parsley or an orange slice.

Mediterranean Frittata Ingredients: 2 whole eggs + 2 egg whites, 1 tsp. olive oil, 1-2 T. fresh basil, 2 T. chopped onion, 1/4 cup chopped fresh spinach or Arugula, 2 T. pancetta, prosciutto or salami strips, salt and pepper and 1/4 cup goat cheese. **Instructions:** In a bowl, mix the eggs, salami, salt and pepper. Set aside. In an 8-10" sauté pan, heat the oil and add the onion and cook for 2-3 minutes. Add the Arugula and sauté for another 30 seconds. Add the egg mixture; cover and simmer until egg is almost set. Add the cheese, remove pan from heat and let sit uncovered for another minute. Remove egg to a plate and garnish with fresh Arugula or basil.

