

Introduction and Tips from Enid Kassner

I enjoy eating! So when I undertake the fasting mimicking diet (FMD) I put special effort into preparing tasty, satisfying meals that don't make me feel deprived. But I understand that not everyone shares my zest for cooking or has the time for lots of food shopping and vegetable chopping. While some readers are enjoying the recipes we have developed, others find them too burdensome.

But the 5-day diet, as laid out here, consists of only 11 meals (3 the first day; 2 on each of the following 4 days) and I have some suggestions for minimizing the effort for those who have little time for or interest in food preparation. A few of the meals require almost no effort:

- The breakfast cereal of cooked oats with coconut milk, berries, and nuts can be prepared in 5 minutes in the microwave (not even a pot to clean – but do use a large bowl, as the oats bubble up when cooked). I enjoy this breakfast even when not following the FMD and find that it keeps me full for hours.
- The salad with apple, almonds and rice cakes also can be prepared in minutes – especially if you have access to salad greens that are already washed. And if you want to take this salad to your workplace for lunch, you can package it in a large plastic container with the dressing on the bottom so the greens don't wilt. When it's time to eat, just shake it up to distribute the dressing and eat it right out of the container.

If you don't mind eating the same dish for several meals, you certainly can double, triple, or even quadruple any recipe and then divide it into equal portions, which can be reheated on subsequent days. This is a nice practice that I employ often, as it helps me maintain appropriate portion control, even when I'm not on the FMD. But if you like more variety, here is another suggestion:

The curried butternut squash recipe could be quadrupled or even quintupled, with a different vegetable added for 4 or 5 meals. For example, the recipe calls for 6 ounces of broccoli, which can be steamed or microwaved separately and then added to a portion of the base recipe. For other meals you could use 7 ounces of green beans, 6 ounces of okra, 8 ounces of cauliflower, or 12 ounces of zucchini. If you tire of the ½ ounce of cashews, you could substitute an ounce of tofu and add an extra teaspoon of coconut oil to the curry. Or, let's say you prefer carrots to butternut squash. You could substitute 7 ounces of carrots for the 8 ounces of squash, or use a combination of the two if you are preparing several servings.

With these substitutions the exact proportions will vary slightly from the FMD formula, which we have adhered to as closely as possible in the posted recipes. But a small variance is probably better than giving up and not trying the diet at all.

A final suggestion: recruit a friend to try the diet with you and share dinner preparation. Each of you could make a double portion to share and only have to cook every-other night. And, you'd have a partner to support your effort to stay fit and healthy!

We welcome your continued comments and interest in the FMD.