

Living well: Optimizing your nutrition & detoxifying your kitchen
Session II: Power Beverages

Rachel Beller, MS, RDN (00:00):

What we drink also counts when it comes to our daily intake and incorporating cancer-fighting properties and anti-inflammatory properties. I'm going to introduce a few of what I call some of my a.m. power beverages, a de-bloat, a mushroom latte, a golden matcha latte, and a smoothie. This is a favorite among my masterclass participants and my patients. This is like our a.m. riser beverage. It's very soothing to drink in the morning, first thing, and it contains fresh turmeric; fresh ginger root; fennel, which helps relieve gas and supports our GI system; parsley, dandelion, both have a mild diuretic effect. So really great de-bloat-me tonic. I also incorporate one of my spice blends. It's called Morning Boost, and it has clove, as I mentioned, ranked number one food in terms of antioxidant content; ginger;

Rachel Beller, MS, RDN (01:07):

it has nutmeg; all spice; Ceylon cinnamon, known as true cinnamon — all contain anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties. Think pumpkin pie, kind of — a delicious type of blend. And it works really well in the beverage. This is the recipe for this particular beverage. You're going to throw everything into a pot. You're going to simmer for 15 minutes, and you've got yourself a nice batch. Mushroom powder latte and tea. It is really popular right now. High mushroom intake has been associated with breast cancer risk reduction. It's rich particularly in aromatase inhibitors, which may reduce the activity of an enzyme that produces estrogen, as well as in beta-glucans that we've been talking about, which is that special prebiotic fiber that shows, promise when it comes to supporting our immunity. And one thing I do want to mention, as these mushroom powders are so popular: I don't want you to forget the value of fresh mushrooms.

Rachel Beller, MS, RDN (02:17):

I recommend for my patients to phase in fresh mushrooms, and incorporate them into their cooking. All mushrooms count, by the way — even the white ones. And so, eat it fresh. And then what I also love recommending is those dehydrated mushrooms. "They're a power pantry — essential dehydrated mushrooms. You always have 'them around. And what I like to do is I refer to it as this spaghetti method prep: you boil a pot of water, keep it in there for 30 minutes as opposed to the eight with pasta. And then you just cook it up and flavor it with spices and such. And it's super, super great. I really want to mention that because we always go for that little shortcut, and the mushroom powder that we're buying is really for the more exotic kind mushrooms that are not always available fresh.

Rachel Beller, MS, RDN (03:17):

Next up is a golden matcha latte. I love this great synergy with this particular latte. It contains matcha, which is a high-grade green tea, finely ground green tea powder. It has cacao, which is packed with protective polyphenols; turmeric anti-inflammatory properties; and Ceylon cinnamon, with additional anti-inflammatory effects and that potentially may help regulate our blood sugars. So, I was talking about synergy and spice synergy. So, the cacao and turmeric work in sync in this beverage. Both cacao and turmeric have anti-cancer properties, but the quercetin in cacao — and this goes back to that question about black pepper and turmeric — enhances curcumin absorption, and cacao and matcha actually have a synergistic effect in that cacao enhances the absorption of EGCG, which is the main antioxidant found in green tea. So,

you've got these ingredients. To make this latte, you're just simply taking a teaspoon of a Golden Breakfast blend, some matcha powder, and plant-based milk.

Rachel Beller, MS, RDN (04:30):

And I use a hand frother for that. Really, really easy takes three seconds. And you've got yourself this synergistic effect and everything in one. And, of course, you can make your own blend of the Golden Breakfast blend and do it that way. A green power smoothie. I love incorporating a smoothie into this as well. This smoothie is powered up with watercress and/or broccoli sprouts. First, I'll talk about watercress and its benefits. The CDC ranked it No. 1 nutrient-dense among all vegetables, which is great. You can find it in the produce section. And it's also rich in indole-3-carbinol, which has been shown to potentially help fight breast cancer by enhancing our body's natural detoxification process. Broccoli sprouts — love broccoli sprouts. It's basically three- to five-day-old broccoli — you could see it right here — and it contains a lot more sulforaphane than mature broccoli.

Rachel Beller, MS, RDN (05:41):

Both are great. And sulforaphane, the active compound in broccoli, has been shown to potentially inhibit breast cancer cell growth. So, the magic here, what I love about this and how it fits into a smoothie, is that two tablespoons of broccoli sprouts has as much sulforaphane as two pounds of mature broccoli, both are amazing. But again, if you're just going to add that to a smoothie, a tablespoon even into your green smoothie, it has the sulforaphane equivalent of a pound of mature broccoli. Really small, lots of power. So, for this smoothie in particular, you start with a very basic, basic smoothie. You're putting in plant-based milk, a frozen greenish banana, some chia seed or flax or another booster. And then you will power it up with a little bit of watercress or broccoli sprout. It could get pretty bitter if you're going to put a whole bunch in there, but think about it — a little bit goes such a long way.

Rachel Beller, MS, RDN (06:44):

And then after you blend it, you can top it up. I like using whole hemp seeds because they're super, super crunchy and delicious. Black cumin. I've got my cup right here that I'm enjoying. I love it. These are GI support power beverages. I'm just going to share it two with you guys tonight. Black cumin has become super popular. They're these black seeds, unlike the spice, black seeds, and they're rich in, thymoquinone, which is a compound that can help stimulate digestion. So that's great for GI support, and it has a lot of other potential benefits, as well. So how do you make a tea? I basically take a couple of teaspoons of the seeds, three cups of water, and basically boil that, simmer that for a few minutes, and then I strain it and I've got myself a tea.

Rachel Beller, MS, RDN (07:50):

If you want to add a splash of a plant-based milk, you could. I generally just drink it as a tea as is, and I love it. I included this get moving flax gel because it is so popular with my patients. I couldn't help but include it here. So basically, this is like a little constipation hack. What you would do is take some golden flax seeds and three cups of water. And I actually love integrating my Cinnapeel Spicer blend. It's basically Ceylon cinnamon, ginger, and granulated orange peel. And I just boil that, simmer for 15 minutes. You can feel like it becomes gel-like. You will strain it, and then you can keep the seeds.

Rachel Beller, MS, RDN (08:48):

'They become very chewy, so you don't have to throw them out, but the way you would use this is by adding about a quarter of a cup into a smoothie. I add it sometimes into my tea. It's great, and it's got a lot of different benefits that you're getting from the flaxseed. So, that's been a great one. All right, let's talk about some p.m. beverages, bedtime beverages. I'm going to introduce to you a barley grass latte, and a bedtime recovery latte. We'll start with the barley grass latte. What makes this drink so special is that the barley grass has GABA, 'a neurotransmitter' that will relax you and help you with sleep and anxiety. And I actually love the taste. It's very simple to make it also contains beta-glucans, which support our immunity. It's basically young barley grass that's been made into a powder. One teaspoon of barley grass, I like to put a little bit of morning boost blend in there for flavor and anti-inflammatory properties. A cup of plant-based milk, and you've got yourself a great relaxing latte. It's a lot of fun. It reminds me a little bit of matcha, but it's different. It's' great.

Rachel Beller, MS, RDN (10:12):

If you're not in the mood for a latte, you can make a bedtime recovery tea. This one is also a lot of fun. It utilizes tart cherry juice, which you could find anywhere Trader Joe's has it. Turmeric, ginger have anti-inflammatory properties. Ceylon cinnamon is very, very soothing, and chamomile tea is great before bed. It has a great smell. So I love making this, in the evening, and here's how you'd make it. You'd basically put everything in a saucepan: chamomile, tea, turmeric, ginger, cinnamon, the juice and water. Optionally, you can sweeten it a tiny bit, and it is great. I just make a few. I don't make it necessarily every night. You can reheat it. You can make a batch for about three days or so.

Rachel Beller, MS, RDN (11:08):

And just for fun, a pomegranate mocktail, I love this one. Super simple. A little bit of pomegranate juice, a little bit of lime, some mint leave, some soda water. It's a lot of fun. It's very refreshing, especially during summertime, and pomegranate seeds are rich in something called puniceic acid, which research suggests may have cancer-protective properties. But it's fun. We all need a little bit of a mocktail. And I thought I would introduce that. So, that's the power beverage section, and I don't want you to feel like you need to make all of these or include all of these or try all of them. Some of them have ingredients that may appeal to you. Some may may not. But either way, keep it simple. And I usually say, try to include two or three power beverages a day, but again, don't spend a lot of time on it. Think about what may work for you, and keep it simple. I just wanted to inspire you.

Keneene Lewis, LBBC (12:13):

A couple of people are inquiring about mushroom supplements interfering with medications and treatments. They were told different things about mushrooms. Can you speak on that a little bit?

Rachel Beller, MS, RDN (12:25):

I would go food first, to be honest, especially during treatment. I would definitely go food first, and understand the difference between food and supplements. They're completely different. And that's why I kind of stressed to not forget about our friends the fresh mushrooms and the dried mushrooms, that are actually just mushrooms, dehydrated.

Keneene Lewis, LBBC (12:52):

And I want to say before I continue with the questions that we may run a little bit over. We will send you information so that you can get the recipes, as Rachel mentioned earlier. Rachel, how do you compare matcha powder with 'freshly brewed green tea, in terms of EGCG?

Rachel Beller, MS, RDN (13:15):

A' teaspoon of matcha is equivalent to about 10 cups of green tea that you get from a regular tea bag. So, the difference is when you're ingesting matcha, you're ingesting the whole leaf that's been ground up the whole thing, whereas when you're making a cup of tea from the leaves, the leaves are just sweating into the water and then you're throwing away the leaves. So, you're getting a little bit. And most of the research studies showed the real benefit was with individuals who drink about nine to 10 cups of green tea a day, which is a lot. It's not something that's typical, at least not among my patient population. So, MAA is like a shortcut to make that happen in that it's just the whole leaf. It's not even an isolated compound. It's just the whole leaf, which is great and very well researched. I love matcha.

Janine Guglielmino, LBBC (14:21):

Would you recommend a good matcha powder brand?

Rachel Beller, MS, RDN (14:25):

There are a lot out there. What I would recommend is to look for a ceremonial grade, if you can, and organic, if you can, whenever possible. What I wouldn't recommend is going into the coffee shop and getting like a matcha latte, not only because you're going to have about seven to 10 teaspoons of added sugar, I would argue for the cost of three of those, you could probably make 25 cups of high-grade organic premium matcha. So, from a cost-effective point, I mean, those lattes cost, I think it's close to \$9, just for one! And the ingredients are not going to be premium, and you're going to get Grade C; they're not buying premium matcha to make that. They're buying what we call in the nutrition space industrial MAA

Janine Guglielmino, LBBC (15:25):

Do you recommend avoiding all dairy, and is yogurt better than milk?

Rachel Beller, MS, RDN (15:32):

Ooh, that's a big question. I generally do not recommend dairy to my patients. Hormones is one thing: organic may not have added hormones, but animal proteins and animal products do contain naturally occurring hormones. So, we're asking about, let's say soy and the plant hormones versus the actual, I would definitely go for the plant based and their protective value. And there's an unknown. The research is not conclusive, whether animal-based proteins or dairy in particular increases breast cancer risk. But from my side of it, I don't need for it to be, uber conclusive. It's just more of something that professionally, I feel like it's better. There are so many other options out there. I would just bypass it. But it's not conclusive. I'm not going to say, "Oh, the literature says avoid dairy because it, you know, can increase the risk of cancer." I'm not going to say that, but professionally I would, just forgo it for that sake and just saying, "No, it's not necessary. I don't need it."

Keneene Lewis, LBBC (16:53):

I'm sorry, go ahead.

Rachel Beller, MS, RDN (16:54):

I'd rather go without if I can. And there are so many options. There are plant-based yogurts if one wants, and there are so many milks out there, and there are so many options out there. But again, it's what you do most of the time, not sometimes. So, if you're craving a little something — a pizza or whatever it is — we look at the overall, over time. I hope that I inspired

many of you to integrate some of these nutritional strategies into your lives. And again, I can't stress enough, starting slow, integrating things, being mindful, and feeling empowered. And for many patients who come to me after they've completed their treatment, or while they're in active treatment for life, this is something that they feel like they can control. They feel empowered by being proactive.

Rachel Beller, MS, RDN (18:00):

But one thing I want to stress is to never operate from a place of fear. You know, we want to eat a certain way to help support how we feel today and then also perhaps to help us with our long-term health. Those are really, really important. And many times, patients come to me from a place of fear, like they open the fridge, and they tell me, "I'm just so scared to eat." And I kind of bring them into that safe space. Because food can be so nurturing, and it's really about changing how we think about what we choose to put in our body in a way that we feel good about it. I went through that personally, when it came to my own struggles with food, and it's very liberating. So I did want to stress that because of nutrition, it's like, "What should I do? What should I not do?" And there's a way to approach it. And that's why I developed the Beller Nutrition Method, to have that safe space for, in women to feel empowered with their journey. So, I just wanted to say that. Little bits, and don't feel like you have to do everything or spend so much money on everything. There's definitely a lot to do.