

ACCENT/TASTE EDITOR
EILEEN FISCHER
330-6481
efischer@ctpost.com

taste Accent

B
CONNECTICUT POST
WEDNESDAY
JUNE 21, 2006

Packing lunch saves money, calories

I was standing in line outside the Stage Delicatessen waiting for my turn to audition for a spot in the Toyota Comedy Festival. I was getting so nervous waiting that I



**THE WEIGH
IT IS**
SHERYL WOLFF
KAYNE

felt more like crying than laughing. To divert my attention, I watched this woman making her way through the line toward me. "Tell me your favorite lunch joke and I'll give you \$5," she said. "My husband is so incommunicado. At home he's too tired from work, he won't talk to me. When I call him at work, he's always out to lunch." She handed me \$5. I didn't get a spot in the Festival, but it paid for my lunch.

I've been thinking a lot about lunch lately. I was watching an "Oprah" show about the Debt Diet, a series of programs with experts helping couples reduce their debt.

"That's fantastic that you'll save over \$2,500 in one year by packing your lunch instead of eating out, and an additional \$750 by brewing your own morning coffee instead of buying it," Oprah said after speaking to a woman participant.

"Not only that," said the woman, "since we started packing our lunches, we've both lost weight." That couple not only decreased their debt, they decreased their caloric intake.

My workdays vary widely. Some days I work at home and others I'm out from morning 'til night. I was running into problems of getting really hungry when I was out, between appointments, buying something quick, and eating the wrong things. So, I started packing my own food according to my schedule, sometimes breakfast, lunch and dinner.

I used all kinds of makeshift containers because I didn't want to create more waste with plastic or paper bags. Then I found fit & fresh containers and knew packing up was my calling in life.

These clever containers have built-in freezer packs. For early meetings, I use the chilled shaker for my fruit yogurt smoothie. There's a freezer cylinder that looks kind of like a blue popsicle that fits right in the center of the drink. There's a compartment on the bottom for the protein shake powder, which I don't use, so I keep my chopped walnuts and almonds in there.

My fit & fresh salad shaker has changed my life. The freezer pack fits securely into the plastic cover, which also has a recessed compartment for the plastic ware and a salad dressing dispenser. Six hours later, my spinach salad with fresh mushrooms tastes as if I just made it.

There's even a dual-action mug, which I should have invented. The top part is for hot soups and the bottom is for cold salads.

I'm in heaven, eating healthy throughout the day, saving money and not going hungry anymore. I've even lost a few pounds.

Sheryl Wolff Kayne writes alternate Wednesdays. She can be reached by e-mail at weightitis@aol.com.

fit & fresh™
Tools for
a healthy life