



The Magic of Plain Full-Fat Greek Yogurt

It's 4:30pm on a summer afternoon. You've just dragged yourself home, kicked off your shoes and exchanged your damp sheitel for something more comfortable.

Coming home all hot and sweaty at the end of a long summer day isn't fun for anyone, but for kids who arrive home after a long day of camp and a ride home on a non-air conditioned school bus, hot and sweaty takes on a whole new meaning. Add in a dose of (over)tiredness and what you have



is a group of kids not willing to wait patiently until dinner is ready.

As far as I can tell, there are two options here:

1. Make sure dinner is always ready before the kids walk through the front door. (Ha. Are you laughing with me?)

or

2. Have a pre-made healthy snack ready before your tribe arrives home, the key word here being "pre-made."

Well, there might be a third option: try and distract the kids from food with a joke.

Here's a healthy one to try. Ready? What do you call a sad strawberry? A blueberry.

No? It's okay. It wouldn't work in my house either.

In general, I try for option number two, with option one being only a dis-

tant second, and option number three not even making the list. And because it's the summertime, option number two is more than likely going to be a frozen treat that can be eaten in the backyard and away from the dinner prep area.

Like pretty much all other parents, I buy ice cream, but only sometimes. I also buy frozen yogurt, but that happens even less often than ice cream.

More often than not, I make my own – not because ice cream doesn't fit into the budget or because store-bought frozen yogurt isn't delicious, but because I really like to know what ingredients go into the foods that my children eat and, even more importantly, I like to know what *does not* go into the foods they eat.

I invested in a few sets of silicone ice cream pop molds. They are inexpensive *and* easy to clean – and they're also fun to look at.

My frozen yogurt pops always start out as smoothies – very simple, no weird ingredients, just good-for-you smoothies.

For years, I started my day off with a smoothie – they sound so healthy, they have fruit, yogurt, almond milk. Really, what could be bad?

I was religious about my smoothies, always making them the same way the nutritionist that I was seeing at the time told me to. I drank them, a little smugly, on the carpool line because – *look at me, I'm so healthy!* But there was another side to that whole smoothie stage of life – an hour after I finished drinking, I was starving. As in, *why yes, a run through the Dunkin' Donuts drive thru does sound like a most excellent idea, thank you!*

And then I switched nutritionists. And I learned about fat, the good kind. The avocado-coconut oil-full fat dairy kind. I swapped full-fat plain Greek yogurt for my low-fat vanilla yogurt in my morning smoothies and *oh! Hello, no, I'm not hungry for lunch, but thank you for asking!*

It was as if a light bulb had gone on over my head.



THE WELLNESS MAMALAH

BY JENNIFER WISE



Full fat yogurt, especially Greek yogurt – and, most importantly, unflavored plain yogurt – kept me full for hours.

And so now, several years later, when I make smoothies for my kids in the summer, I always use full-fat plain Greek yogurt. Not only do I always

make sure to have a container in the fridge, but I always have a backup container as well. In fact, we get a little panicky around here when we open a container and there isn't one waiting in the wings.

These smoothies – that become frozen yogurt pops in the freezer – always start with full-fat, plain Greek yogurt. You can customize to your heart's content, but make this your base and you may just find that your kids are so full from their smoothie or frozen yogurt pop that you won't have to make dinner at all. Honestly, if that's not a summertime win, then I don't know what is.

And for the truly pressed-for-time-parent who cannot even put the blender together, try this: layer ½ cup of yogurt in a bowl and sprinkle ½ cup of child's favorite low-sugar cereal on top. Top with a few blueberries, a couple of strawberries or even a pitted cherry or two and you have an instant parfait, which in our house is code for "fancy dessert."

Five Fun Smoothie and FroYo Pop Ideas:

The How-To: Blend all the ingredients together in a blender. Smile and enjoy. Alternatively, don't drink the smoothies right away. Instead, pour them into silicone or plastic ice pop molds and freeze overnight, or until they are all eaten. Then make some more.

Strawberry-Chocolate Smoothie:

5 frozen strawberries
¼ cup chocolate chips
1 cup unsweetened chocolate almond milk
¾ cup full-fat plain Greek yogurt

Chocolate and Nut Butter Smoothie:

6 large ice cubes
1 cup unsweetened almond milk
½ cup chocolate chips
½ cup peanut butter or almond butter
¾ cup full fat plain Greek yogurt

Orange-Creamsicle Smoothie:

1 cup of ice
1 cup full fat plain Greek yogurt
1 cup orange juice

Peach Coconut Smoothie:

1 frozen banana, cut into four pieces
1 peach, peeled and cut into pieces
4 ice cubes
¾ cup unsweetened coconut milk or almond milk
½ cup full fat plain Greek yogurt
1 tbsp unsweetened shredded coconut, sprinkled on the blended smoothie

Strawberry-Almond Smoothie:

6 frozen strawberries
½ cup full fat plain Greek yogurt
1 cup unsweetened vanilla almond milk
3 tbsp almond butter
1 tbsp honey