



Cottage cheese makes a comeback

Along with its retro appeal (remember your mom's "diet salad" of curd-filled cantaloupe?), cottage cheese has serious nutritional cred: Cup for cup, it has more protein than yogurt (a 4-ounce serving has 111 calories and about 12 grams of protein), and is a great source of calcium.

Plus, it can boost your brain power, a new Dutch study found: When researchers asked people to tackle verbal-skills puzzles, subjects who had consumed tyrosine (an amino acid that is abundant in cottage cheese) were better at intelligent problem solving than those who had eaten meals that were tyrosine-free.

For a satisfying snack—or savory breakfast—cover a crispbread or cracker with cottage cheese and sliced vegetables, drizzle with olive oil, and finish with pepper. If you're turned off by its texture, try the small-curd cheese, which is firmer and less watery.

Eat to beat... heartburn

Despite nixing the obvious triggers—fatty snacks, spicy foods, alcohol—you still may get that fire in your chest, the result of stomach acid migrating up into the esophagus. "Even healthy options like dairy can cause heartburn for some people," says *Shape* advisory board member Keri Gans, R.D.N. She recommends these foods to help tame the flames.

PAPAYA

Rich in papain, an enzyme that breaks down protein and speeds up digestion, a few slices of papaya after dinner can reduce stomach pain and inflammation.

FRUITY GUM

When you chew gum, it stimulates the production of saliva, which neutralizes acidic foods in the stomach. Go for fruity flavors, since Gans says mint can exacerbate heartburn symptoms.

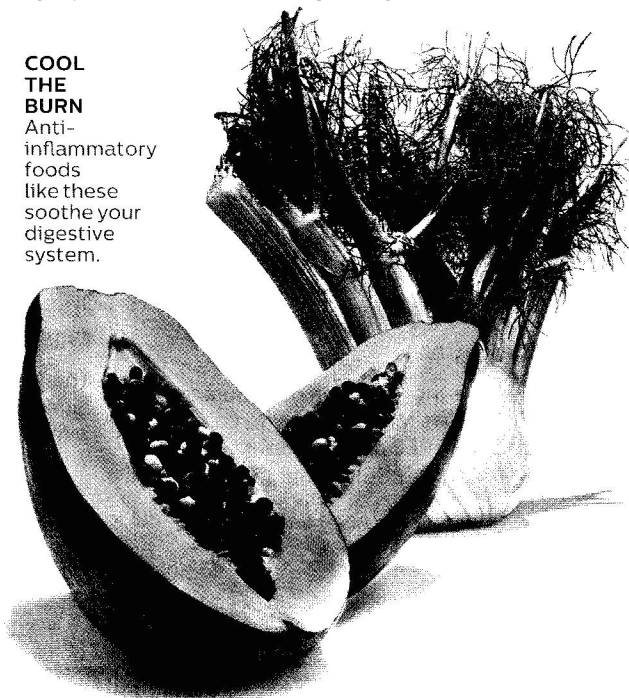
FENNEL

Thanks to its anti-inflammatory effect, this veggie has been used medicinally for centuries. "Fennel reduces stomach acid levels," Gans says.

OATMEAL

Studies show that high-fiber foods like oatmeal lower your chances of heartburn because they spend a short time in your stomach. Plus, since it's low-fat and non-acidic, the breakfast staple is gentle on your system.

COOL THE BURN
Anti-inflammatory foods like these soothe your digestive system.



Top photograph by Christine Holmes; food styling by Jamie Kimm. Bottom photograph by Travis Rothbone; food styling by Matt Vahr for Halley Resources, Inc.