

Have you heard the phrase “May-cember”? Basically, all the stress, time and work of December, but without the gifts (and snow)! It is a busy time of year. This week we will feature some on-the-go, simple, family-friendly and homemade food and snacks for those families in the middle of “May-cember” and the on-the-go schedules.

Let us know if there is something you would like us to put in our column, or if you have a recipe to share, please submit to [ads@thedrummer.com](mailto:ads@thedrummer.com).

## Easy Breakfast Egg Muffins

*Prep time: 15 mins*

*Cook time: 30 mins*

*Total time: 45 mins*

*Servings: 12*

*Yield: 12 egg muffins*

cooking spray  
1 green bell pepper, chopped  
1 red bell pepper, chopped  
1 bunch green onions, chopped  
8 lg eggs  
2-3/4 oz fully-cooked bacon crumbled or pieces  
1/4 c. whole milk  
1 pinch garlic powder, or to taste  
1 pinch onion powder, or to taste  
salt and ground black pepper to taste  
1/2 (8 ounce) package shredded mild cheddar cheese

Preheat the oven to 350° F. Grease a 12-cup muffin tin with cooking spray.

Place bell peppers and green onions into a large bowl. Add eggs, bacon, milk, garlic powder, onion powder, salt, and pepper. Sprinkle cheddar cheese into the bowl and whisk until incorporated. Pour mixture equally into the prepared muffin cups.

Bake in the preheated oven until a toothpick inserted into the center of a muffin comes out clean, about 30 minutes. Let cool slightly before serving.

**Notes:** Can put in refrigerator for up to 4 days or freeze for up to 2 months. Store in airtight container.

To reheat in microwave: place on microwave safe plate and cover with a slightly damp paper towel. Heat 30 seconds for refrigerated and 2 minutes if frozen.

## Strawberry Oatmeal Breakfast Bars

*Prep Time: 15 mins*

*Cook Time: 45 mins*

*Additional Time: 1 hrs*

*Total Time: 2 hrs*

*Servings: 8*

*Yield: 8 bars*

1 lb fresh strawberries  
1/2 lemon, juiced  
2 T. white sugar  
2 tsp. cornstarch  
1-1/2 c. old-fashioned rolled oats  
1/2 c. all-purpose flour  
1/2 c. whole wheat flour  
1/2 c. packed light brown sugar  
1/2 tsp. kosher salt  
1/4 tsp. ground ginger  
8 T. unsalted butter, melted

Preheat the oven to 375° F. Butter a 9x12-inch baking dish.

Remove the green tops from strawberries. Place the berries cut-side down on a work surface and cut in half. Slice each half lengthwise 3 to 5 times before turning and cutting across in a nice, uniform dice.

Combine diced strawberries, lemon juice, sugar, and cornstarch in a mixing bowl and stir until thoroughly combined and the cornstarch disappears. Set aside until needed.

Combine oats, all-purpose flour, whole wheat flour, brown sugar, salt, and ginger in a mixing bowl. Pour in melted butter and stir thoroughly until dry ingredients are evenly coated.

Transfer 60% of the oatmeal mixture into the prepared baking dish and spread out into an even layer. Press the mixture down with the back of a spoon or spatula to compress slightly.

Place strawberries over the top using a slotted spoon. Do not press down. Reserve any accumulated juices in the bowl. Top with remaining oatmeal mixture and press down lightly with the back of a spoon or spatula. Drizzle reserved juices on top.

Bake in the preheated oven until the top is golden brown, about 45 minutes. Press the top down with a spatula to compress slightly. Let cool completely, about 1 hour. Cut into bars and serve.

**Notes:** You can use all of one type of flour instead of using both all-purpose and whole wheat.

These can be made in an 8x8-inch baking or cake dish for a thicker bar. Since this will result in a thicker layer, it may need a few extra minutes of baking time.

If you want to make these more dessert-like, top with icing.

## Simple Chicken Salad With Grapes

*Prep: 15 mins*

*Cook: 0 mins*

*Total: 15 mins*

*Servings: 4 servings*

1-1/2 c. skinless chicken, cut into 1/2-inch cubes or shredded  
1/2 c. finely chopped celery, with leaves  
1 scallion, retaining about 2 inches of green and cut crosswise into 1/8-inch-thick slices  
3 to 4 T. mayonnaise, adjust as needed for desired consistency  
Salt, to taste  
Freshly ground black pepper, to taste  
12 red or green seedless grapes, halved  
1 dash curry powder, or to taste  
Grape tomatoes, optional  
Chopped nuts, toasted, optional  
Lettuce, for serving, optional

Combine the diced or shredded chicken, chopped celery, and scallion slices with 3 T. of mayonnaise in a large bowl. Toss to evenly distribute the ingredients. Add more mayonnaise, if desired, and season with salt and freshly ground black pepper. Add the halved grapes and curry powder, tomatoes, and nuts if using. Toss gently to combine. Mound the salad on greens or lettuce leaves for a light and delicious lunch or dinner salad.

**Notes:** Instead of a scallion, use finely chopped red onion, sweet onion, or yellow onion for a stronger onion flavor.

Mix a tsp. or two of freshly squeezed lemon juice or a T. of Dijon mustard with the mayo for a more piquant flavor.

Add finely chopped kale for crunch or snip some fresh herbs into the bowl for a summery flavor. Try tarragon, basil, Italian flat-leaf parsley, or chives.

Make it a Waldorf-style salad with 1/4 c. of chopped walnuts, 1/4 c. dried cranberries, and 1/2 c. of diced apple along with the grapes.

For the easiest preparation, use store-bought rotisserie chicken or leftover roasted chicken from dinner.

Store prepared chicken salad in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to three days.

Use light mayonnaise to reduce the calorie and fat content.

## Easy Pizza Pockets

*Prep: 20 mins*

*Cook: 15 mins*

*Total: 35 mins*

*Servings: 8 servings*

*Yield: 8 pockets*

1 (8-biscuit) can refrigerated Pillsbury Grands biscuits  
1/2 c. shredded mozzarella cheese, or a pizza cheese blend  
1/2 c. sliced pepperoni  
1/2 c. sliced olives, or finely chopped bell pepper or onion  
1/4 c. olive oil, optional  
1/2 c. grated Parmesan cheese, optional

### **For the Pizza Sauce:**

1 clove garlic, pressed or minced  
1 tsp. kosher salt  
1 (6 oz) can tomato paste  
1 (8 oz) can tomato sauce  
Freshly ground black pepper, to taste  
1/2 tsp. dried oregano

**Sauce:** In a small saucepan combine the garlic, kosher salt, tomato paste, tomato sauce, a dash of black pepper, oregano, and olive oil.

Bring the sauce to a simmer; reduce the heat to low and cook, stirring, for 3 minutes.

Cool the sauce and store in a covered container in the refrigerator for up to three days.

Makes about 1-1/2 c. of sauce.

**Pockets:** Preheat the oven to 350° F.

Line a baking sheet with parchment paper or spray with nonstick cooking spray.

On a lightly floured surface, roll each biscuit out to about 6 inches in diameter.

Spread about 2 to 3 tsp. of pizza sauce in the center of each round, then top with pepperoni and a few slices of ripe olive, chopped onion or bell pepper, or a combination. Top with about 1 T. of shredded pizza cheese or mozzarella.

With a finger, moisten the edge with a little water, fold over, and press all around the edge to seal. Place on a lightly greased baking sheet and prick with a fork or tip of a sharp knife to allow steam to escape.

Bake the pizza pockets for 14 to 16 minutes, until nicely browned.

Meanwhile, warm the remaining pizza sauce.

If desired, brush the pockets lightly with olive oil as soon as they come out of the oven and then sprinkle with a little freshly grated Parmesan cheese. Serve hot with warmed pizza sauce on the side.

## Crispy Baked Chicken Tenders Recipe

*Prep: 20 mins  
Cook: 15 mins  
Total: 35 mins  
Servings: 4 servings*

2 c. panko breadcrumbs  
1 T. turmeric  
2 tsp. cayenne pepper  
2 tsp. freshly ground black pepper  
2 tsp. salt  
2 lg eggs, lightly beaten  
1/2 c. all-purpose flour  
1 lb chicken tenders  
**Honey Mustard Dressing**  
4 T. mustard  
1/4 c. vegetable oil  
2 T. runny honey

Preheat oven to 425° F. Place the panko breadcrumbs into a large bowl, add the turmeric, cayenne, black pepper, and salt. Stir well, then sprinkle the spiced crumbs onto a baking sheet.

Pop the sheet into the preheated oven and toast the crumbs for about 5 minutes, shaking and turning the breadcrumbs halfway through. Keep a close eye on these; they should be nicely golden, not too dark, and certainly not burned. Once toasted, leave them to cool then tip onto a shallow dish or plate. Put the flour onto a shallow plate and the egg into a medium-sized bowl. Starting with the flour and using tongs or your fingers, dip a tender into the flour to lightly coat, lift it out and give it a little shake to remove any excess. Dip the floured tender into the egg, shake again. Roll the chicken tender into the lightly spiced, toasted panko breadcrumbs. Press the tender lightly into the crumb to make sure the breadcrumbs are firmly stuck on. Lay the coated tenders one by one onto a grill pan. Repeat with all the tenders, you may need to prepare a second tray. Bake the tenders in the center of the preheated oven for 7 minutes.

Turn, and bake another 5 to 8 minutes until chicken tenders are crispy and fully cooked, if have a temperature probe you are looking for 165 °F.

While the tenders are cooking, place all the dressing ingredients into a screw-top jar and shake to emulsify the dressing, it should be thick and creamy. Taste the dressing and add salt or pepper to your taste if needed. This recipe gently spices up the breadcrumb coating on the chicken tenders, but you could leave it out if not to your taste. Do season the breadcrumbs, with salt and pepper though or they will be a little bland.

## **Crispy Snack Mix**

*Prep: 10 min.  
Cook: 2-1/2 hours  
Makes: 13 servings*

4-1/2 c. crispy chow mein noodles  
4 c. Rice Chex  
1 can (9-3/4 oz) salted cashews  
1 c. sweetened shredded coconut, toasted  
1/2 c. butter, melted  
2 T. reduced-sodium soy sauce  
2-1/4 tsp. curry powder  
3/4 tsp. ground ginger

In a 5-qt. slow cooker, combine the noodles, cereal, cashews and coconut. In a small bowl, whisk the butter, soy sauce, curry powder and ginger; drizzle over cereal mixture and mix well.

Cover and cook on low for 2-1/2 hours, stirring every 30 minutes. Serve warm or at room temperature.

## **Quote of the Week:**

***“Armed Forces Day, above all, honors the dedicated individuals who wear the uniforms of their country. Each serviceman, wherever he may be, whatever his task, contributes directly and importantly to the defense of the nation. The task of each one is the task of all the armed forces: to protect the freedoms which underlie the greatness of America.”***

**~ General Earle G. Wheeler**