

A note of caution: It's key to consult a health professional before altering your diet, and it's especially vital when upping your intake of grapefruit in any form. The reason: A compound in the fruit suppresses an enzyme in the intestines that metabolizes certain drugs—and this can change the bio-availability of medications.

While grapefruit isn't considered high-risk to consume with most OTC meds, it can interact with the OTC antihistamine *fexofenadine* (sold as Allegra and Wal-Fex). Among the Rx drugs that can be affected: some statins (like *lovastatin* and *simvastatin*), blood-pressure meds (like *nicardipine* and *felodipine*) and anti-anxiety meds (like *bupirone* and *diazepam*), as well as the anti-arrhythmia drug *amiodarone*. The fruit may also affect metabolism of some birth-control pills and HRT.

That said, not all meds carry a high risk of grapefruit interaction. For example, the statins *pravastatin* and *fluvastatin* and the blood-pressure med *amlodipine* are considered safer bets. But to avoid serious reactions, check with a doctor or pharmacist before ingesting grapefruit within 72 hours of taking *any* drug.

2 Tbs. minced sweet onions. Sprinkle with 1 tsp. poultry seasoning, like Old Bay Seasoning. For vinaigrette: Combine 2 Tbs. olive oil, 1 Tbs. grapefruit juice and salt and pepper to taste. "It gave me energy before going to work out," says Crystal Smith, who trimmed 107 pounds. "It's quick and healthy, and I think it tastes great!"

Tummy-trimming milkshake: In blender, combine 1 sliced banana, 1 peeled and chopped grapefruit, ½ cup grape juice and ¼ cup low-fat ice cream. Blend 1 min. or until smooth. "I started eating grapefruit every day for breakfast, but I realized it can also be an indulgent treat," shares Brenda Lenis, who dropped 110 pounds. "This shake is delicious!"

It worked for me

"I never get sick anymore!"

Oh my gosh, I look as round as a ball...and so unhappy, Melissa Caporino thought as she studied a recent snapshot. She knew she'd been comforting herself with food since breaking up with her boyfriend, but she hadn't realized the toll it was taking on her health until that moment. Vowing to pull herself out of the downward spiral, Melissa set a resolution to regain her figure—and her happiness.

She started eating half a grapefruit with breakfast and lunch—a recommendation encouraged by the nutrition team at the Lucille Roberts gym where she worked out. "I felt good about filling up on grapefruit because it has less sugar than other fruits," Melissa says. "I didn't need to feel guilty about having it all the time."

Melissa's diet and exercise efforts paid off. She dropped 50 pounds—and trimmed 9 inches from her stomach—in six months. She also noticed improved energy and clearer skin. Plus, instead of getting sick three times that winter like she usually did, she didn't feel under the weather at all—an amazing feat for a nanny surrounded by children. But the biggest change, says Melissa: "People told me, 'You look so happy!'"

In the three years since she started on her healthy new path, she found another thing to smile about: She met the love of her life! "My wedding gown had to be taken in a few times," reveals the newlywed. "I know when I look back years from now, I'll be thrilled with those photos!"

Melissa
lost
82 lbs!

Melissa Caporino, 32,
Midland Park, NJ
Height: 5'5"

NOW: 148 lbs



THEN: 230 lbs

Turn for the strategy that fast-tracks results