

## Dave's No-Oil Stir Fry

On April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020 I began following Chef AJ's 21-day challenge, as specified in her book, *The Secrets to Ultimate Weight Loss*. I followed it before, in April of 2019, but not as closely. I avoided the flours and dried fruits, and I even weaned myself off coffee, but I wasn't really near 100% compliant. Maybe 70% compliant.

In 2020, I *really* ramped up my compliance. Not did I avoid dried, pulverized, highly processed foods, but I ate at least two pounds of non-starchy vegetables every day – a pound or more at breakfast and second pound at lunch. I threw in some starches here and there along with the veggies, but it did not eat as much starch as I ate during my 2019 attempt. In 2019 I still ate a huge bowl of oatmeal at breakfast, and lots of rice, corn, beans and potatoes **along with** what was *almost-a-pound* of veggies at each meal.

This year I have been eating the veggies **instead of** or **in place of** the large portions of starch, and it has made a big difference. In 2020, after following the 21-day challenge for 40 days, and I lost 16 pounds. In 2019, I lost 10 pounds at day 40. I was 218 on April 1<sup>st</sup>, and today, May 10<sup>th</sup>, I am 202 pounds.

**BOTTOM LINE:** To really lose weight, load up on foods that are more calorie dilute – non-starchy vegetables and fruits. The more calorically dilute your food, the greater the weight loss. And adding exercise, will supercharge the results.

During the first 40 days of my 2020 challenge, this recipe evolved into, and became one of my favorite breakfasts, but, of course, I also ate it whenever I wanted to, for any meal.

Additionally, it can be finetuned or tweaked however you like, but the basics here worked very reliably.

I began by having all of the following ingredients ready and in place to add to the pan when it was time:

- 4 oz. of **mushrooms**, sliced/chopped (any kind you like... I used whatever was cheap or marked down)
- OPTIONAL: a serving (or less) of a **low/non-fat meat substitute**, chopped (I used up a couple of frozen packages of Beyond Meat® Beyond Chicken® Strips Grilled, that was a tasty 10%-fat addition.)
- 1 **shallot** or **small onion**, chopped
- 2-4 cloves of **garlic**, minced or finely chopped
- a thumb-sized piece of **ginger**, minced or finely chopped
- **rice vinegar** (any vinegar will do, if necessary)
- **low-sodium soy sauce**
- 1-2 servings of a favorite **chili sauce** (e.g. sweet chili sauce, Hoisin sauce, chili garlic sauce, etc.)
- about 16 oz. of **non-starchy veggies**, chopped (broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cauliflower, snap peas, bok choy, carrots, etc. or a combination of any of these)
- **Chinese five-spice** (to taste)
- **sesame seeds** (to taste)
- ¼ - ½ cup of **pineapple**, chopped or tidbits
- 1 serving of **seaweed**, chopped (I added this to incorporate a natural source of iodine into my diet.)
- a generous serving of **pickled ginger**, chopped (Love this stuff! Find it where sushi ingredients are sold.)

START with the **mushrooms**. (You may want to add the **meat substitute** at this time, especially if it's frozen.)

Place just the mushrooms in a **large non-stick pan** on **medium to medium-high heat** and let them sizzle until they begin to shrink and brown. Toss or stir and let them brown a little bit more. It will begin to smell really good!

Add the **onion, garlic, and ginger**. Now it will smell even better!

Add the **vinegar, soy sauce** and the **chili sauce** to provide steam. Lightly stir/toss to distribute for cooking. Now everyone in the house will begin noticing and remarking about how good it smells.

Add the chopped non-starchy **veggies** – the whole thing – right on top of all the mushrooms and herbs. Spread the veggies into a layer around the whole pan and **cover**. Let them **cook/steam for 4-5 minutes, stirring halfway through**.

When cooked to your liking, turn off the heat, add **everything else** to the pan and gently stir/toss together.

Serve immediately and enjoy!

Add a little **sweet soy sauce, teriyaki sauce** or other **oil/fat-free sauce** to taste, if desired.

Consider also adding a serving of **cooked brown rice** or **noodles** for an added starch to increase satiety.