



# Ask Ellie

Dietitian and *Healthy Appetite* host **Ellie Krieger** answers your nutrition questions—and gives the OK to eat pizza for breakfast.

**Q: I am a pasta-holic! I eat it at least four times a week. Can you suggest some healthy meals?**

Charity Rigert,  
East Wenatchee, WA

**A:** Don't worry, you don't need to kick your pasta habit. The trick is to choose whole-wheat pasta (for its fiber, antioxidants and great nutty taste) and to keep portions to 1½ cups of cooked pasta per person. Then load the dish with veggies and lean protein so your meal is balanced; you can amp up marinara sauce by adding white beans and baby spinach leaves. A regular dinner at my house is penne with sautéed onions, colorful bell peppers and Italian chicken sausage.

**Q: I'm trying to cut back on salt to lower my blood pressure. Which salt is the best to use, and how can I keep my dishes flavorful?**

Gloria Charbonneau, Cocoa, FL

**A:** Salt is important, but chances are you don't need as much as you're used to. Three-quarters of the salt in our diet comes from processed foods, so start by eating fresh fruits, vegetables, meats and poultry, and adding salt sparingly. Herbs, spices, citrus and vinegar can all punch up flavor, too. And try using coarse salts like kosher and sea salt. They're less dense than table salt, so a teaspoon of either one has less sodium than a teaspoon of table salt.

Have any  
new ideas for  
breakfast?

I usually eat a waffle or bowl of cereal for breakfast.

Can you help me find easy options that will fill me up?

Kelly Slagle, Yorba Linda, CA

**A:** Who says your first meal of the day has to be traditional breakfast food? I love a peanut butter and banana sandwich, or a whole-grain pita stuffed with turkey and greens. But the unconventional breakfast that tops the charts is pizza! It's hot and satisfying, and this one, made on a whole-wheat English muffin, is an excellent source of essential nutrients like protein, calcium and fiber.

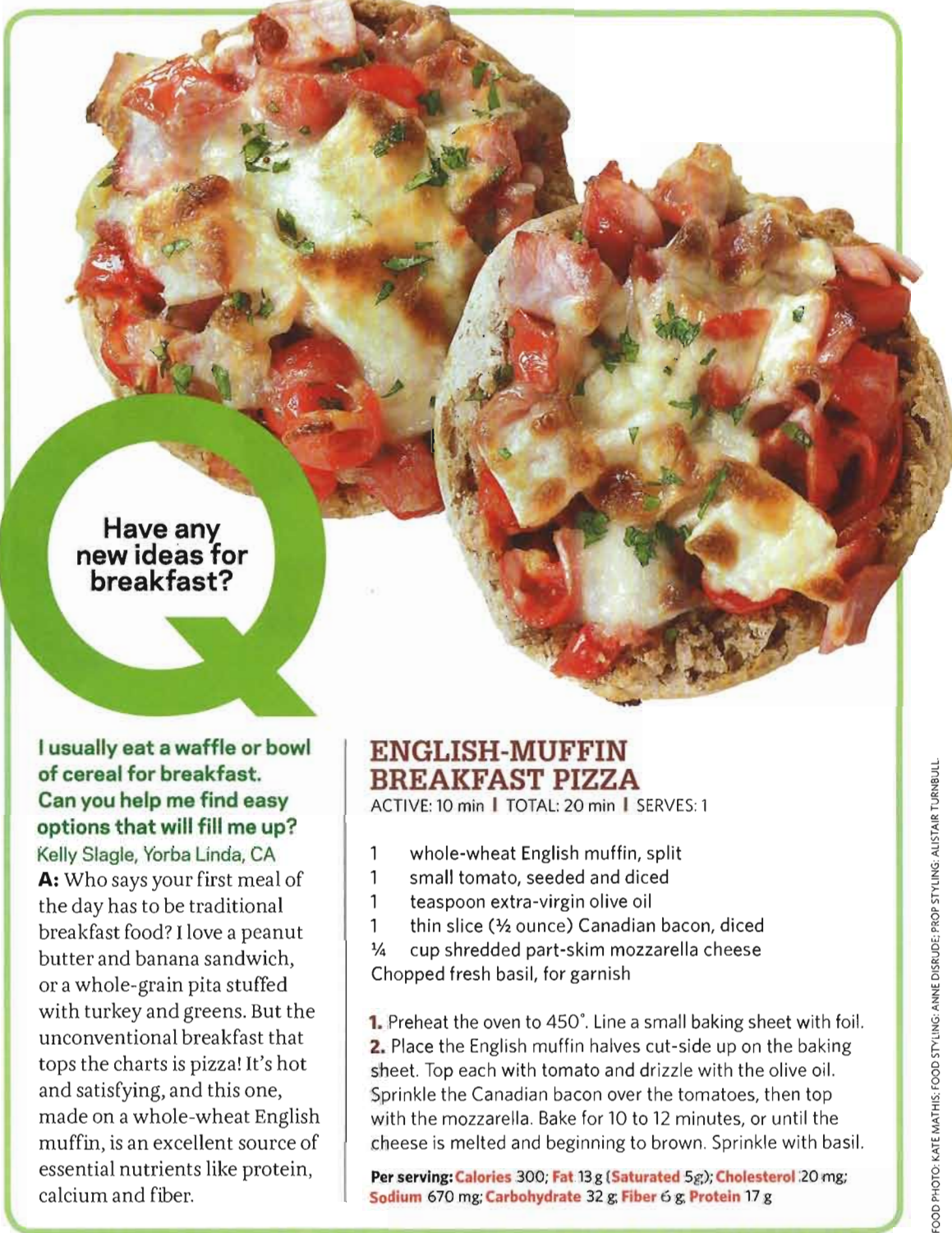
## ENGLISH-MUFFIN BREAKFAST PIZZA

ACTIVE: 10 min | TOTAL: 20 min | SERVES: 1

- 1 whole-wheat English muffin, split
- 1 small tomato, seeded and diced
- 1 teaspoon extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 thin slice (½ ounce) Canadian bacon, diced
- ¼ cup shredded part-skim mozzarella cheese
- Chopped fresh basil, for garnish

1. Preheat the oven to 450°. Line a small baking sheet with foil.
2. Place the English muffin halves cut-side up on the baking sheet. Top each with tomato and drizzle with the olive oil. Sprinkle the Canadian bacon over the tomatoes, then top with the mozzarella. Bake for 10 to 12 minutes, or until the cheese is melted and beginning to brown. Sprinkle with basil.

**Per serving:** Calories 300; Fat 13 g (Saturated 5g); Cholesterol 20 mg; Sodium 670 mg; Carbohydrate 32 g; Fiber 6 g; Protein 17 g



FOOD PHOTO: KATE MATHIS; FOOD STYLING: ANNE DISRUDE; PROP STYLING: ALISTAIR TURNBULL