

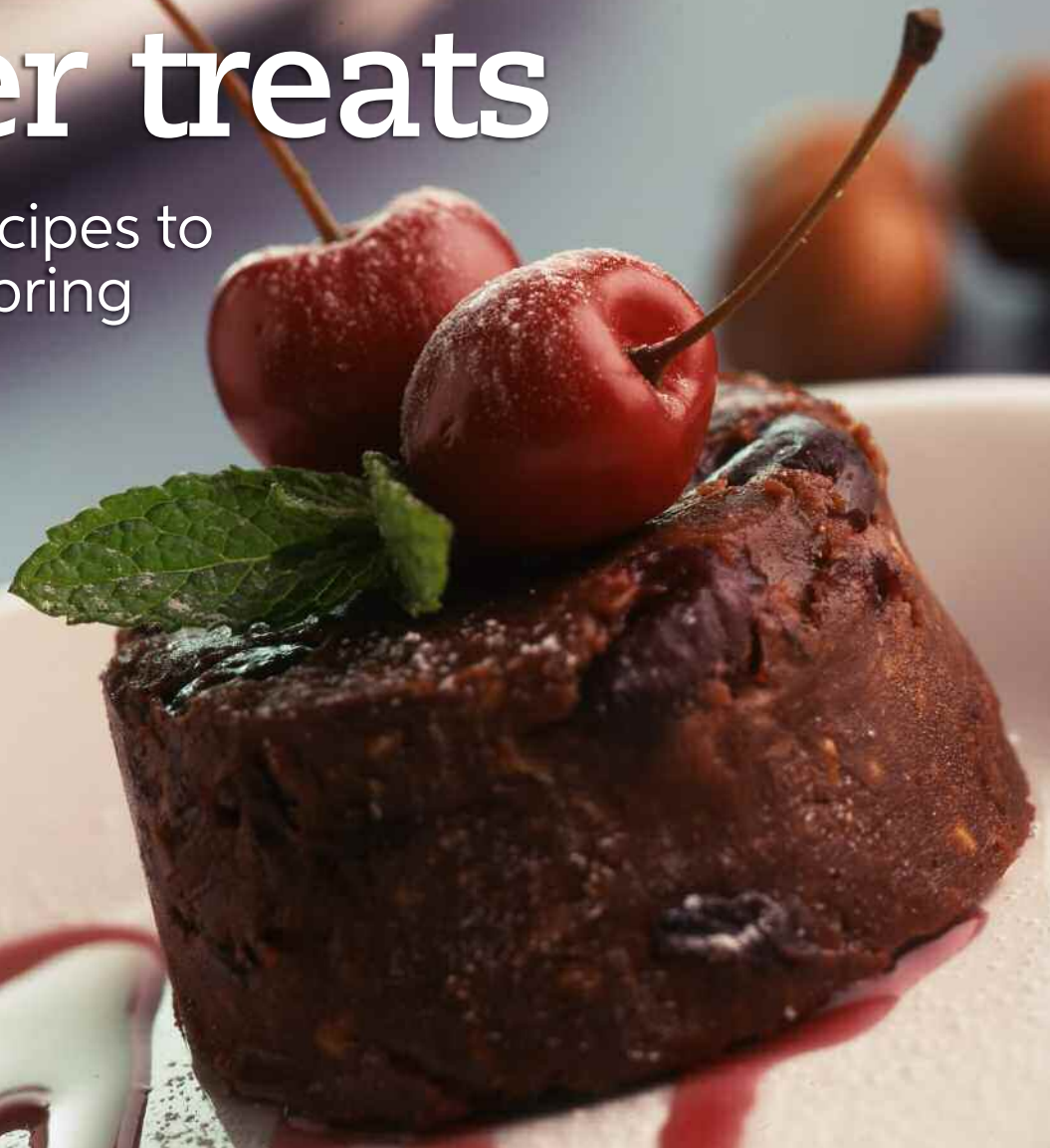
# eBites

Spring 2015

Published by **Vegetarian for Life**, the advocacy and educational charity working on behalf of older vegetarians and vegans

## Easter treats

Refreshing recipes to  
delight this Spring



**Ready, steady... enjoy!**

Vegan dinners  
delivered to your door

**Tempting aging  
appetites**

Tips to entice  
older diners

**PLUS:**  
**Introducing**  
**A C Grayling –**  
**our newest patron**





# Welcome

Welcome to the third issue of our magazine, Vegetarian for Life eBites. The arrival of Spring brings a fresh sense of optimism and new beginnings. We have a plethora of these this issue.

Our new guide, [Easter Treats](#), is packed with delicious and refreshing recipe inspiration for you and anyone you cater for ([see page 6](#)).

Having ready meals delivered directly to your home is becoming increasingly popular – particularly for those who are frailer. We have produced a new guide to help navigate the range for special diets ([see page 4](#)) – with an exclusive reader discount below.

National Vegetarian Week is coming – and there are plenty of reasons to join in. If you run a care home, it could be a perfect excuse for organising a taster day or trying out a few new veggie menu options ([page 3](#)).

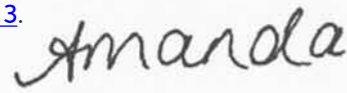
Our sense of smell often declines with age, meaning that our interest in eating can wane. Making food more enticing for older diners is a vitally important challenge. Leslie Vandever presents some top tips ([page 8](#)).

Chefs from Sunrise Senior Living recently took part in our care home caterer training courses in Cheshire and Bath. The training is available inexpensively to all members of our [UK List](#) – and you can find out more on [page 5](#).

Last but not least, we're proud to welcome esteemed philosopher A C Grayling as our newest patron. You can read his thoughts about the importance of our work on [page 3](#).

I hope that you enjoy the issue.

Amanda Woodvine, Editor



Vegetarian for Life is an advocacy and educational charity working on behalf of older vegetarians and vegans throughout the UK.



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# Time to share a veggie feast

National Vegetarian Week 18–24 May 2015

Dust off your apron, grab your utensils and start choosing your recipes! It'll soon be time to share your favourite veggie dishes with friends, family, community groups and the big wide world.

This year's National Vegetarian Week is all about sharing. So whether you've a favourite cake, curry or coleslaw get preparing, get making and get sharing. Visit [www.nationalvegetarianweek.org](http://www.nationalvegetarianweek.org) for ideas, tips and recipes to try, to add your veggie share event, and find out what's happening in the UK.

Lynne Elliot, Chief Executive of the Vegetarian Society, which organises the Week said: "Sharing food brings people together: feasts and meals mark special occasions while festivals offer a variety of tastes to try. National Vegetarian Week is all about delicious veggie food and sharing – getting people to come together to cook and share. Whether you decide to make veggie dishes for a community group or friends – sharing food can make a moment. There's no better way to celebrate veggie food and discover how you can be kinder to animals, the planet and yourself".

There are plenty of reasons to join in National Vegetarian Week 2015. If you run a care home, what better excuse for organising a tasting of the veggie options on your menu, or trying out a few new ones?

Says Carol Gilligan, who has run a care home for almost three decades: "We currently have two vegetarian residents, but two sisters have recently moved in and they are increasingly avoiding meat and eating vegetarian food. Many of the other residents are also regularly having the vegetarian option. They love the extra choice – particularly Italian dishes.

"I held a vegetarian week with the agreement of residents. It was very popular and there wasn't a single complaint!"

And if you live near Dundee, Glasgow, Tower Hamlets, Barnet and Reigate or Banstead, it could be the perfect time to share a home-cooked veggie meal with a housebound neighbour via [Mealmakers](#) or [The Casserole Club](#).

The Vegetarian Society has lots of great recipe ideas to get you sharing – starting with a gorgeous [gumbo stew](#), a [chocolatey chilli](#), [pizza](#), [sharing salad](#) and [surprise brownies](#). Tuck in!



## Introducing our newest patron

We are delighted to welcome A C Grayling as our newest patron.

To give him his full impressive title, Anthony Grayling MA, DPhil (Oxon), FRSL, FRSA is Master of the New College of the Humanities, and a Supernumerary Fellow of St Anne's College, Oxford. Until 2011 he was Professor of Philosophy at Birkbeck College, University of London.

He has written and edited over 30 books on philosophy and other subjects, and for several years wrote columns for the *Guardian* and *Times*.

Anthony sits on the editorial boards of several academic journals, and for nearly 10 years was the Honorary Secretary of the principal British philosophical association, the Aristotelian Society.

Says Anthony: "I am honoured to be a patron of Vegetarian for Life, which is a really excellent charity: how little we think about what it must be like for vegetarians in care institutions which don't properly cater for them. You have recognised this and are putting right! I congratulate Vegetarian for Life and hope your work is quickly and completely successful".

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## Reader exclusives

Based in County Durham, everything is made from scratch in its own kitchens by teams of chefs and nutritionists to make it allergy-safe. Meals cooked in modern space-saving pouches in a pressure cooker to naturally preserve flavours (this means they don't need refrigeration – store at room temperature). All



dishes are always gluten-, nut- and milk-free; vegetarian and vegan options. Order [online](#) or by phone. ilumi is offering eBites readers a £10 discount on their first order over £30. To claim, use the code VEG4LIFE at the checkout and £10 will be discounted. Offer expires 31 May and valid on first order only.

Everything cooked by hand, in small one-pot batches, using only natural ingredients, and no artificial colours, flavours or preservatives. Fast-frozen to lock in the freshness and flavour. Options: dairy-free; gluten-free; [vegan](#). Order [online](#), by phone or by post.

Chef on Board is offering a 10% discount for readers of eBites. To claim, simply enter voucher code VEGLIFE10 at the checkout. Valid on first order only.







# Ready, steady... enjoy!

Having ready meals delivered directly to your home has become an increasingly popular choice for many people across the UK – particularly those who are more frail. VfL's new guide shows it's possible to enjoy the convenience of these meals without having to compromise your vegetarian or vegan principles.

An estimated 300,000 older people in the UK are vegetarian or vegan. While most of these are in glowing health and still cook for themselves, others may be more vulnerable. Vegetarian for Life's 2014 survey suggests that around 6,500 older vegetarians and vegans live in care homes. Others rely on community meals services, such as 'meals on wheels', as a lifeline to living independently.

Lynne Elliot, Chief Executive of the Vegetarian Society, which sponsored the production of the guide said: "Good food is crucial to our wellbeing. Many vegetarians who are unable to leave their homes due to disability or ill health often find their problems are compounded by access to only a limited range of meals".

"If they have no internet access, preventing them from using supermarket home-delivery schemes, these vulnerable people are reliant on social services' knowledge of food suppliers that provide vegetarian or vegan meals for home-delivery. This guide will be a vital tool for these people, and for the carers who look after and advise them, which is why we have sponsored it."

The [Dinners to your Door guide](#), which has also been sponsored by the Vegan Society, features many

of the leading companies that offer home-delivery schemes for special diets. It also includes some of the delicious dishes available. From Tuscan Bean Casserole to Spanish Style Vegetables & Rice and from Carrot & Ginger Soup to a Red Pepper Boat filled with Mushrooms there is something to appeal to everyone's appetite.

Not surprisingly, the versatility and convenience of these meals will also appeal to individuals who don't need support with meals. Available either chilled, frozen or even freeze-dried they easily can match your lifestyle – less waste and less strain on your budget!

The guide also covers schemes that offer home-cooked food made by neighbours, for neighbours, as well as explaining the importance of enquiring about local 'meals on wheels' services.

Neel Radia, National Chair, National Association of Care



Catering comments: "Meals on wheels' is a truly wonderful service. We have sadly seen the number of services dramatically decline over the past decade as a result of local authority budget cuts but the National Association of Care Catering is committed to protecting it by raising awareness of the holistic value it offers through ongoing campaigns and our annual National Community Meals Week. As well as providing a tasty, nutritious meal, it plays a crucial and immeasurable social role, addressing loneliness and social isolation and safety in the home and community, and ultimately enabling the elderly to live independently in their own homes for longer.

"It is imperative that a 'meals on wheels' provider caters for all dietary requirements, such as those relating to lifestyle choices, religion, culture and food intolerances. I have seen some great examples of varied and creative meals, including vegetarian and vegan, and this guide will really help highlight these to the customer."

Vegetarian for Life is appealing to its supporters to distribute copies of the Dinners to your Door guide locally to ensure that it reaches those most in need. Possible channels include your local branch of Age UK; Valuing Older People Networks; Citizens Advice Bureaux; Community and Voluntary Services; and religious organisations. Please contact us for further suggestions or support. For more information or to order copies of the guide, call Vegetarian for Life on 0161 445 8064 or [click here](#).

## Feeding the imagination

Earlier this month, 14 chefs from Sunrise Senior Living took part in Vegetarian for Life's caterer training courses at the Cordon Vert Cookery School in Cheshire, and Demuths Cookery School in Bath. Amanda Woodvine reports

How about sitting down to a buffet of nut roast, veggie Glamorgan sausages, rich onion gravy, celeriac fritters, and aubergine tagine with dates? Chefs from [Sunrise Senior Living](#) sampled these and more at Demuths Cookery School this March.

At a second caterer training course held at the Cordon Vert Cookery School, Sunrise's northern contingent learned to make a tasty superfood salad, carrot, lentil and sesame bites, vegetarian 'chicken' and mushroom pie, tofu 'meatballs' and vegan chocolate pots.

Sunrise – which caters for around 2,500 residents in the UK across 27 communities – had commissioned Vegetarian for Life to train its chefs in care home catering for older vegetarians.

Sunrise has already reached the regional finals of this year's Care Cook of the Year competition with a [vegetarian menu](#) – but was keen to learn more.

Each training day lasted around 5 hours and included practical demonstrations and the opportunity to taste and assess the foods prepared. Delegates learned more about vegetarians and vegans, the relevant nutrition and how to adapt recipes easily.

Said Alex Connell, Principal Tutor at Cordon Vert: "Working with the chefs from Sunrise was a real pleasure. We looked at and sampled a range of easy to prepare vegetarian main meals and desserts. The trick to create great vegetarian or vegan dishes everyone will enjoy is simply to

think about the basics of what makes any dish good. So, presentation, contrast, colour, flavour, and of course nutrition. Once you have done that, get creative!"

Demuths added: "Everyone took away a pack of all the taught and demonstrated recipes plus recipes for a variety of veggie 'alternatives' – with 2 pages of suggestions for using vegetarian ingredients and seasonal produce".

Training courses are available only to members of Vegetarian for Life's [UK List](#). Membership is free and joining couldn't be easier – just go to the [best practice](#) page on our website, check you meet our criteria and join online. There are many other benefits of being a member, including free marketing for your home and regular new recipes for your residents to enjoy. And, of

### Get a vegetarian catering DVD for FREE

We have a short (20 minutes) training DVD that is condensed from the training courses. It gives nutritional tips and demonstrates three recipes. It is free to UK List members and related charities. If you are a member and haven't already received a copy, let us know and we'll be happy to post one.



course, membership and the training are valuable in your efforts towards equality and diversity.

Said Chris Dean, Sunrise's Regional Director of Dining and Procurement: "This training should be an essential part of all care chefs' training to fully understand the intricacies of vegetarian and vegan diets.

"It was great to see silken tofu and meat-substitutes used in dishes that we would not normally consider them in, as aids to fortifying dishes. Every head chef in a care home should have this training."

Sophie Murray, Sunrise's Head of Nutrition and Hydration added: "The training was incredibly helpful for everyone in catering and could be renamed 'Maximising flavours through use of herbs, spices and vegetables'.

"It was an excellent balance of theory of nutrition and practice in a professional kitchen. Taste-testing highly nutritious foods was an extra bonus for each attendee. If you have a meat-dominated diet, this will still be a benefit". Courses can be held in Cheshire and Bath, and we can even travel to you – all for just £25 per head, including lunch. [Contact us](#) for further information.



# Easter

a time for new beginnings, inspiring recipes and treats!

All around the world Easter is celebrated as a time of new life and fresh beginnings. We hope that we have captured this feeling of optimism with some delicious and refreshing recipes in our new guide, [Easter Treats](#).

From a delicious Sweet Potato Soup to an enticing Pink Rhubarb and Mascarpone Pudding and from a warming Pine Nut and Carrot Loaf to a refreshing Hot Citrus Pudding our there is something in the guide to delight everyone. And not forgetting that Easter is a time of treats, there is also a simply wonderful Black Cherry and Kirsch Truffle Dessert!



For a free copy of Easter Treats in the post, please [click here](#) to email us, or call 0161 445 8064.



## Sweet Potato Soup

Serves 6, Vegan

- Ingredients**
- 2 tsp vegetable oil
  - 1 onion, diced
  - 1 tbsp finely chopped fresh ginger
  - 1 tbsp vegan Thai red curry paste
  - 1 tsp salt
  - 660g/1lb 7oz sweet potatoes, diced
  - 400ml/14fl oz canned reduced-fat coconut milk
  - 1 litre/1¾ pints vegan stock
  - Juice of 1 lime
  - 30g/1oz finely chopped fresh coriander, to garnish

- 1 In a large, heavy-based saucepan, heat the oil over a medium-high heat.
- 2 Add the onion and ginger and cook, stirring, for about 5 minutes or until soft.
- 3 Add the curry paste and salt and cook, stirring, for a further minute or so.
- 4 Add the sweet potatoes, coconut milk and stock and bring to the boil.
- 5 Reduce the heat to medium and simmer, uncovered, for about 20 minutes or until the sweet potatoes are soft.
- 6 Purée the soup, either in batches in a blender or food processor or using a hand-held blender. Return the soup to the heat and bring back up to a simmer. Just before serving, stir in the lime juice.
- 7 Serve hot, garnished with coriander.

Recipe from *Vegan: 100 Everyday Recipes*, part of Parragon's range of Love Food Cookbooks. For more information visit [www.parragon.com/lovefood](http://www.parragon.com/lovefood) The Vegan Society sells this book in its shop for just £2 plus p&p. Visit [www.vegansociety.com/shop](http://www.vegansociety.com/shop)



## Rose Elliot's Pine Nut & Carrot Roast with Mushroom Sauce

Serves 6, Vegetarian

### Ingredients

- 25g butter
  - 1 onion, finely chopped
  - 225g carrots, finely grated
  - 2 celery sticks, finely chopped
  - 225g pine nuts, grated
  - 2 tbsp chopped parsley
  - Squeeze of lemon juice
  - 2 free range eggs
  - Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper
  - Freshly grated nutmeg
- For the sauce:**
- 7g dried mushrooms, rinsed
  - 600ml water
  - 25g butter
  - 1 small onion, thinly sliced
  - 2 tsp cornflour
  - 2 tbsp vegetarian Madeira or fortified wine
  - 2 tbsp soy sauce

- 1 Preheat the oven to 180°C/350°F/gas mark 4.
- 2 Grease and line a 500g loaf tin.
- 3 Melt the butter in a large pan and fry the onion, without browning, for 5 minutes, then add the carrot and celery and cook uncovered for 10 minutes.
- 4 Remove from heat and add the pine nuts, parsley, lemon juice and eggs.
- 5 Season well with salt, pepper and nutmeg.
- 6 Pour into the tin and bake for 40 minutes until golden brown and firm in the centre.

### To prepare the sauce:

- 1 Put the mushrooms and water in a saucepan, bring to the boil then remove from heat and leave to soak for 40 minutes, then drain, reserving the liquid and chop the mushrooms.
- 2 Melt the butter in a saucepan, add the onion and fry for 10 minutes until lightly browned.
- 3 Add the mushrooms and gently cook for 30 minutes until tender.
- 4 Mix the cornflour with the reserved liquid, Madeira and soy, then add to the mushroom mixture. Bring to the boil, stirring until slightly thickened. Season to taste.
- 5 Turn the roast out onto a plate, slice thickly and drizzle with the mushroom sauce.



## Black Cherry and Kirsch Truffle Desserts

Serves 8, Vegan

The classic combination of cherries, dark chocolate and nuts in this recipe is simply wonderful.

### Ingredients

- 350g black cherries, stoned and chopped (canned may be used)
- 4 tbsp kirsch liqueur
- 1 tsp almond essence
- 200g quality dark vegan chocolate
- 175g creamed coconut, roughly chopped or grated
- 100g hard (block) vegan margarine
- 200g vegan almond crunch biscuits
- 50g hazelnuts, roughly chopped

- 1 Lightly oil 8 ramekin dishes with a flavour-free oil and line with silicone baking parchment.
- 2 Place the fresh or canned cherries in a bowl and pour over the kirsch liqueur and almond essence. Leave to marinate for 2 hours.
- 3 Melt the chocolate, creamed coconut and margarine together over a gentle heat.
- 4 Roughly crush the almond crunch biscuits and stir into the melted mixture with the hazelnuts. Add the marinated fruit and any remaining liquid.
- 5 Pour the mixture into the prepared ramekin dishes and lightly smooth the top. Cover and chill for 2 hours.
- 6 Turn out the desserts and serve on individual plates.

© The Vegetarian Society (recipe created by the Cordon Vert Cookery School)

[www.vegsoc.org](http://www.vegsoc.org)

[www.vegetarianforlife.org.uk/recipes](http://www.vegetarianforlife.org.uk/recipes)

[www.vegetarianforlife.org.uk](http://www.vegetarianforlife.org.uk) 7

# Tempting aging appetites

Our sense of smell often declines with age, decreasing our interest in eating, too. Making food more enticing for older diners is a vitally important challenge. Leslie Vandever presents some top tips

Aging changes the body in multiple ways. Although we might choose not to dwell, most are obvious: our hair goes grey, our skin wrinkles, and muscle tone wanes. Our hearing and eyesight worsen, we may move more slowly and fall more easily.

One of the changes that's common with advancing age rarely makes the list, though. It's how food tastes to us. And that, oddly enough, is intricately tied to our sense of smell.

Like other bodily functions, our sense of smell (olfaction) often declines with age. In fact, a [study](#) suggests that over three-quarters of over 80s have evidence of major olfactory impairment. Paired with our sense of taste, smell allows us to perceive 'flavour'.

When we chew, food releases aromas that blend with the five universal tastes: salty, sweet, bitter, sour, and savoury. Each, along with texture and temperature, affects flavour and how we perceive it. When our sense of smell declines, it can affect the pleasurable tastes we associate with food. Many older people complain that food tastes bland, bitter, or metallic.

While it might not seem like a serious problem, it often is. When food tastes 'funny' to us, our pleasure – and interest – in eating can wane. That may cause malnutrition, dangerous weight loss and impaired immunity. It can even worsen other medical conditions.

Making food more interesting, attractive, and palatable to older diners can be a challenge. Here are our top tips.

## THE FIRST BITE IS WITH THE EYE

Paying attention to how food is presented can make a huge difference. A breakfast of eggs or yogurt and toast will look more enticing with bright fruit on the side. You could also try varying the shape, colour, or pattern of the dishware that meals are served on.

Says George Sampson, Head of Hospitality at MHA Care Homes: "Taking extra time and care for specific needs is important. Many

residents have conditions that affect swallowing and require food that matches the National Dysphagia Diet Food Texture Descriptors. Our chefs and kitchen staff are experimenting with presenting these foods attractively on the plate – we've had pureed broccoli forming the leafy tops of carrots, and dots of cream to make the seeds in pureed strawberries. Sometimes residents struggle with their appetites, but having attractively presented food definitely helps."

## SPICE IT UP

It may be tempting to jazz food up with extra salt or sugar, but that may invite or worsen other problems, such as high blood pressure or [type 2 diabetes](#). Instead, try flavourful herbs and spices for an exotic kick. Lemon juice, vinegars and aromatic spices like paprika, chilies, fennel, cumin, and turmeric can add flavour, colour, or both. Look for exotic blends, like Chinese Five Spice, to enhance a familiar dish that's grown uninteresting and bland. Herbs like lemon thyme can make the usual unusual – and fresh herbs are always more flavourful than dried. Anything that mixes and livens things up can help stimulate an aging appetite.



## Spruce it up

- By arranging foods of different and contrasting colours, textures, and shapes on the plate, you'll make the whole look more inviting. Think dark green courgettes with orange carrots, or a mix of red-skinned apple wedges, fat, oval green grapes, tangerine segments, and ruby pomegranate seeds.

- Add bright orange carrots, crunchy dark greens, and the snappy reds of radishes and tomatoes to everyday staples like beans and rice.



- Always try to avoid serving a meal with several foods from one colour group.

- Add colourful sauces with an artistic flair, or sprinkle chopped nuts or granola on yogurt or ice cream.



- Pastas in new and unusual shapes can make a meal more interesting.
- Brighten plates with a parsley garnish or a base of lettuce leaves.
- Offer a cooling, nutritious smoothie on a warm day rather than the regular breakfast or lunch.

Leslie Vandever is a professional journalist and freelance writer with more than 25 years of experience. She lives in Northern California and writes for [Healthline](#).