

Food and Fitness

West Virginia Bureau of Senior Services



August 2013

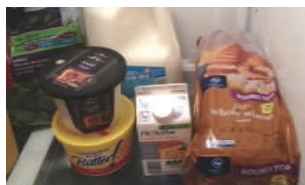
Volume 137

Creative Cooking

Are you the type who likes to follow recipes to the letter when you cook? If so, then cook-books and boxes of recipe files are made for you! Free internet recipes abound!



Perhaps you are another type who likes to cook spontaneously. You look in the



fridge and fix what you have and what you need to use up before it goes to

waste! No quick trips to the grocery store for one or two ingredients—if you don't have it you just leave it out or substitute!

If you have squash in your garden this year, chances are you will have too many to eat. So why not pick some of the blossoms and stuff them?

Pick them in the morning when they are opened.



Make a stuffing from what you have—perhaps

Romano or Parmesan cheese, bread-crumbs or a grated slice of bread, parsley or chives, and seasoning.



Arrange blossoms on a baking tray. Spoon filling into



blossoms, close, and bake for 15-20 minutes at 350°.



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Websites of interest:

- aicr.org/research/continuous-update-project
- Farmgirl-Fare.com
- cancer.org

Dog Days of Summer

Does that phrase cause you to picture an old hound dog sleeping under a raised porch such as this one, trying to escape the heat? The hot, humid, sultry days of July and August have long been termed the “Dog Days” of summer.

Ancient Greeks and Romans associated this time of insufferable heat with the rising of the star Sirius, the brightest star of the constellation Canis Major (Large Dog). The Romans sacrificed a brown dog at the beginning of the Dog Days to appease the rage of Sirius, believing that the star was the cause of the hot, sultry summer weather. (Wikipedia)

The “Dog Days” of summer have definitely arrived in West Virginia! Perhaps you and man’s (or woman’s) best friend—your

dog—can find a cool place and time to walk through these scorching days together!

Rebecca A. Johnson from the University

of Missouri College of Veterinary Medicine puts it this way: “You need to walk, and so does your dog. It’s good for both ends of the leash.”

Dr. Johnson’s 2010 study showed that older adults who walked with a dog experienced a greater improvement in fitness than those who walked with a human companion!

Imagine that!

The dog walkers increased their walking speed by 28%; the human walkers improved by just 4%. Part of this improvement was likely related to consistency of exercise.

The dog walkers felt greater responsibility to walk because of their ca-

nine friends. The human walkers often complained about weather and talked each other out of walking. The walkers paired with a dog didn’t make excuses and neither did the dogs!

A study from Matthew Reeves of Michigan State University reported individuals who took their dogs for regular walks exercised an average of 30 minutes daily five days per



week. Only a third of non-dog owners got that much exercise. In fact, this study showed that 60% of owners who took their dogs for regular walks met federally recommended guidelines for exercise!

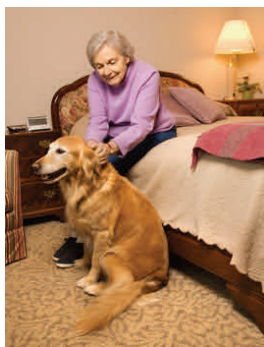
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Dog Days of Summer

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A study by Shane Brown and others published in the *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* showed that dog owners walked nearly 50% more minutes and achieved higher levels of cardiovascular fitness than people without dogs. A 2012 study by Gretebeck and others at the University of Michigan's School of Nursing looked at dog ownership in community-dwelling older adults and found the same results.

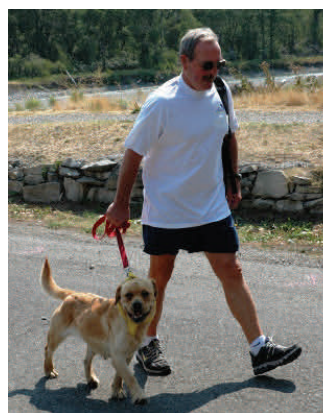


A 2008 study in Australia found that acquiring a dog increased average walking by 30 minutes per week compared to people who did not have a dog. Likewise, a California study of more than 41,500 residents found that dog owners were about 60% more likely to walk than people who owned cats or those who did not have any pets at all.

Exercise is not the only benefit of pet ownership. Owning pets lowers blood pressure and lessens symptoms of anxiety, loneliness, and depression.

A study by Allen R. McConnell of Miami University in Ohio found, "pet owners had greater self-esteem, tended to be less lonely, were more conscientious, were more extroverted, tended to be less fearful and tended to be less preoccupied than non-owners". Dr. Robert Kushner, an obesity expert at Northwestern University, calls dogs "natural exercise machines on a leash".

You don't have to own a dog to walk a dog. Consider volunteering to walk a dog at a local animal



shelter. The above study by Dr. Johnson involved older adults in assisted living

who took a bus each day to a local shelter where they were assigned a dog to walk. So grab a leash, grab a dog, and enjoy walking!

(Sources: "Forget the Treadmill, Get a Dog" NY-Times.com "Exercising with your Dog"

Spark People "Dog Ownership, Functional Ability, and Walking in Community-Dwelling Older Adults" Gretebeck and others *Journal of Physical Activity and Health* 2013

"Friends with Benefits: On the Positive Consequences of Pet Ownership" McConnell and others *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 2011)

Can Tasty Herbs Improve Your Health?

You know that herbs enhance the flavor of almost everything delicious that you eat, but did you



know that many of them may have medicinal value? Let's look at a few commonly used herbs and learn more about their potential for healing.

According to physician Frank Lipman, M.D., founder of Eleven-Eleven Wellness Center in New York City, "herbs won't replace medicines, but research shows that for many conditions, herbs work well and are less expensive than drugs". Unlike drugs, herbs usually have fewer dangerous side effects, Lipman adds.

Discussing an article entitled "Herbs That Heal," by Michael Castleman, Lipman further explains that the herbs in a whole state often lessen any potential harmful side effects. <http://>

www.naturalhealthmag.com/health/herbs-heal

Mint

Varieties of mint abound but peppermint and spearmint are most widely used. Crushing a few leaves of your mint plant as you work in the garden creates a pungent but pleasant fragrance for you to enjoy.

Add mint leaf garnish to your iced tea for a refreshing flavor. Mint is a



popular ingredient in tabbouleh salad as well. Try to choose fresh mint over dried when possible for its more pungent flavor.

Mint and its oils have been promoted in many ways to enhance health:

- As a calming soak in peppermint oil in a bath
- To possibly lessen the growth of the stomach ulcer bacteria called hel-

icobacter pylori

- To control colon spasms
- To alleviate respiratory symptoms for asthmatics
- A cup of mint tea as a soothing digestive aid
- As an air freshener in the car!
- As a garnish for a dessert!



http://www.naturalnews.com/025823_mint_healing_oil.html#ixzz2YwaX0Lwz

Mint is fairly easy to grow at home. In fact, it can take over your garden if not properly managed! Planting it in a container is

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Can Tasty Herbs Improve Your Health?

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a practical solution to this problem.

Mint is a perennial, so it will return year after year. Or, mint can be grown indoors in a pot on a moderately sunny windowsill and you can enjoy its benefits year-round.

Mint can be stored in the refrigerator, loosely wrapped in a wet paper towel and placed in a plastic bag. It will keep fresh for about a week. Or put a cutting of mint in a glass of water in the windowsill, and it will sprout roots within a week!

Basil

The oblong, often pointed leaves of the basil plant make it look a lot like peppermint, to which it is related. Its highly fragrant



leaves are used as seasoning herb for a variety of foods. Research studies on basil have shown unique health-protecting effects in two basic areas: flavonoids and volatile oils.

Flavonoids in basil protect cell structures as well as chromosomes from radiation and oxygen-based damage. In addition, the volatile oils in basil may provide protection against unwanted bacterial growth. Source—<http://www.whfoods.com/genpage.php?tname=foodspice&dbid=85>



Creative cooks use basil in sauces, pesto and pizza. For summertime salads, however, basil makes an attractive adjunct and no cooking is necessary! In addition to the most com-

(photo used with permis-



*sion of
www.FamgirlFare.com)*

mon green variety, a purple leafed variety makes a colorful supplement to your recipes. So don't just garnish with basil. Eat it, too!

Garlic

Did you know that garlic may lower the risk of certain cancers? High consumption of garlic lowered rates of ovarian, colorectal, and other cancers, as reported in a 2006 research review in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*.

Another 2006 Japanese clinical trial also found that after a year of taking aged garlic extract supplements, people with a history of colon polyps saw a reduction in the size and

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Can Tasty Herbs Improve Your Health?

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number of the precancerous growths detected by their doctors.

Garlic might also



provide cardiovascular benefits. Garlic contains more than 70 active phytochemicals, including allicin, to which many studies attribute decreases in high blood pressure by as much as 30 points. Garlic may help prevent strokes as well by slowing arterial blockages, according to a yearlong clinical study at UCLA. In addition, patients' levels of homocysteine, a chemical that leads to plaque buildup, dropped by 12%.

James A. Duke, PhD, author of *The Green Pharmacy*, is of the opinion that high consumption of garlic lowers rates of ovarian, colorectal and other cancers. To maximize the benefits, crushed fresh garlic offers

the best cardiovascular and cancer-fighting benefits, says Duke.

You would need to consume up to five cloves of garlic each day to match the amounts consumed in the above studies! You can maximize your consumption of garlic by including fresh garlic in your soups, sauces, salads and salad dressings every day.

Read more: <http://www.prevention.com/mind-body/natural-remedies/best-healing-herbs-top-10?page=4#ixzz2YwXbMzmO>

Recipe Corner

While the mercury measures in the 90's, ease the heat a little by avoiding use of the stove and oven! Cool salads offer a refreshing option for summer lunches and suppers.

This month's Recipe Corner features a variety of salads to please any palate. Consider serving just one at a time, or prepare a salad bar for your guests with many tasty options. Complete the picture with whole wheat breads, rolls, and crackers!

Recipe Corner

Camille's Corn and



Bean Salsa

2 medium-size ripe avocados, peeled and cubed
1 (15.5-oz.) can black beans, rinsed and drained
1 (15.8 oz.) can black-eyed peas, rinsed and drained
1 (15.8 oz.) can red kidney beans, rinsed and drained
1 (15 1/4-oz.) can whole kernel corn, rinsed and drained
1 fresh jalapeño pepper, seeded and diced



1/3 cup thinly sliced red onion
3 tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro

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Recipe Corner

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Dressing:

3 tablespoons fresh lime juice

2 tablespoons olive oil

3 cloves fresh garlic, minced

1/2 teaspoon ground cumin

Stir together all ingredients for salad in large bowl. Prepare dressing by whisking ingredients together or shaking in a small covered jar. Mix dressing in gently with salad ingredients. Makes a great high protein salad or dip for corn chips.

Tomatoes with Basil and Feta Cheese

2 pounds fresh tomatoes---



select your favorite varieties

Juice of 1 fresh lime

1/2 cup crumbled feta cheese

3 sprigs fresh basil

Wash and slice the tomatoes. Sprinkle with lime juice. Add cheese and finish with whole or chopped basil leaves. Chill before serving. Don't forget to eat the basil!

Margaret's Marinated Shrimp with Mushrooms

(This recipe has been modified slightly to reduce fat)



fied slightly to reduce fat)

1 pound cooked, peeled shrimp

2 jars sliced mushrooms, packed in water

1 large can artichoke hearts in their own juice, drained and quartered

1 large can pitted black olives, drained

2 cups grape tomatoes

1/4 red onion, sliced thinly

3 stems green onions,

chopped finely

8 oz. feta cheese, cut into small bites

Lemon Dijon Vinaigrette

Lemon Dijon Vinaigrette

1/4 cup freshly squeezed lemon juice

1/4 cup Dijon mustard

1/2 cup olive oil

3 cloves fresh garlic, crushed

2 tbsp. green onions, finely chopped

1 teaspoon fresh dill

First make the vinaigrette dressing. Then place shrimp, mushrooms and artichokes in a large zip-lock bag

Pour in vinaigrette and marinate for at least twenty-four hours. Add the remaining ingredients, stirring together in a large salad bowl. Chill for about three hours before serving. Entertaining idea: Using red-tipped lettuce leaves as serving cups, spoon 1/2 cup mixture into lettuce cups and arrange individual servings on a platter. Recipe serves about 12.

Recipe Corner

Fruit Platter with Mint Dipping Sauce

Cut and arrange seasonal fruits on a tray or platter. For late summer, cantaloupes, watermelon and honey dew melon make attractive partners.

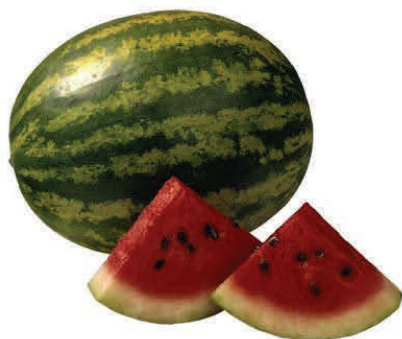


Slice honeydew into slices or wedges for contrasting shapes.

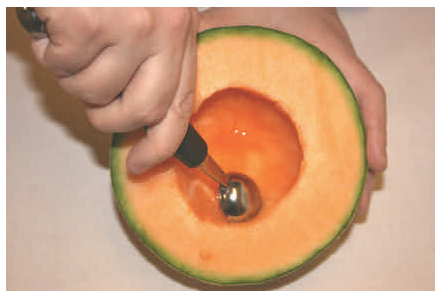
concentrated orange juice
1/2 teaspoon orange zest

In a food processor or blender, pulse mint until pieces are tiny. Add yogurt, orange juice concentrate, and orange zest. Whirl just until smooth.

Serve mint dipping sauce with variety of fresh fruit. You can get as wildly imaginative as you want to be with fruit types and serving ideas!



Cut watermelon into pie-slice shaped wedges.

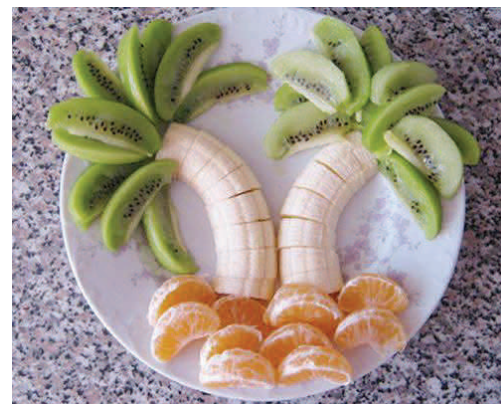


Use a melon ball scoop to make cantaloupe balls.

Serve with mint sauce for dipping (recipe below).

Mint Dipping Sauce

12 large fresh mint leaves
1 cup Greek yogurt
1 tablespoon frozen



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*This newsletter is created
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in part by the West Virginia
Bureau of Senior Services.
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News You Can Use

Vegetable and Fruit Eaters Live Longer

A study from the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition of 71,000 Swedes aged 45-83, followed for 13 years showed those who said they ate no fruits or vegetables were 53% more likely to die during the study period than those who said they ate 5 servings per day of vegetables and fruits.

Food vs. Supple- ments?

Don't throw your fish away yet! A recent report regarding blood levels of omega-3 fatty acids and prostate cancer did not examine diet or supplement intake of subjects. Talk with **your** doctor about **your** health!

Preventing Aggres- sive Prostate Cancer

A new study from UCLA's Jonsson Cancer

Center in the journal Nutrition and Cancer reported that being overweight, smoking and lack of vegetables can increase risk of aggressive prostate cancer.

Limiting red meat to no more than 18 ounces per week and avoiding "calorie dense" foods (high fat, high sugar, high calorie per bite) were also cancer protective.