FOOD AND FITNESS

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Inside this issue:

March Winds and April Showers…..	2-3
Spring Forward with Salads	4-7
WVU Extension Service Classes	8

WEST VIRGINIA FOOD YESTERDAY AND TODAY



Did you experience in your youth the folk wisdom of the annual spring tonic? The spring tonic may have consisted of a tea from nettles, sassafras, dandelion roots, blue violet, or fennel. Or were you served up a large portion of greens such as poke salad, "creecy-greens" or ramps?



West Virginians are known for their use of what is available to nourish and sustain themselves. But what did early West Virginians eat? The Native Americans who first inhabited the area were hunters and gatherers as were most early settlers.



They hunted what was available—deer, beaver, black bear, and raccoon—and gathered what was available—walnuts, chestnuts, hickory nuts, cherries and persimmons.



Today's West Virginians are equally resourceful consumers of what is naturally available—brook trout, wild game, berries, nuts, ramps, and the Golden Delicious apple first discovered in West Virginia in about 1914.

Whatever your pleasure for a "spring tonic" keep greens in mind. Potential abounds for nutrition, variety, flavor, and fun!

Web sites of interest:

- ehow.com
- urbangardencasual.com
- appalachianhistory.net
- kanawha.ext.wvu.edu

MARCH WINDS AND APRIL SHOWERS BRING.....MAY FLOWERS!

And Mayflowers bring.....Pilgrims! As you put on your walking shoes for your daily exercise, have you ever wondered if the Pilgrims exercised? Maybe not!

But, the history of physical activity and exercise tells us that people have been doing this for a long time. From the ancient Greeks and their Olympic games to modern day athletic games, people throughout history have exercised.



Whether exercise was intentional, as in training for sport, or part of activities of daily living, our ancestors were much more active as a society than we are today. Hippocrates (460-370 BC) stated "if we could give every individual the right amount of nourishment and exercise, not too little and not too much, we would have found the safest way to health".

Galen (AD 129-210) distinguished between activity and exercise when he noted "those movements which do not alter respirations are not called exercise". And Hieronymus Mercurialis (1530-1606) said "exercise is deliberate and planned movement of the human frame, accompanied by breathlessness, and undertaken for the sake of health or fitness....."



Early American colonists had little time for the pursuit of fitness outside the hardships of daily life. But some of our early leaders saw value in regular physical activities like running, walking, and swimming. Benjamin Franklin was known to swim in the Delaware River. He said, "Use now and then a little exercise, a quarter of an hour before meals, as to swing a weight, or swing your arms about with a small weight in each hand; to leap, or the like, for that stirs the muscles of the breast".

Thomas Jefferson stated "walking is the best possible exercise...habituate yourself to walk very fast".



In early America, people didn't think so much about the effect of exercise on health. For the wealthy it was more about recreation and leisure. They spent their recreational time swimming running, horse

MARCH WINDS AND APRIL SHOWERS BRING.....MAY FLOWERS!



back riding, playing tennis, croquet, and fencing. Children of the wealthy had hoops and balls to play with.

The poor had little time for sport. Their time was spent doing physical labor. Chores included cleaning, washing clothes, chopping wood, trimming grass, gardening, and climbing trees to pick fruit that would be loaded onto carts to push through town and sell. Children of these families helped with the work.



As the Industrial Revolution moved America forward, a more sedentary lifestyle appeared. With less activity, American citizens began to experience diseases related to lack of fitness. Physical Education classes entered the school system to promote exercise.

Now in the 21st century, exercise is looked at in two ways. We can choose an exercise for fitness such as walking, running, jogging, biking, hiking, swimming, or rowing. On the other hand we can choose a sport that serves as exercise such as golf, tennis, basketball, baseball, badminton, or croquet. As long as we do something we like to do, and are as active as we can be, the end result will be better health.

While we are thinking about health, let's return to the ideas of our ancestors. It wasn't complicated then or now. "The right amount of nourishment and exercise" (Hippocrates) performed hard enough to "alter respirations" (Galen) and making that exercise "deliberate and planned" (Hieronymus) can have the end result of good health.

Can't make up your mind which exercise to do? Keep it simple. "Swing your arms about with a small weight in each hand" (Franklin) and "habituate yourself to walk very fast" (Jefferson). But have fun whatever you choose to do!



SPRING FORWARD WITH SALADS

Looking for new ways to eat those spring greens? Try these recipes and you'll be wild for spring!



Broccoli is one of those green vegetables that seems to have it all. It packs a powerful punch of 19 nutrients. Eat one serving (one cup) and you will be downing excellent quantities of vitamin C, vitamin A, and folic acid. Add to that very good quantities of potassium and B vitamins. Broccoli also brings to the table phosphorus, magnesium, protein, zinc and vitamin E, to name a few more. Broccoli also provides a healthy amount of dietary fiber.



Broccoli can be prepared in a variety of ways so that every age group can enjoy it. Toddlers will appreciate pureed broccoli. Just steam it and throw it in the food processor.

While vegetable enthusiasts might enjoy it steamed and served with a light hollandaise sauce, one relatively new way to enjoy broccoli is to have it in a coleslaw. This could be a way for "picky eaters" to appreciate the health bene-

SPRING FORWARD WITH SALADS



fits of this great green vegetable!

Source: http://dancing-gecko.wordpress.com/2009/01/11/broccoli-nutrients/

Tangy Broccoli Slaw

This recipe was modified slightly from a recipe by Ellie Krieger. Serves 4.

1 cup nonfat plain Greek yogurt*

1/3 cup toasted pine nuts or sunflower seeds

¼ cup low fat buttermilk

Juice of 2 lemons

2 Tablespoons light mayonnaise with olive oil

1 Tablespoon spicy brown mustard

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

(1) 12 oz. package of fresh broccoli, carrot, and red cabbage mix

Whisk dressing ingredients together and stir in a large bowl with shredded coleslaw mix. Add salt and pepper to taste. This salad tastes better if allowed to chill for one hour before serving.

*If you do not have Greek yogurt you can simply drain plain non-fat yogurt for an hour or two through a paper towel placed inside a strainer. If you can't find the coleslaw mix, you could cut up carrots and broccoli stalks with a food processor to make your own mix.

Classic Salade Niçoise

Here's a recipe for a tasty spring meal in one bowl. You may use a variety of fresh greens. Serves 4.

6 small red potatoes, scrubbed and cut into quarters



¼ pound fresh green beans, trimmed and halved

(Continued on page 6)

RECIPE CORNER

(Continued from page 5)

1 cup chicken broth or stock

1 pound fresh tuna

1 teaspoon salt

1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

2 Tablespoons olive oil

2 sprigs fresh rosemary or 1 Tablespoon dried



1 head Romaine or butter lettuce

1 Tablespoon chopped fresh parsley

6 plum tomatoes, halved

½ cup Kalamata or black olives, pitted and halved

¼ cup red onion, thinly sliced

Use a simple marinade of salt, pepper, olive oil and minced rosemary to season tuna. Cook by either grilling over charcoal or braising it in a skillet on the stove until tuna reaches a satisfactory degree of readiness (125° to 140° internal temperature with meat thermometer).

Parboil potatoes in chicken stock until tender; set aside to cool. Add green beans to the same stock and cook until almost tender. Tear lettuce into bite-sized pieces and place in a large bowl. Add all vegetables and top with precooked tuna. Toss with Niçoise dressing.

Niçoise Dressing:

Juice of 2 lemons

2 teaspoons Dijon mustard

4 Tablespoons olive oil

2 Tablespoons chopped shallots or green onions

2 Tablespoons capers, drained and chopped

2 cloves fresh garlic, minced

Salt and pepper to taste

Shrimp and Dill Salad with Creole Tomato Salad Dressing

1 pound boiled shrimp

1 small head Romaine lettuce or a variety of salad



greens

1 Tablespoon dried dill

6 plum tomatoes, quartered

RECIPE CORNER

¼ cup pickled banana peppers, chopped



Prepare shrimp first by bringing 8 cups water to a boil. Season water with salt, two lemons and ½ teaspoon red pepper.

Place shrimp in boiling mixture and return to a boil. Cook for approximately three minutes then turn off the heat. Let stand for five minutes to soak up seasoning then drain, cool and peel shrimp.

Tear lettuce into bite-sized pieces. Add shrimp, tomatoes, dill and banana peppers. Any colorful peppers of your choice may be added to the vegetable mix of your salad.

Mix in the Creole Tomato salad dressing (recipe below) and enjoy!

*Hint: The shrimp may be prepared up to a day ahead for easy meal preparation.

Creole Tomato Salad Dressing:

½ cup light mayonnaise with olive oil

1 Tablespoon apple cider vinegar

1 Tablespoon spicy brown mustard

1 large or two medium fresh tomatoes, skinned and pureed

1 Tablespoon parsley, chopped finely

1 Tablespoon green onion, chopped finely

1 Tablespoon Tony's Creole Seasoning

1/2 teaspoon black pepper

Prepare tomato by dipping it in boiling water to remove skin. Remove seeds and puree in food processor or food chopper.

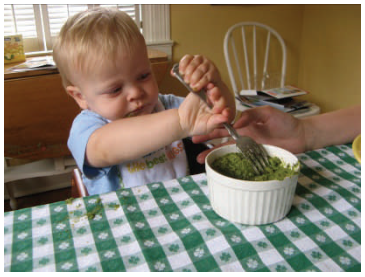
Add parsley and green onions to processor and chop very finely. Mix other ingredients together, including mayonnaise, vinegar, olive oil, and Creole seasoning. Slowly stir in tomato and adjust the seasoning if necessary.



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WVU EXTENSION SERVICE OFFERS CLASSES

Are you interested in gardening, food preparation, nutrition, food preservation, edible landscaping and more?



Your county Extension Service offers these classes and many more either free or for a very reasonable cost.

For example, in Kanawha county in May 2011 there will be classes on preserving tomatoes and green beans, making jams and jellies and freezing fresh produce to name a few.

Dining with Diabetes, Community Gardening, Edible Landscaping, Basic Cooking, and Nutrition in the Kitchen are examples of other types of classes provided by the WVU Extension Service.

For a calendar of events in Kanawha County go to: Kanawha.ext.wvu.edu. Don't live in Kanawha county? Simply replace "Kanawha" with the name of your county for classes and information specific to your area.

