

Food and Fitness

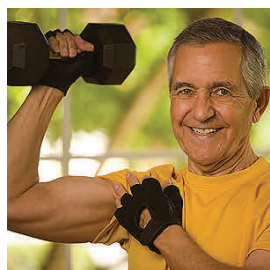
May is Older Americans Month



OLDER AMERICANS MONTH 2013

Unleash the Power of Age!

According to the United States government's Administration on Aging Older Americans month was originally celebrated as Senior Citizens Month as early as 1963. President Jimmy Carter re-designated the celebration as Older Americans Month in 1980.

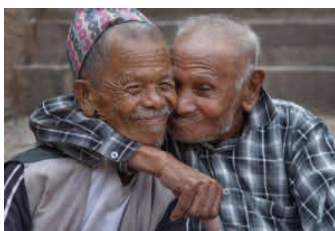
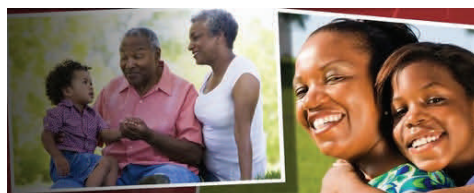


The 2013 theme for Older Americans Month *Unleash the Power of Age* speaks to the power of wisdom,

experience, and happiness that come from a long life well-lived. Have you achieved all this or are you a work in progress!

Having family and friends and the health and time to enjoy them are all that really matter. The time is now!

- Call family members more often
- Get together with a childhood friend



- Write to a former work colleague

- Join a book club
- Start a walking group
- Invite your next-door neighbor for dinner
- Start a progressive dinner at your house
- Have your grandchildren connect with you via "Facebook" or

texting—it's likely the only way they will communicate with you!

Volume 133

May 2013

Websites of interest:

- aol.gov
- eldercare.gov
- exerciseismedicine.org

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“Exercise Is Medicine”

"Exercise Is Medicine" is a national initiative created by Dr. Robert Sallis and introduced by the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) and the American Medical Association in 2007. May is the designated month to celebrate "Exercise is Medicine".

Why, you may ask, is exercise valued as highly as medicine?



Research shows that exercise and physical activity play a role in prevention and treatment of more than 40 chronic diseases. Regular exercise can:

- reduce the incidence of heart disease and high blood pressure
- lower the risk of stroke
- lower the risk of develop-



- ing type 2 diabetes
- be twice as effective in treating type 2 diabetes as standard insulin therapy
- decrease depression as effectively as medication or therapy
- reduce the risk of developing Alzheimer's disease
- lower the risk of colon cancer

..... and this list could go on and on.

Evidence cited by the World Health Organization in 2004 listed physical inactivity as the 4th

leading risk for death in the world, falling behind high blood pressure, tobacco use, and

high blood sugar.

More recent evidence shows inactivity to be the leading cause of death in the

US. A low level of physical activity can put a person at greater risk of dying than do smoking, obesity, hypertension, or high cholesterol. ("Physical Inactivity: The biggest public health problem of the 21st century" by Steven Blair, published in the *British Journal of Sports Medicine* 2009).

The goal of "Exercise Is Medicine" is to encourage physicians and other health care providers to include exercise when developing treatment plans for their patients and clients. Assessing physi-



cal activity should be included as a "vital sign" and assessed at each doctor's appointment just like blood

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“Exercise Is Medicine”

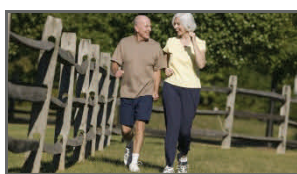
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pressure, heart rate, and body weight are assessed.

ACSM recommendations for exercise include:

- Cardio-respiratory exercise—150 minutes per week of moderate intensity physical activity, such as brisk walking
- Resistance exercise—free weights, dyna-bands or lifting soup cans 2-3 times per week
- Flexibility exercise—stretching 2-3 times per week
- Neuromotor exercise—balance exercise 2-3 times per week

If you fol-



low a regular exercise program, then good for you!

You are being proactive when it comes to your health. If you don't have a regular exercise routine yet, or if you've gotten away from regular activity, one of the easiest ways to begin is to start walking or climb back onto your stationary bike.

The "Exercise is Medicine" website gives guidelines for starting an exercise program. It is important to make your exercise be like a daily dose of medicine—take your dose of exercise daily.

- Choose an activity you enjoy
- Start with short intervals
- Start at a comfortable pace Make sure you have enough breath to talk while you exercise
- Gradually increase the dis-



tance and the speed as you become more fit

- Work your way up to at least 30 minutes daily, either altogether or broken up into multiple segments



- Exercise with friends
- Check with your doctor if you have questions about whether it is safe for you to begin exercising. If you would feel more comfortable beginning an exercise program under supervision, check with a local health club or cardiac rehab facility.

Celebrating Cinco de Mayo

Cinco de Mayo rolls around every year and we Americans continue to wonder what is being celebrated! Cinco de Mayo—or the fifth of May—commemorates the Mexican army’s victory over France at the battle of Puebla during the Franco-Mexican War (1861-1867).

Mexico’s smaller less well equipped forces repelled France’s attempt to establish a stronghold in Mexico. A minor holiday in Mexico, Cinco de Mayo in the US celebrates the culture and cuisine of Mexico, especially in areas with large Mexican-American population.

Many Americans perceive Mexican food to be a platter of enchiladas smothered with yellow cheese and sour cream. However, authentic Mexican food focuses on the use of a wide variety of beans and vegetables, especially peppers. Diana Kennedy is American-born, yet has come to be an expert on

regional Mexican cooking. Tips and recipes from her book *The Art of Mexican Cooking* follow.

Beans

Mexican markets always showcase a large variety of open sacks of beans. An ex-



cellent source of protein and fiber, regional varieties of beans play a key role in the nutrition of the Mexican culture.

Preparation of beans also varies among regions of Mexico. While different herbs may be used in different areas, most use an earthenware bean pot. In the U.S. a crock pot or slow cooker



can serve the same purpose. Different types of beans require different cooking times. Pinto

beans may take only two to three hours while black beans might take all day to cook.

Vegetables

Kennedy says the American concept of a meal with “a meat and two vegetables” does not exist in the traditional Mexican kitchen. Fresh vegetables are often



combined in soups and stews, and as part of many main dishes. Often they are cooked with other ingredi-

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Celebrating Cinco de Mayo

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ents, then left to stew briefly in their own juices, like the Mexican *guisados*, or stews with meat and vegetables. Although one can get almost



any vegetable in Mexican markets or supermarkets, it is most common to prepare those that are fresh from one's own garden.

Squash of different



types is a much-used vegetable in Mexican cooking. Not only is the squash used but

sometimes even the flowers are stewed for soups and quesadillas! (Warning: Gathering, preparing and cooking the squash blossoms is a



somewhat tedious process and should be left to the experts or adventurous cooks!) Included in the Recipe Corner is one of the simplest ways of cooking small squash or zucchini.

Meat

The predominant meat in Mexican cuisine is that which can be raised domestically, like chicken, turkey or pork. This is true for most of Mexico, except in

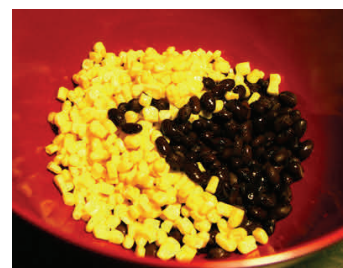


the North, where cattle-raising is important. According to Kennedy chickens raised in Mexico tend to have firmer flesh and more flavor than their US counterparts. Hence, they are suitable for the methods of cooking in Mexico. They are sometimes poached, with the meat shredded for tacos and enchiladas, or seasoned, wrapped in leaves, and barbecued on a pit dug into the earth.

Meat is not a mainstay of the Mexican cuisine, in part because of its expense and limited availability.

Beans and corn products take pre-

dominance in the Mexican diet, providing a substantially nutritious substitute and offering a good deal less fat than the traditional American diet of "meat and potatoes."



Recipe Corner

Barbacoa de Pollo (Barbecued Chicken)

The term Barbacoa is used here very loosely. In



Mexico it means putting a cauldron of liquid over hot coals in a 3-foot deep pit dug into the earth. A grill is placed over the cauldron and the meat—typically from the head of a goat or cow—is wrapped in banana leaves and placed on top of the grill.



Vegetables and spices are often added to the cauldron. The whole apparatus is sealed tightly and covered with damp earth. It may cook overnight or all day, becoming moist, tender, and flavorful.

Not inclined toward this method? You can achieve ALMOST the same effects using your own barbecue pit, an overnight marinade, and lots of spices! Here's how.

Start this sauce the day before:

6 chiles anchos (ancho chili peppers)

1 small can mild green whole chili peppers

1 1/4 cups hot water

1/2 cup vinegar

3 cloves garlic, crushed

4 whole buds allspice, crushed

1 teaspoon ground cumin

1 teaspoon ground chipotle chili pepper

2 peppercorns, crushed

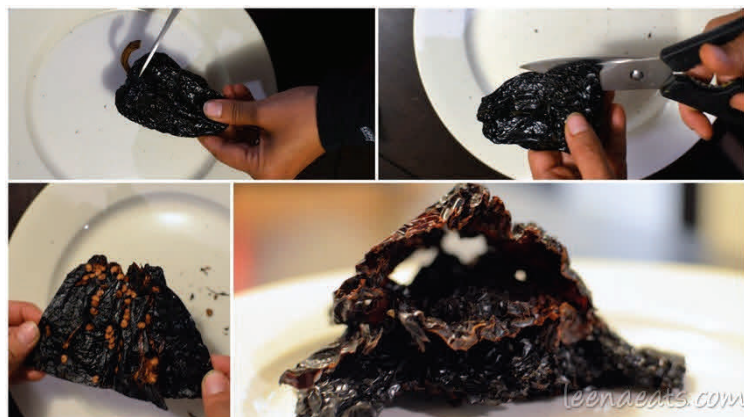
1 1-inch cinnamon stick, broken up

1 teaspoon dried Mexican oregano

3 cloves garlic, peeled and chopped finely

1 tablespoon oil

1 small chicken (about 2 1/2 lbs.) cut into pieces



Slit dried ancho chili peppers open and remove seeds and veins. Cover with hot water and simmer about five minutes. Remove from

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Recipe Corner

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heat but leave peppers in water about 10 minutes more. To a blender, slowly add water, spices and the *chiles anchos*, little by little. Blend after each addition. Then add the green chiles, blending thoroughly.



Heat the oil in a frying pan, add the blended sauce, and cook over medium heat, stirring often, for about five minutes. Remove from heat and set aside to cool. The sauce will begin to thicken with standing.

Spread over chicken pieces and place covered in the refrigerator to marinate overnight. A large zip-lock bag works nicely for this!

To cook, start a fire in a charcoal grill, adding pecan wood for extra flavor. After the fire has reached its peak,



place chicken on the grill to the side. Allow to cook, about 30 minutes, or until chicken reaches a safe temperature of 165°F. Take it off the pit and cool for five



minutes. For an authentic presentation, serve the chicken on banana leaves, garnished with optional toppings.

OPTIONAL TOPPINGS:

Freshly sliced avocado
Lime slices
Finely sliced radishes
Finely sliced white onion



Chopped fresh cilantro

Calabacitas Guisados

(stewed squash)

1 tablespoon oil
1 small finely chopped white onion
2 large cloves garlic
3 fresh tomatoes, unpeeled, chopped roughly
2 tablespoons mild or hot green chili peppers, seeds and stems removed (Kennedy uses *chiles serranos* but these are very hot!)
2 pounds small calabash or zucchini squash, sliced

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Recipe Corner

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Salt to taste

Heat oil in a large cov-



ered skillet. Add onion and garlic, and sauté gently for a few minutes. Add tomatoes and peppers and cook over fairly high heat to reduce liq-



uid—about five to ten minutes. Finally add zucchini and salt; cover skillet and cook until juice has been ab-

sorbed and zucchini is well-seasoned.

Frijoles Negros (black beans)

1 pound dried black beans

1 small white onion, roughly sliced

½ small head (whole pod) of garlic

10 cups hot water

Salt to taste

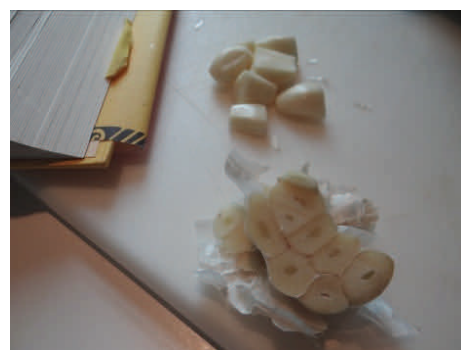
Wash and sort the beans, discarding any brown ones or debris. Rinse in cold water and put into a slow cooker.



Add the onions. Cut garlic across the top and place in the center of the pot for later removal. Cover with hot water and cook on high setting in crock pot until beans are soft—4-8 hours, depending on the age of the beans. Salt

to taste when the beans are soft.

You may want to serve them in a small bowl, adding cilantro and sour cream, for



an American touch!

Whether you are celebrating Cinco de Mayo in Mexico or in America be sure to enjoy Mexico's unique and flavorful cuisine to commemorate the day! Try one of these recipes or if you are dining out, be daring and order an authentic Mexican dish such as these are!



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News You Can Use!

“Gut Bugs” Increase Risk for Heart Disease?

Scientists at the Cleveland Clinic report that microbes present in the gut may convert lecithin from egg yolks, liver, and red meat into an artery clogging substance called TMAO. High blood levels of TMAO are associated with heart disease. Antibiotics can lower levels of TMAO.

New Engl J Med 4-24-13

Sugary Drinks Raise Risk of Diabetes by 22%

A European study of 350,000 people confirmed that drinking just one 12-oz. can of sugary drink a day can raise risk of having type 2 diabetes. The same was not true for fruit juice and unsweetened soft drinks.



Diabetologia 4-24-13

Heart Bypass vs. Stents

Slightly more Medicare patients with heart bypass surgery (74%) survived 5 years than those who had stenting of the arteries (72%). However, stenting may have been a better option for those with disease in only one blood vessel. Doctors and patients should decide which is best for each individual considering such procedures.

Ann Intern Medicine 4-22-13