

FOOD AND FITNESS

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“An Apple a Day Keeps the Doctor Away” or Health Notes for Making Cancer “History”

October brings to mind crisp West Virginia ap-



ples and a bounty of fall vegetables from



which to choose. While young people



spend the next few weeks planning their Halloween costumes, older folks prepare for the arrival of trick-or-treaters at the front door. The tradition of bobbing for ap-



ples used to go hand in hand with Halloween!

Another major event occurring in October is National Breast Cancer Awareness Month, an annual health



campaign organized to increase awareness of the disease. The event also serves to raise funds for research into the cause, prevention, diagnosis, treatment, and cure of breast cancer.

This month's Food and Fitness will explore how apples can be both preventive medicine and a positive way to impact those who have been diag-

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Websites of Interest

- nci.org
- aicr.org
- webmd.com/footcare

Don't Suffer De“feet”!

This football and soccer season don't suffer the defeat of painful feet! You know that regular exercise is essential for health.

- You're advised to take walks and to stay active—everyday.
- You've established a great exercise routine (game plan!) and maintained it throughout the summer.
- You've made plans to walk with your friends (coaches!) at the mall through the winter or to meet them at a local gym.
- Don't be sidelined (!) by painful feet!



Anyone can suffer foot pain from time to time.

Few things can ruin your game like problems with your feet—aches and pain from corns, calluses, blisters, plantar fasciitis, sprains, and arthritis. Per-



sons with diabetes are particularly at risk for foot problems due to decreased circulation in the lower extremities.

The good news is there are steps you can take to prevent foot problems:

- Don't skimp on shoes
- Wear the right socks
- Keep feet clean and well

cared for

- Examine your feet
- Exercise your feet
- Massage your feet

Ken Plancher, M.D., director of Plancher Orthopedics and Sports Medicine advises, “There definitely is a difference in sneakers... you have to be serious enough to invest in good footwear...” He further advises that exercise shoes should “feel like heaven” from the moment you try them on.

When shopping for new shoes, go to a



store where the sales personnel know how to fit your foot.

Make sure you also wear the right socks. Poor choices in socks can cause friction, which eventually



Don't Suffer De“feet”!

leads to irritation and injury, especially blisters.

Morris Morin, DPM, chairman of the Department of Podiatry at Hackensack University Medical Center, says “if

socks are too thick, rough in texture, too tight, or too loose...friction multiplies and so does your risk of foot problems”. Find socks with a cushioned sole and fabric designed to wick away moisture.

White socks are best so you can notice bleeding or other stains that could indicate injury. Wear clean, dry socks each time you exercise.



Wash your feet daily. Use mild soap and warm water. Be sure to dry them

thoroughly. You can use lotion to prevent cracking but don't put lotion between your toes. Keep your toenails trimmed but be careful not to cut them too short.



Check your feet every day. Look for redness, warmth, tenderness, swelling, cuts, scratches, or blisters. Follow your healthcare provider's guidelines for treating minor foot problems.

See your physician if you have delayed healing. See your physician if you have cracking between the toes (this could be Athlete's Foot), ingrown toenails, blackening of the skin, infection, increased numbness or pain.

Exercise your feet to

increase circulation. While sitting, rotate your ankles in one direction, then the other. Sit with bare feet and curl your toes, then spread them out.

Give yourself a gentle foot massage and prop your feet up every chance you get! Don't sit for long periods. Stand up and move around now and then. Protect your

feet from cold in winter by wearing thick socks and waterproof boots when you go out in the snow.

It has been said that if your feet hurt, everything hurts. Take a few extra “steps” each day to protect



your feet so you can keep your exercise routine going through the winter months.

An Apple A Day.....

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nosed with breast cancer. No matter how you slice them, apples pack powerful health benefits for a variety of reasons.



Best Health Magazine lists fifteen ways that apples support a healthy body. (<http://www.besthealthmag.ca/eat-well/nutrition/15-health-benefits-of-eating-apples>) For starters, eating the apple, peelings and all, will stimulate production of saliva in the mouth. Saliva reduces tooth decay by lowering bacteria in the mouth.

Consider, also, eating apples as preventive medicine. Researchers at Cornell University have identified compounds called

“triterpenoids” in the apple peel that prevent growth of cancer cells in the liver, colon, and breast.

In another related study, scientists found that extracts from whole apples reduced the number and size of mammary tumors in rats. Since The National Cancer Institute recommends a high fiber, low-fat diet to reduce the risk of many cancers, apples make good sense for everyone!

Other health benefits of apples are obvious and



not so obvious. There is much truth to the old adage, “An apple a day keeps the doctor away.” Apples have long been associated with digestive regularity. Fiber can either pull water out of your colon and keep things

moving along in your digestive track, or absorb excess water to slow you down if you have the opposite problem.

There are at least two reasons why you can also have a healthier heart by including apples in your diet:



The soluble fiber found in apples binds with bile acids in the gut. New bile acids must be formed from cholesterol in the blood, thus lowering blood cholesterol levels.

Research has linked a high intake of soluble fiber with a slower build-up of plaque in the arteries. We know that too much plaque on the walls of the arteries reduces blood flow to the heart. Consequently con-

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An Apple A Day.....

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sumption of high-fiber fruits like apples, as well as all fruits and vegetables should help to reduce risk of coronary artery disease.

Most of the benefits of apples in preventing cancer are also gained by eating a variety of all fresh fruits and vegetables on a daily



basis. There is no single “best” vegetable or fruit. Each brings its own special cancer-fighting nutrients to the table. In fact, for those who have already received a diagnosis of cancer, a diet rich in a wide variety of fresh fruits and vegetables can offer patients a way to be proactive about their health.

"When you're being treated for cancer, it's im-

portant to avoid extreme diets that may leave you short on key nutrients," says Veronica McLymont, PhD, RD, director of food and nutrition services at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center. Instead, focus on eating a balanced diet. McLymont supports the recommendations of the 2010 USDA Dietary Guidelines as part of the wellness approach:

- Choose whole grain bread and cereals.
- Drink only 100% fruit or vegetable juices—pasteurized. Make sure they are pasteurized because you may be more susceptible to bacteria while you're receiving cancer treatment.
- Fill at least half of your plate with vegetables and fruits. Why not add a simple side salad?



- A few times a week, choose meatless meals such as beans, vegetarian lasagna or vegetable stir-fry.
- Snack on carrot sticks, sweet pepper slices, and fresh or dried fruits.

(<http://www.webmd.com/cancer/features/eating-treatment>)

If the crunchiness of a fresh apple is hard on your dentures you can peel and slice the apple for easier



eating. Or you might try getting the benefits of apples in other ways. You can puree, “drink”, or bake apples! Fruit juice and smoothie recipes abound, but one can also cut calories and carbohydrate from the traditional high carbohydrate juice drinks, while still

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Recipe Corner

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reaping the benefits of apples. One more way to enjoy apples is to make your own bran muffins and include fresh apples in the recipe. Finally, if you choose to bake the apples, be sure to eat the peelings for added nutrition.

Apple Oat Bran Muffins

2 large apples, cored and chopped into small cubes



2 cups whole-wheat flour
1 cup unbleached flour
1 cup oat bran or All-Bran cereal
2 1/2 teaspoons baking soda
1 teaspoon cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon nutmeg
2 cups 100% apple juice

1/2 cup unsweetened applesauce
1/3 cup water
1/3 cup chopped pecans or walnuts, lightly floured

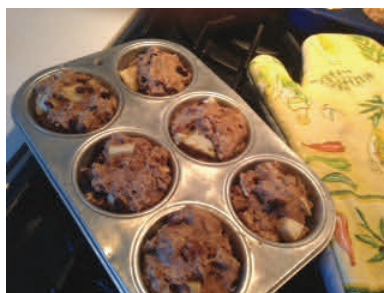
Heat oven to 325° F.
Lightly spray muffin pan with cooking spray.

In a mixing bowl, stir together flours, oat bran, baking soda, cinnamon, and nutmeg.

Add apple juice, chopped apples, pecans, and just enough of the 1/3 cup water to make a light batter.

Mix batter only enough to moisten all ingredients.

Mixing too much can toughen the muffins.



Divide batter among the muffin cups and bake till lightly browned, 25-30 minutes. Remove muffins

from pan while hot. This recipe, with modifications, originates from *Dr. Weil's Healthy Kitchen*.

Fizzy Fruit Punch

2 quarts 100% apple juice

2 cups pineapple juice

1 qt. lemon-lime carbonated water like Fresca or sugar free ginger ale, or club soda. Stir well to mix apple juice and pineapple juice. Add your choice of calorie-free carbonated water. Garnish with fresh mint and strawberries.



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Recipe Corner

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Easy Baked Apples

Experiment with different varieties of apples for your favorite flavor. Gala is exceptionally sweet and has a pleasing texture.

Wash apples and remove core but not peeling. Place in baking dish or custard cup. Sprinkle top with cinnamon and add a little water to bottom of baking



dish. Baked apples make a healthy addition to breakfast, lunch or dinner, as a light dessert! Try West Virginia honey crisps for baking or snacking!

Diary of a Breast Cancer Survivor

Diary of a Breast Cancer Survivor

By Catherine M. Townsend

July 15, 2004

Two of my favorite people, Ann and Cathy, stopped by to visit on their way home from having a mammogram. They wanted me to know that the exam was “a piece of cake” and recommended that I take advantage of the nice employees at a particular clinic in Lake Charles.

What they **didn't** know was that I had a prescription for the dreaded exam which I had been avoiding for six months—make that 21 years!

That same afternoon I called and made an appointment, feeling proud that I had finally taken care of business neglected since the birth of my second child in 1983!

July 30, 2004

I had the mammogram and everything my friends said about the clinic was true. The staff was very professional but also very kind and seemed to work on the premises that everyone who came in was special.

I had no clue there might be a problem until my gynecologist called to say I needed to talk with a surgeon. The results of the mammogram indicated a “problem.”

The next week was torture because the recommended surgeon was out-of-town. I remember sitting at a table outside and crying, imagining the worst that could be.

It wasn't enough that I had struggled with diabetes for 34 years. Now I was going to die from CANCER.

During that same

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Diary of A Breast Cancer Survivor

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week I met another girl who also got questionable results on her mammogram. She was waiting on the very same surgeon to return from his vacation! Nadine and I became fast friends.

August 3, 2004

Started my first day at a new job as the Director of Religious Education at the very same school both of my children attended. That same day I also started a period of my life that was pretty scary, to say the least.

The long-awaited conference with a local surgeon was bad news. But—he put me in touch with another local surgeon whose wife had marvelous success from treatment and recovery at MD Anderson.

Once the problem was identified, I was on the way toward being more “in charge” and feeling like there were decisions I could make about the outcome of

the disease. The tumor was measurable. There were tests that could show the surgeons exactly where and how to proceed.

I debated whether to have surgery locally or out of town. I decided to take my chances with the experience of the university and research-oriented MD Anderson, Houston, Texas.

September 16, 2004

I really want to keep this news of breast cancer to myself and my family. I do not like my personal business being blabbed all over town!

I finally gave it up when I realized that telling others about the problem inevitably resulted in the response that those friends and neighbors would pray for me. And I discovered that almost everyone knows someone who has cancer.

September 23, 2004

Motored to Houston for surgery. When they say, “attitude is everything,” it’s

true. And having two strong and supportive family members with you makes all the difference. My sister was my personal nurse and advocate; my husband was and is the love of my life (see photo p. 11).

When we walked into the hospital I kept telling myself, “This is just a vacation for us,” and, “Who are all these sick people? I’m not sick!”

September 24, 2004

Repeated several tests at MD Anderson, including mammogram and needle localization, to make surgeon’s job easier. Surgery to remove tumor from right breast started about 9:00 am. That part was finished by 4:00.

Then started with Round Two—sentinel node biopsy. Even though I was slightly uncomfortable, I spent the night in a hotel room with husband and sister, watching two weird

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Diary of A Breast Cancer Survivor

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movies and trying to follow the doctor's orders.

In less than two weeks I returned to work. I found so many kind friends who were willing to help me get back to normal.

Melinda took me shopping for the sports bra I never thought I'd wear; Rita was my taxi and brought me to school for a special event. Joyce took me to the local doctor for a follow-up. And Hubby took me to lunch at Piccadilly!

Oct. 5, 2004

Got the call from Lori, who said the margins from surgery were not clear. Translation: You need to come back and do something more! Good news, however—cancer had not spread to lymph nodes. Hooray!

October 14, 2004

Met with surgical oncologist and a fabulous new plastic surgeon, who told

me reconstruction was a definite possibility.

It was not something I even considered until today, but he said I was healthier than most of the women he treated! I was sold on the concept in less than one hour.

October 28, 2004

Had pre-op consultations with plastic surgeon, surgical assistant and anesthesiologist today—all very nice! Ann took me to Ruggles, a very fine lunch place indeed.

November 1, 2004

Wake up call at 5:00 am. Whew! But I am ready. Walked across to hospital and got an early start with pre-op procedures. I believe I lost it when they put those long white stockings on my legs.

There was something like a white knit thing for my hair as well, which I wore as French beret. I could not stop giggling with

my sister!

Started surgery at 8:00 and woke up about 4:00 pm. I said goodbye to cancer and hello to a healthy new me! Actually, I got rid of an unhealthy breast and some extra fat around my middle.

I was amazed and in awe of the plastic surgeon who designed something good from something not so attractive. My primary motivation for enduring this process [reconstructive surgery] was that I wanted to feel like a whole person. And it worked!

Got my “room with a view” shortly thereafter. I was constantly amazed at the parade of nurses who attended me—people from such a variety of origins: Philippine, Peruvian, Canadian, Nigerian, and Turkish. I loved talking with them all!

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Diary of A Breast Cancer Survivor

November 6, 2004

In the next few days I measured intake and output constantly. Went from catheter and four drains post-surgery to two drains in less than a week. Hooray!

Had visits from another great sister and a cancer survivor from home, who brought me a special pillow. Two best memories from hospital stay: great food, selected from a menu, served by men in tuxedos (!) and a special hair stylist who washed my poor, pitiful hair. YES!

November 15, 2004

Through the next few weeks of recovery, I note that “it’s good and necessary to have a supportive family.” My husband helps me in ways I never expected or could even imagine!

This feels like a vacation, in that I can sleep late, read for pleasure, and choose to nap if the need arises. One special treat: Sister-In-Law and good

friend, Evie brought me fresh vegetables with dip!

November 20, 2004

Doctors are pleased with the healing process.

Mardi Gras, 2005

Hubby drove me to Houston for second phase of reconstruction, nipple reconstruction. Ate dinner out with Karen and Tom, good friends and very supportive throughout process.

Spent night before and after at Rotary House. Started at 8:00, finished by 10:00 and out by Noon. Piece of cake, but wearing a plastic guard over breast. Not a pretty picture!

June 8-9, 2005

Mammogram at 8:00 was best yet. Took a maximum of fifteen minutes and only four shots.

Ate lunch at Churasco’s and drank sangria to celebrate! Visited with two plastic surgeons after lunch who kept asking the same question: “Is there anything

I do differently now or anything I can’t do that I *could* do in my life previous to surgery?”

HA! I keep telling them, “No!” Saw Oncologist last, who said he saw no changes since last mammogram—translation: he sees no evidence of cancer!!

For the next five years I visit the clinic annually and I continue to enjoy being one of the “not sick, just visiting” folks who come to MD Anderson.

When I am finally dismissed from this program I find I am rather sad to be leaving the doctors I have come to love. There is, however, a wellness program that I sign up for, so I still get to come in and say hello to the familiar fish tank and the delightful people who make this a place for well people!

September 15, 2013

Hubby and I headed for Houston on Tuesday for wellness check!!!!

Diary of A Breast Cancer Survivor



Autumn 2010

Catherine (center) tailgating with family.



Summer 2011

Catherine (left) ready for a game of croquet.



(Right)

Jeff, Catherine's husband and #1 support person!



Spring 2012

Catherine (left) lector at family wedding.

(Right) Catherine, the picture of health at her wellness check in Houston's MD Anderson Cancer Center September 17, 2013.



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Soy and Breast Cancer



Early studies suggesting a link between soy food components (isoflavones) and breast cancer caused concern over eating soy foods for many people. These studies were done with rodents.

Scientists now know that rodents and humans metabolize soy isoflavones differently. Human estrogen levels do not rise with consumption of soy foods.

Six recent human studies have shown that eat-

ing soy foods does not cause recurrence in breast cancer survivors. Studies further show that soy foods may even be protective for breast cancer patients.

Think about it. Asian countries consume large quantities of soy foods. Incidence of breast cancer was lower in Asian countries until they began to eat more of a western diet. Now they are catching up with us!

Best advice for pre-

venting breast cancer and for breast cancer survivors:

- Maintain a healthy weight—this means lose weight if BMI is greater than 25.
- Be physically active.
- Avoid or limit alcohol.
- Eat lots of vegetables daily.
- Eat fruit daily.

aicr.org and "Soy is Safe for Breast Cancer Survivors". November 21, 2012 AICR Cancer Research Update.