



Food and Fitness



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Matters of the Heart

February brings Valentine's Day and American Heart Month. Both deal with matters of the heart and they are interrelated.

Love, laughter, happiness and connection to others promote greater heart health. While diamonds may be a girl's best

friend, flowers and candy can be a close second and a good thing!

Making this a healthy Valentine's Day and Heart month can be a breeze. Here are some things you can do for your valentine:

Give dark chocolate with high cacao %.

Cook a healthy meal—see Recipe

Corner for ideas.

Take him/her to a funny movie—laughter is medicine.

Exercising with your valentine is more fun than doing it alone.



Nutrition Tips for the Heart

Heart smart eating can help not just your heart, but your whole body. A few tips:



- Replace saturated fat (cheese, butter, bacon and sausage

grease) with monounsaturated fat (nuts, avocado, and olive oil)

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Websites of interest:

- nutritionevidence.library.com
- adaevidencelibrary.com

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Slow Cooking in a Fast Paced World

Slow cookers are hot! Rival's Crock Pot trade mark is now used generically to refer to the appliance that —"cooks all day while the cook's away"!



During the energy crisis of the 1970s, Americans were encouraged to conserve energy, and crock pots operated at a very low wattage. In addition, more women were abandoning their traditional roles as homemakers to enter the work force. The slow cooker fit their new life-style.

Slow cookers have proven over time to be both efficient and economical in food preparation. Consider these five good reasons why you might want to dust off your crock pot and start cooking:

Great Variety

The crock pot is no longer used simply as a glorified pot roast cooker. In fact, it can be used to prepare appetizers, soups, vegetables, breads, main dishes and even desserts. Crock Pot expert Stephanie O'Dea devoted an entire year testing 365 crock pot recipes. She then published a cookbook called Make It Fast, Cook It Slow. To access the recipes online: crockpot365.blogspot.com. Then click on "index" to get free recipes.

Quick Prep Time

Most of the recipes for using the crock pot can be assembled in a matter of minutes, saving time for other things. With a crock pot no one has to stand up in the kitchen for long.

You can start cooking in the morning and return home at the day's end to enjoy a finished dish. Or, you might put together a recipe at lunchtime and enjoy it for the evening meal.

Saves Energy

Crock pot cooking uses less energy than an

oven, stovetop, or barbeque pit. Less energy consumption means you'll pay less for utilities at the month's end. During the winter months, when energy bills typically go up for heating, conserving energy will help. During the summer, using a slow-cooker will keep your air conditioner from working too hard.

Saves Money

O'Dea recommends you also save money on groceries by stocking your freezer with your own broths, gravies, or special sauces. She often freezes or cans foods prepared in the crock pot for another meal. O'Dea also uses leftovers in creative ways. She has created recipes for bread pudding, refried beans, chili, and vegetable soup by cleaning out the pantry!

Makes a House Smell Like a Home

After a long day of slow-cooking your new favorite recipe your home will be filled with that aroma. And that's something good to come home

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Recipe Corner with the Crock Pot

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to after a busy day at work, carpooling grandchildren, or spending free time out that otherwise would have been spent at the stove.

Choosing a Slow Cooker

Crock pots come in different sizes, so choose a slow cooker to fit your family's needs. For example, a 2-quart cooker is perfect for 1-2 people; for a family of 3-4, a 4-quart cooker would be a good choice. If you have a large cooker but want to do a small dessert, try inserting an oven-safe dish into your stoneware crock pot to create a smaller vessel.

Some things to remember:

- Not all recipes in the slow cooker take all day. Most cookers have two to three different settings, so you can vary the speed at which the food is cooked.
- Be sure to wear oven mitts or use pot holders to prevent burning your hands—the outside of the slow cooker also gets hot!

After trying these recipes perhaps the slow cooker will gain a place of honor on your countertop with other appliances.

Make Your Own Applesauce

4 large apples or pears, peeled, cored, and cut in quarters



Juice of 1 lemon
1/3 cup water
1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
1 teaspoon vanilla
1 Tablespoon brown sugar

Directions

Peel, core, and cut apples into quarters. Place apple pieces into the crock

pot with lemon juice and



water. Add cinnamon, vanilla, and brown sugar.

Cover and cook on low setting 4-5 hours.

When the apples are tender, mash with a blender or food processor.

Notes:

- You can vary the flavor and sweetness of the applesauce by using different varieties of apples.
- Making applesauce is a good way to use apples that have lost their crunchiness.
- Vanilla makes the applesauce darker than commercial products. Leave it out if you want your sauce to be lighter!

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Recipe Corner with the Crock Pot

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Roasted Chicken with Artichokes

An elegant and light meal with very little effort.

1 small fryer, skinned



1 Tablespoon olive oil
 Tony's Cajun Seasoning
 2 cloves fresh garlic, finely chopped
 ½ cup onion, chopped
 2 pieces celery, about four inches long
 3 Tablespoons whole grain mustard like Gray Poupon
 Juice of 2 lemons
 ¼ cup white wine
 1 can artichoke hearts with juice
 2 Tablespoons fresh parsley, chopped
 ¼ red or orange pepper, sliced thinly
 Freshly ground black pepper

Remove skin from

chicken. Coat outside with olive oil, using about one tablespoon. Sprinkle with Tony's Cajun Seasoning and black pepper. Put celery and onion inside the cavity and place chicken in center of crock pot.

Mix together garlic, mustard, lemon juice, and white wine to make a marinade and pour liquid over the top. Decorate top of chicken with thinly sliced red peppers. Cover and cook about 3-4 hours on high setting. When chicken appears to be almost cooked, add parsley and artichoke hearts and cook another thirty minutes on low setting. Serve with your favorite whole wheat pasta.

Rosemary Pot Roast

Hassle-free supper all in one pot.

1 (2 1/2 pound) lean boneless beef roast (sirloin tip or



round)

2 Tablespoons flour
 1 Tablespoon olive oil or olive oil spray
 1 Tablespoon prepared horseradish
 2 yellow onions, peeled and cut into large chunks
 6 small red potatoes, cut in halves
 ½ pound carrots, cleaned and cut into 3-4 inch pieces
 ½ cup red wine
 1 Tablespoon chopped fresh rosemary (stems removed)
 1 cup low sodium beef broth
 1 teaspoon hot pepper sauce
 Salt and pepper to taste

Trim any visible fat from beef. Sprinkle beef with flour and brown in a skillet coated with olive oil spray.

Place browned roast in bottom of large slow cooker. Spread horseradish over surface of meat. Surround roast with vegetables and sprinkle with rosemary, salt and pepper.

Mix wine and beef broth together; pour mixture around beef and vegetables. Cook on low setting

Recipe Corner with the Crock Pot

about 5 hours, or until beef is tender. Garnish with sprigs of rosemary.

Dark Chocolate Fondue

The slow cooker is a great way to prepare and serve fondue. You won't need a double boiler to melt the chocolate sauce. You can also use the crock pot to serve it because the low heat will keep the sauce at just the right temperature.

6 oz. dark Chocolate (62% Cacao)
2 oz. semisweet chocolate
1 Tbs. soft margarine
¼ cup evaporated milk

Place chocolates and margarine in an oven-proof quart-sized dish. Set dish inside the earthenware portion of crock pot and turn heat on low setting.

In a separate small pan heat evaporated milk to just below boiling point. After the chocolate has melted whisk milk into chocolate mixture and continue heating a few minutes. When ready to serve, stir the mixture. Serve as a

dip for fresh berries, sliced apples, bananas or your favorite fresh fruits.

What Makes Dark Chocolate Healthy?

Chocolate is made from a plant, the cocoa bean. Most plants contain natural protective chemicals called antioxidants and flavonoids and the cocoa bean is no exception.

These protective substances neutralize free radicals which can cause damage to organs and tissues. They also help to lower blood pressure through the production of nitric oxide,



which relaxes the blood vessels. Dark chocolate contains nearly 8 times the number of antioxidants found in strawberries. So have some dark chocolate fondue with your strawberries... and apples, and peaches, and pears!



Living Better

While we all hope for a long happy life it appears that our life expectancy is not increasing! We may have reached our maximum longevity for this era.



This report comes from research by Eileen Crimmins and Hiram Beltran-Sanchez which was published in the December *Journal of Gerontology*.

Additionally, and perhaps a bit more disturbing, their research suggests we may be spending more of our later years dealing with illness than we did just a decade ago.

Crimmins and Beltran-Sanchez studied morbidity, the part of life spent with serious illness. When compared with mortality (death) their research

indicated that our time of morbidity is also increasing. This may mean we are seriously ill longer.

Why is this happening?

It is well known that advances in medicine have led to greater success in managing chronic disease and dealing with the consequences of disease. We are living longer but possibly



having to deal with illness longer. Lack of mobility, such as the ability

to walk up a flight of steps or around the block is increasing for us in our later years.

The explosion of obesity, and in many cases, lifelong obesity is in part to blame. Accompanying

maladies such as diabetes, hypertension, and cholesterol problems contribute to



our decline in health in later years. Generations that follow us can expect to have to deal with similar issues unless we turn the tide of obesity.

What can we do about this?

Since we know that physical inactivity plays a vital role in the development of many diseases, we have to take the bull by the horns and get active. We have to start from where we are and work up to a regu-



lar exercise program. The

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Living Better

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first step is to clear it with your doctor regarding your health and how **you** should start an exercise program.

Regular exercise burns calories and can help you lose weight if needed, or maintain a healthy weight. Exercise strengthens muscles and gives you more energy. In essence, exercise helps you to



live better. Isn't this what all of us really want? We want to live long, healthy lives. We want to decrease the number of years in our lives that are spent seriously ill. Exercise is an important element to help sway the odds in our favor.

A good exercise routine includes aerobic exercise, strength training and



stretching. Aerobic exercise involves moving continuously for a time to the point of elevating your heart rate, breathing a little harder, and even breaking a sweat. Movement such as walking, jogging, riding a bike, swimming,

dancing, or hiking would be considered aerobic exercise. Strength training includes using handheld weights, weight machines, elastic bands, or lifting items like soup cans or cartons of milk.



Stretching exercises including yoga help to prevent injury and maintain range of motion around the joints.

Exercise helps senior citizens stay independent by maintaining strong hearts, lungs, muscles and bones. Exercise also helps

to guard against mental decline. Seniors who have strong muscles also sway the odds in favor of



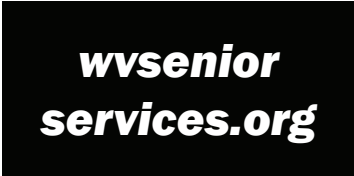
better balance and less chance for falls and debilitating injury.

So, when we read reports that say our life spans may have reached the limit of how long we can live, let us resolve to live better through exercise. By living better it just may be

that we live longer, healthier years!



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Nutrition Tips for the Heart

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- Consume fish and fish oil with pre-existing heart disease to prevent future heart events.
- Make vegetables and fruits the center of the



meal.
• Replace refined carbohydrate (sugar, corn

syrup, white bread, rice, and crackers) with complex carbohydrate (beans, peas, whole grain breads, rice, and crackers).



- Avoid trans fats—the kind found in stick mar-

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 1 cup (200g)	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 260	
	% Daily Value
Fat 13g	20%
Saturated Fat 3g	25%
+ Trans Fat 2g	
Cholesterol 90mg	10%
Sodium 660 mg	28%
Carbohydrate 31g	10%
Fiber 0g	0%
Sugars 5g	
Protein 5g	
Vitamin A 4%	Vitamin C 2%

garine, shortening, and fried fast foods.