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Food and Fitness

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Web sites of interest:

- www.clevelandclinic.org
- www.johnshopkins.edu
- www.warfarinfo.com
- www.cranberryinstitute.org
- www.fda.gov

Happy Valentine's Day!

Is your Valentine your spouse, daughter, neighbor, or a favorite uncle? Regardless of who it is this is the time of year we think of doing something special for that special someone.

Consider these activities:

- Spend time together—go for a walk.
- Rent a movie and watch it together—"The Pursuit of Happyness or "Shall We Dance?".
- Give a gift certificate with you the giver of—help with housekeeping, planting flowers, mowing the yard, grocery shopping.

- Give a gift certificate to luxury service—a pedicure, a massage.
- Give a gift certificate to a newsletter—Johns Hopkins *Health After 50* or Cleveland Clinic's *Heart.*

Cranberry Juice and Warfarin (Coumadin®)

In 2003 a British man died from excessive bleeding in the stomach and around the heart. He had been ill and not eating much but subsisting mostly on cranberry juice. One of the medicines he was taking was warfarin. He had an INR of more

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Cranberry Juice and Warfarin (Coumadin®) (continued)

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than 50. (INR = International Normalized Ratio. Reference level is 0.8-1.2. Used to measure the effectiveness of anti-clotting medicines). Since then 12 more similar cases were reported.

The Cranberry Institute, concerned about the issue, consulted with experts in hematology, cardiology, and pharmacology about the likelihood of interactions between warfarin and cranberry juice. These experts could not lay sole blame on cranberry juice.

Scientific studies are under way to determine if and what the interaction might be. Some investigators note that taking more than 24 oz. cranberry juice per day may inhibit the breakdown and elimination of warfarin in the body, thus increasing clotting time and raising the INR.

In April 2006 the US Food and Drug Administration mandated that Bristol-Myers Squibb, makers of Coumadin, advise consumers not to use cranberry products while taking Coumadin ®. However, cranberries are a

wonderfully health-promoting food, high in antioxidants and flavonoids.

If you are taking Coumadin® be sure to ask your doctor if you need to limit cranberry products. Discuss this issue with your doctor and follow your doctor's advice.

Interpreting Nutrition News

Does it seem like one week alcohol is good for your heart and the next week bad? Can coffee really lower your cholesterol level or does it raise your blood pressure? Newsworthy media reports just don't tell the whole story. At www.hsph.harvard.edu. Click on Nutrition Source then "Interpreting News on Diet". You'll have the tools you need to interpret the media's health reports!

February is Heart Month—Take Care of Yours!

Getting healthier is doubtless one of your New Year's Resolutions. Put your heart at the top of the list! Spreading your plan out over a year makes it easier to get it done.

February—get a move on and take your Valentine with you! The benefits of exercise to the heart are limitless. Decide whether you will walk, take an exercise class at the Senior Center, or dust off your treadmill.

March—change to whole grains. They help with diabetes, weight loss and triglycerides. Look for the word "WHOLE" in the first ingredient of the package ingredient list.

April—don't let the Easter Bunny be the only one caught in Mr. McGregor's garden. Eat more vegetables by adding lettuce, onion, and tomato to sandwiches. Have a salad every day. Keep baking potatoes and frozen vegetables on hand for quick cooking in the microwave.

May—avoid tobacco smoke. Quit if you need to quit. Don't let anyone smoke in your house or car.

June is Dairy Month—get 3 good servings of low fat dairy every day. Have a yogurt for a snack. Add cheese to sandwiches. Drink milk with meals.

July—celebrate the fourth by having blueberries and strawberries on your angel food cake.

August—take a yoga or stretching class to improve flexibility. The relaxation will help your heart.

September—take baked chips and bean dip to the tail gate party instead of fried chicken.

October—find trick-or-treat kids who needs supervision and walk the neighborhood with them.

November—serve steamed broccoli with Thanksgiving dinner. The folate and Vitamin C protect your heart.

Take your list of New Year's resolutions and spread them out over a whole year. Then the challenge won't seem so tough!

December—set out strawberries dipped in chocolate for Santa—he needs to eat more fruit, too! Go back to February and start Christmas shopping so you won't be stressed about it now!

Recipe Corner

Seafood Gumbo

1 Tbs. canola oil

2 Tbs. flour

2 stalks celery, diced

2 medium onions, chopped

1 green pepper, chopped

6 cloves garlic, minced

1/2 cup water

1# peeled de-veined shrimp

1 6 oz. can claw crab meat

2 tsp. Cajun seasoning

1/2 bunch green onions, chopped

1/2 bunch parsley, chopped

In a skillet brown flour in oil and set aside. Sauté celery, onions, green pepper, and garlic in water until wilted. Add more water to keep from sticking. Stir in browned flour. Cover with about 2 quarts water. Add shrimp, crab, and seasoning and cook until shrimp are tender, about 20 minutes. Add green onions and parsley 10 minutes before serving. Serves 8.

Nutrition information per serving:

Calories	232
Protein, g	20
Carbohydrate, g	30
Dietary fiber, g	2
Fat, g	3
Saturated fat, g	0
Trans fat, g	0
Cholesterol, mg	126
Sodium, mg	598

Cherry Pineapple Nut Cake

21 oz. can cherry pie filling

20 oz can crushed pineapple

1/2 cup light margarine

1/2 cup pecan halves

1 18.25 oz. yellow cake mix

Layer pie filling and pineapple in 9”x9” glass baking dish. Sprinkle cake mix over top. Add margarine and nuts. Bake at 350 degrees for 40 minutes. Serves 12.

Nutrition information per serving:

Calories	331
Protein, g	3
Carbohydrate, g	58
Dietary fiber, g	1
Fat, g	10
Saturated fat, g	2
Trans fat, g	0
Cholesterol, mg	0
Sodium, mg	356

Heartfit Building
3200 Chesterfield
Charleston, WV 25304

Phone:304-388-9520
Fax: 304-388-9422

www.state.wv.us/
seniorservices

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This newsletter is created by Susan M. Poindexter, MS, RD, LD, Nutrition Consultant to the West Virginia Bureau of Senior Services, and is funded in part by the West Virginia Bureau of Senior Services.

What's Your Salt Sense?

Do you use sea salt or Kosher salt, thinking they are lower in sodium and therefore, healthier alternatives for your blood pressure? Reconsider.

Sea salt is less refined than table salt and may contain flecks of impurities, making it darker and coarser. As a result, the flavor may be different. Nevertheless, it is sodium chloride and will affect your blood pressure the same as table salt would.

Kosher salt is also sodium chloride without additives. Its larger, more absorbent molecule is used to remove all traces of blood from meats in the process of making meats Kosher. It is coarser, but no healthier.

Light salts may be a combination of sodium chloride and potassium chloride. Ask your doctor if light salts can be combined with your blood pressure medication.