Food and Fitness

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WEB SITES OF INTEREST:

STROKE.ORG

CDC.GOV

AMERICAN-HEART.ORG

DASH-DIET.ORG

NHLBI.NIH.GOV

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National Stroke Awareness Month

It is possible that anyone may have a stroke, but anyone can decrease their risk of stroke by controlling the blood pressure. A desirable blood pressure is less than 120/less than 80.

It is well known that limiting dietary sodium helps to lower blood pressure. The DASH diet study also proved that eating 9 half cup servings of fruits and vegetables and 3 servings of low fat dairy food per day can help to lower blood pressure.

New Sodium Recommendations

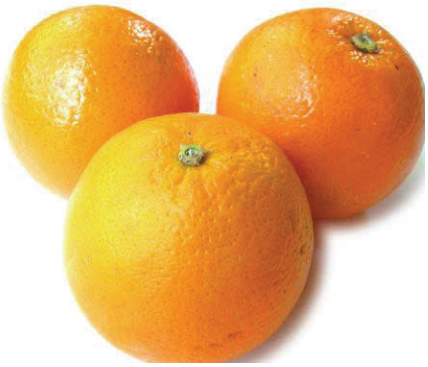
In March 2009 the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as well as the American Heart Association declared that almost 70% of the American population over age 20 would benefit from lowering dietary sodium to less than 1500 mg per day.

Naturally occurring sodium in fruits, vegetables, and whole grains is minimal. Unsalted animal food such as meat, fish, or chicken is slightly higher in sodium. Choosing a healthy diet of unsalted foods, incorporating the foods of the DASH diet will cost about 600 mg of naturally occurring sodium. Adding 1/4 teaspoon of table salt would add another 600 mg of sodium. For recipes see "Websites of Interest" on this page.

Soluble Fiber for Cholesterol Reduction

Your doctor has said you need to lower your cholesterol, but you're apprehensive about taking cholesterol medications! Have you heard that soluble fiber can lower your blood cholesterol level?

Soluble fiber, also called viscous fiber, is found in all plants, some having a higher content than



others. The fiber supplements Metamucil and Konsyl, made from psyllium seed husks are also high in soluble fiber content.

Soluble fiber may work to lower cholesterol by binding with bile acids in the gut. Cholesterol in the blood is then taken out to form new bile acids, hence lowering the blood cholesterol level.

Increasing intake of soluble fiber to 10-25 g daily is recommended by the National Cholesterol Education Program. Very few manufacturers list the soluble fiber content of foods on Nutrition Facts labels. Check out the following chart from the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institutes of the National Institutes of Health for soluble fiber content of 1cup of cooked food:

Lima beans	7
Kidney beans	6
Brussels sprouts	6
Prunes	6
Black beans	4
Navy beans	4
Pinto beans	4
Oatmeal	2
Orange, med.	2
Grapefruit, med.	2
Pear, med	2
Strawberries	1
Peach med	1

Psyllium fiber supplements vary by brand but 1 Tbs. = about 5

Some Like It Hot for "Cinco de Mayo"!

We Americans are always looking for a reason to celebrate! The 5th of May (cinco de mayo) is not Mexican Independence Day, but many Americans think it is! And *Cinco de Mayo* is not an American holiday, but we can celebrate it because it's about freedom!

On the 5th of May 1862, 4000 Mexican soldiers defeated the French and a traitor Mexican army of 8000 at the battle of Puebla in their struggle for freedom. A love of freedom and a love of good food are but two things that unite us with our neighbors to the South.

In the next three newsletters we will examine the importance of the culinary "trinity" of Mexican cooking—chiles (peppers), corn, and chocolate. Let's begin with chiles. Buen provecho (happy eating)!

Peppers are featured prominently in Mexican cuisine. In the immature stage they are often green. Fully ripe, they may be either red or yellow. Popular pepper varieties typically used in Mexican cuisine include, from less hot to more hot: banana, poblano, jalapeno, serrano and cayenne.

Tips for using chiles:

- For most recipes, hot peppers need to have their seeds and ribs removed. The substance in peppers that gives them heat is called *capsaicin*. Since it can be painful if it gets into the eyes or nose, it is a good idea to wear gloves when handling hot peppers.
- The longer you cook a dish with hot peppers, the more intense the flavor will be. Different peppers of the same variety may have different degrees of heat. Professional cooks have rated them according to their intensity using Scoville units. The higher the Scoville unit, the hotter the pepper.

(Recipes compliments of *Escuela Kukulcan, Cuernavaca, Morelos, Mexico)*

Recipe Corner

Chiles Rellenos

Ingredients:
6 chiles poblanos
2 cups Ricotta, Mozzarella or Muenster cheese
Salt and black pepper to taste
3 eggs, separated
½ cup Canola oil
One cup flour, as

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Recipe Corner (continued)

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needed

Preparation:

Wash poblano peppers. (1) Place uncovered over a low gas flame or on a grill. Roast for approximately fifteen minutes until charred but not burned. Rinse peppers and scrape off some of the charred outside. (2) Make a lengthwise slit from top to tip to remove pith and seeds. Wrap in foil to reserve heat.

Add seasoning to Ricotta cheese; stuff each pepper until almost full. Secure peppers with toothpicks to hold them together. (If using Muenster or Mozzarella, cut into strips ½ by 3 inches long and stuff peppers. Then close with toothpicks.)

Beat egg yolks in small bowl. Beat egg whites in a large bowl until they form stiff peaks, then fold yolks into egg whites. (3) Dip stuffed peppers into egg batter and then (4) coat with flour. Heat oil in heavy skillet. Pan-fry peppers until browned, turning as needed, for about ten to fifteen minutes. Remove from skillet and drain on paper towels. Chiles can be reheated in a 350 oven on baking sheets lined with fresh paper to absorb excess oil. Serve with red salsa (Salsa Roja).

Roasting peppers over gas fire burner.

Salsa Roja

6 small red tomatoes
1 large or two small chiles verdes (serranos)
1 small white onion
1 bunch cilantro

Dip tomatoes in boiling water for one minute; remove skins. Mash cilantro in a bowl or in a molcajete to enhance flavor. Put tomatoes, onions, peppers and cilantro into a blender. Blend all until finely pureed. While best if served fresh, sauce will keep in refrigera-

Finished product!

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Recipe Corner (continued)

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tor for a day or two if covered.

Arroz Rojo

Ingredients:
1 cup whole grain rice
1 Tablespoon vegetable oil
1/2 small onion
2 cloves garlic, chopped
2 whole chiles verdes (serranos)
2 fresh tomatoes, peeled and chopped
1/3 cup celery, finely chopped
1/3 cup corn
1/3 cup carrots, chopped
2 cups water
1 cube chicken bouillon

Preparation:

Stir rice and oil together in skillet about 15 minutes, until rice turns a light brown. Add chopped vegetables, and cook another five minutes. Stir in water and cover the mixture. Cook on medium heat until there is no longer standing water in the bottom of the pot. Change heat to very low setting and steam until rice is tender, another five to ten minutes.