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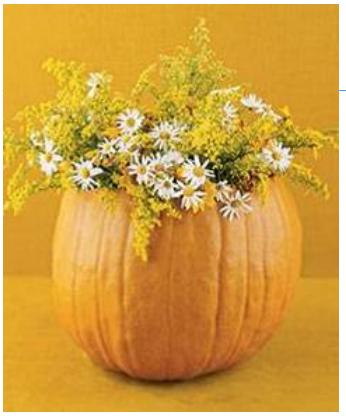
Food and Fitness



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Gourds Are Good for You!

Pumpkins and other gourds are a traditional holiday decoration for the days of autumn. They adorn porches and front entrances, carved and decorated for Halloween.

But pumpkins provide a great deal more than holiday decoration---they are a storehouse of good nutrition and health benefits. Native Americans were well aware of the pumpkin's healing proper-

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Web sites of interest:

caloriekeeping.com

southern-food.about.com

Falling into Fast Food

Does autumn's busy bustle have you driving through fast food restaurants looking for a quick breakfast? You don't have to settle for unhealthy fare even when you're in a

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No Time For Exercise?

You've heard it and maybe even said it—"I just don't have time to exercise!" Right?

We all know the benefits of exercise—it's good for prevention and treatment of diabetes, heart disease, arthritis, osteoporosis, high triglycerides, calorie burning, mood elevation, energy booster, better sleep, etc. etc. etc.! But we just can't seem to find the time to do it!!

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics "American Time Use Survey" (ATUS), the average American spends **9 hours** daily in personal care activities. This includes sleeping, grooming, health-related self care, and travel related to personal care.

Still working the old **8-hour** day? That leaves 7 hours. Retired? Maybe that leaves you more time.

The ATUS reports women spend almost **3 hours** daily on chores like laundry, housecleaning, lawn care, and managing finances. Men may spend a little less time on these chores.

Is there time to eat? The ATUS reports we spend about **1 hour** socializing, **1.5 hours** eating. That leaves 1.5 hours for idle pursuits like TV or perhaps exercise!

Tips for fitting exercise in:

Consider exercising on a stationary bike or treadmill while watching TV.

Make exercise part of your daily routine.

Exercise more often in shorter intervals if you can't do a long session.

Add more activity to your day by parking farther from your destination

The latest recommendations for exercise include:

Aerobic—30-60 minutes 3-5 times a week

Strength training—2-3 days a week.

The effort you make will pay off. You'll have more energy to do more things!

Gourds Are Good for You (continued)

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ties---they used the pumpkin for food and medicinal purposes. Oil from the seeds was used to treat burns and wounds while eating the seed itself was said to improve both kidney and bladder function.

Scientific analysis confirms what Native Americans knew first: These gourds are good for you! One cup of fresh pumpkin puree delivers the following:
Calories 49; Protein 2 grams; Carbohydrate 12 grams; Dietary fiber 3 grams; Calcium 37 mg; Iron 1.4 mg; Magnesium 22 mg; Potassium 564 mg; Zinc 1 mg; Selenium 0.50 mg; Vitamin C 12 mg; Niacin 1 mg; Folate 21 mcg; and Vitamin A 2650 IU

The rich, orange color of fresh pumpkin hints at one of its most important nutrients. Pumpkin provides a generous dose of *beta carotene*. Research shows that people who eat a diet rich in beta-carotene are less likely to develop certain cancers than those who fail to include beta-carotene-rich foods in their diet.

Studies show people who have a potassium rich diet lower the risk for hypertension. Not only is zinc a major boost for your immune system, it also aids in bone density support for people at risk for osteoporosis. Diets rich in fiber may prevent cancer, heart disease and other serious ailments.

Pumpkin seeds have another added bonus: they are a very good source of the minerals magnesium and phosphorus, and provide iron, copper, protein, and zinc. In animal studies, the addition of pumpkin seeds to the diet has compared favorably with use of the non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug *indomethacin* in reducing inflammatory symptoms common in arthritis.

In the Recipe Corner pages 4-5 you'll find recipes which can be used not only in October but year round. Cut peeled pumpkins into pieces and cook in a large pot with a cup of water for about thirty minutes over medium heat. Try freezing it in 1 cup portions---.and you'll have fresh pumpkin available for all of these great recipes!

Cushaw—decorative member of the gourd family—has cooking and nutritional properties similar to pumpkin.

Recipe Corner

Pumpkin Pancakes

1 medium egg
1 cup skim milk
¾ cup unbleached white flour
¾ cup whole wheat flour
¾ cup canned or fresh cooked pumpkin
1 Tablespoon of sugar
1 Tablespoon honey
2 teaspoons of baking powder
1/2 teaspoon of ground cinnamon
Pinch of ground nutmeg
Pinch of ground ginger
Vegetable oil spray

In a large-sized mixing bowl, combine all of the ingredients (except vegetable oil), stirring until blended. Use the vegetable oil spray to lightly coat a griddle. When heated, pour the pancake batter in.

Flip the pancakes over when bubbles break around the edges. Cook until browned and serve hot.

Toasted Pumpkin Seeds

Pumpkin seeds
Cooking Spray
Ranch Dressing Dip Mix

Rinse pumpkin seeds. Use your fingers and/or a sharp paring knife to scrape off all the pulp. Drain pumpkin seeds and discard pulp. Spread out on a cookie sheet to dry overnight.

Preheat oven to 250 degrees F. Line a baking sheet with non-stick foil.

Spray pumpkin seeds lightly with cooking spray. Sprinkle with about ½ package of Ranch Dressing. Stir to coat the seeds. Other seasoning options include salt, garlic powder, onion powder, seasoned salt, cayenne pepper, etc.

Bake about 1 hour, tossing every 15 to 20 minutes, until golden brown. Cool pumpkin seeds before eating. Store in an air-tight container at room temperature up to 3 months. These are high in fiber and good for you!

The seeds of any member of the squash family can be toasted for a tasty, satisfying and nutritious snack!

Recipe Corner

Creamy Pumpkin Soup

This recipe is compliments of Mary Romero Aycock, Baton Rouge, LA.

1 3# pumpkin
8-12 oz. grated gruyere cheese
1 1/2 cups Pepperidge Farm Seasoned Croutons
12 oz. Half 'n' Half or 1 can "Light" Evaporated Milk
¼ teaspoon nutmeg

Remove the "lid" from the pumpkin with a knife. Scoop out seeds and stringy part with an ice cream scoop. Place the pumpkin on a sheet of heavy duty aluminum foil. Fill the cavity with a layer of cheese, then a layer of croutons; repeat the layers. Then pour in Half 'N Half or evaporated milk to fill up the cavity. Replace the lid and wrap securely with foil. Place on a baking sheet and bake in oven at 350 for about an hour, until pumpkin is soft. Cool on counter about 15 minutes then scoop everything but outside skin into a food processor. Process until smooth, adding half and half cream as necessary. Season with nutmeg.

Note: Reduce fat by using fat free half and half.

Chilled Pumpkin Soup

½ cup white onion, chopped
1 Tablespoon olive oil
Two cups fresh pumpkin
1 ½ cups chicken broth
½ cup Fat Free Half 'n' Half
¼ to ½ teaspoon curry powder

Sauté onion in a skillet with the olive oil until it is shiny. Place onion, pumpkin, and about half of the chicken broth into a food processor. Process until the texture is fairly smooth. Transfer this mixture to a heavy two-quart saucepan. Stir in the remaining chicken broth and continue cooking on low heat for about twenty minutes. Finally stir in fat free cream and curry. Cool and store in refrigerator for about two hours. Serve chilled.

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Food and Fitness

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Contributors to articles—Catherine Townsend and Betsy Greer and recipes—Catherine Townsend.

In a hurry? Fast food places have something for everyone. Healthy options abound—it's your choice!

FALLING INTO FAST FOOD (CONTINUED)

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hurry! Most fast food restaurants can help you get by!

Wendy's—Mandarin oranges

McDonald's—Fruit and Yogurt Parfait, pancakes and fruit and walnut salad

Subway—Dannon Light and Fit Yogurt and sliced apples

Starbucks—Request non-fat milk for "skinny latte"

Burger King—BK Fresh Apple "Fries" (fresh apple slices) and fat free milk