

HEALTHY, WEALTHY, & WISE

Live Well. Be Well.



February 2008
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Agent's Corner



Wow! January was such a hectic month. With the county fair, classes, and trainings, I hardly had time to think! And February's shaping up to be a busy one, too.

This month we are raising awareness about women's heart health. Heart disease is the #1 killer of American women and yet heart disease is still considered a man's disease. Please help spread the word that this disease affects everyone by wearing red every Friday in February.

Together, we can make a difference!

Samantha Kennedy

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Family & Consumer Sciences Agent

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The Wordsmith

mouthfeel \MOWTH-feel\ n.: the sensation created by food or drink in the mouth

Example: Some artificial sweeteners can leave a slimy *mouthfeel*.

Simply Florida:

A Taste of Flavors from the Sunshine State

Looking for a great gift idea for that gourmet cook in your life? The new *Simply Florida* cookbook created by Family & Consumer Sciences agents throughout Florida is the perfect choice! Order your copy today by calling Samantha at (941) 722-4524 or by visiting <http://www.simplyflorida.org>.

Fast Fact



The smallest bone in the human body is the stapes ("stirrup") bone in the middle ear. It is approximately .11 inches (.26 centimeters) long.

Living Well



Homegrown Healing

The healing properties of some plants are well-documented. After all, the bases of many pharmaceuticals are plants. Here are a few plants that you can easily grow at home that can help keep you healthy.

Aloe vera. The gooey gel inside the leaves of this plant treats cuts and soothes the sting of sunburn. Be sure to test a small area of skin for an allergic reaction before slathering it all over. Aloe plants like sun, so place them on a sunny windowsill.

Lavender. The soothing fragrance of this plant's flowers can calm your nerves and

encourage deep sleep. Place a small pot of lavender on your nightstand or in your bedroom window.

Gerbera daisy. This plant is a natural air filter, ridding your air of harmful pollutants such as formaldehyde and benzene. The colorful blooms also brighten any room. Place several around your home.

Citrus tree. Miniature citrus trees can be grown in pots and can provide fresh sources of vitamin C all year round. Place them in any sunny, south-facing area to promote optimal growth.

Six Ways to Help Your Heart

1. Eat a more plant-based diet rich in vegetables, fruits, legumes (beans & peas), and nuts.
2. Eat fish (like salmon & tuna) at least twice a week.
3. Consume high-fat animal foods in moderation, choosing lean meat and low-fat or nonfat dairy products.
4. Choose whole grains and other lower-glycemic-index carbohydrates like sweet potatoes and legumes.
5. Use canola and olive oils as your primary fats.
6. Enjoy alcohol in moderation (one glass a day for women, two glasses a day for men).

Taken from *Eating Well* magazine.

"My dog is worried about the economy because Alpo is up to 99 cents a can. That's almost \$7.00 in dog money."

~Joe Weinstein~



Kitchen Tip

Check the potency of dried herbs by rubbing a pinch between your fingers before adding them to your dish.

If they release a strong aroma, they're still good to use.

Keep in mind, though...the optimum freshness window of opportunity for dried herbs is 4-6 months. Be sure to store them in a cool, dark place.

Magic Bullet? Nah, But These Foods Can Help

Wouldn't it be nice if there was a magic bullet, a miracle food that we could eat that would make our cholesterol low? Unfortunately, no such thing exists. High cholesterol is a result of both diet and genetics, so no one thing can magically make it "normal". However, not all hope is lost. Some foods have amazing abilities to help lower cholesterol. Here are a few:



Pistachios. They're rich in monounsaturated fat, fiber, and phytosterols, all of which help lower cholesterol when eaten daily. They're also high in potassium, which provides the benefit of helping lower high blood pressure.



Pomegranates. This "seedy" fruit has been touted as a "super" fruit and for good reason: its very high antioxidant content has been shown to decrease blood pressure, especially for those people who were already on hypertension medication.



Salmon. This fish is the best source of healthy omega-3 fatty acids you can get and omega-3's have been shown to lower cholesterol and blood pressure.

Adapted from *Health* magazine, Jan/Feb 2008.

Fresh vs. Frozen: Putting the Argument on Ice

The variety of fresh produce available at certain times of the year can be limited. And since Americans in general lag far behind in fruit and vegetable consumption, we need to remember that veggies in *any* form are better than none at all. In many cases, frozen vegetables may be even

more nutritious than their fresh counterparts. Why? Vegetables destined for the freezer case are picked at peak ripeness, when they're at their most nutritious. On the other hand, veggies headed to the produce department are usually picked before they're fully ripe.



Did you know that superfine sugar dissolves more quickly than granulated sugar? That's because the granules are much smaller, so it takes less "effort" to dissolve them. Superfine sugar is also perfectly suited for beverages, mixed drinks, and batters for extralight baked goods, like angelfood cake and meringue. Don't have any on hand? Make your own by processing granulated sugar in a blender for two minutes, then letting it stand for a minute to let the dust settle.

Taken from *Cooking Light* magazine, August 2007.

"Drive-in banks were established so most of the cars today could see their real owners."

~E. Joseph Cossman~

Are You A Flexitarian?

You may be asking yourself, what in the world is a flexitarian? No, it's not the follower of some strange cult or new religion. "Flexitarian" is the term used to describe people whose meals focus primarily on plant foods such as fruits, vegetables, and grains while only augmenting their diets with small quantities of animal foods like meat and dairy.

Many people want the health benefits of a plant-based diet without having to give up animal foods completely. Besides, animal foods contain a lot of nutrients (vitamin B₁₂, zinc, and iron just to name a few) that aren't readily available in plant foods, so cutting them out completely may not be the answer.

On the other hand, animal foods contain some not-so-good stuff, too, such as cholesterol and fat. So limiting our intake of these foods can encourage a healthy diet.

Flexitarians are equal-opportunity eaters. They don't cheat themselves, they just choose to focus more on plant-based foods, using animal foods in a supporting role.

Flavor of the Month: Poached Salmon with Spinach

In honor of American Heart Month, here's a tasty recipe recommended by the American Heart Association.

Ingredients

| | |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 lb. salmon fillets | 5 oz. frozen chopped spinach |
| 1 1/2 c. water | 1/8 tsp. ground nutmeg |
| 1/2 c. dry white wine or water | 1/4 c. shredded mozzarella |
| 2 green onions, sliced | Freshly ground black pepper |
| 1 bay leaf | Lemon slices (optional) |

Directions

Cut salmon into 4 pieces, rinse, and pat dry. Set aside. In a large skillet, combine water, wine, green onions, and bay leaf. Over high heat, bring just to a boil. Carefully add salmon and return to a boil. Reduce heat, cover and simmer 8 to 10 minutes, or until fish flakes easily with a fork.

Remove fish and pat dry with paper towels. Cut each salmon steak in half, removing as much of the bone, cartilage, and skin as

possible. Meanwhile, cook spinach according to package directions. Drain well, squeezing out moisture. Stir in nutmeg.

Preheat broiler. Place fish on a broiler-proof serving platter or on the rack of an unheated broiler pan. Top with spinach mixture, sprinkle with cheese and season with pepper. Broil 4 inches from the heat for 1 to 2 minutes, or until cheese melts. Garnish with lemon slices, if desired.

Calories: 190

Protein: 27g

Carbohydrates: 2g

Total Fat: 8g

Saturated Fat: 2g

Polyunsaturated Fat: 2g

Monounsaturated Fat: 3g

Cholesterol: 47mg

Sodium: 110mg

Help Keep Rover Relaxed

“Pets are people, too.” That was a common mantra in my household growing up. We always had at least one furry family member around the house. And the summers in south Florida were especially hard on them since they couldn’t dress appropriately for the weather. They wore a fur coat day in and day out.

Here’s a rule of thumb: if you’re uncomfortable, chances are your pet is, too. And they probably feel even worse. So be sure to remember them when the temperature starts to climb this summer. Here are some tips:

Consider a haircut. This is especially true for long-haired pets with thick coats more adapted to colder climates. A periodic trim could help keep them cool.

Provide shade. If your pet will be outdoors, make sure there’s a nice shady spot for them to take refuge in. Oh, and provide plenty of fresh water as well.

Monitor meals. Pets generally eat less in the summer because of the heat. However, if they refuse food completely, consult a veterinarian.

February Birthdays

| | |
|------------------|-------------|
| Barbara Waldo | February 2 |
| Nancy Sanick | February 9 |
| Jeanette Dolbow | February 18 |
| Barbara Horton | February 22 |
| Shirley Whitaker | February 23 |
| Cory Garrison | February 27 |
| Marie Vargo | February 28 |

Congratulations to all our 2008 Manatee County Fair Arts & Crafts winners!

Blue Rosette: Shirley Dunham (1)

Blue Ribbon: Sue Daidone (2), Celia Strickler (1), Claudine Macon (1), and Marcia Kaszuba (1)

Red Ribbon: Barbara Waldo (1), Sue Daidone (2), Claudine Macon (3), and Marcia Kaszuba (4)

White Ribbon: Marcia Kaszuba (1)

Upcoming Events & Important Dates

| | |
|------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| February 4, 2008 | Guild Birthday Lunch 1:00–3:00pm |
| February 11 & 25, 2008 | Guild Meeting 1:00–3:00pm |
| February 18, 2008 | Presidents’ Day CES Office Closed |
| March 3, 2008 | Guild Birthday Lunch 1:00–3:00pm |



Solutions for Your Life.

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February is American Heart Month

