

FOOD FOR FITNESS AND FUN

June - 2006

This month I chose to focus on spinach and other leafy greens fresh from the garden. There are also some great recipes entered in the Johnson County Older Americans Cooking Contest. Enjoy! Jan Temple

HEALTHY FATHER'S DAY TREATS

The following two recipes were winning entries in the Johnson County Older American's Cooking Contest, 2006.

AUNT SIGNE'S BRAN MUFFINS 36 MUFFINS

Pour **1 cup boiling water** over **1 cup Bran Buds®** cereal and cool. Then add **2 cups All-Bran®**. In a separate bowl cream together **½ cup shortening**, **¾ cup brown sugar**, and **¾ cup white sugar**. Add **2 beaten eggs** to creamed mixture. Sift together **2 ½ cups flour**, **2 ½ teaspoons soda**, and **½ teaspoon salt**. Add dry ingredients to sugar mixture along with **2 cups buttermilk**. Mix well. Add bran mixture stirring only enough to moisten. Put mixture in an air tight storage container leaving 1 inch at the top for expansion. Refrigerate batter over night. Store in the refrigerator baking only what you can use fresh. This will keep in the refrigerator 2-3 days. Bake at 375°F for 20-25 minutes in greased muffin tins.



Each muffin: 107 calories, 3 g total fat (0.8 g sat fat), 12 mg cholesterol, 165 mg sodium, 2.5 g fiber, 2 g protein, 19 g carbohydrate.

Source: *Eve Casserly, Coralville, Older Americans Cooking Contest, Whole Grains Winner 2006.*

ANN'S FRUIT SALAD SERVES 6

The hint of cinnamon in the dressing makes you think of pie – only you're not getting all those calories!

Mix together:

- 1 small apple, thinly sliced
- 1 cup grapes
- 1 can mandarin oranges, drained

Honey-Spice Dressing:

- 2 Tablespoons lemon juice
- 2 Tablespoons honey
- ¼ teaspoon cinnamon



Mix together the dressing ingredients, pour over fruit, cover and refrigerate until serving. May serve on greens or enjoy as a bowl of mixed fruit.

Each ½ cup serving: 80 calories, 0 g total fat (0 g sat fat), 0 mg cholesterol, 4 mg sodium, 1.0 g fiber, .2 g protein, 20 g carbohydrate.

Source: *Gen Taylor, Iowa City, Older Americans Cooking Contest, Fruit Winner 2006.*

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ANTIOXIDANTS IN FOOD MORE EFFECTIVE THAN SUPPLEMENTS

There is a naïve belief that so-called "antioxidant" supplements such as Vitamin E will help block the formation of harmful free radicals in the body. In truth all antioxidants are redox agents. As such they are capable not only of scavenging free radicals but also can become pro-oxidants and actually create more free radicals in high concentrations. Certainly at physiologically normal levels Vitamin E in combination with other substances found in a healthy diet may act to reduce free radical damage in the body and so reduce the risk of CVD and cancer. However, in large amounts, Vitamin E may increase free radical production in some tissues. This may in fact be how large doses of Vitamin E may damage heart muscle and contribute to heart failure. Whole grains, leafy vegetables, fruits, and small amounts of nuts and seeds can easily supply all the vitamin E needed for optimal health.

Source: *Communicating Food for Health, June 2006*

BROWN BAG TUNA SALAD SERVES 4

This can be made ahead and assembled at your desk.

4 low sodium whole grain crackers

Salad ingredients:

4 teaspoons olive oil	4 cups sliced cucumber
2 Tbsp. flavored vinegar	4 cups baby carrots
4 cups dark leafy lettuce	

Tuna salad ingredients:

1-6 oz. can water packed tuna, drained	2 Tbsp. red onion, minced
1 tomato, cored, diced	1 stalk celery, diced
¼ cup fat free mayonnaise	Black pepper to taste

Divide the tossed salad ingredients among 4 individual plastic bags, keeping the oil and vinegar in the bottom, and refrigerate until ready to serve. Mix all ingredients for tuna salad together in medium-sized mixing bowl. Pack in 4 individual bags and refrigerate until ready to serve.

To serve: Toss salad ingredients in bag and place onto plate. Top with tuna salad and a cracker.

Each 2 cup serving: 215 calories, 5 g total fat (0.5 g sat fat), 22 mg cholesterol, 302 mg sodium, 7 g fiber, 15 g protein, 31 g carbohydrate

Source: *Communicating Food for Health, April 2001*

SPINACH – THE POWERHOUSE VEGETABLE



Spinach is a powerhouse vegetable, packed with important nutrients. Not only is spinach a great source of vitamins A and C, it is also rich in fiber and contains phytochemicals that fight to protect your health. In fact, the phytochemicals in spinach have been shown to prevent eye disease. Although spinach provides iron and calcium, the minerals cannot be completely used by the body because it also contains oxalic acid which limits the absorption.

When buying spinach, look for clean, fresh and crisp leaves that have a rich green color. Avoid wilted spinach or spinach with long stems. Spinach should be stored in your refrigerator's crisper. Don't wash the spinach before storing it as it will hasten wilt and decay. If you purchase spinach in a cellophane bag, leave it in the bag until ready to use. If you purchase a bunch of spinach, wrap it in paper towels and place the wrapped spinach into a plastic bag and store in the crisper. Fresh spinach should keep for 3-4 days.

WALNUT SPINACH SALAD SERVES 4

Spinach contains lutein which may help prevent age-related blindness.

¼ cup chopped walnut halves or pieces

6 cups spinach leaves, ready-to-serve

1 Tablespoon olive oil

1 Tablespoon flavored vinegar

1 Tablespoon lemon juice

1/8 cup sliced red onion

2 Tablespoons feta cheese

Fresh ground pepper

Combine all ingredients together in a medium-sized mixing bowl. Serve immediately or chill up to 2 hours until ready to serve.

Each serving: 87 calories, 8 g fat, 1 g saturated fat, 4 mg cholesterol, 109 mg sodium, 2 g carbohydrate, 4.5 g fiber, 4 g protein. Diabetic exchange: 1 vegetable, 1 fat.

Source: Communicating Food for Health, April 2001



ORANGE-ALMOND SPINACH SALAD

SERVES 4

12 oz. fresh spinach, washed and torn into pieces

1 cup orange slices or sections, diced

½ Tablespoon oil

3 Tablespoons red wine vinegar

¼ cup green onion, chopped

¼ cup slivered almonds



Mix all ingredients together in large bowl and serve immediately. This salad goes well with lean baked ham or fish.

Each 1-cup serving: 88 calories, 5.8 g fat, 0.5 g saturated fat, 0 mg cholesterol, 102 mg sodium, 6.5 g carbohydrate, 9 g fiber, 4 g protein.

Source: Communicating Food for Health, May 2003

CREAMY SPINACH CASSEROLE SERVES 9

This entry featuring spinach in the Older American's Month Cooking Contest was a crowd favorite. Using lower fat ingredients helps improve the nutrient profile, but it's still high in fat and sodium for those who are counting. Enjoy it in small portions.

1 8 oz. package fat free cream cheese

1 can cream of mushroom soup (98% fat free)

1 10 oz. package frozen chopped spinach

1 can (2.8 oz.) French fried onions

1 cup soft bread crumbs

3 Tablespoons butter

In a bowl, mix the cream cheese until soft and add soup. Put the thawed and drained spinach in a clean cloth and squeeze until well drained. Add to the soup mixture with the can of onions. Put into a greased 1 ½ quart casserole.

Bread crumb topping:

Melt butter in skillet and add about 1 cup of soft bread crumbs. Put crumbs on top of spinach and bake uncovered at 325° about 35 minutes.

Each serving: 193 calories, 10.6 g total fat (4 g sat fat), 14 mg cholesterol, 671 mg sodium, 1.5 g fiber, 6.4 g protein, 18 g carbohydrate.

Source: Lois Bliven, Iowa City, Johnson County Older Americans Cooking Contest, Vegetable Winner, 2006

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