

December 2014 Newsletter

7 Spices to Keep you feeling GOOD in WINTER...

- 1. Black Pepper:** The benefits of this wonder spice are too many to list, but in winter, you'll find it a great aid to battling chest congestion, boosting appetite, and improving digestion. Grate all over soup, veggies and pasta.
- 2. Cardamom:** This fragrant, warming spice heals the respiratory tract, and keeps you feeling energetic. Enjoy it in tea, pop a pod of it when cooking rice, or add it to baked squash or pumpkin soup.
- 3. Chamomile:** feeling crummy or stressed can make it hard to sleep. This little floral herb soothes the stomach, and relaxes both mind and body. It also has mild muscle-relaxing properties, to help you get the rest you need.
- 4. Chili Peppers:** You know that teary-eyed, runny-nosed, throat-clearing sensation you get after eating hot peppers? The next time you are miserably congested and scratchy-throated, put those peppers to work! Add a little cayenne to soup, or add hot sauce to stir-fried veggies.
- 5. Cinnamon:** Winter is unimaginable without it, but while you love its delicate, sweet fragrance, it's also good to know that cinnamon brings relief from arthritis, keeps the brain sharp, fights bacteria and lowers bad cholesterol.
- 6. Cloves:** Improve blood circulation, clear respiratory passages and support a healthy digestive system, too. Add a clove or two to "gas-causing" foods such as cauliflower and beans, and your stomach will stay calm. They taste great in baked goods, too!
- 7. Garlic:** Keep this ingredient in your cold-fighting arsenal. Top toast with olive oil and chopped, fresh garlic or add a lot to chicken soup at the first sign of a cold. Source: <http://www.eatrealbewhole.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/WinterSpices.png>

Winter Running Tips

- 1. Dress in layers.** You can always remove a layer.
- 2. Run with others!** Running in the dark is never easy but if you have a run date you won't want to disappoint your running partners!
- 3. Cover your hands and head!**

On a cold day you can lose as much as 40% heat through your head and 30% through your hands!

4. Ease into it. Breathing and keeping your normal pace in the colder weather may seem hard, maybe even impossible. Use your first few cold weather, outdoor runs as a training to build a base. Leave your watch at home and enjoy the scenery instead!

5. Avoid ice at all costs. Even an Olympic gymnast's balance is no match for black ice. If the weather reports say that the roads have turned to ice, head for the treadmill until the roads are cleared or the temperature melts the ice. In addition, sometimes soft running paths can be great alternatives!

Source:
www.healthierhappierbear.com

Health Benefits of CINNAMON

- the scent of cinnamon is proven to improve memory & cognitive skills
 - cinnamon is high in fiber, iron, calcium and manganese
 - cinnamon has natural anti-inflammatory properties
 - studies show that cinnamon helps to regulate and stabilize blood sugar
 - routine cinnamon consumption can lower bad cholesterol
 - cinnamon relieves pain associated with PMS and balances hormones in women
- <http://www.realfarmacy.com/the-health-benefits-of-cinnamon/>



Creating Community
Changing Lives



Food Replacement Hacks



Replace: Sour Cream With: Greek Yogurt

Sour cream has 227% more calories and 450% less protein than Greek yogurt.



Happy Holidays
from All of Us at
FitnessWorks
for Women!





Eggplant and Chickpea Stew



This tasty vegetarian stew, studded with plenty of eggplant and protein-rich chickpeas, is reminiscent of ratatouille. The eggplant breaks down and makes a saucier stew if you peel it before cooking, but you can certainly leave the peel on if you prefer. Serve over quinoa or soft polenta with sautéed spinach on the side.

Serves: 8 | **Total Time:** 4 hrs. 45 min. | **Prep Time:** 45 min. | **Source:** <http://www.delish.com/recipefinder/eggplant-chickpea-stew-recipe-ew0111>

Ingredients

- * 1 ounce dried porcini mushrooms
- * 2 large onions, thinly sliced
- * 1 tsp. salt
- * 1 can (28-ounce) tomatoes (see Note), drained and coarsely chopped
- * 3 cups hot water
- * 6 cloves garlic, minced
- * 1 tsp. freshly ground pepper
- * 2 lg. eggplants (about 1 1/2 pounds each)
- * 2 tsps. dried oregano, crumbled
- * 1 bay leaf
- * 3 tbsps. extra-virgin olive oil
- * 1 sm. (1-in.) cinnamon stick
- * 1 cup dried chickpeas, rinsed, soaked overnight & drained
- * 1/4 cup finely chopped fresh parsley

Directions:

Preheat oven to 400 degrees F. Combine dried mushrooms and hot water in a bowl. Stir well and let stand for 30 minutes. Strain through a sieve lined with a paper towel and set the liquid aside. Finely chop the mushrooms. Meanwhile, peel eggplants, if desired, and cut in half lengthwise. Brush the cut sides liberally with 2 tablespoons oil. Place on a rimmed baking sheet, cut-side down, and roast until tender, about 25 minutes. Let stand until cool enough to handle. Cut into 1-inch cubes and transfer to a 4-quart (or larger) slow cooker. Meanwhile, heat the remaining 1 tablespoon oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add onions and cook, stirring frequently, until softened, 3 to 6 minutes. Add garlic, oregano, cinnamon stick, salt, pepper, bay leaf, and the chopped mushrooms; cook, stirring, for 1 minute. Add the reserved mushroom-soaking liquid and chickpeas. Bring to a boil and cook, stirring occasionally, for 5 minutes. Transfer to the slow cooker and stir to combine with the eggplant. Cover and cook until the chickpeas are very tender, about 4 hours on High or 7 to 8 hours on Low. Remove cinnamon stick and bay leaf. Stir in tomatoes and parsley. **Note:** Look for Italian San Marzano tomatoes — they are particularly rich in flavor and taste best in this dish.

Nutritional Information (per serving) Calories: 219 Total Fat: 7g Sodium: 413mg Total Carbohydrate: 33g Dietary Fiber: 12g Protein: 9g



7 tips for Winter Health

How to keep your energy up, your immune system strong and your body healthy all winter long. In winter, the sun sets earlier, a chill fills the air, and we spend less time outside being active and more time inside eating starchy and sugary foods. Our hibernating instinct doesn't keep us healthy. Rather, our immune system takes a hit, allowing winter colds and flus to grab hold. Luckily, there are certain things you can do to keep your energy up, your immune system strong and your body healthy all winter long.

1. Drink healthy fluids - Sugary and caffeinated beverages can suppress immune-system function, not to mention cause weight gain and dehydration. Drinking six to eight glasses a day of water or herbal tea can keep your digestive system healthy, your weight down and your energy up. This is especially important over the winter months to help flush the system. Green and white teas are also wonderful antioxidant-rich options to keep you healthy throughout the season.

2. Get some z's - Sleeping is one of the most effective ways to refuel after a stressful day. Make sure to sleep in a dark room to ensure your body properly secretes the hormone melatonin, which is believed to help repair the immune system.

3. Avoid added sugars - In addition to causing weight gain, refined flours and sugars can suppress immune-system function. In other words, if there is a flu or cold circulating and you go a little crazy on the white sugar (cookies, pop, candy, etc.), you're creating the perfect environment for illness to strike. Turn to naturally occurring sugars found in fruit for some sweetness. If you crave chocolate, go for dark chocolate (minimum 70 per cent cocoa), which contains plant phenols that have been shown to lower blood pressure. Cut up squares and store them in your freezer. Grab one or two when you need a sweet treat.

4. Go for garlic - The sulfur-containing compounds in garlic help increase the potency of two important cells of the immune system, T-lymphocytes and macrophages, which in turn help battle colds. Eat garlic raw or cooked for an immune-system boost.

5. Eat zinc-rich foods - Zinc helps prevent a weakened immune system. Get adequate amounts by eating oysters, liver, lean beef, pork, turkey, lamb, lentils, pumpkin and sesame seeds, garbanzo beans and yogurt.

6. Favour fruits and veggies - A recent study of more than 35,000 Canadians conducted by the Canadian Community Health Survey showed that the majority of us eat fewer than five servings of fruits and vegetables a day – **Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating** recommends eating five to 10 servings per day. One serving is equal to:

- 1 medium-size fresh vegetable or fruit
- 1/2 cup (125 mL) fresh, frozen or canned vegetables or fruit
- 1 cup (250 mL) salad
- 1/2 cup (125 mL) juice

7. Move it - Don't succumb to inactivity this winter -- hit the yoga studio, run on the treadmill or suit up and head outdoors. A brisk walk burns calories, gets the blood flowing and increases energy.

And don't forget to watch your stress levels over the winter -- when we don't get enough sun exposure, mood and energy tend to fluctuate. Journaling, meeting with friends, enjoying "me" time and meditating are all wonderful ways to keep yourself healthy and happy. **Source:** http://www.canadianliving.com/health/mind_and_spirit/7_tips_for_winter_health.php