



Lifestyle Letter

Wellness News

Guide to Seasonal Cooking

Buying fresh fruits and vegetables in season is the way to a healthier, tastier lifestyle!

Eating fresh vegetables and fruits when they are grown naturally and in season offers many benefits.

Fresh local produce is generally less expensive and more flavorful and you're helping local farmers flourish. Or try starting your own garden, even if it's small, and experience firsthand the taste difference of freshly-grown produce.

Let the seasons determine your menu

Seasonal cooking is a natural way of life, not a new concept. Before the 1900s, everyone based their menu on what was in season and what was available that day. When planning your menu, think about food and where it comes from.

Seasonal cooking means that when strawberries or asparagus are in season, you use them. All foods have a season. In the fall, think about squash and pumpkin. In the summer, think tomatoes and zucchini.

Which foods to buy and when

Many areas of the country are known for certain foods grown at certain times, but generally

fresh fruit and vegetables are associated with a specific season.

Spring: Early fresh vegetables include asparagus, radishes, leafy greens like arugula, mushrooms, strawberries and peas.

Summer: The produce bounty season includes peaches, apricots, nectarines, cherries,

raspberries, blueberries, beets, zucchini, summer squash, string beans, cucumbers, blackberries, brussels sprouts, eggplant, corn, okra, melons, tomatoes, peppers and potatoes.

Fall: This is the season for apples, pears, broccoli, cauliflower, kale, and mustard greens - all heartier produce that will thrive even if it's cool at night.

Winter: Now is the time for root vegetables, including turnips, winter squash, celery root, parsnips, sweet potatoes, carrots and rutabagas.

So let your seasons be your guide in meal planning and don't be tempted by the imported, costly produce offered year round! You'll save money and be healthier in the long run!



Be Fit.

Get Fit with a Stability Ball

A stability ball, also called an exercise ball, allows you to do a number of exercises that strengthen and tone your abdominal muscles and it's a good way to stretch out your torso and improve flexibility.

The stability ball is designed to stretch and tone the abs, which are part of the body's core.

There are several exercises you can do with a Stability Ball:

Stretching: Lie on your back with the ball underneath you to stretch the abdominal muscles, or lie on your side to stretch the side muscles. You can also sit on the ball with your legs and feet in front of you to stretch out leg muscles.

Lift weights. Use the ball to give yourself support, balance, and a greater range of motion while you lift weights.

Crunches. Lie on a stability ball and do crunches for an excellent abdominal workout. Also, use the ball as back support against the wall as you do squats, or prop your feet or legs on the ball while doing modified pushups.

Be sure to watch *Creating Wellness's* exercise DVD's for more Stability Ball work outs!

Think Well.

Laughter is the "Best Medicine"!

Can a laugh every day keep sickness at bay?

Laughter, along with a sense of humor, may help protect you against a heart attack, according to recent studies. These studies showed that people with heart disease were 40 percent less likely to laugh in a variety of situations compared to people of the same age without heart disease.

While it was not known why laughter protected the heart, it is known that mental stress is associated with impairment of the endothelium, the protective barrier lining the blood vessels. This can cause a series of inflammatory reactions that lead to fat and cholesterol build-up in the coronary arteries and ultimately to a heart attack.

The ability to laugh either naturally or as a learned behavior has important implications in high paced societies such as the U.S., where heart disease remains the number one contributor to early death.

So try to incorporate a little laughter into each day; watch a funny video or talk to family and friends about the humorous parts of your day.

At *Creating Wellness* our recommendation for a healthy lifestyle is to eat right, exercise and laugh every day!

Recipe

Spaghetti with Summer Veggies

Ingredients

- 8 ounces pasta, spaghetti; whole wheat pref.
- 2 teaspoons olive oil
- 1 onion
- 1 tomato, large, fresh, chopped
- 1 zucchini, cut into 1/2 coins
- 1 summer squash (yellow), cut into 1/2 coins
- 3/4 cups broth, chicken, fat free, salt-free
- 1/3 cup fresh parsley, chopped
- 1/3 cup fresh basil, chopped
- 3 tablespoon lemon juice
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper, black ground
- 3 tablespoon cheese, grated Parmesan

Preparation

Cook the spaghetti according to package directions, omitting salt; drain well.

While the pasta is cooking, heat the oil in a large skillet. Add the onion and sauté about 1 minute.

Add the vegetables and chicken broth, stir. Cover and simmer about 6 minutes. Add the parsley, basil, lemon juice, salt and pepper. Stir and cook 1 minute more.

Add the spaghetti to the vegetables; toss well.

Sprinkle with Parmesan cheese at serving time.

Makes 6 servings.

Per serving: 225 cal., 1g fat, 6g total fat,

Be sure to visit "My CreatingWellnessSpace" for more recipe ideas!