

LifeStyle Newsletter

October 2011

K.O. Colds and Flu

Cold and flu season is upon us. If you haven't gotten your flu shot yet, you may want to move it to the top of your to-do list. But, that's not all you can do to fight against disease this winter. Medical professionals say that boosting your immune system – your body's built-in defense against disease – with good food, plentiful exercise, and sufficient sleep can help, too.

Eat good food

Katherine Tallmadge, national spokesperson for the American Dietetic Association, says nutrition profoundly affects our ability to fight disease. If you want to stay healthy this winter, it's a good idea to eat:

- **Lean protein**, like chicken, fish, and fat-free dairy products, because the molecules that help us stay healthy are made of protein.
- **Good fat** that is found in olive oil, canola oil, and nuts can help your cells function better and fight disease.
- **Fruits, vegetables, and whole grains** are key players because they contain antioxidants which help us stay healthy.

Work out every day

Regular exercise also helps boost your immune system and keep illness at bay. Just don't overdo it, especially as you get older. Thirty minutes of light to moderate exercise a day is enough to keep your immune system strong.

- **Walk** anywhere and everywhere. All you need is a comfortable pair of shoes.
- **Take a class** at the YMCA, a senior center, or a local gym. Try water aerobics, yoga, Tai Chi – or all of them.
- **Watch television.** Chances are that your kids or grandkids have a Wii, Playstation, or Xbox. Each of these systems offers exercise programs that let you work out at home.

Rest, relax, and rejuvenate

Studies show that lack of sleep makes us more susceptible to colds and flu viruses. If you don't sleep like a log every night, consider these sleep tips from Helpguide.org:

- Limit caffeine late in the day
- Avoid alcoholic beverages
- Avoid big meals or spicy foods late at night
- Have a light snack before bedtime
- Use a relaxation technique to prepare for sleep

If all else fails, keep the chicken soup handy

If you fall ill despite your best efforts, remember the chicken soup. It's not a wives' tale. According to the Mayo Clinic, chicken soup has anti-inflammatory and mucus-thinning effects which can soothe when you get sick.

Acorn Squash: Super Food

Is squash a fruit or a vegetable? Technically, it's a fruit because it has seeds inside. This gourd is closely related to pumpkins, melons, and cucumbers, and it's a great source for fiber, nutrients, and antioxidants. Plus, it's easy to cook. If you're on the fence about squash, try this delicious recipe.

Acorn Squash with Ground Beef Stuffing

2 medium acorn squash
1-1/2 teaspoons olive oil
1/8 teaspoon crushed red pepper
4 cloves garlic, minced
1/2 cup chopped green onions
1 cup coarsely chopped carrots
8 ounces ground beef
1 medium green apple, peeled, seeded, and diced
3 tablespoons lime juice
1 cup dried cranberries
1/4 cup rice wine or sherry
Cayenne pepper, to taste

Preheat oven to 375°. Cut squash in half. Scoop out the seeds and place the squash, cut-side down, in 9" by 13" baking dish that contains one inch of water. Bake for one hour. Discard the water. Turn squash cut-side up in pan and set it aside.

In a frying pan, heat the oil and crushed red pepper over medium-high heat. Add the garlic, green onions, and carrots. Cook for 3 minutes. Add the ground beef and cook until brown, stirring frequently. Drizzle the lime juice over the diced apple and add to the pan. Add the cranberries and rice wine or sherry. Lower the heat and simmer for 5 minutes.

Scoop the ground beef filling into each of the squash sections. Sprinkle with cayenne pepper. Cover with foil and bake for 15 minutes or until thoroughly heated.

What Do You Know About Yosemite?

President Abraham Lincoln declared the Yosemite Valley and the giant sequoias of the Mariposa Grove a public trust, paving the way for the national and state parks systems that millions of Americans enjoy today. See what you know about Yosemite by answering these questions:

1. Where is Yosemite National Park?
 - a. Vermont
 - b. Michigan
 - c. Utah
 - d. California

2. Who lobbied to preserve the wilderness area around the Yosemite Valley?
 - a. John Muir, environmentalist
 - b. Richard Ballinger, Commissioner of the General Land Office
 - c. Yogi Berra and Boo Boo, park residents
 - d. Rachel Carson, author

3. Who took the photographs that immortalized Yosemite's beauty?
 - a. William Henry Jackson
 - b. Gertrude Stanton Kasebier
 - c. Ansel Adams
 - d. Andy Warhol

4. Yosemite's Upper Falls is as tall as:
 - a. The Empire State Building
 - b. The Sears Tower
 - c. The Eiffel Tower
 - d. Big Ben

How Many Generations are Under Your Roof?

If you recognize the line, "Good night, John-Boy," then you're old enough to remember the TV show, *The Waltons*. The show dramatized the challenges of one family living in rural America during the great Depression and World War II. The Walton family – grandparents, parents, and seven children – lived under one roof.

When the show aired in the 1970s and early 1980s, multi-generational housing seemed like a quaint idea. Today, according to Pew Research, it's making a comeback. The Great Recession accelerated a trend toward multi-generational housing that started gaining momentum during the 1980s.

- 1940: 25 percent of households had three or more generations
- 1980: 12 percent of households had three or more generations
- 2008: 16 percent of households had three or more generations

Cultural, economic, and demographic factors are behind the change. In some cases, households expand because divorce, loss of a home, or unemployment cause adult children and their offspring to move in with parents. In others, aging parents with financial or physical needs can no longer live independently and move in with their children and grandchildren.

No matter the cause, the trend is affecting Americans of all ages. Twenty percent of adults who are 25 to 34 years old live in multi-generational households, and so do twenty percent of adults who are 65 or older. American housing is coming full circle.

Answers:

1. D – California
2. A – John Muir, environmentalist
3. C – Ansel Adams
4. B – The Sears Tower

Sources:

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The above material was prepared by Peak Advisor Alliance.

Best regards,

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