

Health Futures Pty Ltd/ 1300 720 323
Newsletter Issue A27



Information:

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Winter Welcome

Winter definitely has its bonuses; ski trips, comfy clothes, football games, log fires, and the right to drink as much hot chocolate as you'd like! But there are also some pretty pesky downfalls, especially when it comes to your health.

At one time or another we've all suffered from colds, flu and other bugs, as well as a general lack of energy, motivation and enthusiasm.

Our winter newsletter aims to help you stay healthy and fighting fit through the cooler months.

Winter can be just as much fun as summer if you know how to stay on top of your health and fend off any annoying illnesses or energy slumps. The main thing to remember is to stay hydrated, eat well, keep active and steer clear of germs.

That way you can enjoy your mountain break complete with cosy fire, warm beverage, and blanket to its full advantage!

Have a great month,

Carrie Rathbone and the Health Futures Team

Healthy Recipe: Pumpkin Soup

Looking for something delicious, healthy, and easy for home, school or work? Pick up a fresh seeded bun on the day and enjoy with this great soup.

Ingredients (serves 6)

2 tbs olive oil
1 onion, finely chopped
1 leek, white part only, finely sliced
1 garlic clove, crushed
1/2 tsp ground coriander
1 tsp ground cumin
1/2 tsp freshly grated nutmeg
1kg peeled pumpkin, diced
1 large potato, peeled, diced
1L chicken or vegetable stock
1/2 cup (125ml) skim cream (optional)

Method

Heat oil in a large saucepan over low heat, add onion and leek and cook for 2 to 3 minutes, until softened but not coloured. Add garlic and spices and cook, stirring, for 30 seconds. Add pumpkin, potato and stock and bring to the boil. Turn heat to low, cover and simmer for 30 minutes. Allow to cool slightly, then blend in batches.

Optional - Return soup to pan, stir through skim cream and reheat gently. Season and add a little more nutmeg if desired.

Enjoy!



5 Ways to Stay Healthy During Winter

With each change in season comes equal opportunities and challenges to maintaining your routine, your activities, your motivation and focus. Here are some sensible ways to stay healthy.

Eating Healthily

When creamy pasta dishes and warm baked desserts become the standard food fare, it is important to counter some of those less healthy selections with a few nutrition-packed ones.

Stock your kitchen cupboards with fresh fruits and veggies for snacking. Fresh produce offers a powerful punch of nutrition with very few calories.

Grab an apple while you are on the move or crunch some carrot sticks during your afternoon break. Keep a bowl of washed fruit on your counter or in your refrigerator for easy access during frantically busy days.

Avoid Overeating

When the cooler months arrive, it can be easy to overindulge at night, and opt for the richer items on restaurant menus. If you are heading out to dinner you may wish to eat a light snack beforehand which may help you to consume less while out with friends.

You should also aim to drink plenty of water (or sugar and caffeine free beverages) each day, since water fills the stomach and hydrates the body. Remember that alcoholic beverages are packed with calories without providing much satiety, so limit yourself to one or two drinks on days when you do drink.

Get your ZZZ's

Sleep is important for a number of

reasons. A healthy amount of sleep keeps the immune system working at peak capacity so your body is prepared to fight off the many bugs lurking at this time of year. Sleep is also the time when, aside from other important functions, your body produces hormones that prevent you from overeating. Even during the busiest weeks, you should strive for seven to eight hours of shut-eye a night.

Make Time for Exercise

It is easy to forgo your workout program when it is cold or dreary outside, but your body needs just as much physical activity during winter. Exercise boosts your energy levels so you can actually accomplish more during the day. It also keeps your immune function high and helps you maintain a healthy weight, even when you do decide to indulge in those cookies. If you really want to lose weight during Winter or work off those extra calories, consider a ski break or other "Winter only" activity which will help to will burn off any extra kilo's and keep you in shape.

Manage Stress

Too much stress makes the body more prone to sickness and more likely to indulge in unhealthy habits like overeating or drinking. To manage this, make some time to relax and indulge in activities you enjoy. Spend an evening with a good book or a jigsaw puzzle, or relax in a decadent bubble bath. When you make time for yourself, stress will be less likely to take its toll.

You can get through winter maintaining good health with a little bit of planning. By taking control of the season, rather than letting it control you, you will be more likely to make it to Spring with your health in top shape.

"Look after it and it will look after you."

-JIM PAPALOIS

How to Ward Off a Cold!

Even with your best efforts to stay fit, eat well and sleep well, there are still seasonal bugs which can strike and leave you feeling worse for wear. Colds are a fact of life every winter but you can take some precautions and action if you do fall ill.

What causes a cold?

Most colds spread through the air when someone with an infection coughs or sneezes. You can inhale the viruses, but you're more likely to get sick if you touch your eyes, nose or mouth after handling a contaminated object. Telephones, computer keyboards and doorknobs are known for harbouring germs and the reason colds are more prevalent in Winter is because more people tend to cluster indoors.

Can you prevent a cold?

Unfortunately it is near impossible to guarantee cold prevention in Winter, however, there are some things you can do to make sure your immune system is functioning at its best and is well equipped to fight off any germs should they come knocking. For instance:

- Avoid people who are sick, and stay home if you're unwell yourself.
- Wash your hands with soap regularly and use sanitiser wipes to clean surfaces or objects you touch daily.
- Avoid sharing dishes, towels, cups or silverware with other people.
- Manage stress; it lowers immunity and may make you more susceptible to illness.
- Try taking a multivitamin every morning to boost your immune system. Vitamin C, Echinacea, and zinc are also good at warding off colds.
- Let fresh air into your house and go for a

walk at lunchtime to clear your air passages.

- Exercise regularly and maintain a healthy diet.

How to banish bugs faster (if you do fall ill).

When most of us feel ill we either crawl under a doona and moan to our partners or we pretend we're perfectly healthy and spend two weeks walking around like a clogged up zombie. Give both methods the flick and bounce-back faster by:

- Drinking plenty of water, juice, tea, clear soup or warm lemon water with honey to loosen congestion and prevent dehydration.
- Eating a good amount of healthy, nutritious foods to boost your immune system. Despite the old saying, "Starve a cold, feed a fever," there's no evidence that avoiding food relieves the symptoms of a cold.
- Staying warm and resting. You'll be surprised what one day off work can do for your rebound potential. You can also try laying in a hot bath and breathing in the steam to un-clog your nasal passages.
- Gargling salty water. Add half a teaspoon of salt to a glass of warm water and gargle. It will relieve a sore, dry throat.
- Using saline nasal sprays. Over-the-counter saline nasal sprays are probably the best at combating a blocked or runny nose.

Try these tips above, but if you have no relief ensure you head to your doctor for further assessment and treatment if required.



"A wise man will make more opportunities than he finds."

FRANCIS BACON



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Stay Active During Winter: Outdoors and Indoors

There is usually no reason why you can't continue with a wide range of activities all year round, indoors or outdoors.

Outdoors:

If you intend to continue training outdoors remember to:

- **Wear suitable clothing.** Fabrics that keep moisture away from your skin will prevent you becoming wet and chilled. Wear bright or reflective clothing to increase visibility.
- **Wear a hat.** When going out in the cold, it is advisable to wear a hat. Much of your body's heat loss occurs through the head.
- **Dress in layers.** Wear plenty of light layers so you can gradually peel them off as you become warm. You should be a little cool starting out.
- **Exercise caution.** Beware of slippery surfaces, and exercise in daylight wherever possible. Anticipate that drivers may not be able to see you or stop quickly.
- **Keep your fluid levels up.** Drinking water regularly is just as important during winter as it is in summer.
- **Communicate any concerns with your doctor.** Some medical conditions make winter exercise dangerous. Check first with your doctor if you have any concerns.

Alternatively Train Indoors:

When it's cold and miserable, and you don't want to step foot outside, having some exercise options indoors can make all the difference.

You could try:

- **Exercise equipment.** There is a wide range of cardiovascular machines and strength-training equipment to suit every budget. If price is a concern, look to rent, or buy second-hand equipment. Set the machine in front of the television, or listen to music while you train. Choose something that's practical, enjoyable and easy to use.
- **Exercise DVDs and TV shows.** There are numerous exercise DVDs on the market, covering everything from yoga to step aerobics. You could hire a few from your local video store, or borrow one from the library. Find a routine that suits your needs and fitness levels.
- **In-house circuits.** You can perform many exercises in your home with little or no equipment. Always start out slowly, then push yourself a little harder as your fitness levels improve. Refer to your back care chart (Health Futures) for some great exercises.

Most of all, Enjoy!

Notice Board: Special Announcements

Many of you have requested information regarding your participation in the Good health – Great Future program for 2010. We are in the process of finding out this information for you and appreciate your patience. If you would like to be kept up to date when we have feedback from your organisation, please respond to this email with "Follow Up" in your email subject and we will ensure we keep you in the loop.

★★★

If you would like an up to date edition of our back care chart as referred to above, please reply to this email and we will gladly email a .pdf version. Please type "Back Care" in your email subject.