

Santé!

Holistic Health News from Dr. Sarah Cimperman

April/May 2007

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Quote of the Month

"A cloudy day is no match for a sunny disposition."

William Arthur Ward

Sleep to Learn

Studies have shown that sufficient sleep *after* learning is an essential element in committing new information to memory and we now have reason to believe that sleep *before* learning can be equally important. Harvard researchers recently studied the effects of sleep deprivation after new experiences. Compared to people who got enough sleep the night before learning new information, those who got insufficient sleep had a compromised ability to remember the information they had learned. Even a single night of sleep deprivation caused impairment in the hippocampus, part of the brain's limbic system that is responsible for encoding information to form new memories.

Yoo SS et al. A deficit in the ability to form new human memories without sleep. *Nature Neuroscience*, 10(3):385-92, March 2007.

Ask the Doc: Egg Whites Vs. Whole Eggs

Are egg white omelets healthier than regular omelets?

*Chris
New York, NY*

Eggs, especially whole eggs, have gotten a bad reputation. However, they are a healthy choice for people who eat animal products and I always recommend eating the whole egg, over the whites alone. Both are nutritious: the whites are a source of high quality protein and the yolks provide many nutrients – including essential fatty acids, choline, iron, beta carotene, vitamins A, D, E and K.

Unfortunately, all eggs aren't created equal. Those that come from chickens raised on pasture contain substantially greater amounts of vitamins A and D, and the essential fatty acid DHA, because they have access to sunlight and their natural diet of insects, insect larvae and grubs. Pastured eggs are healthier for the environment too, as chickens raised on pasture don't produce the pollution of those raised in confined animal feeding operations, and the animals are inarguably treated more humanely. Look for pastured eggs at your local farmers' market. If you live in New York City, you can get them at Union Square's GreenMarket every Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday.

Cannellini Kale Tomato Soup

1 medium onion
2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
1 can whole peeled tomatoes
3 garlic cloves, smashed and minced
Pinch crushed red pepper flakes (optional)
1 tbsp red wine vinegar
2 cups vegetable or chicken stock
1 can cannellini beans or 2 cups cooked
4 large kale leaves, cleaned
Sea salt
Ground black pepper

Chop onion and sauté in olive oil over low heat for 7 minutes, until translucent and soft. Meanwhile, empty the can of tomatoes into a large bowl and use clean hands or a potato masher to roughly crush, then set aside.

Add garlic and red pepper flakes to the onion and stir to combine. Cook for 1 minute more, taking care to not burn the garlic. Add the vinegar and 1 cup of the crushed tomatoes, reserving the rest for another use (or add them all for soup with a stronger tomato flavor). Add the beans, stock and enough water to cover everything by one inch. Turn heat to medium-high and bring to a boil. Lower heat to low and simmer, uncovered, for 20 minutes.

Meanwhile, remove any tough stems from the kale (they add good texture, fiber and nutrients, so keep as much as possible) and cut the leaves in half lengthwise. Shred or cut into thin ribbons.

Add the kale to the soup with ground black pepper and simmer, uncovered, for 10 minutes more. Add a pinch of sea salt, then taste and adjust seasoning if necessary.

Serve immediately or remove from heat until ready to serve. This soup can be made a day in advance. If the soup cools to room temperature before you are ready to eat it, store it in the fridge and gently reheat it before serving.

Curried Lentils

1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
1 medium onion, chopped
2 cloves garlic, crushed or minced
½ tsp red pepper flakes (to taste)
½ tsp tumeric
½ tsp curry powder
½ tsp cumin
¾ cup dry lentils, sorted and rinsed
1 can whole peeled tomatoes and their juices
1½ cups water or broth

Heat the olive oil over low heat and sauté the onion until it is soft and translucent, about 10 minutes. Meanwhile, add tomatoes to a bowl and use a potato masher or clean hands to roughly crush them. Set aside one cup for this recipe and reserve the rest for future use.

Once the onion is soft, add the garlic and crushed red pepper flakes. Stir and continue cooking over low heat until the garlic is aromatic, a minute or two. Add the tumeric, curry and cumin, and stir to distribute the spices evenly. Add the lentils and continue cooking over low heat, stirring occasionally, for 2 more minutes.

Add the tomatoes and water or broth, stir and cover. Increase heat to medium, bring the mixture to a boil, then reduce heat to lowest setting and simmer for 45 minutes, or until lentils are tender. Serve as is or over brown rice.

If possible, make this ahead of time. Once the lentils are tender, turn off the heat and allow the covered pot to sit on the stove until ready to eat, giving the flavors time to develop. If the lentils cool completely, transfer the pot to the fridge. To serve, warm over gentle heat until hot.

Raspberry Red Wine Sauce

1 cup raspberries, fresh or frozen
½ cup red wine
1 to 2 tsp honey
Dash cinnamon

Combine all ingredients in a small saucepan and simmer over low heat for 15 minutes, until the liquid has reduced and thickened. Serve hot or cold over yogurt or other dessert.