

Keeping your health and wellbeing in the know

MyHealthTALK

March 2014

Courtesy of Asset Health

Spring Begins
March 20!



The Benefits of **SPRING PRODUCE**

Spring is a great time to try adding more fruits and vegetables to your diet and to focus on eating right and making healthier food choices in celebration of National Nutrition Month.

From snow peas to radishes and rhubarb to apricots, spring vegetables and fruits not only add color and variety to your meals, but also offer a plethora of health benefits that are essential for fighting disease, controlling weight and living a healthy life.

Artichokes are full of vitamin C, potassium, folate and fiber. They also aid in digestion and liver function. Asparagus is low in fat and full of vitamins A, K, E and C as well as folate, potassium and fiber.

One cup of raw strawberries fills 100 percent of your daily recommended vitamin C intake, according to *USA Today*. The vitamin C in strawberries whitens your teeth, too. Sweet cherries are high in fiber and potassium and are thought to relieve arthritis pain.

Visit fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org for a complete list of fruits and vegetables available this season and for recipes and healthy meal planning tips.

webmd.com, doctoroz.com

"The month-by-month guide to seasonal produce," Emily Saladin, *usatoday.com*, Jan. 30, 2014.

Spinach & Artichoke dip

(from CookingLight.com)

Makes 22 servings
(75 calories, 4.2 g fat, 5.9 g protein)

Ingredients:

- ½ cup fat-free sour cream
- ¼ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 (14-ounce) can of fresh artichoke hearts, drained and chopped
- 1 (10-ounce) package frozen chopped spinach, thawed, drained and squeezed dry
- 1 (8-ounce) block 1/3-less-fat cream cheese, softened
- 1 (8-ounce) block fat-free cream cheese, softened
- 6 ounces part-skim mozzarella cheese, shredded and divided (about ½ cup)
- 1 ounce fresh Parmesan cheese, grated and divided (about ¼ cup)

Directions:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a large bowl, combine the first seven ingredients and stir until well-blended. Add four ounces of the mozzarella cheese and two tablespoons of the Parmesan cheese and stir well. Spoon the mixture into a broiler-safe 1 1/2 -quart glass or ceramic baking dish. Sprinkle the rest of the mozzarella and Parmesan cheese on top and bake at 350 degrees for 30 minutes or until the dip bubbles. Preheat the broiler to high with the dish in the oven and broil the dip for three minutes or until the cheese is lightly browned.



Protective Eyewear

Can Help Prevent Workplace Injuries

Research shows that more than 700,000 work-related eye injuries occur annually, but 90 percent of all workplace eye injuries are preventable with the use of the correct safety eyewear, according to Prevent Blindness America (PBA).

PBA recommends choosing eyewear that is designed for a particular function or hazard, fits properly and comfortably, and is fitted by an eye care professional or trained individual.

Shannon Owens, vice president of procurement and operations for Memphis-based Radians Inc., said that features that provide extra comfort, such as rubber nosepieces, are “frontline factors,” which are important in increasing compliance, especially when safety eyewear has to be worn all day, according to *Safety and Health Magazine*.

Owens suggested that there are advancements in lens technology



to fight “digital eye stress,” which comes from looking at computers all day. Specialty lens colors are trending in the market as well. Light blue lenses help decrease brightness from artificial light.

March is Workplace Eye Wellness Month, which makes it the perfect time to review important safety precautions to help keep your eyes safe and prevent unnecessary pain and suffering while working.

Check the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Occupational Safety and Health Administration websites for additional tips and information on how to protect your eyes and avoid eye injuries.

preventblindness.org, cdc.gov, osha.gov

“Trends in ... eye protection,” Tracy Haas, safetyandhealthmagazine.com, Jan. 24, 2014.



SNOOZING Could Be Unhealthy for You

You might have heard the saying “You snooze, you lose” quite often – and with good reason. Research shows that you are setting yourself up to feel less alert and productive later in the day if you snooze after your alarm goes off, according to CNN.

Robert S. Rosenberg, medical director of the Sleep Disorders Center of Prescott Valley and Flagstaff, Arizona, suggests that the snooze button messes with your brain hormones by disrupting your circadian cycle, which in turn weakens your capacity to feel awake during the day and sleepy at night.

Constantly hitting the snooze button can cause you to always feel groggy throughout the day because you actually begin a new sleep cycle without finishing it, wasting those extra few minutes of snooze time, according to Rosenberg.

National Sleep Awareness Week is from March 2 to March 9. There are simple things you can do to improve sleeping habits and avoid hitting the snooze button.

Try getting at least seven hours of sleep each night. If you are unable to get adequate sleep, try following the same bedtime and wake-up time, even on the weekends. Also, expose yourself to sunlight in the morning to help manage your circadian rhythms.

DON'T FORGET, Daylight Savings Time begins 2 a.m. Sunday, March 9. Remember to set your clock one hour forward!

sleepfoundation.org

“Is the snooze button bad for you?” Erinn Bucklan, cnn.com/health, Feb. 7, 2014.