



the CommonHealth Compass



Make use of Fall Fruit! Spicy Apple-Filled Squash



INGREDIENTS

- 1 acorn squash (about 1 lb)
- 1 golden delicious apple, peeled, cored and sliced
- 2 tsp reduced-fat margarine, melted
- 2 tsp brown sugar
- 1/8 tsp cinnamon
- 1/8 tsp nutmeg
- dash ground cloves

DIRECTIONS

Heat oven to 350° F. Grease a one-quart baking dish. Cut squash in half and remove the seeds, then cut into quarters. Place squash, skin-side up in baking dish and cover with foil. Bake for thirty minutes. Meanwhile, in a medium bowl, combine remaining ingredients. Turn cut sides of acorn squash up and top with apple mixture. Cover and bake thirty minutes or until apples are tender.

Quick microwave version: Halve and seed squash; cut into quarters. Arrange quarters, cut side up, in microwave-safe baking dish. Microwave on high (100 percent) 6 to 7 minutes, rotating squash halfway through cooking time. Top squash with apple mixture, cover with vented plastic wrap and microwave on high 4 to 5 minutes or until apples are tender.

Nutritional Information

Per 1/2 cup serving:
CALORIES 140, FAT 0G, FIBER 3G,
VITAMIN A 320%, VITAMIN C 30%

CommonHealth Declares War on Germs

Did you know there are more germs in your office than on a toilet seat?

Germ Warfare will show you where the germs are and how to stay healthy during cold and flu season. The program this quarter offers a 2-oz hand sanitizer spray and an antimicrobial pen. This pen uses natural components to keep germs from attaching to surfaces and spreading from one user to the next.

Go to www.commonhealth.virginia.gov to learn more about the program and other CommonHealth information.

FREE FLU SHOTS NOW AVAILABLE

Getting a flu shot is easy and besides, there's no cost if you are in a state health plan! Why wait? For more information, visit the front page of the DHRM Web site at www.dhrm.virginia.gov.

Team Competition Makes Walking Fun

Tom Barnard, of the Middlesex County Health Department, has taken employee walking to a new threshold with the help of the CommonHealth program. He divided the 24 worker-walkers at the department into two teams and on the day after Labor Day, the competition began.

"I've been here 24 years," said Chris Gabany, Business Manager for the Three Rivers Health District, "and I have never seen anything take off like this. It has already generated a lot of competition and the camaraderie is wonderful."

According to Ms. Gabany, everyone is getting up to go talk to someone instead of calling them on the phone. Many team members are walking in place at their desks. "It is really funny," she said. "We're looking like bobbleheads and having a great time. The laughter is contagious."

The team members are logging their miles on a spreadsheet so that everyone can keep track of how both teams are doing. Steps may only be counted during work hours - no off duty or evening walks or jogs count.

"And guess what?" proclaims Gabany. "We're still getting our work done!"

In a bit over a month, the group has logged more than 1,000 miles.



Some of the Middlesex County Health Department walkers, from left, Lee Walton, Camilla Sutherland, Sue Lau, Carolyn Salmon, Lee St. Clair, and Tom Bernard, log additional steps and miles while at work.



Reducing Breast Cancer Risks

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month. The following suggestions from the American Cancer Society can help reduce breast cancer risks:

- **Decrease your daily fat intake—especially saturated or hydrogenated fats.** Eat leaner meats and limit consumption of red meat.
- **Increase fiber in your diet.** Fiber is found in whole grains, vegetables and fruits. This type of diet is also beneficial for your heart.
- **Eat fresh fruits and vegetables.** In addition to their fiber content, fruits and vegetables have antioxidant properties and micronutrients that may help prevent some cancers.
- **Limit alcohol.** Evidence suggests that a small increase in risk exists for women who average two or more drinks per day (beer, wine and distilled liquor).
- **Stay active.** The U.S. Surgeon General recently reported that you can help prevent many health problems by engaging in a moderate amount of physical activity (such as taking a brisk, 30-minute walk) on most days of the week. Strive to maintain the body weight recommended by a health professional, since excess fat may stimulate estrogen production.
- **Don't smoke.** Although smoking doesn't cause breast cancer, it can increase the chance of other cancers that may spread to the breast.

For additional information, visit www.cancer.org.

Good Dental Health: It's Something to Chew On

Staying healthy may involve a number of lifestyle changes. For some, that might be taking regular care of teeth and gums.

October is National Dental Hygiene Month. What can you do to help maintain oral health? Here are some tips from the Centers for Disease Control. Find out more at www.cdc.gov/OralHealth/publications/factsheets/adult.htm.

- Drink fluoridated water and use a fluoride toothpaste
- Brush your teeth thoroughly at least twice a day and floss!
- Avoid tobacco, which increases the risk of gum disease
- Limit alcohol, which increases the risk for oral and throat cancer
- Limit snacks, and avoid sugar and starch when snacking
- Most important, schedule regular check-ups at the dentist.



Your state health plans pay 100% of the cost for two preventive and diagnostic dental check-ups every plan year. Why not take advantage of this great benefit and schedule a dental visit today? For more information, contact your Benefits Administrator or visit the Health Benefits section of Employee Benefits at www.dhrm.virginia.gov.

