WINTER NUTRITION SPOTLIGHT

WINTER FITNESS

Although the weather has changed and temperatures dip, there are still plenty of ways to stay healthy and fit this winter. Physical activity is important for everyone, and can always be modified to accommodate any injuries or physical abilities.

Indoor exercise classes are available at many Older Adult Centers (OACs) and Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities (NORCs) all around New York City. Many offer classes such as Tai Chi, Aerobics, Zumba, Road Runners, Yoga and more.

If you are home due to inclement weather, some exercises that can be done at home include walking up and down the stairs, household chores like laundry and cleaning, dancing to the radio and stretching during TV commercial breaks.

It might seem more difficult to exercise in cooler weather, but it is equally as important to make sure you are physically active for overall health. Physical activity also helps strengthen our immune system which helps protect us from becoming ill. Exercise and eating nutritious foods are the best way to keep yourself healthy this winter.

WINTER AROUND THE WORLD

Have you ever wondered how other cultures embrace the cold?
Different cultures around the world have their own naturopathic customs and traditions when it comes to staying warm in cooler temperatures. Naturopathy, or naturopathic medicine, is a system of medicine based on the healing power of nature, often using herbs, foods and alternative techniques to help manage, cure or prevent illness.

A common Korean custom is to drink Yuja tea (Yuzu in Japanese), thought to help fight illness and provide a boost of Vitamin C which helps strengthen the immune system.

In Ayuverdic medicine in the Indian subcontinent, warming up with food is common due to the idea that certain foods promote inner warmth and help fight illness. The foods and herbs used in Ayurvedic medicine are rich in antioxidants which provide protection against long-term illnesses such as heart disease and arthritis. Ayuverdic foods and herbs include ginger, curry, onion, garlic, spicy and acidic foods, like lemon and vinegars and meats.

Chinese medicine has similar practices with the idea of hot and cold foods . Porridges like congee are thought to be a warming food.

Plants that take longer to harvest, such as root vegetables are considered warming. These include: pumpkins, potatoes, carrots, parsnips, winter squashes, onions, garlic, ginger and turmeric, cayenne pepper and lemons.

Luckily, these are foods that are readily availably in NYC and can easily be purchased to make a warming soup or stew.

Naturopathic medicine is a fun way to incorporate foods and their healing properties into everyday meals.

CURRIED POTATOES WITH RED LENTILS

INGREDIENTS (6 servings)

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 2-3 cloves garlic, crushed
- 1 sweet potato, medium peeled and cut into 1/2-inch pieces
- 2 yellow potatoes, cut into 1/2-inch pieces (thin-skinned potatoes, such as Yukon Gold)
- 1 tablespoon ginger, fresh grated
- 1 tablespoon curry paste (or curry powder)
- 1/2 cup dried red lentils
- 2 cups vegetable stock
- 1/2 cup chopped fresh cilantro
- 1 cup coconut milk
- 2 teaspoons lime juice
- salt (to taste, optional)

DIRECTIONS

1. In a large, heavy skillet, heat the oil over medium-high heat. Sauté the onion for 3-4 minutes, until soft and starting to turn golden.
2. Add the garlic and potatoes and cook for another 3-4 minutes until the potatoes are starting to turn golden on the edges.
3. Add the ginger and curry paste and cook for another minute.
4. Add the lentils, cilantro, vegetable stock, and coconut milk. Stir to combine well and reduce the heat to a simmer.
5. Cover and cook, stirring occasionally, for 30 minutes, or until the potatoes are tender. Add a little water, stock, or coconut milk if it gets too thick.
6. Add the lime juice and season with salt (optional). Serve hot.

Adapted from: https://snapedny.org/recipes/curried-lentil-potatoes/

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