

Baby Boomers

FAIRFAX COUNTY TIMES



JANUARY 2023



How to build
**lasting healthy
habits**

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A healthy New Year's recipe

COURTESY OF TALL OAKS

In the winter, we tend to crave heavy (and unhealthy) comfort foods. Tall Oaks' Chef Cheryl Beckwith has created a healthy alternative that is just as comforting!

"I love tapping into my culinary and nutritional background to create meals with all of the flavor and none of the guilt," said Beckwith. "Plus, even individuals with dietary restrictions can enjoy it!"

Winter Squash Soup

Green Kabocha Squash (Japanese Squash) 1 small
Butternut Squash 1 small • Acorn Squash 1 small
Chopped Carrots 1 cup • Yellow Onion 1 medium
Celery 2-3 Stalks • Margarine ½ cup, melted
Ground Cinnamon 1Tbsp • Bay Leaves 2
Ground Ginger 1 tsp • Powdered Garlic 1 Tbsp
Vegetable, Chicken, or Gluten-Free Stock 6 Cups

1. Cut carrots, onions, and celery into large chunks. Combine vegetables with ¼ cup melted margarine and roast in the oven at 350 degrees until vegetables are browned and caramelized (approx. 25-30 mins.).
2. Peel the butternut squash, cut into chunks, remove seeds, and coat with 1/8 cup melted margarine. Roast at 350 degrees until golden brown and caramelized (approx. 25-30 mins).
3. Cut the acorn and kabocha squashes into chunks and remove seeds (do not peel). Coat with 1/8 cup melted margarine and roast (on a separate tray than the butternut squash) at 350 degrees until caramelized (approx. 20 – 30 mins.). After cooled, peel acorn and kabocha squashes.
4. Mix all ingredients in a pot and cook until the vegetables are tender.
5. Puree in a blender until smooth.
6. Garnish with pumpkin seeds or chopped walnuts.

Fairfax County Times *Baby Boomers*

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ON THE COVER: FUN TIMES IN THE SNOW.
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TALL OAKS

Tall Oaks residents Jim and Bonnie are enjoy this cold-weather favorite.

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Accomplish health goals with better-for-you meals

COURTESY OF FAMILY FEATURES

Setting out on a mission to eat healthier starts with creating goals and working to achieve them with those you love. To help make nutritious eating more manageable, call together your family and work with one another to create a

menu everyone can enjoy while staying on track.

Connecting an array of recipes that all can agree on starts with versatile ingredients like dairy. Gathering at the table with your loved ones while enjoying delicious, nutritious recipes featuring yogurt, cheese

and milk can nourish both body and soul.

For example, the key dairy ingredients in these recipes from Milk Means More provide essential nutrients for a healthy diet. The cheese varieties in Feta Roasted Salmon and Tomatoes and 15-Minute Weeknight Pasta provide vitamin B12 for

healthy brain and nerve cell development and are a good source of calcium and protein, which are important for building and maintaining healthy bones.

To find more nutritious meal ideas to fuel your family's health goals, visit MilkMeansMore.org.

Feta Roasted Salmon and Tomatoes • Recipe courtesy of Marcia Stanley, MS, RDN, Culinary Dietitian, on behalf of Milk Means More • Prep time: 15 minutes • Cook time: 15 minutes • Servings: 4

- Nonstick cooking spray
- 3 cups halved cherry tomatoes
- 2 teaspoons olive oil
- 1 teaspoon minced garlic
- 1/2 teaspoon dried oregano or dried dill weed
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon coarsely ground black pepper, divided
- 1 1/2 lbs salmon or halibut fillets, cut into four serving-size pieces
- 1 cup (4 ounces) crumbled feta cheese

1. Preheat oven to 425 F. Line 18-by-13-by-1-inch baking pan with foil. Lightly spray foil with nonstick cooking spray. Set aside.
2. In medium bowl, toss tomatoes, olive oil, garlic, oregano or dill weed, salt and 1/4 teaspoon pepper.
3. Place fish pieces, skin side down, on one side of prepared pan. Sprinkle with remaining pepper. Lightly press feta cheese on top of fish. Pour tomato mixture on other side of prepared pan. Bake, uncovered, 12-15 minutes, or until fish flakes easily with fork.
4. Place salmon on serving plates. Spoon tomato mixture over top.

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How cold-weather activities can impact heart health

COURTESY OF FAMILY FEATURES

Clearing sidewalks and driveways of snow may be essential to keep from being shut in, however, it's important to use caution when picking up a shovel or starting the snowblower. Research shows many people face an increased risk of a heart attack or sudden cardiac arrest after shoveling heavy snow.

In fact, snow shoveling is among the physical activities that may place extra stress on the heart, especially among people who aren't used to regular exercise, according to the American Heart Association's scientific statement, "Exercise-Related Acute Cardiovascular Events and Potential Deleterious Adaptations Following Long-Term Exercise Training: Placing the Risks Into Perspective - an Update." Numerous other scientific research studies over the years have also identified the dangers of shoveling snow for people with and without previously known heart disease.

"Shoveling a little snow off your sidewalk may not seem like hard work," said Barry Franklin, Ph.D., FAHA, lead author of the scientific statement, long time American Heart Association volunteer and a professor of internal medicine at Oakland University William Beaumont School of Medicine. "However, the strain of heavy snow shoveling may be as, or even more, demanding on the heart than taking a treadmill stress test,



according to research we've conducted. For example, after only 2 minutes of snow shoveling, study participants' heart rates exceeded 85 percent of maximal heart rate, which is a level more commonly expected during intense aerobic exercise testing. The impact is hardest on those who are least fit."

Franklin said winter weather in general can contribute to increased risks. Cold temperatures may increase blood pressure while simultaneously constricting the coronary arteries. Those factors, combined with higher heart rate from extra physical effort, may increase the

risk for acute cardiac events. There are even studies showing an increased risk for heart attacks among people using snowblowers. Similar to the exertion of pushing a shovel, pushing a snowblower can raise the heart rate and blood pressure quickly.

"The impact of snow removal is especially concerning for people who already have cardiovascular risks like a sedentary lifestyle or obesity; being a current or former smoker; or having diabetes, high cholesterol or high blood pressure; as well as people who have had a heart attack or stroke," Franklin said. "People

with these characteristics and those who have had bypass surgery or coronary angioplasty simply should not be shoveling snow."

If you experience chest pain or pressure, lightheadedness, heart palpitations or irregular heart rhythms, stop the activity immediately. Call 911 if symptoms don't subside shortly after you stop shoveling or snowblowing. If you see someone collapse while shoveling snow, call for help and start Hands-Only CPR if they are unresponsive with no pulse.

Learn more about cold weather and cardiovascular health at [Heart.org](https://www.heart.org).



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How to build lasting healthy habits

COURTESY OF FAMILY FEATURES



GETTY IMAGES

Starting on a path toward healthy habits is often easier than maintaining them long term. This year, you can avoid a major pitfall of healthy resolutions and build healthy habits that stick by working small, positive steps into your daily life.

In fact, healthy habits are the first suggested treatment strategy for people whose blood pressure and cholesterol levels are creeping higher than normal, according to an American Heart Association scientific statement.

These six ideas from the American Heart Association's Healthy for Good Habit Coach can help.

Bust common habit-building myths

You may be surprised to learn the truth about creating and sticking to healthy habits. One myth is getting healthy means doing things you don't like. Research shows positive emotions make habits stick, so set your intentions on something you enjoy. Another misconception is big results require big changes, which may

lead to overly ambitious habits. However, the simpler the routine is, the more likely it is to become habit.

Work with your "brain loops"

Your brain creates "loops" for habits made up of three things: a cue, a routine and a reward. Each time the loop is repeated, it becomes more routine and may become automatic. Knowing this, you can design cues for developing new, healthy habits, such as setting walking shoes by the bed to start a walking habit. The routine is putting on the shoes and walking around the block, and the reward is the pleasant sensations and brighter mood from a morning stroll.

Create cues that work for you

Most successful health habits begin with a cue. The cue can be external in your environment or internal in terms of your mindset. The more consistent the cue, the more likely it is to trigger the habit. Hacking your brain's reminder system can help you remember your cue. Some examples of visual cues are placing

a sticky note where you'll see it often, keeping a water bottle on your desk or refrigerating fresh veggies at eye level.

Build a routine that supports your goal

Positive and consistent habits are important to achieve your personal goals. Small habits done consistently can add up to big results. To create a new healthy habit, think through the steps that could lead to your desired outcome. Ask yourself whether you want to do it, if it's easy and if it's high impact. It's important to choose habits that make a difference and move you closer to your goals.

For example, if one of your goals is improving your heart health, a meaningful habit might be to move more. Increasing physical activity can help lower blood pressure and cholesterol along with many other health benefits, Gibbs said.

"Every little bit of activity is better than none," she said. "Even small initial increases of 5-10 minutes a day can yield health benefits."

Use rewards to make habits stick

Start by choosing a habit you enjoy that's rewarding by itself. If you're more of a dancer than runner, increase your physical activity with an upbeat dance class. You might also look for a more enjoyable version of a new habit, such as getting more fruits and veggies by sipping on a delicious smoothie.

Understand resets are part of the process

New habits are experiments. If they don't stick, you haven't failed. Instead, you've learned what doesn't work, which is useful. Get curious and ask yourself which part of the habit didn't work for you. Maybe the cue was ineffective. Maybe the steps of the routine were too ambitious and you need to split them into smaller, easier steps. If you realize you don't enjoy the habit, stop doing it and try something else.

Find more inspiration and ideas to jumpstart healthy habits this year at heart.org/habits.

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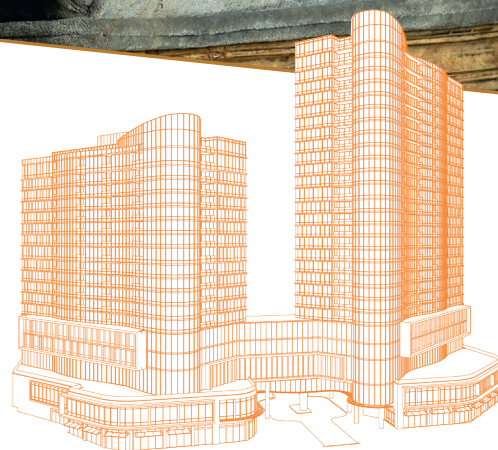
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