

## Women's Nutrition Matters Monthly October 2011

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they are nutrient-dense and flavorful. They add easily to all soups and stews, making it easy to get your daily quota of greens. Tomatoes and cucumbers may be dwindling, but winter squashes and apples are plentiful.

Baking them is easy, season them with cinnamon and the house will smell wonderfully.



### Transitioning to autumn

Everyone is always sad to see the summer end, and for the first time, I was sad as well. You see, I do prefer the cooler months, and I embrace the snows of winter. But this year, my dearest husband built me raised beds so I could have vegetable gardens. And garden I did! But as the days get cooler and shorter, and my kale and Bok choy are nestled under their tunnels, I start to pack away my shorts in favor of old sweaters and jeans.

Just as the weather is changing, so too, is our diet, personal care, and soul-life.

As fresh lettuces are a mere memory, fall spinach, kale and chard become center stage. Now is the season of cooked greens, and if you don't know them, acquaint yourself immediately! Kales, Bok Choi, chard, collards are all staples of the fall diet, and

Fall is also a time we seek out heavier foods, but instead of reaching for rich desserts and heavy meats, look toward whole grains such as polenta, oatmeal and pilafs. I recently bought a small 2 quart crock pot to cook my grains. It is wonderful: I add stock and the grain, some minced herbs or onions, and walk away. I then have a crock of grains for the week!

As the weather cools, our skin tends to dry as our tans peel off and skin has a rough, old texture. If you haven't added healthy fats to your diet all along, your skin will suffer now! In addition to keeping well hydrated by drinking water, eat fatty fish such as wild-caught Pacific salmon, sable fish, sardines or herring for their essential fatty acids. Or, take a high-quality fish oil supplement such as Nordic Naturals. Use raw organic butter, organic coconut oil, and organic extra virgin olive oil. And don't forget the nuts and seeds (raw, please) that provide protein and healthy fats for not only

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your skin but also your brain cells! And let's not forget dry skin brushing to make your skin glow.



Some people tell me they get depressed as winter rolls around. Some say it is the lack of sunlight, some say a deficiency of vitamin D. I think it is more than that. I think it is also a mindset. When I visit people up north, they seem to embrace winter, participating in outdoor activities, and seem quite fine overall. I think it is important to get some sunlight on your face, in your eyes every day that it is possible. And, keep your vitamin D level in the 50's at least. Then, change your mind about winter. Find a way. I know you can! Take up walking, leaf collecting, park-hopping while the weather cools down. Invest in some warm clothes and a good flashlight. Buy cheap snow shoes! Whatever intrigues you about winter, go for it. Your soul needs fulfillment all times of the year. It needs to be nourished and excited about life in all seasons! If you really hate the thought of braving the cold, make friends with books and embrace a whole new life through reading. Or crafting. Or sewing. Feed your soul something new and get excited about it. Fall is the perfect season to transition into something new and good and fun. That is one of the keys to staying young.

Fall is the perfect season to institute a walking habit. The weather is cool, the sky is beautifully clear and colorful. If you have a dog, walk it. If you have a child, grab the stroller or back pack and head out.

Do take my advice and get a high-quality flash light with extra batteries. Even if you can see well, a flash light is great for giving oncoming cars a heads 'up that you are out there if you have to walk on the roads. If you walk in areas where there are hunters, wear bright colors, wear a bell or sing! For years I hiked all over Hunterdon County during hunting season with my dogs and would sing constantly. The hunters may have thought I was nuts, but I was safe!

In anything you do, know that you are creating and contributing to your health, both physically and mentally. Embrace that power you have and thank God that you have the ability to take charge over your wellbeing!

Warmly,

Diane