



MARY'S MEMO

Recipes • Menu Ideas • Shopping • Cooking Tips

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Chief and Rays Supermarkets

ACTIVITY LINKED TO MOOD, FUNCTION IN OLDER ADULTS

High levels of physical activity, such as shopping, housekeeping and living with others, show a strong association with perceived, functional fitness and mood in older adults, according to recent studies in Portugal and Japan presented at the American College of Sports Medicine's Annual Meeting in Baltimore in June 2010. Lack of activity correlated with poor balance, depression and perception of poor health. Eighteen percent of Portugal's population is over 65. The Japanese study concluded that older people should follow an exercise program to elevate mood and improve symptoms of depression. In Japan, 23 percent of the population is over 65. (In the U.S., 13 percent of the population is over 65.)

Source: Duke Medicine Health News, September 2010.

ANOTHER BENEFIT OF COFFEE

Drinking coffee may reduce the risk of head and neck cancers. In a recent international analysis that pooled data from nine previous studies on neck and head cancers, regular drinkers of caffeinated coffee had a lower risk of cancers of the mouth and pharynx (part of the throat behind the mouth); there was no effect on cancer of the larynx ("voice box"). Data on decaf were too sparse to draw conclusions; tea had no effect on any of these cancers. Coffee has been blamed for everything from hypertension to various cancers, but in nearly every instance research has found it not guilty, or found that it may actually be beneficial.

Source: University of California at Berkeley Wellness Letter, September 2010.

WHAT'S COOKING THIS WEEK?

I love slow cooker recipes, especially ones that don't take a bagful of groceries to make! Like many of you I peruse cookbooks when I am looking for something specific and also leisure reading. I was doing the latter when I found this week's recipe for No Peek Casserole. The dish calls for 2 to 3 pounds of stew meat. My package weighed 2.17 pounds. For a cheaper option, buy a chuck roast when they're on sale and cut your own meat into cubes. My package weighed 2.17 pounds and made 5 servings. Rather than buy a large bottle of wine, buy a package of 4 small bottles and keep on hand for recipes. Watch for sales on white and red wines in Chief and Rays wine department.

NO PEEK CASSEROLE

- 2 to 3 pounds beef stew cubes
- 1 package dry onion soup mix
- 1 can Campbell's Healthy Request Cream of Mushroom Soup

- 8-ounce can mushroom stems and pieces, drained
- 1/2 cup dry red wine
- 2 tablespoons Minute Tapioca

Combine all ingredients in a 4 to 6-quart crock pot. Cook on high 1 hour. Turn to low and cook an additional 7 to 9 hours. Serve on noodles or angel hair pasta.

Source: Adapted from recipe in Good as Gold, A Collection of Recipes from St. Pius X School, Celebrating 50 Years of Academic Excellence, 1955-2005, Greensboro, North Carolina.

GRITS ANYONE?

I served a dish made with grits recently at the Bryan Chief and I was surprised that some customers hadn't eaten them before. Although grits can be any coarsely ground grain, when I think of grits I think of corn grits, the most popular kind. Fresh or frozen sweet corn can be used.

CHEESY CORN GRITS

- 1-3/4 cups water
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 cup quick cooking grits (not instant)
- 1 cup fresh or frozen sweet corn
- 3/4 cup milk
- 1/2 cup shredded sharp Cheddar cheese
- 1/2 cup shredded Romano or Parmesan cheese (I used Romano)
- 1 bunch scallions, chopped (1/4 cup)
- 1 tablespoon butter
- 1/4 teaspoon Tabasco sauce
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper

Bring salted water to a boil in a Dutch oven. Add grits to boiling water, whisking until smooth. Reduce heat to low and cook 8 minutes, stirring occasionally. Stir in corn and milk and cook 2 minutes longer. Remove from heat. Add cheese, scallions, butter, Tabasco sauce and pepper to grits and mix well. Serve immediately as a side dish with ham, pork chops or omelets. Recipe serves 6 to 8.

Source: Adapted from recipe in Pasadena Junior League California Mosaic cookbook, published in 2008.

WASH THOSE SHOPPING BAGS!

There is concern about cross contamination in the shopping bags many of us are using these days. They are washable so to prevent bacteria from accumulating in the bags do wash them regularly. It has also been recommended that you separate meats from produce and other groceries that you buy.

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