



# OCDPA BI-MONTHLY

## What's Happening Now: Current Projects

### 'Multiple Risk-Factor' Workgroup

The OCDPA 'Multiple Risk Factor' Workgroup is currently developing a background paper which examines transferring lessons and application of policies and practices across risk factors. This paper complements previous work of the OCDPA, which includes a power point presentation posted on our website, [www.ocdpa.on.ca/KE\\_PHSummitOct08.htm](http://www.ocdpa.on.ca/KE_PHSummitOct08.htm) and complements OCDPA's identified priority in "Applying Learnings from Tobacco Control to HEAL Efforts and High Risk Alcohol Consumption with an emphasis on Dose of Best Practices and Evaluation". Members can expect the paper to be made available and posted on the OCDPA website in late Spring 2009.

### OCDPA Moving Forward as a System

In collaboration with the Alliance's partners, the Canadian Mental Health Association and the Centre for Addictions and Mental Health, the OCDPA hosted a Think Tank on Mental Health and Chronic Disease Prevention: Moving Forward as a System on Feb 6th. Participants engaged in discussions related to the issue of mental health as a risk factor for chronic disease and looked at their role in integrating mental health promotion within their current work. Participants prioritized independent and collective actions that can and should move forward. A summary of the event will be available in April on the OCDPA website.

### OCDPA Common Messages

The OCDPA has hired a consultant to help develop a message utilization framework for its members to identify their interest and role in the delivery of common risk factor messages through their respective organizations. In March, OCDPA members will discuss how to move forward to external groups who are working within the CDP field. Please view the completed "Common Messages: Supporting Collective Priorities and Actions on Chronic Disease Prevention across Ontario" by visiting the "What's New" section on our website. Email staff with your interest in learning more about this project at [ocdpa@opha.on.ca](mailto:ocdpa@opha.on.ca)

### Early Environmental Exposures and Chronic Disease Joint Constellation Project

The Canadian Partnership for Children's Health & Environment (CPCHE) and OCDPA have submitted to the Ontario Trillium Foundation 1) a Collaborative Agreement which will govern their joint activities throughout the duration of this two-year project; 2) a logic model to guide the evaluation of this project. A report on the links between early environmental exposures and chronic disease is in development. We are also in the process of planning a Forum, anticipated to be held in Fall 09, to engage CPCHE and OCDPA Partners as well as key stakeholders in the issue. For more information on this initiative, please contact Erica Phipps, Project Manager, [erica@healthyenvironmentforkids.ca](mailto:erica@healthyenvironmentforkids.ca).

Environmental factors are key drivers in Alzheimer's and Parkinson's diseases

Lifetime influences of environmental factors include: common dietary patterns, toxic chemical exposures, inadequate exercise, socio-economic stress and other factors.

Stein J, Schettler T, Rohrer B, Valenti M. (2008). *Environmental Threats to Healthy Aging*.

### Inside this issue:

What's Happening Now	1
Note from Chair	2
Road to Healthy Aging	3
Living with or without osteoporosis	4-6
The Arthritis Society	6-7
Alzheimer Awareness Month	8
Include Your Brain in Your Workout	9-10
Special Recipes	10-13

## Note from the Chair



Connie Uetrecht,  
OCDPA Co-Chair

The year 2009 is off to a good start with several initiatives underway to promote healthy Ontarians and to support chronic disease prevention in Ontario:

- The commitment by the Ministry of Health Promotion to address “childhood obesity” has now been incorporated into the poverty reduction strategy as the After School Strategy.
- Development of Cancer Care Ontario’s *Healthy Eating, Physical Activity and Healthy Weights Guidelines*, evidence-based guidelines for chronic disease prevention, which supports the implementation of the 2008 Ontario Public Health Standards pertaining to chronic disease prevention and child health.
- Continuation of the *Take Charge of Toxics* campaign, a campaign which looks forward to help make Ontario a leader in toxic use reduction and to reduce the burden of illness from environmental and occupational carcinogens. The Canadian Cancer Society poll results showed that 96% of Ontarians surveyed support the government’s strategy to have industries develop a toxics reduction plan.

As of March 31st, 2009, my term, as well as Linda Stewart’s term, as an OCDPA Co-Chair will be ending. Over the past two years, the OCDPA has gained momentum and watched as our members have taken collaborative and complimentary action to focus on chronic disease prevention at both provincial, regional and local levels. As a collective, our members have supported the OCDPA in promoting a systems approach to policy and planning. Actions included:

- A letter of recommendation to all 4 of Ontario’s major political party leaders detailing nine recommendations for action regarding chronic disease prevention in Ontario;
- A submission to the Ministry of Health Promotion recommending policy and program investments to reduce childhood obesity in Ontario;
- Release of the *Primer to Action: Social Determinants of Health* in 2007 (in collaboration with the Canadian Cancer Society and Health Nexus) and a revised edition in 2008 (in collaboration with Health Nexus);
- Release of the *Moving the Health Eating and Active Living Strategy Forward in Ontario* report, with 4 priority actions identified to move forward as a system;
- The development of ‘common messages’ which provide focal points to address policy and undertake actions to support broader chronic disease prevention and/or risk factor issues;
- Hosting of a Systems Think Tank on Mental Health and Chronic Disease Prevention.

Finally, I would like to extend a sincere thanks to all OCDPA members and stakeholders in contributing to and engaging in OCDPA’s activities. The Alliance would not be able to fulfill its purpose without your support and contributions. I can assure you that I will continue, as Executive Director of OPHA, to support OCDPA as a partner and Secretariat. I look forward to another successful and action-filled year to *THINK, AND ACT, LIKE A SYSTEM.*

Connie Uetrecht, OCDPA Co-Chair

## Road to Healthy Aging

Findings from a study by Statistics Canada, which examined factors associated with maintaining good health after the age of 45, suggest that factors that affect an individual's chances of maintaining good health are not the same for middle aged adults and seniors. This study was based on longitudinal data from the National Population Health Survey (NPHS) over an observation period of eight-year (from 1994/95 to 2002/03); middle aged adults (age 45 to 64) and seniors (age 65 or more) were considered. Factors that impact good health are summarized below:

### Social Economic Characteristics

Middle-aged adults who live in an upper-middle or high-income household are more likely to stay healthy; however, health differences between income groups fade out with age and household incomes makes no difference to seniors chance of staying healthy.

Education, on the other hand, was significantly associated with maintaining good health among both age groups.

### Lifestyle

Impacts of healthy habits accumulate over time. For seniors, physical activity in leisure time, alcohol consumption and a healthy weight are associated with healthy aging. Moreover, data showed that seniors who started out in good health in 1994/95 were more likely to lose their health by 2002/03 if they smoked or quit in the last 10 years.

### Positive Attitude

Middle aged adults with low chronic stress are more likely to age healthily than those with high level of chronic stress. Interestingly, the reverse is true for seniors and less stressed seniors are less likely to maintain their good health. A high sense of coherence (finding life meaningful, manageable and comprehensible) is associated with healthy aging.

### Chronic Conditions

Chronic condition, such as arthritis, diabetes and heart disease, reduces the chance of a person staying healthy and preventing these diseases before age 65 could improve the health of the elderly population.

### Doctor's Visit

While consultation with a physician makes little difference to maintaining health for middle aged adults, seniors who had not consulted a physician are more likely to show health decline.

### Reference:

Martel L., Belanger A., Berthelot J.M. and Carriere Y. (2006). Healthy today, healthy tomorrow? Findings from the National Population Health Survey. Healthy Aging. Component of Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 82-618-MWE2005004.

### Did you know...

Environmental lead exposure in the community is linked to increased risk of cognitive impairment.

Stein J, Schettler T, Rohrer B, Valenti M. (2008). *Environmental Threats to Healthy Aging*.

## Whether living with or without osteoporosis - your bone health is important!

Submitted by Cindy Sabolic, Osteoporosis Canada



Osteoporosis Canada  
Osteoporose Canada

Throughout generations, parents and guardians have made their children's health a top priority. Whether they exposed their children to the right foods, or perhaps encouraged them to pursue physical activity, parents have understood the need to help children build strong and healthy bodies. Yet even if one were to eat all of the right foods and maintain a healthy and active lifestyle, the risk of developing osteoporosis still remains.

In Canada alone, one in four women and at least one in eight men over the age of 50 have osteoporosis. It is estimated that as many as two million Canadians may be at risk of osteoporotic fractures during their lifetime. The reduced quality of life for those with osteoporosis is enormous. This disease can lead to disfigurement, lowered self-esteem, reduction or loss of mobility, and decreased independence.

Consequences of osteoporosis are frightening, and though many of us may feel that we do not need to worry about osteoporosis, we must still pay close attention to our eating habits and lifestyle in order to ensure that we reduce our chances of acquiring the disease later in life.

Osteoporosis Canada, the first national organization of its kind to focus on raising awareness of and promoting education about osteoporosis, is on a mission to help the public decrease their chances of developing the disease, as well as to help those already living with osteoporosis to learn how to manage it safely, thereby regaining their quality of life.

### Decrease your risk of fracture

While the most common fractures associated with osteoporosis are those of the hip, spine and wrist, not everyone diagnosed with this disease breaks bones. Whether or not you have had a fracture, everyone with osteoporosis should attempt to modify their lifestyle in order to minimize their risk of breaking a bone. The essential elements in maintaining bone health are an adequate intake of calcium and vitamin D and physical activity, particularly weight-bearing activity. (This is any kind of activity where you are bearing your own body weight, such as walking.) If you have been diagnosed with osteoporosis, your doctor may prescribe an osteoporosis medication. There are several that have been approved by Health Canada. Even if you are on a medication, don't ignore calcium and vitamin D. For those 50 and over, Osteoporosis Canada recommends 1500 mg\* of calcium and at least 800 IU\* vitamin D daily from all sources. In the winter months, October to March, vitamin D is not created by the action of the sun on the skin, and there are not many food sources of vitamin D, so a supplement is in order.

In addition to drug therapy, exercise, calcium and vitamin D, it is very important to understand how to move in a way that is safe for your bones. The practical advice that follows is designed to help you understand what are considered safe movements and to pay attention to the details of daily living so that you don't compromise your bones.

\* Please note that these are Osteoporosis Canada's recommended levels of intake; please check [www.hc-sc.gc.ca](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca) for Health Canada's recommendation.

### Did you know...

Air pollution is harmful to the brain, in addition to the lungs, health nose and blood vessels.

Stein J, Schettler T, Rohrer B, Valenti M. (2008). *Environmental Threats to Healthy Aging.*

(Continued from page 4)

### Guidelines for safe movement:

- Do not bend forward, as it puts you in danger of breaking the bones in your spine. Use your knees instead of bending at the waist.
- Avoid twisting your torso - it will put pressure on your spine.
- When lifting objects that are not too heavy, bend your knees and keep your back straight. Avoid lifting objects above shoulder level and do avoid reaching over your head to retrieve something from a shelf or cupboard.
- Avoid activities that overload your spine when you are in a bent position, e.g., putting a roast in or out of the oven, putting wet laundry in the dryer, lifting the mattress to tuck in sheets, shovelling the driveway. Ask for help.
- Think, then do. Don't do something dangerous in a moment of impatience. Don't be in a hurry to catch a bus, answer the phone or respond to a doorbell. Haste may create more problems than it's worth.
- Stick to moderate weight-bearing exercises. Jogging jars the spine and puts you at risk of injury.
- Take extra care if you have a poor sense of balance, poor eyesight, or if you wear bifocals.

### Tips for daily living

#### *In your home:*

- Don't bend to pick up a child (or anyone else you may be caregiving). Sit and let the child climb onto your lap.
- Get in and out of bed carefully. To get in, first sit on the edge of your bed. Then lie on your side and gently roll over. If you sleep on your side, a pillow between your knees will help support your hips and lower back. To get out of bed, lie on your side, ease yourself to the side of the bed, then push yourself up with your arms so that you are in a sitting position at the side of the bed with both feet on the floor.
- Avoid reading in bed. To read comfortably, sit in a chair, place a firm pillow on your lap, and support your arms and book on the pillow. Keep chin tucked and neck straight. Raise your feet on a low stool, keeping knees bent.

#### *In public places:*

- Request a comfortable chair when dining out. Don't feel you have to explain your illness, just say "I have a bad back problem."
- Do avoid crowded public places because it is easy to get knocked off balance and fall. If using public transit, travel during off-peak hours if possible.
- Take care not to jolt your spine when climbing stairs or stepping off a curb.
- Take a pillow with you for back support in cars, offices, etc.
- When getting in and out of a car, sit down facing the door, then swing legs inwards. Reverse the procedure to get out of the car.
- If you drive a car, use rear view mirror extenders and your side mirrors to check traffic behind and beside you to avoid having to twist around. Watch out for the blind spot.

(Continued on page 6)

*(Continued from page 5)*

If you have been recently diagnosed, here are some ideas about where to begin:

- Educate yourself: learn all you can about osteoporosis. Osteoporosis Canada operates a toll-free information line. Our information counsellors discuss your concerns, send you relevant information and, if there is one, refer you to a Chapter or support group near you.
- Consider adding your name to COPN, the Canadian Osteoporosis Patient Network. They publish a regular newsletter with helpful tips and information on living with osteoporosis. Please visit our website (another great resource tool!) for more details.
- Review your treatment options with your doctor. You have several choices.
- Review necessary lifestyle changes with your doctor as well.
- Ask your doctor to refer you to other professionals. Although your physician is your primary medical resource, there is a wide range of professionals who can be involved in helping you care for your bones.

This article was prepared with collaboration from Osteoporosis Canada; for more information about osteoporosis, please visit [www.osteoporosis.ca](http://www.osteoporosis.ca) or call 1-800-463-6842.

## The Arthritis Society says get active this winter!

Submitted by Lisa Hartford, The Arthritis Society



With the temperature dropping and the snow piling up, staying indoors and going into hibernation can seem very appealing. Being active year-round, however, is very important to keep your joints and body strong and increase your range of movement. Frequent, low-impact exercise can also help decrease pain caused by your arthritis.

For people with arthritis, exercising for long periods of time can be challenging. It can be more manageable to exercise for a shorter duration, and more often. In fact, exercising for just 10 minutes a few times a day is as beneficial as exercising for 30 minutes once each day!

Did you know that by losing 10lbs of excess weight you are relieving your knee joints of 40lbs of stress? That same 10lbs also reduces your risk of needing a joint replacement. Excess weight can increase your chances of developing osteoarthritis, the most prevalent form of arthritis in Canada.

Follow these easy tips to get yourself moving this winter and you'll be amazed at how much better you will feel, both physically and mentally, while improving the health of your joints. So get outside - for as long as you can manage - and find out for yourself just how fun this season can be!

*(Continued on page 7)*

(Continued from page 6)

### Layer up

Wear several layers of thin, breathable, non-absorbent clothing while exercising outdoors in cold weather. Multiple layers of thin fabrics, such as silk, wool and fleece will actually keep you warmer than wearing one thick layer of clothing, since the layers trap warm air and help with body heat retention. If you get too warm while exercising, you can always remove a layer to keep yourself comfortable.

### Seek out the sun

Plan to go outside when the sun is shining. Not only will this help improve your mood, but exposure to the sun can also help strengthen your bones by triggering the production of vitamin D in your skin, which helps with the absorption of calcium. Experts recommend getting at least 15 minutes of sun exposure, two to three times a week, on your face and hands for adequate vitamin D production.

### Grab a friend

Exercising with a friend can not only be a great way to keep motivated, but can also make the experience more fun for both of you. Take turns deciding which activities you will do, then set realistic goals to reach together.

### Listen to your body

If you are experiencing pain in your joints or muscles two hours after you work out, chances are you've tried to do too much too quickly. Don't stop exercising all together; just exercise for a shorter duration or at a lower intensity next time. Gradually increase your workout time and intensity and you'll be amazed at how quickly you will build up your stamina. Just remember to keep monitoring your body and adjust your exercise routine accordingly.

The Arthritis Society's Lifestyle Makeover Challenge program has already supported thousands of Canadians to make lifestyle changes that enable them to manage or delay the onset of arthritis. The Challenge begins as a four-week program that encourages Canadians to become more active and eat healthier. The approach also addresses, through exercise and stretching, how to reduce the pain and stiffness of osteoarthritis.

If you'd like to take on the Challenge, sign up at [www.arthritis.ca/lifestyle](http://www.arthritis.ca/lifestyle). Registrants receive a welcome kit that includes a waist tape measure, a contract, an activity tracker, a list of exercises, and a nutrition and arthritis brochure. These tools are meant to support you on your journey to a healthier lifestyle.

The Arthritis Society also offers joint-friendly exercise ideas and other daily living tips on its website at [www.arthritis.ca/tips](http://www.arthritis.ca/tips). Always remember to talk to your health care team before you start a new exercise plan to ensure that the activity you are pursuing is best for you.

Founded in 1948, The Arthritis Society is Canada's leading charitable organization devoted solely to funding and promoting arthritis research, programs and patient care. In the last 60 years, The Society has invested \$165 million towards arthritis research to develop better treatments and, ultimately, find a cure.

### Did you know...

Exposure to a variety of pesticides is linked to increased risks for Parkinson's disease.

Stein J, Schettler T, Rohrer B, Valenti M. (2008). *Environmental Threats to Healthy Aging*.

## January is Alzheimer Awareness Month

Source: Alzheimer Society of Ontario

January is Alzheimer Awareness Month. The Alzheimer Society of Ontario's Chapters kick off Alzheimer's Awareness Month with Manulife Walks for Memories, held in over 50 communities across the province.

The provincial goal of the Walks this year was to raise \$1.6M to help fund research into finding better treatments and a cure for Alzheimer's disease and related dementias, as well as benefit vital local services provided by the Society's 39 member Chapters.

Alzheimer's disease and related dementias are a stark reality for almost 170,000 Ontarians, a number that is expected to increase to nearly 185,000 this year.

Now, a new study undertaken by the Alzheimer Society of Canada in conjunction with RiskAnalytica confirms that Alzheimer's disease does not only strike the elderly. People as young as 40 and 50 are also developing the disease. *Rising Tide: The Impact of Dementia on Canadian Society* reveals that 15 per cent or one in six of those with dementia are under the age of 65. In 15 years, the number of Ontarians with Alzheimer's disease or a related dementia will soar to 386,984. With baby boomers reaching their pensionable years and people living longer, this alarming trend will help fuel a healthcare crisis like no other.

Nationwide, the study reveals that half a million Canadians have Alzheimer's disease or a related dementia. Of this number, 71,000 are 65 or younger and nearly 50,000 are under 60. In just five years, the number of Canadians affected will increase by 200,000. In 25 years, this number will balloon to more than a million.

"This report is just the tip of the iceberg," says Linda Stebbins, CEO, Alzheimer Society of Ontario. "It's a harbinger of the challenges that lie ahead and the impact that dementia will have on our health care system and on tens of thousands of families. That's why this year's Walk is so critical. Clearly, we need to continue to educate the public about this disease and the importance of early diagnosis. We also know that more families are going to need our services to help them better cope with this devastating disease."

Dementia is a term used to describe several diseases of the brain, of which Alzheimer's is the most common. Alzheimer's disease results in failing mental and physical function and loss of memory, and is the seventh leading cause of death in Canada

For more information about *Rising Tide: The Impact of Dementia on Canadian Society*, please visit the [Alzheimer Society of Canada](http://www.alzheimer.ca) website.

### Did you know...

High intake of omega-3 fatty acids is associated with lower risk for Alzheimer's.

Stein J, Schettler T, Rohrer B, Valenti M. (2008). *Environmental Threats to Healthy Aging*.

# Include Your Brain in Your Workout

Source: Alzheimer Society of Ontario

Here are ten tips for a healthier brain:

## 1) Feed your mind

It needs nourishment to stay fit. Pump up on these cognitive-enhancing nutrients:

- Powerful antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties make blueberries the perfect brain berry
- Green, leafy vegetables are folate rich and full of B vitamins
- Eat your broccoli and cauliflower, too. Cruciferous veggies can help prevent memory decline
- Healthy fats found in nuts, olive and canola oil, and salmon can lower inflammation and cholesterol, protecting the brain.

## 2) What's good for the heart is good for the brain

Good cholesterol and controlling your blood pressure, through diet or medication, can lessen your risk for mental deterioration.

## 3) Gone fishing

Fish oil is a mighty machine in the war against aging. DHA, the omega-3 fatty acid found in cold-water fish, is the reason that Alzheimer's-prone mice were protected from the expected brain damage and memory loss. Include at least one meal of fish in your weekly diet.

## 4) Use it or lose it

Join a book club, learn a new language, take a course. Any mental stimulation will help keep your brain in tip-top shape.

## 5) Move it or lose it

You don't need to run a marathon, but taking part in a variety of exercise activities three times a week will provide greater insurance against memory impairment.

## 6) Sleep on it

Stronger memory and increased attention spans are the benefits of a good night's rest. Six or more hours of sleep will help replenish the neurotransmitters that are responsible for learning and problem solving.

## 7) Bottoms up

Improve your cognitive skills by drinking a glass of wine a day. If fruit juice is your thing, drink it fresh to derive similar benefits.

### Did you know...

Exercise is linked to reduced risk of dementia and Alzheimer's.

Stein J, Schettler T, Rohrer B, Valenti M. (2008). *Environmental Threats to Healthy Aging*.

(Continued from page 9)

**Did you know...**

Higher saturated fat intake increases the risk of dementia by two to three times.

Stein J, Schettler T, Rohrer B, Valenti M. (2008). *Environmental Threats to Healthy Aging*.

**8) All the tea in China**

Black tea, and especially green tea, are effective weapons against the formation of the brain-clogging plaques that cause Alzheimer's. Java junkies need not despair. Caffeine in moderation can enhance mental performance.

**9) Spice it up**

Add variety to your diet. Turmeric, a spice common in Indian cuisine, contains the active ingredient curcumin. Curcumin reduces inflammation in the brain, which in turn can reduce the risk of Alzheimer's.

**10) An Aspirin® a day**

Alzheimer's is caused by brain lesions, the buildup of beta-amyloid plaque. Anti-inflammatory drugs like Ibuprofen have been shown to help dissolve these lesions and prevent new ones from forming.

## SPECIAL RECIPES



The Colour It Up: Go for More Vegetables and Fruit (Colour It Up Program) is a community-based, behaviour change program designed to promote increased vegetable and fruit consumption to women between the ages of 19-50 and their families. Colour It Up provides participants with behaviour change strategies in six thoroughly outlined sessions. Materials are available in English and French.

The program was originally developed and evaluated by [Cancer Care Ontario](#) in 2002 under the program name Take Five: 5 - 10 a day... *your way!* The impetus for the program stemmed from consistent scientific evidence indicating that increased vegetable and fruit consumption is an important factor in reducing the risk of cancer, cardiovascular disease and diabetes.

Colour It Up can be implemented locally by a variety of Ontario sites, including public health units, community health centres or family health team sites. The Nutrition Resource Centre provides provincial coordination on the program with funding from the Ontario Ministry of Health Promotion. Provincial partners include: Cancer Care Ontario, the Canadian Cancer Society (Ontario Division), and the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Ontario.

For more information about the Colour It Up program, please visit: [www.colouritup.ca](http://www.colouritup.ca)

Recipes courtesy of Colour It Up: Go for More Vegetables and Fruit . Please visit [www.colouritup.ca](http://www.colouritup.ca) more information about the Colour It Up program.

## Apple Pie Shake

All the flavours of an apple pie in a shake, yummy and refreshing!

1	apple, cored and diced	1
1¼ cups	unsweetened apple sauce	300 mL
1 cup	ice	250 mL
¾ cup	unsweetened apple juice	175 mL
½ cup	vanilla flavoured yogurt (1 or 2% M.F.)	125 mL
¼ tsp	cinnamon	1 mL

1. In a blender combine apple, apple sauce and ice; pulse until apple is pureed.
2. Add apple juice, yogurt and cinnamon; puree until blended.
3. Pour into glasses and serve.

**Preparation Time:** 5 minutes

**Yield:** 4 servings

### Cooking Tips:

- The secret to any smoothie or shake is start with ice cold ingredients and better yet, serve in chilled glasses.
- For added fiber, leave the skin on the apple, the shake will be lightly speckled with red flakes.
- Read labels and look for unsweetened apple sauce or make your own when apples are in season. For smooth apple sauce try Empire, McIntosh or Gravenstein apples.

### Switch it Up:

- To boost the calcium and to make the shake thicker add 3 tbsp (45 mL) skim milk powder along with the juice.
- Sprinkle each serving with freshly grated nutmeg.
- For a treat, add 1 cup (250 mL) vanilla ice-cream along with the apple juice.

## Sweet Potato Baked Fries

Here's a healthier version of fries that even the kids will enjoy! Leave the skins on the potatoes for extra fibre.

4	sweet potatoes	4
2 tbsp	vegetable oil	30 mL
	salt and pepper	
	Parmesan cheese (optional)	

**Yield:** 4 servings

1. Heat oven to 450°F.
2. Peel sweet potatoes. Rinse and dry well. Cut into wedges or small sticks. Put sweet potatoes in a bowl and coat well with vegetable oil.
3. Arrange potatoes on a baking sheet. Bake for 15 minutes. Turn the fries over and bake for another 15 minutes until slightly crispy.
4. Season to taste with salt and pepper and Parmesan cheese if you wish.

## Fruit and Couscous Salad

Not only is this salad yummy on its own, but for a change try it stuffed into romaine lettuce-lined whole wheat pita halves. Enjoy this fruit studded salad with grilled chicken, fish or pork and accompanied with steamed seasonal veggies.

P.S. This taste great even the next day.

¾ cup	whole wheat couscous	175 mL
¼ cup	raisins	50 mL
1 teaspoon	curry powder	5 mL
¼ teaspoon	cinnamon	1 mL
6	dried apricots, finely chopped	6
1	red apple, cored and diced	1
1/3 cup	diced sweet onion, diced	75 mL
¼ cup	toasted whole skinned almonds, chopped	50 mL
¼ cup	chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley	50 mL
1 teaspoon	grated orange zest	5 mL
3 tablespoons	fresh orange juice	50 mL

1. In medium heatproof bowl combine couscous, raisins, curry and cinnamon.
2. Stir in 1 cup (250 mL) boiling water; cover and let stand 5 minutes.
3. Fluff with fork, stir in apricots and cool to room temperature.
4. Stir in apple, onion, almonds, parsley, orange zest and juice; toss thoroughly. (*Make-ahead: Cover and refrigerate for up to 2 days.*)

**Preparation time:** 10 minutes

**Standing time:** 5 minutes

**Yield:** 6 servings

### Variation – Fruit and Bulgur Salad:

- Substitute the whole wheat couscous with ¾ cup (175 mL) medium bulgur.
- Place bulgur in a heatproof bowl along with the raisins, curry powder and cinnamon.
- Cover with 1 cup plus 2 tablespoons (250 mL plus 30 mL) boiling water; let stand uncovered for 30 minutes or until water is absorbed.
- Proceed with remaining recipe.

### Cooking Tips:

- Couscous looks like a grain but is actually a tiny pasta made from semolina. Precooked couscous is available in supermarkets in bulk or packaged. To boost flavour and nutrition remember to look for whole wheat couscous when making your selection.
- Bulgur is partially steamed, dried crushed wheat kernels or berries. Look for it in bulk stores or in packages in the grain and rice section of your supermarket. Because it is partially cooked, it really just needs rehydrating.

(Continued on page 13)

(Continued from page 12)

- When a recipe calls for the zest and the juice of citrus fruit, remember to remove the zest first and then juice. To grate the zest, use the small holes on a boxed shaped grater, a microplane rasp or a zester. You can also use a paring knife or a vegetable peeler, remove the zest and then chop into fine pieces.

#### Switch it Up:

- For a refreshing main meal salad, add drained water packed tuna, canned chick peas drained and rinsed or cooked chopped turkey or chicken.
- Try fresh diced pears or mango instead of the apple or even a combination of fresh seasonal fruit would be delicious.
- Use 2 green onions sliced in place of the sweet onions.

#### Veggie Facts – Sweet Onions:

- Sweet onions have a mild sweet flavour and you can forget the tears.
- Treat sweet onions gently to avoid bruising.
- Store in the refrigerator on paper towels or for longer storage wrap in foil. Another interesting way to store them is to take a leg from a clean pair of pantyhose, drop an onion into the foot, tie a knot and repeat as necessary. Hang in a cool, dry, well-ventilated area and when ready to use, cut above the knot. Wrap cut onions in plastic wrap and refrigerate.

## Cocoa Zucchini Cake

Grated zucchini keeps the cake moist, and is used in place of extra oil. Instead of zucchini, you can also use the same amount of grated carrots.

2	small, unpeeled zucchini, grated	2
2½ cups	all-purpose flour	625 mL
½ cup	cocoa powder	125 mL
1 tsp	baking powder	5 mL
1 tsp	baking soda	5 mL
½ tsp	salt	2 mL
2 tsp	cinnamon	10 mL
¾ cup	oil	175 mL
2	eggs	2
2 cups	sugar	500 mL
2 tsp	vanilla	10 mL
½ cup	milk	125 mL
¾ cup	chopped walnuts	175 mL

**Yield:** 12 servings

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Lightly grease a 8x8x2 inch (2 L) baking pan.
2. Wash, dry and grate the zucchini with the skin on. Set aside.
3. In a bowl, combine the all-purpose flour, cocoa powder, baking powder, baking soda, salt and cinnamon. Mix well.
4. Beat the eggs in a large bowl. Stir in sugar, oil, vanilla and milk. Mix well. Stir in the grated zucchini and walnuts, if desired.
5. Add the flour mixture to the wet ingredients and stir until combined.
6. Pour the batter into the baking pan. Bake for 50 to 60 minutes. To see if the cake is baked, stick a small knife into the middle of it. If the knife comes out clean, it is done.
7. Let it cool in the pan for about 10 minutes. Then remove. Cut into 12 pieces.

WE'RE ON THE WEB!  
[www.ocdpa.on.ca](http://www.ocdpa.on.ca)

## Working Towards a **Chronic Disease Prevention System** For Ontario

The Ontario Chronic Disease Prevention Alliance is a collective voice on effective Chronic Disease Prevention policy and programming.

Ontario Chronic Disease Prevention Alliance

Contact Us:

OCDPA

c/o Ontario Public Health Association  
700 Lawrence Avenue West, Suite 310

Phone: 416-367-3313 ext. 225

Fax: 416-367-2844

E-mail: [ocdpa@opha.on.ca](mailto:ocdpa@opha.on.ca)

## Save the Date: OPHA Annual Conference 2009

2009 OPHA 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Conference

“Celebrating our past, Building for the Future”

November 1 to 4, 2009

Toronto Marriott Downtown hotel



### Upcoming Meetings

#### Membership Meeting

Date: March 10, 2008

Time: 12:00pm–5:00pm

Location:

Heart and Stroke Foundation,  
Suite 1300

2300 Yonge Street

Toronto, Ontario

© Copyright 2009 by Ontario Chronic Disease Prevention Alliance, Toronto, Canada. Permission to copy this resource is granted provided source is acknowledged.

For education and information purposes only. Not for commercial use.

Images are from Microsoft Office unless otherwise stated.

Image on page 4 courtesy of Osteoporosis Canada.

Image on page 6 courtesy of The Arthritis Society.

Image on page 10 courtesy of Colour It Up.

Image on page 14 courtesy of the Ontario Public Health Association.