

The TOPS Reminder

A newsletter for Western Massachusetts Counties

By Terri Lavigne (413) 532-7664 losingweight@tlavigne.us December 2016

Energy is the essence of life. Every day you decide how you're going to use it by knowing what you want and what it takes to reach that goal, and by maintaining focus.

- Oprah Winfrey

MERRY CHRISTMAS, HAPPY HANUKA AND A HEALTHY 2017

FOUR KORNER KOPS HONOR SOCIETY

The Honor Society held their holiday meeting at the Collegian Court in Chicopee. The meeting began 12:30, on December 3. Next meeting will be in March. Bring a friend to see what they are all about.

Resume workshop

Will be held January 7th at 9:30 in Greenfield at the Mill House. Cost is \$5 per chapter for mailing and donation of the room. The address is 75 Wells Street, Greenfield MA. Please email me or call to let me know if you are going. I have MA 0001, 0179, 0187, 0211, 0412, 0395

The six most Misunderstood Vegetables

1. Brussels sprouts

"Properly prepared [Brussels sprouts](#) are a tremendous addition to your veggie options," says [Laura Jeffers, MEd, RD, LD](#). "They're a great source of vitamins C and K, and provide fiber, too."

Like its cruciferous cousin the cabbage, Brussels sprouts give off hydrogen sulfide gases when cooked too long. These can be off-putting.

Prep tip: "Overcooking Brussels sprouts makes them smell and also robs them of their nutritional benefits," she cautions. For optimum nutrition, quarter and steam Brussels sprouts for less than 5 minutes. Add

a little garlic or lemon, and enjoy!

2. Watercress

People don't always know what to do with [watercress](#), but this cruciferous veggie packs a serious punch, says [Kristin Kirkpatrick, MS, RD, LD](#).

"Study after study is documenting watercress' amazing benefits. Researchers are studying its potential in reducing smoking carcinogens, turning off breast cancer signals and alleviating physical stress from workouts," she says.

"The big prize came in 2014, when watercress was named the top powerhouse veggie in terms of antioxidants."

Prep tip: Watercress is an easy, toss-into-anything kind

of veggie, she says. Add it to salads and pasta dishes, or place it on top of a beautiful piece of wild fish.

3. Artichokes

“[Artichokes](#) are a versatile veggie — you can eat the hearts as well as the leaves,” says [Kate Patton, MEd, RD, CSSD, LD](#).

“Artichokes are extremely rich in antioxidants and are a good source of folate, potassium and many other vitamins and minerals,” she says.

Plus, they’re low in calories (just 45 in 1 cup cooked hearts) and high in fiber (5 grams).

Prep tip: Try steaming artichokes and eating the tender ends of the leaves. “Steaming veggies is fast and easy,” she says. “Then dip in olive oil, hummus, olive dip or Greek yogurt dip. You can also defrost frozen artichokes and add to green salad, tuna salad, or pasta salad.”

4. Cauliflower

“Don’t be fooled by its pale color — [cauliflower](#) is packed with nutrients,” says [Anna Taylor, MS, RD, LD](#).

Like other cruciferous veggies (Brussels sprouts, cabbage, kale, bok choy and broccoli), it’s rich in glucosinolates.

Glucosinolates are being studied for their anti-cancer properties.

Prep tip: “I love roasting veggies – not just because of the taste, but also because it’s so easy!” she says. Line a cookie sheet with foil, mist it with olive oil, and line up prepped cauliflower florets.

Top with another mist of olive oil and a dash of garlic, black pepper or Parmesan cheese. Bake at 425°F for 10-20 minutes until fork-tender.

Related: [Crunchy and Cruciferous: You’ll Love This Special Family of Vegetables](#)

5. Broccoli rabe

“Everyone knows about broccoli, but this cross between broccoli and kale is underrated and underconsumed in the United States,” says [Brigid Titgemeier, MS, RDN, LD](#).

Broccoli rabe is extremely nutritious, loaded with iron, calcium, zinc, vitamins A, C and K, she says. Like other cruciferous veggies, it contains potentially cancer-fighting glucosinolates.

People are not eating enough dark green vegetables — like broccoli rabe — according to the [2015 Dietary Guidelines for Americans](#). “It’s important to try new foods and to get variety in your diet, so consider adding broccoli rabe to your grocery cart,” she says.

Prep tip: Lightly sautee broccoli rabe’s leaves, buds and stems with extra virgin olive oil, lemon juice, garlic and cashew butter. “The best way to enhance cruciferous veggies’ nutrients is to prepare them raw, lightly steamed or sautéed,” she notes.

6. Cucumber

“[Cucumber](#) may not be as dense in nutrients as other veggies, but considering it has only 16 calories and 4 grams of carb per cup, it packs a punch,” says [Julia Zumpano, RD, LD](#).

Cucumbers are a good source of vitamin K, potassium, pantothenic acid, phosphorus, copper and manganese.

Prep tip: “Cucumbers can be used in so many ways — as a snack with hummus or Greek yogurt dip, in salad or in sushi, to replace chips or crackers for guacamole and cheese, to add flavor to water and mixed drinks,” she says. Cucumbers are also a great veggie to introduce to kids.

Related: [5 Veggies That Don’t Deserve the Hype: Your Dietitian’s Picks](#)

Two easy prep methods

Keeping raw veggies on hand for munching is good for your waistline and your health. “They’re great with Greek [yogurt](#) dip — anytime

and anywhere!” says Ms. Jeffers.

Adds Ms. Zumpano: “Eating veggies raw maximizes the nutrition and the crunch, and minimizes the prep work.”

Roasting cauliflower, sliced fennel, asparagus, Brussels sprouts, carrots and other veggies is also a snap. “I like the way roasting makes veggies crunchy and flavorful,” says Ms. Taylor. “And clean-up is a cinch! All these vegetables would help keep you on your plan during the holidays. Try something new.

4 Healthier Holiday Cocktails That Don't Go Overboard On Calories

This healthy eating tip is courtesy of Dr. Weil on Healthy Aging: Your Online Guide to the Anti-Inflammatory Diet. Start your free trial today!

The best way to sidestep empty calories this holiday season is to limit sugary and alcoholic drinks or avoid them altogether. But that doesn't mean that you can't enjoy traditional beverages – just be sure to moderate your intake and drink water between cocktails to keep hydrated. The following drinks are lower-calorie holiday options when you want something sweet or alcoholic.

1. **Sparkling non-alcoholic punch.** The calories can vary, but most holiday punch can easily be diluted with additional sparkling water to reduce calories and sugars. If you are [making your own punch at home](#), use unsweetened cranberry juice concentrate.

2. **Red wine.** The antioxidant activity of red wine has been linked to heart health benefits, reduced stress and even preserving memory. Limit yourself to a six-ounce glass; it typically has about 120 calories.

3. **Hot toddy.** A combination of lemon, honey, cinnamon, [cloves](#) and brandy, this beverage has between 100 and 150 calories and provides some vitamin C thanks to the lemon juice.

4. **Champagne.** This celebratory drink has about 90 calories in a four-ounce glass.

You can also simply substitute sparkling water or club soda for soft drinks or tonic typically added to liquor as a way of curbing calories.

New YEAR RESOLUTIONS

Make physical activity a regular part of the day

The first of January many people set unrealistic goals for the New Year. Their goals set them up for failure and many just give up. My resolution is to weigh less than the year before and not give up on myself. Dave and I also make one together to make time for us, since he is busy with Boy Scouts and we are both busy with TOPS



Choose activities that you enjoy and can do regularly. Fitting activity into a daily routine can be easy; such as taking a brisk 10 minute walk to and from the parking lot, bus stop, or subway station. Or, join an exercise class. Keep it interesting by trying something different on alternate days. Every little bit adds up and doing something is better than doing nothing.

Make sure to do at least 10 minutes of activity at a time, shorter bursts of activity will not have the same health

benefits. For example, walking the dog for 10 minutes before and after work or adding a 10 minute walk at lunchtime can add to your weekly goal. Mix it up. Swim, take a yoga class, garden or lift weights. To be ready anytime, keep some comfortable clothes and a pair of walking or running shoes in the car and at the office.

More ways to increase physical activity

At home:

- Join a walking group in the neighborhood or at the local shopping mall. Recruit a partner for support and encouragement.
- Push the baby in a stroller.
- Get the whole family involved — enjoy an afternoon bike ride with your kids.
- Walk up and down the soccer or softball field sidelines while watching the kids play.
- Walk the dog — don't just watch the dog walk.
- Clean the house or wash the car.
- Walk, skate, or cycle more, and drive less.
- Do stretches, exercises, or pedal a stationary bike while watching television.
- Mow the lawn with a push mower.
- Plant and care for a vegetable or flower garden.
- Play with the kids — tumble in the leaves, build a snowman, splash in a

puddle, or dance to favorite music.

- Exercise to a workout video.

At work:

- Get off the bus or subway one stop early and walk or skate the rest of the way.
- Replace a coffee break with a brisk 10-minute walk. Ask a friend to go with you.
- Take part in an exercise program at work or a nearby gym.
- Join the office softball team or walking group.

At play:

- Walk, jog, skate, or cycle.
- Swim or do water aerobics.
- Take a class in martial arts, dance, or yoga.
- Golf (pull cart or carry clubs).
- Canoe, row, or kayak.
- Play racquetball, tennis, or squash.
- Ski cross-country or downhill.
- Play basketball, softball, or soccer.
- Hand cycle or play wheelchair sports.
- Take a nature walk.

5 Hidden Causes That Could Be Making You Fat:

- 1) Low Vitamin D Levels
- 2) Poor Gut Health
- 3) Obesogens...Obese-o-what?
- 4) GMO...OMG!
- 5) Stress: The Muffin Top Monster

This would be a good program a little work on your part.



With baby steps you can climb any mountain to your goal!

Terri