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## Nutritious Bites

### Cooking for One or Two

By Mary Grider, Nutrition Educator

Often as we age, we may be frustrated by having to cook healthy meals for just one or two people. It may seem like too much work, or you may worry about wasting too much food. The following tips should go a long way to alleviate your fears.

- Limit take-out food. Though it may seem quick and inexpensive, in the long run it may be very costly. When we go out, we often ignore dietary guidelines and eat more calories, sodium, or fat than we should, which can put our health at risk.
- Make full-sized recipes and freeze the leftovers in individual serving-sized containers.
- Using coupons and store sales as a guide, plan healthy meals ahead of time and shop once a week.
- Use frozen vegetables. They often are inexpensive, and you can use a small portion and leave the rest frozen, which can eliminate waste.
- Meals don't have to be extravagant. An omelet or grilled cheese can make a quick meal.
- Cook once but plan on using the leftovers as the base for another recipe the following day. For example, roasted chicken one night can be turned into burritos the next night.
- Canned goods are also a smart option. It helps save on refrigerator space, they are inexpensive, and they can last up to two years in the pantry.
- If you go out for a meal, plan on bringing half of it home for another meal...two meals for the price of one!

## Recipe of the Month

### Slow-Cooker Spicy Chicken (Serves 2)

This super easy slow-cooker recipe is perfect for one or two people. Enjoy the spicy chicken in a burrito or on top of a salad.

#### Ingredients

- 2 skinless, boneless chicken breast halves
- ½ (8-oz.) jar medium salsa
- ¼ cup tomato sauce
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 small red onion, diced
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1 teaspoon chili powder
- Pinch of salt and pepper to taste



#### Directions

1. Arrange the chicken breasts in the bottom of a slow cooker. Pour the salsa and tomato sauce over the top of the chicken. Add the garlic and onion, and sprinkle in the cumin, chili powder, salt, and pepper.
2. Set the cooker on **Low**, and cook until the chicken is very tender, 4 to 5 hours.
3. Shred the chicken with two forks for serving.

Recipe and Photo Courtesy of:

<http://allrecipes.com/recipe/214731/slow-cooker-spicy-chicken/>

## Keep on Moving

### Warm Up and Cool Down

Muscle soreness and injuries from exercise can keep you from being active. Warming up and cooling down are key to preventing injuries and decreasing muscle soreness so that you can keep on moving.

#### Warm Up

Before your workout, start with a slower walk or marches in place to help your blood circulate and warm up your muscles. After about five minutes, you can do a few light stretches for your arms, back, hamstrings, quadriceps, and calf muscles.

#### Cool Down

At the end of your workout, slow down your pace to a walk or slow march in place. Then, you can do deeper stretches for all of your muscle groups, holding for at least 15 – 30 seconds each.

<https://nihseniorhealth.gov/exerciseandphysicalactivityexercisestoty/flexibilityexercises/01.html>

## Monthly Chair Exercise Duck Wing Squeeze

Strong arms, shoulders, and chest muscles are very important – especially if you accidentally find yourself on the floor and need to pull yourself up onto a chair.

In a seated position with good posture, place a ball underneath your right arm in the armpit region so that it does not fall. Squeeze the upper arm and elbow onto the ball like a duck folding its wing, feeling the chest and arm muscles tighten as you squeeze. Do not bend at the waist. Release and repeat 8 to 10 times. Switch to the opposite side and perform 8 to 10 repetitions. Rest briefly. Do another set of 8 to 10 repetitions on each side.

Modification (without a ball): Keeping arms in the same position as above, move your arms in a controlled flapping motion, like wings.

### Duck Wing Squeeze



For more exercises, visit the following link:  
<http://www.livewellagewell.info/study/2007/12-ChairExercisesUGA113006.pdf>

## Preventing Heart Attacks and Strokes

The most common cause of heart attacks and strokes is blocked blood flow – either to your heart (causing a heart attack) or to your brain (causing a stroke). Because the causes are similar, prevention of both conditions is also similar. The key is to help keep your arteries clear, and for this a healthy lifestyle is essential.

- Eating plenty of fruits and vegetables (7 servings a day) and foods higher in healthy omega-3 fats like salmon (and other oily fish) and walnuts will start you on your way.
- Keep track of your blood sugar levels, especially if you have diabetes or pre-diabetes.
- Blood pressure and cholesterol levels also need to be monitored. You may need to watch your sodium or cholesterol intake or talk with your doctor about preventative medications.

- Exercising regularly is also necessary to stay healthy. Aim for some kind of moderate physical activity for at least 30 minutes most days of the week.

All of these healthy habits combined can help you maintain a healthy weight, which will also curb your risk for heart attacks or strokes.

If you notice your stress levels are high, it would be beneficial to find ways to manage your stress. You might try socializing, prayer, or mindfulness and meditation.

One of the most damaging habits for your health is smoking, which can double your risk for heart attack or stroke. So if you do smoke, talk with your doctor about finding options that may help you quit as soon as possible.

Source: Cohen, Marissa. "At 20 Years Old, I Had a Stroke and Didn't Realize It." *Good Housekeeping* (February 2017).

## Medication Manager

### Safety Measures for Medications

As many Americans grow older, they find that their lists of medications are also growing. Safely managing all medications should be a primary concern.

Start by making a list of all medications that you take, both prescription and over the counter. Make sure that you know what each medication is for, how much of it you are taking and how to take it properly. At your next check-up, discuss the entire list of medications with your doctor. You may find that you're taking something you no longer need.

It's important to have one pharmacy that knows all medications that you're taking, including over the counter treatments, herbs, supplements, creams, eye drops, etc. (just because you don't need a prescription for these items doesn't mean they won't interfere or interact with your prescription medications). The goal is to be sure none of your medications are interacting with each other.

### Matter of Balance Classes

Oconee County Senior Center  
Watkinsville, Georgia  
Wednesday's, 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.  
March 1 – April 19, 2017

Lakewood Hills  
Athens, Georgia  
Tuesday's and Thursday's  
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.  
March 28 – April 20, 2017

More workshops are listed on our web site <http://www.negahealthmatters.org/>

### Live Strong, Live Long

Jackson County Senior Center  
Jefferson, Georgia  
April – May 2017 (TBD)

## Upcoming Events

# Test Yourself

## Examining Your Habits

### How am I doing?

1. I currently eat \_\_\_\_\_ servings of fruits most days of the week (circle one)  
a. Less than 1 serving    b. 1-2 servings    c. 3 or more servings
2. I currently eat \_\_\_\_\_ servings of vegetables most days of the week (circle one)  
a. Less than 1 serving    b. 1-2 servings    c. 3 or more servings
3. I currently eat \_\_\_\_\_ servings of whole grain products most days of the week (circle one)  
a. Less than 1 serving    b. 1-2 servings    c. 3 or more servings
4. I currently have \_\_\_\_\_ servings of milk or other dairy products most days of the week (circle one)  
a. Less than 1 serving    b. 1-2 servings    c. 3 or more servings
5. I limit the amount of sodium or salt I eat (circle one) Yes    No
6. I limit how much sugar or sweet foods I eat (circle one) Yes    No
7. I practice endurance exercises each week (circle one) Yes    No
8. I know how to prevent a stroke or heart attack (circle one) Yes    No
9. I keep an updated list of all of my medications and supplements (circle one) Yes    No

### What do I want to change?

This month, I want to do the following to improve my health and well-being:

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On a scale of 1 to 10 (1 = low confidence, 10 = high confidence), how confident am I that I can make the change I wrote above? (circle one)

1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10

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### Questions or Comments? Contact us!

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