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SUPERCHARGE YOUR LIFE

Healthy living and inspiration for people with diabetes

Superfood Spotlight: BUTTERNUT SQUASH: A NUTRIENT-DENSE SEASONAL TREAT



As cooler weather finally starts to return to many parts of the country, October marks a transition back to savory, comfort cooking. And one of the star ingredients of the season is absolutely butternut squash.

Hearty and versatile, butternut squash has a great nutty flavor that pairs well with a variety of flavors from earthy rosemary to fiery chiles. It also boasts a wide array of health benefits.

Butternut squash is naturally low in calories: a one cup serving is only about 80 calories. It is, however, a great source of fiber, with seven grams per cup. When boiled, its glycemic index is also only 51. These qualities make it a great, filling choice for people managing their blood sugar.

Butternut is also packed with vitamins and minerals. It's an especially rich source of vitamin A with a whopping 450% of the recommended daily intake (RDI) in that same one cup serving. Vitamin A serves numerous functions in the body. It's a vital part of maintaining bone, eye, and immune health and also plays a role in regulating cell growth. This last benefit makes it especially important for pregnant people and their developing babies.

Vitamin C is also present in butternut squash. You get about 50% of your RDI per serving. Like vitamin A, vitamin C works as a potent antioxidant in the body, contributing to cell and immune health.

Healthy Living Tips: SLEEP AND THE IMMUNE SYSTEM

Waking up refreshed and relaxed after a good night's sleep is a great way to start the day. On the other hand, a sleepless night typically brings side effects like brain fog and irritability. But while the cognitive and emotional benefits of sleep are widely known and readily observable, sleep is also responsible for some important behind-the-scenes work that helps to keep us healthy.

Over the long-term, poor quality sleep is associated with a wide variety of chronic conditions including hypertension. It can also impair short- and long-term memory.

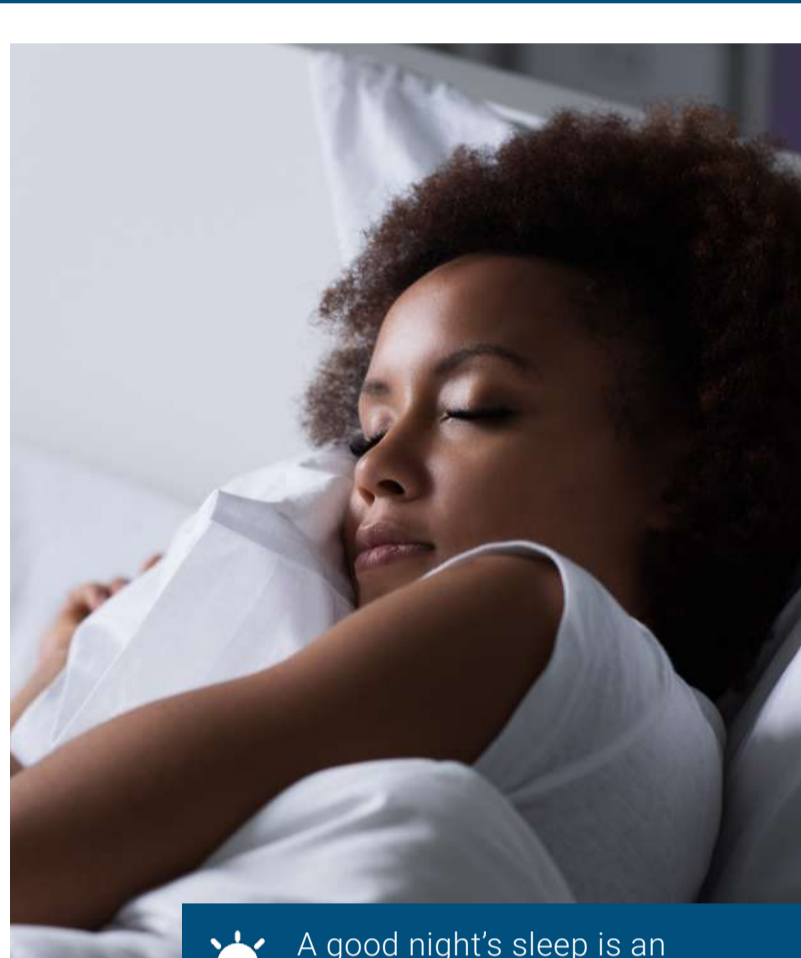
But one of the most important functions of sleep is regulating and maintaining immune health.

Growing evidence points to a link between sleep quality and a variety of immune functions. Even short term, modest sleep deprivation may lead to health problems. If you've ever gotten a cold or had a hard time fighting off a bug while your sleep was disrupted it may have been due to the decrease in infection-fighting antibodies that comes with sleep deprivation.

What's more, just one night of restricting sleep can lead to a marked decrease in your body's production of natural killer (NK) cells. One study showed that someone who slept for just 4 hours had only 73% as many NK cells as someone who got a full night's sleep (7-8 hours for a typical adult). NK cells play an important role in tumor suppression. In the long term, reduced NK cell activity significantly increases a person's risk of death from all types of cancer.

A final important benefit of a good night's sleep? Vaccinations like your annual flu shot work much better in people who have a regular and sufficient sleep schedule. Another study showed that people who consistently got enough sleep had a 50% stronger response to the influenza vaccine than those who did not.

What does this mean for you? We all lose sleep now and again—whether it be due to stress and worry or a fun family celebration or event. What's important is that you get yourself back on track and create a consistent schedule that works for you.



A good night's sleep is an essential part of fighting off infections and reducing risk of chronic disease.

Healthy Recipe: BUILD YOUR PERFECT GRAIN BOWL WITH BUTTERNUT SQUASH

Grain bowls are an easy meal option for a hearty lunch or wholesome dinner. The best part is you can customize them to your taste preferences and what's in season. This fall, try using butternut squash for a delicious, colorful meal.

Ingredients:

- One butternut squash, peeled and diced, seeds removed
- Quinoa or whole grain of choice, cooked according to package instructions
- Chopped kale or other leafy green
- Pecans
- Sliced apples
- Extra virgin olive oil
- Lemon juice
- Salt and pepper

To prepare the squash:

1. Preheat oven to 400° and line a large baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. Season with salt and pepper and drizzle with olive oil. Toss to coat evenly.
3. Roast for 30-35 minutes or until golden brown at the edges.

To build your bowl:

1. Start with your chosen grain as your base and add greens.
2. Top with squash and pecans and drizzle with olive oil and lemon juice.
3. Garnish with apple slices.

Feel free to customize your bowl with other toppings like cranberries, crumbled goat cheese, or pumpkin seeds. You can also add chickpeas or grilled chicken for a hearty, more protein-rich meal.



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Quick Tips: FESTIVE HALLOWEEN TREATS (THAT AREN'T CANDY!)

If you like to celebrate Halloween, and especially if you've got little ones in your life, it can seem like you're everywhere this month! While it's perfectly fine to indulge in your favorite treats on occasion, you can also easily opt for fun, festive treats without all the added sugar. Try getting some Halloween themed cookie cutters and using them to create a fun fruit salad (cantaloupes make for great pumpkins!) or use dark chocolate to add eyes and a mouth to a banana for an easy "ghost" treat.



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