



Crestwood Kitchenettes

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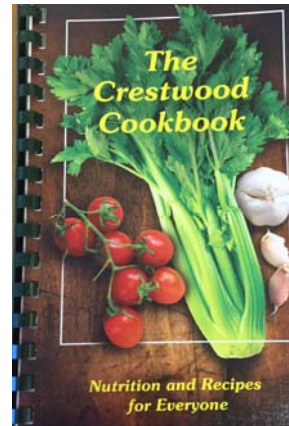
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Many of our campuses have recently had kitchenettes installed, and many others are planning to add them soon. This will allow us to hold cooking groups for clients, teaching them the valuable skill of cooking for themselves. It is also a great opportunity to teach healthy eating habits that can positively affect long-term health. Research shows that incorporating a kitchen as a sort of “lab” for teaching cooking and nutrition can be an important component in improving health.

A recent study in the American Journal of Lifestyle Medicine examined the effects of Teaching Kitchens in workplace settings. Teaching Kitchens, designed by one of the researchers, combine cooking instruction, nutrition education, exercise, mindfulness, and health coaching.

At the end of the 14-16 week program, participants showed more confidence in cooking, relied less on ready-made meals, cooked from scratch more often, and read nutrition labels more often. Many also had improved measurements in important markers of health, such as decreases in body weight, lower BMIs, and lower blood pressure and cholesterol.

It is one thing to talk about healthy behaviors; it is another to demonstrate them. Many people learn best by doing, rather than observing. Kitchenettes in our campuses will allow us to demonstrate healthy behaviors such as cooking with healthy ingredients, proper portion control, food safety, and mindful eating. They will also provide space for our clients to meet with staff, each other, and with their visitors to share food, which is such a vital part of the human experience.



If you'd like to start holding cooking groups, but you're not sure where to begin, take a look at the **Crestwood Cookbook**. There are several recipes in the beginning of the book that can be used as lessons, and many, many more recipes that can be made with the most basic kitchen equipment. You

can also explore the Nutrition and Wellness folder on the Crestwood intranet, where there are more cooking groups, nutrition PowerPoints, and other group activities such as Nutrition Jeopardy and Healthy Hangman. And all the recipes made in our kitchens are there as well, scaled down for smaller groups of 4 to 16 people.

Let's use this exciting and valuable new resource, our kitchenettes, to improve the health and wellness of our clients, and enjoy cooking together!



Bakersfield Staff Joshua Martin, Samantha Brooks and Cristian Muniz providing a cooking demonstration in the campus' Kitchenette.

Packing a Healthy Lunch

Packing school lunches that are healthy, portable, spill-proof, and that kids will eat, can be challenging. Processed meats have lots of sodium and nitrates, and peanut butter and jelly has a lot of sugar and gets boring fast. Plastic containers can leave chemicals in food that eventually end up in our bodies. Here are some healthy, plastic-free ideas that work for school lunches, or even grown-up lunches at work.

The Container

Glass containers with lids are a great option, because they are microwaveable and plastic-free. However, they are breakable, so they may not be the best choice for kids.

Stainless steel is another option. It is lighter than glass, and not breakable--great for the accident-prone and for kids.



Some can even go right on the stovetop or in the oven to heat up. One drawback is that they are not microwaveable. Still, they are plastic-free, and will last forever, as long as you don't lose them! Stainless steel and glass have another advantage over plastic, aside from being chemical-free, glass and steel don't scratch, whereas plastic develops small scratches and nicks over time, which can trap food and therefore microbes.

Two great options for plastic-free lunchboxes are bento boxes and tiffins. Bento boxes are square-food containers originally used in Japanese cuisine. They are great for people who like to keep their food separate. Bento lunch boxes are available with lids for transporting food to school or work. Tiffins originate from Indian culture and are usually metal containers which snap close and stack into an easy-to-carry package. They are also great for keeping hot foods separate from cold foods.



Lastly, foil can be used to wrap sandwiches, sliced fruit and vegetables, and other foods instead of plastic bags.

Water is the best beverage choice, and there are now many glass and metal water bottles available.

Some of these options may be a bit more expensive than plastic, but if cared for, they last longer and are much better for our health.

The Lunch

According to the Harvard School of Public Health's Healthy Eating plate, you should try to make about half of the meal vegetables and fruits, a quarter whole grain carbohydrates, and a quarter a lean protein.

Use healthy fats while preparing these foods, or throw in a handful of nuts for some good fat. Dairy such as yogurt or cheese is also an option for some extra protein, calcium, and other minerals.

For example, a healthy lunch might include lean chicken with brown rice, steamed broccoli, an apple, and string cheese. Another option might be fish with quinoa, some asparagus, an orange, and a yogurt. For a vegetarian option, try beans and rice, vegetable sticks with hummus, some berries, and some cubes of cheese. Toss one these options in glass or stainless steel containers, or arrange them in a bento box or tiffin, and you have a healthy, kid-friendly, plastic-free, portable meal!



How to Stay Healthy in the Winter

When temperatures drop, days shorten, the weather turns wet, and many fruits and vegetables are no longer in season, it often means less exercise and less healthy eating. However, there are many ways you can keep up your healthy habits, even when it's dark and cold outside.

Soups, Stews, and Chili

Soups, stews, and chili can be a great way to maintain your waistline in the winter, as long as you pack them full of fiber-rich, filling ingredients such as vegetables and beans. They are filling and warm, and because some of their volume is made up of just water, they tend to be less calorie-dense than many other meals.



Exercise Videos and Apps

There are literally millions of videos available through any streaming device that can guide you through any type of exercise imaginable. From cardio to yoga, to circuit training to dance, you can do any type of exercise in your own living room with online videos. There are also many free apps that can be used anywhere, such as the 7-minute workout, which is an intense, muscle-building workout that takes only 7 minutes and can be done with nothing more than a wall and a chair.

Stay Hydrated with Hot Herbal Tea

It's easy to want to snack when you're stuck indoors all day. Instead of reaching for the potato chips, make a hot cup of herbal tea. It will warm you up, help you stay hydrated, and stave off snacking.



Seasonal Vegetables and Fruits

While summer produce such as tomatoes and berries may be long gone, there are still a wide variety of seasonal vegetables that are filling and provide needed vitamins and minerals. Root vegetables such as sweet potatoes, carrots, and parsnips are all in season in the winter, as are greens like kale, cabbage, and Swiss Chard. Many citrus fruits such as oranges and grapefruits are in season in the fall and winter, too.

Cook with Spices

Spices add flavor to food without adding extra salt or fat. In cold weather, they can also warm you up. Spices such as pepper, cayenne, ginger, and cinnamon can make you feel warmer and may even improve circulation. Nutmeg, allspice, and cinnamon are usually found in baked goods, but they can be used in savory foods as well to add complex and comforting flavors.



Healthy Recipes for Winter

Roasted Winter Vegetables

Use about 5 pounds of a combination of any of the following:

- Potatoes
- Sweet potatoes
- Parsnips
- Butternut squash
- Turnips
- Beets

- ¼ cup olive oil
- tsp salt
- 1 tsp black pepper



Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Peel vegetables and cut into cubes. In a large bowl, toss the vegetables well with oil, salt, and pepper. Spread in a single layer on a baking sheet and roast for about 30 minutes or until vegetables are tender.

Orange Fennel Salad

- ¼ cup orange juice
- ¼ cup olive oil
- ½ tsp salt
- ½ tsp black pepper
- 1 fennel bulb, cored and sliced thinly
- 3-4 oranges, peeled and sliced thinly
- ½ cup thinly sliced red onion
- ¼ cup mint leaves, shredded

Whisk orange juice, oil, salt, and pepper together until emulsified. Combine fennel, orange, red onion, and mint. Pour dressing over and toss well.



"No one is born a great cook, one learns by doing."

-Julia Child



Any Nutrition and Wellness News Questions?

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