



THE WINC - Aah Spring!!

March truly has been a feisty month, where anything that has started to flower needs to have been tough and steely. But then, March isn't named after the Roman God of War, Mars, for nothing. As spring bounces into action, evidence of fertility is apparent. Funny that, Mars also happens to be the God of Fertility!



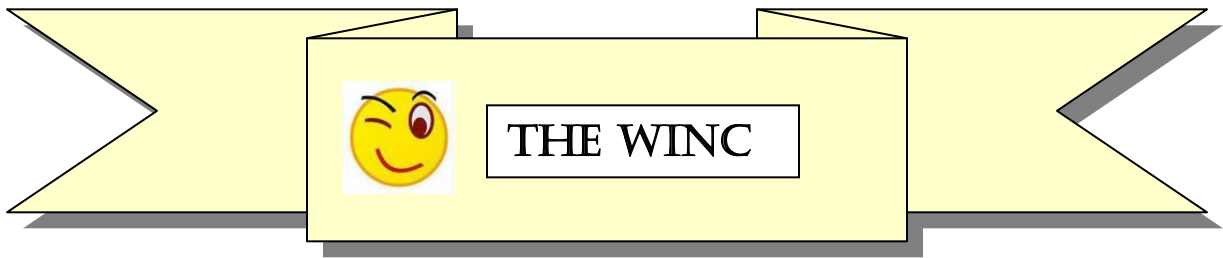
Although we have experienced wind, rain, ice and even a little snow, spring has managed to leap into action now and again as new buds have started to push their way up through the cold winter soil. As the days get longer have you noticed how, like perennials re-surfacing, the walkers, joggers, cyclists and other outdoor types have begun to re-emerge in hot pursuit of the long awaited spring season.



However, like plants, we need to be well nourished to help us to reach our full potential, so that you can smugly flourish in the warmer, sunnier days of April. Now, I'm not suggesting that we heap teaspoons of Baby Bio down our necks, or cover ourselves in well rotted manure. Heavens no!! This month's WINC aims to tantalise your taste buds and give you some useful tips on how to nurture your body with healthy, nutritional advice so that you can bloom radiantly on any netball court!

Eat well and enjoy,

Jeanette



Now is a time when we should be at our healthiest with an abundance of different foods available to us all year round. Sadly, this abundance has done little to improve the nation's health and has a lot to do with the epidemic in diseases of affluence that we are currently experiencing.

Temptation is everywhere causing us to over eat and to shove poor quality, processed foods down our throats until our bodies can't take any more. Each system of the body is stressed to the max and screams out in pain, usually in the form of heart disease, obesity, diabetes and cancer.

Well here at The WINC we want to help you to be healthy and happy. One of the best ways to support that notion is to encourage you to eat well and to enjoy your food. Check out some of the ideas below!

Fatty Facts.....

Fats are easy to understand really. If the fat is solid it is likely to be a saturated fat that is animal based e.g. butter, lard and margarine. If the fat is in a liquid form it is usually unsaturated fat that is plant based e.g. olive oil, sunflower oil, nut oils. Coconut and Palm oils are the exception to the rule here.

Saturated fats

Saturated fats are found in animal products such as butter, cheese, whole milk, ice cream, cream, and fatty meats, and oils such as coconut, palm, and palm kernel oil.



It is the saturated fats that are loaded with bad low density lipid (LDL) cholesterol, which contributes to the build up of plaques in the arteries that result in heart disease and stroke.

However, it is quite easy to replace saturated fat with unsaturated fats such as monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats that are higher in good high density lipid (HDL) cholesterol. You need the HDL cholesterol as this helps to break down and mop up the bad LDL cholesterol.

Watch out for '**Trans fat**' which is an artificial fat made from polyunsaturated fat through a process called hydrogenation. The food industry uses trans fats to produce processed foods so that they keep for longer. Trans fats are literally lethal for your heart, as this type of fat is a major contributor to atherosclerosis (the build up of plaques in the arteries causing blockages and heart disease and strokes).

If you want to reduce your cholesterol levels try exchanging snacks that are high in saturated fats e.g. biscuits, cake and chocolate for a healthier option e.g. fruit, nuts or grains.

Macadamia nuts contain a very high level of good monounsaturated fat. Eating nuts can help to reduce bad LDL cholesterol, reduce the risk of heart disease and stroke, reduce high blood pressure and can be beneficial for people with diabetes. Macadamia nuts also contain omega 3 and 6 essential fatty acids, are high in fibre and the antioxidants polyphenols, vitamins and minerals. Try going to www.macadamias.org.uk for healthy recipes using macadamia nuts.



Sweet Tooth.....



Sugar is a simple carbohydrate that is easily absorbed into the blood. Whilst the body needs glucose for energy for the brain, it should be remembered that an excess of sugar causes rapid fluctuations in our blood sugar levels. When our blood sugar levels drop that's when we feel hungry, and we eat more. In order to stabilise our blood sugar

levels it is better to obtain sugar from natural sources e.g. maltose from milk and fructose from fruit. By obtaining sugar from natural sources you also get the benefit of other nutrients like calcium from the milk and fibre, vitamins and minerals from the fruit. Whereas processed table top granulated sugar (glucose), used in sweets and other processed foods, has no nutritional value apart from the sudden energy boost it might give you. But remember, this energy lift is short lived and you will be craving more in no time at all. Not only is sugar a major contributor to obesity, this in turn increases your risk of type 2 diabetes in later life. Furthermore, there is now some evidence to suggest that a high sugar diet may also add to the effects of ageing. That chocolate bar means an inch on the hips, a hole in your tooth and an extra wrinkle!!

Try this.....

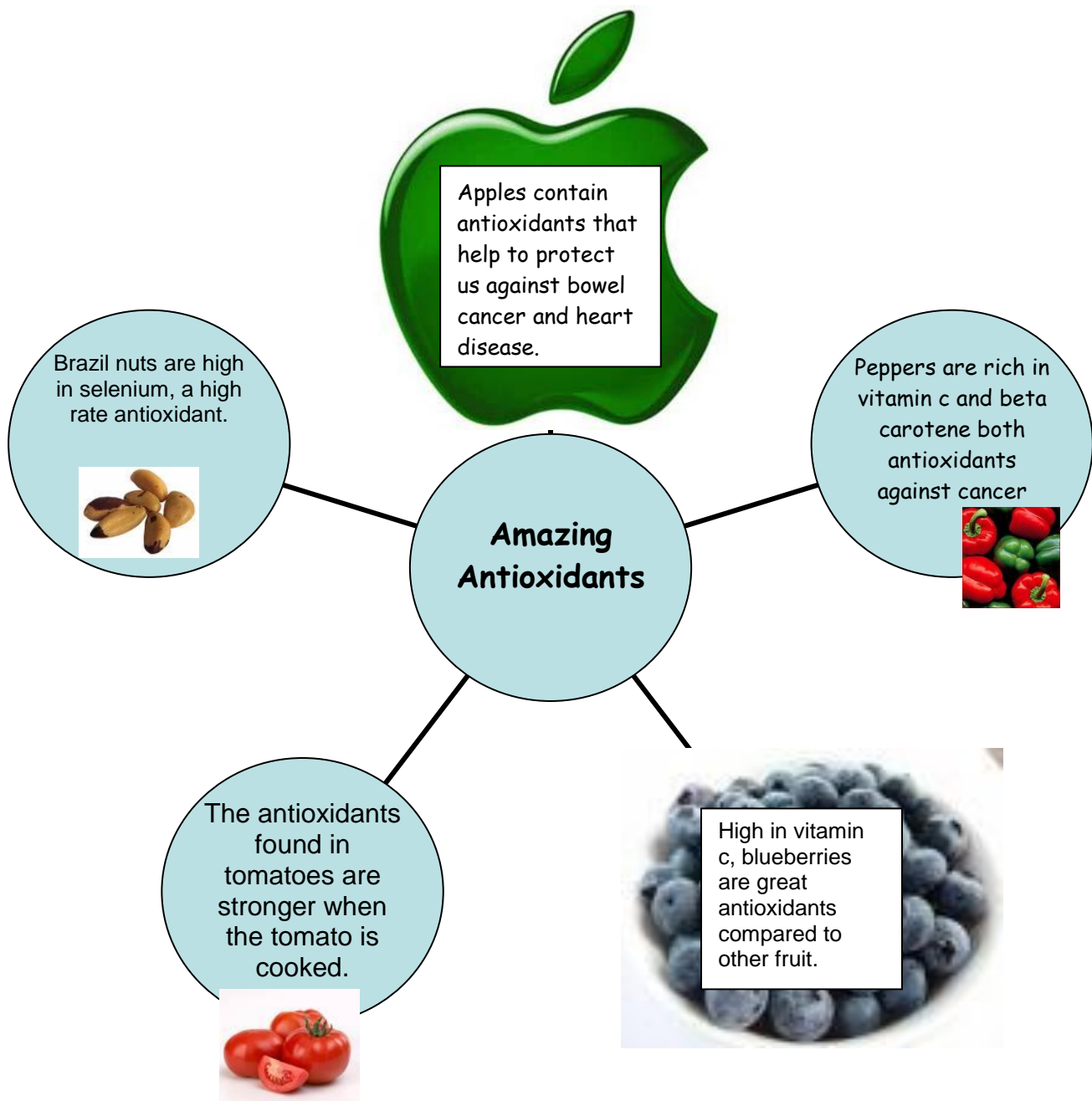


Try this great rhubarb crumble recipe. It is loaded with complex carbohydrates (fibre) to stabilise blood sugar and keep the digestive system healthy. The rhubarb is supercharged with vitamin c and calcium. And, butter has been replaced with unsaturated olive or sunflower oil.

Rhubarb Crumble - Put 700g rhubarb with a little stem ginger, two table spoons of honey and two tablespoons of orange juice in an oven proof dish. Rub together 150g wholemeal flour, 60g porridge oats, 100g olive or sunflower oil and 85g Demerara sugar to create a high fibre crumble. Spread the crumble mix over the rhubarb mix and bake at about 180C until golden.

Amazing Antioxidants.....

The by product of digesting food so that the body can use it for energy are unstable groups of molecules and atoms called 'free radicals'. Free radicals cause oxidation of molecules in your body and this process can be harmful as it is the oxidation of molecules that contributes to ageing and diseases such as cancer. Antioxidants mop up the free radicals preventing them from causing cell damage. We should all be aiming to keep our levels of antioxidants high, given their protective health benefits, by eating the vitamins and minerals known to assist in the neutralising of free radicals. Some foods contain higher levels of antioxidants than others and are often referred to as 'super foods'.



Sound Bites.....

Egg Eyes.....



The yolk of eggs contains lutein and zeaxanthin which are more absorbable when obtained from eggs than from fruit and vegetables. These substances protect the eyes against disorders like Macular Degeneration which can result in blindness.



According to Runner's World magazine broccoli is rich in antioxidants and vitamins C and E. It is also heaving with minerals such as folate and iron. In addition, it contains a compound called indole-3-carbinol which is an immune strengthening compound. Try it steamed with almond flakes and a drizzle of walnut oil. Or you could use it in pasta with some red chilli, pancetta and roasted walnuts (source: Runner's World May 2010).



www.grilledvegetablerecipe.com/Grilled-Vegetables/vegetable-pizza-recipe/whole-wheat-vegetable-pizza

Pizza doesn't have to be unhealthy. Go to the above website and get a great recipe for a healthy vegetable pizza. Go easy on the cheese, use wholemeal flour for the base and pile it high with nutritious vegetables.



Magic Mushrooms.....

Packed with protein, mushrooms are a really useful ingredient for vegetarians. They are also a good source of the B vitamins and folic acid. Try making a low calorie soup with mushrooms, the zest and juice of a lemon, thyme sprigs, vegetable stock, plenty of mushrooms and a sprinkle of fresh parsley. (Source: Weightwatchers Irresistible, Spring 2010).



According to ancient Chinese tradition we should be feeding the love of our lives with peaches and apricots as they are an indication of romance and a sensual nature. They should tantalize the taste buds as well as the libido. But, take a look at the shape; is it really the taste or shape that catches the imagination. And, does it matter! If you want to seduce the man in your life try preparing a cheeky peach based dessert. I cut them in half, smother them in a liqueur like Grand Marnier or a peach snaps, top with a dollop of Crème Fraiche and a sprinkle of nutmeg. Bake in the oven for about 20-30 mins or until soft. The smell alone will stimulate salivation.!!