**November: National American Diabetes Month**

This month we celebrate a national holiday and bring attention to a disease that affects approximately 382 individuals worldwide. Diabetes is a long-term condition that causes the person high blood glucose levels either because there is an inadequate production of insulin, the body’s cells do not respond properly to insulin, or both. Diabetes can cause a series of eye problems, especially if an individual does not monitor their condition properly. This can include cataracts, glaucoma, and retinopathy. Having high blood sugar increases the risk of developing eye problems from diabetes. Regular visits to your eye doctor for comprehensive exams are important to help avoid these problems.

**Cataracts** are caused by a buildup of protein in the eye’s lens. This prevents light from passing clearly through the lens, causing some loss of vision. Although anyone can get cataracts, people with diabetes develop these eye problems at an earlier age than most and the condition progresses more rapidly than in people without diabetes.

**Glaucoma** results in fluid called aqueous humor being unable to drain properly from the eye, causing excess pressure. This can be treated by increasing the drainage or decreasing the production of the fluid. Both of these treatments can be accomplished with prescribed medication. If an individual has open-angle glaucoma, they may not experience the symptoms of this eye problem until there is significant vision loss.

**Diabetic retinopathy** is a complication of diabetes that causes damage to the retina, the blood vessels of the light-sensitive tissue at the back of the eye. During the first three stages of diabetic retinopathy, no treatment is needed, unless you have macular edema. To prevent progression of diabetic retinopathy, people with diabetes should control their levels of blood sugar, blood pressure, and blood cholesterol.

Thanksgiving is a holiday in which we celebrate our families and give thanks for the abundance in our lives. It is not uncommon to eat a lot of food on this holiday. This can be a difficult time for those with diabetes, due to the need to abstain from foods high in fat and Sodium. We have provided a few recipes to help you enjoy a healthier version of your favorite Thanksgiving foods.

**Sweet Potato Casserole**

**Makes:** 10 servings, about 1/2 cup each

**Active Time:** 30 minutes

**Total Time:** 1 1/4 hours

**Ingredients**

**Sweet Potato Casserole**

* 2 1/2 pounds sweet potatoes, (3 medium), peeled and cut into 2-inch chunks
* 2 large eggs
* 1 tablespoon canola oil
* 1 tablespoon honey
* 1/2 cup low-fat milk
* 2 teaspoons freshly grated orange zest
* 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
* 1/2 teaspoon salt

**Topping**

* 1/2 cup whole-wheat flour
* 1/3 cup packed brown sugar
* 4 teaspoons frozen orange juice concentrate
* 1 tablespoon canola oil
* 1 tablespoon butter, melted
* 1/2 cup chopped pecans

**Preparation**

1. Place sweet potatoes in a large saucepan and cover with water. Bring to a boil. Cover and cook over medium heat until tender, 10 to 15 minutes. Drain well and return to the pan. Mash with a potato masher. Measure out 3 cups. (Reserve any extra for another use.)
2. Preheat oven to 350°F. Coat an 8-inch-square (or similar 2-quart) baking dish with cooking spray.
3. Whisk eggs, oil and honey in a medium bowl. Add mashed sweet potato and mix well. Stir in milk, orange zest, vanilla and salt. Spread the mixture in the prepared baking dish.
4. To prepare topping: Mix flour, brown sugar, orange juice concentrate, oil and butter in a small bowl. Blend with a fork or your fingertips until crumbly. Stir in pecans. Sprinkle over the casserole.
5. Bake the casserole until heated through and the top is lightly browned, 35 to 45 minutes.

**Tips & Notes**

* **Make Ahead Tip**: Prepare through Step 4; cover and refrigerate for up to 2 days.

**Nutrition**

**Per serving:** 242 calories; 10 g fat (2 g sat, 5 g mono); 46 mg cholesterol; 36 g carbohydrates; 5 g protein; 4 g fiber; 170 mg sodium; 351 mg potassium.

**Nutrition Bonus**: Vitamin A (280% daily value), Vitamin C (25% dv).

**Carbohydrate Servings:** 2

**Exchanges:** 2 starch

**Lemon-Garlic Roast Turkey & White-Wine Gravy**

**Makes:** 12 servings, 3 ounces turkey & 2-3 tablespoons gravy each, plus leftovers

**Active Time:** 40 minutes

**Total Time:** 3 hours 40 minutes (plus 24 hours brining time

**Ingredients**

* 10 cloves garlic, divided
* 1/2 cup lemon juice
* 1/2 cup Worcestershire sauce
* 1/2 cup kosher salt
* 1 12-pound natural or organic turkey, (see Shopping Tip)
* 1/4 cup freshly grated lemon zest
* 1/4 cup packed fresh oregano leaves
* 2 tablespoons canola oil
* 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground pepper
* 3 tablespoons all-purpose flour
* 1/2 cup dry white wine, or dry vermouth
* 1 14-ounce can reduced-sodium chicken broth

**Preparation**

1. Crush 6 cloves garlic and add to a very large stockpot (or clean bucket). Stir in lemon juice, Worcestershire, salt and 4 quarts cold water.
2. Remove giblets from turkey (if included) and trim excess skin. Submerge the turkey in the brine and refrigerate for 24 hours. If the turkey is not fully submerged, turn it every 8 hours.
3. Remove the turkey from the brine, rinse well and pat dry. Discard the brine.
4. Preheat oven to 350°F.
5. Place the remaining 4 cloves garlic, lemon zest, oregano, oil, pepper and 2 tablespoons water in a food processor and pulse until it becomes a paste. (Alternatively, chop garlic, lemon zest and oregano on a cutting board until finely minced, then place in a small bowl and stir in oil, pepper and water.) Loosen the skin over the breast and thigh meat. Rub the paste all over the turkey, under the skin onto the breast meat and leg meat and a little inside the cavity. Tuck the wing tips under the turkey. Tie the legs together with kitchen string. Place the turkey breast-side down in a roasting rack set in a large roasting pan.
6. Roast the turkey for 1 hour. Turn it breast-side up on the rack, add 1 cup water to the pan, and continue roasting 1 hour more. Baste the turkey with pan drippings, tent with foil and continue roasting, basting every 15 minutes, until an instant-read thermometer inserted into the thickest part of the thigh without touching bone registers 165°F, 30 to 45 minutes more.
7. Transfer the turkey to a large cutting board; let rest for 20 minutes before removing the string and carving.
8. Meanwhile, pour any pan juices and fat into a large glass measuring cup and place in the freezer until the fat rises to the top, about 10 minutes. (Alternatively, pour the pan juices and fat into a fat separator then pour the defatted juices into a large measuring cup.) Whisk flour with 1/4 cup water in a small bowl.
9. Set the roasting pan over two burners on medium heat. Add wine (or vermouth); bring to a simmer, scraping up any browned bits. Continue cooking until reduced, about 3 minutes.
10. 10. Remove the pan juices from the freezer, skim off the fat with a spoon and discard. Add the defatted juices and broth to the roasting pan; return to a simmer, whisking often. Cook for 1 minute, then whisk in the flour mixture and simmer until thickened, 1 to 2 minutes. Pour the gravy through a fine-mesh sieve and serve with the turkey.

**Tips & Notes**

* **Shopping tip:** Look for turkey labeled “natural” or “organic” in natural-foods stores or well-stocked supermarkets. Turkeys labeled “heritage” are also typically “natural.” If you can't find one, don't overlook this recipe. It works with conventional turkey, too; just skip the brining (Steps 1-2) and start with Step 3.

**Nutrition**

**Per serving:** 180 calories; 6 g fat (2 g sat, 2 g mono); 66 mg cholesterol; 2 g carbohydrates; 0 g added sugars; 26 g protein; 0 g fiber; 120 mg sodium; 273 mg potassium.

**Nutrition Bonus**: Zinc (19% daily value).

**Exchanges:** 4 lean meat

**Soft Whole-Wheat Dinner Rolls**

**Makes:** 2 dozen rolls

**Active Time:** 40 minutes

**Total Time:** 4 hours

**Ingredients**

* 1 1/2 cups warm (about 120°F) low-fat milk
* 1/4 cup sugar
* 1/4 cup unsalted butter, melted
* 1/4 cup canola oil
* 3 large eggs, divided
* 1 package quick-rising yeast, (about 2 1/4 teaspoons)
* 3 cups whole-wheat flour
* 2 cups cake flour, divided, plus more for dusting
* 1 1/4 teaspoons salt
* 2 tablespoons wheat germ

**Preparation**

1. Whisk milk, sugar, butter, oil and 2 eggs in a large bowl. Whisk yeast, whole-wheat flour, 1 1/2 cups cake flour and salt in a medium bowl. Gradually stir the dry ingredients into the wet ingredients using a wooden spoon. The dough will be very sticky.
2. Sprinkle 1/2 cup cake flour on a work surface. Turn out the dough onto it and knead until all the flour is incorporated, 1 to 2 minutes. Coat a large bowl with cooking spray. Transfer the dough to the bowl, coat the top with cooking spray and cover with plastic wrap. Let rise at room temperature (about 70°F) until doubled in volume, 1 1/4-2 hours.
3. Coat a 9-by-13-inch metal baking pan with cooking spray. Turn the dough out onto a lightly floured surface; pat into a rough 7-by-10-inch rectangle. Cut lengthwise into 4 equal strips using a bench knife or butter knife. Then cut each strip crosswise into 6 equal portions. (Each portion will weigh 1 1/4-1 1/2 ounces.)
4. Working with one portion of dough at a time, gather and pinch the edges together, shaping the dough into a rough ball. The spot where the edges come together is the bottom of the ball. Place each ball, bottom down, on a clean work surface. With a slightly cupped hand, move the ball around in a circular motion, keeping the bottom in place while tucking the loose edges into it and stretching the surface of the dough tight. (If the outer skin breaks, set the roll aside and let it rest while rounding the remaining rolls. Reroll once the dough relaxes.) Arrange the rolls in the prepared pan. Cover with plastic wrap. (If following make-ahead instructions, refrigerate the rolls now.)
5. Let the rolls rise at room temperature until almost doubled in size, about 1 1/4 hours.
6. Preheat oven to 400°F. Whisk the remaining egg in a small bowl, and brush the tops of the rolls with it (you'll have some left over); sprinkle with wheat germ. Bake the rolls until light brown on top, about 20 minutes.

**Tips & Notes**

* **Make Ahead Tip**: Prepare through Step 4 and refrigerate overnight. Remove from the refrigerator and let rise until almost doubled in size, about 3 1/2 hours. Continue to Step 6.

**Nutrition**

**Per roll:** 154 calories; 5 g fat (2 g sat, 2 g mono); 25 mg cholesterol; 23 g carbohydrates; 4 g protein; 2 g fiber; 137 mg sodium; 83 mg potassium.

**Nutrition Bonus**: Selenium (19% daily value).

**Carbohydrate Servings:** 1 1/2

**Exchanges:** 1 1/2 starch, 1 fat

Sources:

<https://www.nei.nih.gov/health/diabetic/retinopathy>

<http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/info/diabetes/>

<http://www.webmd.com/diabetes/diabetes-eye-problems-directory>

<http://www.eatingwell.com/recipes_menus/collections/healthy_diabetic_diet_thanksgiving_recipes>