

The UConn Buzz



The Benefits of a Plant Based Diet.

What is chronic disease?

Chronic disease is the slow disappearance of robust health over time and in its place flow the aches and pains of arthritis, heart disease, diabetes, obesity, cardio vascular disease and [autoimmune diseases](#). Chronic disease is now affecting most adult Americans and is [sweeping the globe](#) as the number one killer as more and more populations [urbanize and gain access to technology](#) that reduces the amount of physical energy used each day.



What can you do to stem the tide and begin reclaiming your health?

[Begin the shift towards a whole foods, plant based diet.](#) A whole foods, plant based diet (WFPB) is just what it describes: minimizing all animal based foods, as well as processed and packaged foods. Instead choose foods

that you would be able to find in nature: fruits, vegetables, whole grains, root vegetables, leafy greens, legumes, nuts and seeds. Also included are home-made foods that take a bit of care and time to prepare, leaving out processed, denatured, chemically laden, isolated ingredients like oil, sugar and white flour.

What are the benefits of

[WFPB?](#) For one thing, eating this way significantly lowers the risks of many common chronic illnesses including: [heart & cardiovascular disease](#), [cancer](#), [stroke](#), [diabetes](#). When people adopt WFPB, they have reported that they feel better, have more energy and their [thinking becomes more clear](#). Some physicians recommend a plant based diet to help with [chronic pain](#). Another benefit may be weight loss. [One study found](#) that participants following a low fat plant based diet lost an average of 12 pounds, and BMI went from an average 34.5 to 30.2.

How do you get started? For beginners, educate yourself.

Some good resources to begin with are the [Center for Nutrition Studies](#) and [Forks Over Knives](#).

Start small. Pick one or two days a week to replace the meat product with vegetables, complex starches, and legumes. You can find many delicious whole foods [plant-based recipes here](#), as well as many other sites on the internet.

Remember to minimize highly processed foods such as oils, white flour and sugar and you'll be on the road to wellness!

Be Well is an employee wellness program provided through the Eastern Highlands Health District with funding from The CT Department of Health. The goal of the program is to make the healthy choice the easy choice.

Email: be_well@ehhd.org



HAPPENINGS AROUND TOWN

[2nd Annual CT Veterans Day Patriot Race](#), Sat. Nov. 4th, Patriots Park Coventry CT. This 4-mile race will begin and end at Patriots Park in quiet Coventry.

[Walk for Warmth 2017](#), Sun. Nov. 19th, Temple B'nai Israel, Willimantic, CT. This event is a fund raiser for the Windham Area Interfaith Ministry (WAIM) to raise funds for WAIM's Energy Assistance Program.

[Quiet Corner Challenge](#), Sat. November 25, Brooklyn, Hampton, and Chaplin. Three races in one day covering 6.2 over the three courses.

[Turkey Trot 5K Trail Run & 3K Walk](#), Sun. Nov. 12th, West Thompson Lake, Thompson. Fundraiser for benefit TEEG Food Bank and Thompson's park & playgrounds.

[UConn Habitat for Humanity 5K](#), Sun. Nov. 5th, Fairfield Way, UConn. This fundraiser event will go towards habitat construction projects.

Sources: American Psychological Association, Cleveland Clinic, Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Harvard Health, World Health Organization, National Institute of Health, Nature.com, NutritionStudies.org, UpRoot Kitchen, Forksoverknives, Science20.com, Operation Shoebox, Operation Gratitude.

[Roasted Butternut Squash with Kale and Almond Pecan Parmesan](#)

For Roasted Squash:

- ◆ 1 medium/large butternut squash
- ◆ 1 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
- ◆ 3 tbsp finely chopped fresh parsley
- ◆ 1 C stemmed & roughly chopped kale
- ◆ 2 large cloves garlic, minced
- ◆ 1/2 tsp fine sea salt



For Almond-Pecan Parmesan:

- ◆ 1/4 C whole almonds
- ◆ 1/8 tsp fine sea salt
- ◆ 1/4 C pecan halves
- ◆ 1 tsp extra-virgin olive oil
- ◆ 1 tbsp nutritional yeast

Directions:

Preheat oven to 400°F & lightly grease a large casserole dish. Peel the squash. Thinly slice off the bottom & top, then slice through the middle lengthwise to make two halves. Remove seeds. Chop the two halves into 1-inch chunks and place into the casserole dish.

Add the minced garlic, parsley, oil, & salt into casserole dish and toss until combined with the squash. Do not add the kale yet. Cover the casserole dish with tinfoil (with a few holes poked) & bake at 400°F for about 45 minutes, until tender, lightly browned.

In a mini food processor, pulse the Almond-Pecan Parmesan ingredients together until coarsely chopped.

After cooking, remove the squash from the oven and reduce the heat to 350°F. Remove the tinfoil. Stir in the chopped kale and sprinkle the Parmesan all over the squash.

Bake for another 5 to 8 minutes, uncovered, until the nuts are lightly toasted. Watch closely so you don't burn the nuts. Serve warm.



What To Do About Leftover Halloween Candy



With Halloween over many of us will have lots of candy around. This is either due to the kids bags overflowing from their Halloween night collection, or leftover candy that wasn't given out to Trick-or-Treaters. The question becomes what to do with all of this sweet stuff. Be Well is here to help. First, if you are eating a balanced diet there is room for all foods including candy, remember the quote by Oscar Wilde states, "Everything in moderation." Occasionally eating candy will not automatically put you at risk for chronic health disease, but don't sit down and eat half of the bag. Mind the calories you intake, as two of those "fun sized" treats can be equal to one full sized bar. But do not totally shun away from candy all together. Several [studies](#) have shown that following [a diet plan that includes food restrictions](#), can lead to feelings of

deprivation, which in turn can lead to overeating. If you have it in your house and you see it every day, it can be difficult to resist. Here are some tips to help you deal with all that candy:

- **Make some trail mix.** Here is an example from [UpRoot Kitchen](#). By adding it to the trail mix you will get a little bit of sweet along with the fiber, proteins, vitamins and minerals of all the other good stuff in there. Pack it up & take it on a hike. Fall is a great time to get out into nature. Be sure to check [Joshua's Trust](#), [The Last Green Valley](#), and your towns' parks & recreation department for trail info, activities & events near you.

- **Save it for later.** With the holidays coming up you can use it as decoration for ginger bread houses.
- **Use it in a science experiment.** The website [www.science20.com](#) provides a list of ways to turn leftover candy into a learning experience.
- **Get rid of it.** Groups like [Operation Shoebox](#) and [Operation Gratitude](#) will gladly send your unwanted candy overseas to our troops. Also some local Dentist offices are participating in the [2017 Halloween Candy Buyback](#) program.

