

Be Well!

The UConn Buzz

January is Thyroid Awareness Month!

The thyroid gland is a small, butterfly-shaped gland located in the base of the neck just below the Adam's apple. This gland influences the function of many of the body's most important organs, including the heart, brain, liver, kidneys and skin. A non-functioning thyroid can either be over-active (hyper) or under-active (hypo). The American Thyroid Association estimates that more than 12% of the US population will develop a thyroid condition in their lifetime. Untreated thyroid problems can lead to obesity, heart disease, anxiety, depression, infertility and many other health issues.

If your thyroid isn't functioning properly, neither are you!

Radon in your home?

The winter months are the perfect time to test for radon in your home. Radon is a colorless, odorless gas that causes lung cancer. Radon levels vary between neighborhoods and even from home to home - only a radon test can determine the risk in your home. The Surgeon General warns that radon gas is the second leading cause of lung cancer in the nation (smoking is the number one cause). Testing your home is an inexpensive and simple procedure. Test kits can be found at many local retail stores or purchased from the Health District for \$4.00 at the Mansfield office. The test kit purchase price includes a certified laboratory analysis.

FREE Test Kits!

You can receive a free radon test kit from the Eastern Highlands Health District, while quantities last!

Request yours by calling
860-429-3325

Symptoms of a thyroid issue include:

1. Fatigue
2. Weight changes (gain OR loss)
3. Anxiety or depression
4. Neck discomfort or enlargement (goiter)
5. Hair/skin changes
6. Muscle pain or fatigue

Diagnosis of a thyroid condition is simple and can be made through the appropriate blood work with your doctor. While thyroid conditions are fairly common, risk factors include:

1. **Gender**-women are more likely to develop thyroid conditions than men
2. **Family History**-thyroid conditions can be genetic
3. **Age**-you are more at risk if you are over the age of 50
4. **Smoking**-if you ever smoked (even if you quit) you are more at risk

Getting Physical You don't need to pay anything to take advantage of these 'fitness' resources:



- ♦ **Walk**— (or run, or skip, or jog!) Use school yards after-hours, the local mall, your worksite, or neighborhood roads
- ♦ **Workout Videos**—borrow from the library or from friends (or use your kids' DDR!)
- ♦ **Stair master** (in your own home) most homes have stairs: use them as a built-in work-out!
- ♦ **Local Senior Centers**—for folks 55 & older, many senior centers have great (and free) opportunities; call your local center to see if you qualify
- ♦ **10k-a-day Challenge** starting this month through Be Well!



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10k-A-Day

The goal of this walking program is to reach 10,000 steps per day. It allows you to start at a level that is comfortable for you, then challenges you to increase your steps one week at a time!

Join the challenge and receive tips & encouragement to improve your health & fitness!

Purchase a pocket pedometer for \$15 or use your own!

Register [HERE](#) or contact Be Well.

Be Well!

Health Tip!

Looking for ways to incorporate more fruits & vegetables in your diet?

Check out the [Produce of the Week](#)

On the EHHD website: www.ehhd.org

A different seasonal fruit or vegetable is featured each week of the year

Find more great tips and resources at the CDC website:

fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov

Be Well !

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An EHHD Wellness
Program



Key ingredients of a healthy diet:

Balance

Eating foods from each food group

Variety

Select foods each day from a wide range of choices in each food group

Portion Size

Take a double take on the size of your portions, and learn standard sizes

Whole Foods

Focus on foods that are free of additives, flavorings and preservatives



How does your diet rate for variety & balance?

Do you fill half your plate with fruits and vegetables most meals?

Can you eat more whole foods and whole grains in 2012?

~ How you nourish your body *really does matter* ~



Looking for a helping hand with tracking your diet and goals? Try out **Lose It!** As a **free app** for your smart phone *or* use it on-line!

Be Well is an employee wellness program provided through the Eastern Highlands Health District, and offered at your worksite through a grant from the CT Department of Public Health. The goal of this program is to improve the overall health and wellness of employees through wellness initiatives that target risk factors and wellness issues that influence health.

South of the Boarder Butternut Soup

Modified from allrecipes.com

4 servings

Ingredients:

- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 small carrot, chopped
- 1 clove of garlic, chopped
- ½ butternut squash, peeled, seeded and cubed
- 2 cans low-sodium chicken broth
- 7 oz tomato puree
- 2 T chopped jalapeno peppers or green chilies
- Lime wedges for serving

1. In large stock pot, add onion, carrot and garlic and ¼ cup of water. Cook about 5 minutes stirring occasionally, until vegetables are soft.
2. Add squash, chicken broth and tomato puree. Bring to a boil and simmer for 30 minutes.
3. Mash squash pieces with potato masher or back of spoon; stir in jalapeno or green chilies until well blended. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

Nutrition Facts:

Calories: 88
Fat: < 1 g
Cholesterol: 0
Sodium: 600 mg
Protein: 4 g
Fiber: 5 g



Fruits & Vegetables:

The original guilt-free foods!

Active Living Tip:

Winter sports: Prevent head injuries!

- ✓ Always wear a properly fitted helmet for sports that have one, and replace it after a serious fall.
- ✓ Have fun, but know your limitations.
- ✓ Be familiar with your surroundings and stay alert.
- ✓ Be aware of the warning signs for concussion.

Seeing stars is no laughing matter!