

A Fresh Take: Red Velvet Cake

Watch Nutritionist and Chef Stevie Winsborrow as she shows you a fresh take on Red Velvet Cake using red wine and beets!

A Fresh Take: Oats

It's National Oatmeal Month! How do you like yours?

Oats are a very healthy grain. They are a good source of heart healthy fiber, as well as many vitamins and minerals. The antioxidants in oats also contribute to heart health by lowering blood pressure, as shown in research studies. It is these antioxidants, along with the fiber, that contributes to weight loss, balanced blood sugar and lower cholesterol levels. They are gluten free (just check the label to make sure they aren't processed on the same equipment as wheat if you are Celiac). Ground oats applied externally can even be good for your skin!



The most common types of [oats](#) are whole oat groats, steel cut oats, Scottish oats (stone ground), and old-fashioned rolled oats. While quick/instant oatmeal can be quicker, they are

lower in fiber than the others. For a quick bowl of oatmeal, rolled oats really do not take much longer. In fact, did you know that you can make oatmeal in your [rice cooker](#)? You can place your oats and any dry flavorings (cinnamon, nuts, etc) in the rice cooker the night before. In the morning, add your liquid, turn it on, and go on about your morning routine. By the time you are ready for breakfast, it's waiting for you!

Ok so we know about oatmeal for breakfast, and using oatmeal in baked goods such as muffins, cookies, breads and fruit crisps, but have you ever had your oatmeal in a SAVORY dish?

You can make a savory bowl of oatmeal for breakfast and top it with an egg and any other savory condiments you like. Use as a substitute for grits if you are corn sensitive; you can even make them cheesy! For dinner, try making risotto, or cook up some steel cut oats for a rice-like side dish. One thing I have done recently is to use oats as a gluten free substitute for barley. Here is my recipe for a mushroom "barley" soup, perfect for a cold winter's evening! (And FYI, It's also National Soup Month!)

Podcast: Resolutions

Functional Nutritionist Stevie Winsborrow talks about eating right during the holidays, those pesky resolutions, various ways to create good eating habits.

A Solution for the Issue of Resolution...

Its that time of year when everyone starts resolutions, and in a couple of weeks a lot of people will be done with those resolutions. Especially when it comes to healthy changes, I think a lot of people are very gung ho and go all out and try things that aren't really sustainable long term. The whole concept of dieting implies that there is an end to it. You do things to lose weight or make health changes with the intention of ending those methods and going back to the way you ate before. And some of those methods are extreme. Drinking shakes or eating frozen diet dinners all day, or following a fad diet such as the master cleanse or cabbage soup diet are not sustainable long term. I mean lets be honest, we all love to eat, so who really wants to eat cabbage all day? In addition, very low calorie diets can actually mess up your metabolism, then when you feel like you have been starving and you start eating the amount of calories that you SHOULD eat again, you will actually gain weight. This is why so many people abandon resolutions and why diets don't work.

First of all don't wait until the new year or even until the next Monday to start getting healthy. I mean how many times have you started a diet on Monday, cheated by Wednesday and resolved to start again the next Monday? Don't look at it as something you have to begin or end. Just start making small healthy changes now, on a Thursday in april, its totally fine!

You should never go hungry and you should never just completely eliminate an entire food group. Eat REAL food. Using meal substitutions or prepackaged diet meals may make it easy, but once you start eating real food again you haven't learned anything you can keep for life. This is one reason so many people start the same resolution again every single year!

An important strategy I have learned is to focus on adding the good habits rather than eliminating the bad ones. I'm not saying not to change your bad habits, but if you focus on increasing the good habits, chances are the bad ones will gradually drop off as you get healthier on their own! For example, rather than telling yourself you CANT eat a sugary dessert, focus on adding some fresh fruit to a smaller portion of that dessert. When trying to drink more water and less soda, instead of telling yourself you CANT have the soda because you have to drink water, tell yourself that you are increasing your water intake so you can be healthy, and it just so happens to be replacing your soda. Putting a positive spin on these changes really makes a difference.

Also celebrate smaller achievements. If your soda intake was 6 a day with zero water, and today you had 4 sodas and 2 glasses of water, pat yourself on the back! If you wait until a goal is completed in its entirety, you aren't going to notice the small successes along the way, which help keep you motivated.

Don't concentrate on the number on the scale. Your weight can fluctuate many pounds a day depending on many factors, and you may actually gain a few pounds when you start exercise while your metabolism is resetting before the weight starts to drop, because muscle is heavier than fat. Rather you should notice how you feel, how your clothes fit, and your energy level.

Remember there is no reason you cant eat healthy and still enjoy your food. Learn how to make your favorite foods healthy and start gradually making the changes. Try new healthy foods such as vegetables prepared in different ways. And don't force yourself to do things that don't work for you. Hate the treadmill – then don't do it! If you love to dance let that be your cardio. The keys to success are not depriving yourself or overwhelming yourself with things that just don't fit in your lifestyle.

Podcast: Focus on Maintenance, Not Loss!

Listen as Functional Nutritionist Stevie Winsborrow gives you tips on maintaining your weight through the holidays while still enjoying yourself.

A Fresh Take: Holiday Mocktails

Watch as Chef Stevie shows you some delicious non-alcoholic beverages for a safe holiday season.

The Pharmacy: Asian Style Chicken “Noodle” Soup and Staying Well!

During cold and flu season, there are many things you can do to keep yourself healthy. First, you should make sure that you

keep your immune system strong in case you come in contact with those germs, and second, you need to make sure that you avoid those germs to begin with. The second one is easy; make sure you wash your hands, using [hand sanitizer](#) if hot soapy water isn't available; keep things like doorknobs, telephones, etc clean; and don't share eating utensils and other items that may carry germs. This time of year we also tend to be indoors more, and amongst crowds, especially when Christmas shopping. This kind of situation is bound to expose you to something. Try to avoid crowded places when you can. Keeping your immune system healthy will prevent you from succumbing to those germs or at least help you to fight them off a lot quicker.

So how do you do that?

1. Get enough rest. Sleep is when your body heals.
2. Manage stress. Stress definitely inhibits your immune system's ability to fight things off.
3. Exercise. Studies have shown that getting regular exercise strengthens your immune system.
4. Keep your gut happy and healthy. Your gastrointestinal tract is a huge part of your immune system. Eat well, take [probiotics either with supplements](#) and/or fermented foods, and stay hydrated to keep things moving.
5. Avoid sugar. Sugar actually suppresses and stresses your immune system. This is one reason that the old thinking of drinking juice when sick is no longer sound advice. (It's natural sugar, but still a concentrated source of sugar.) Eat the whole orange and have [herbal tea](#) instead. Avoid sugary and refined foods.
6. Take supplements. If you are eating a healthy varied diet, then you only need to supplement if you start to feel sick or know you have been exposed. Take vitamin C and zinc, along

with echinacea. If you do not eat a good diet, you may need to add vitamin c and zinc to your daily supplement regimen. Do not take echinacea as a “maintenance” supplement as if you do, it won’t pack as much punch when you get sick. Only take it when getting sick. As always, make sure any supplements you take will not interfere with any medical conditions or medications you take by checking with your doctor/nutritionist first.

7. Eat chicken soup. There is a reason it’s called “Jewish penicillin”; there truly is something magical about chicken soup. Try to avoid the sodium filled canned varieties and make your own. Ingredients like bone broth, garlic, ginger and hot chiles increase the healing power. Get creative with different kinds of chicken soup, like the Asian style recipe I have below for you.

Stay well!

During The Holidays, Focus on Maintenance Not Loss

Ah, the holiday season is upon us. We just got done with the Halloween [candy](#); now it’s time for a huge turkey dinner and a plethora of [pies](#), soon to be followed by [cookies](#) and cocoa. Then comes mass migration to the health food store and the gym so everyone can “work off” all the weight gain accrued over said holidays.

The other side of the coin are those who stay on a diet, committed to weight loss despite what time of year it is. They absolutely cannot go to the party unless there will be keto food (or whatever other diet du jour is in vogue at the

moment), or they spend as much on special shakes, wraps and pills as they do on Christmas gifts.

Rather than stressing yourself out and being too restrictive or throwing all caution to the wind figuring you will take care of it later, why not just find “the middle ground”? The holidays are not a time to diet or try to lose weight. The focus should be on *maintenance*. Do your best to not **gain** weight. Then once the holidays are over, and the temptation and multiple gatherings are no longer in your face, you can resume your efforts to slim down. But how do you do this with all of the parties and treats?

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-Try to eat a balanced, healthy meal earlier in the day, such as lunch if it's a dinner party. If you show up to the party hungry, it will be harder to resist overeating.

-Stay hydrated. Sometimes when you think you are hungry, you might really be thirsty. Digestion and metabolism work better when you are hydrated. In addition, if you are imbibing in libations, having a glass of water in between each alcoholic beverage slows down your liquor consumption and prevents hangovers if you do drink too much. Don't forget to be mindful of how much you drink – not only for safety purposes, but those calories from both the alcohol and the mixers can add up quickly if you aren't careful.

-Bring a [healthy dish](#) to share! This way you know there will be at least one thing you can eat.

-Don't feel like you have to sample everything. Scan the buffet, fill your plate with the healthiest choices, then round it out with small portions of the items that truly look too irresistible to skip. Don't waste your calories with the things that don't thrill you.

-Don't hang out near the food. Once you have finished eating, pop a mint or chew some gum and move away from the buffet table.

For those endless trays of treats at work, again, bring something of your own to share. You can also keep some good quality [dark chocolate](#) in your drawer and a bowl of fragrant fruit on your desk so when everyone's munching down their 5th sugar cookie of the day, you don't have to feel deprived.

Another thing to help keep you from gaining weight over the holidays is exercise. Try to keep your current routine going; don't add more. If you find you are too busy and not getting your regular workouts in, try adding more activity into your day to make up for it. Park at the back of the lot when Christmas shopping and walk up the escalator! Let's not forget all of the opportunities to combine the festivities with exercise! Dance at that party! Go ice skating! Get a group of carolers together to walk through your neighborhood. Play some touch [football](#) after your Thanksgiving meal instead of just watching it on TV.

Managing stress and getting enough sleep are also paramount to good health. Don't overdo the decorating and party planning. Learn that it's ok to say no if you have too much on your plate. Try giving back to those less fortunate by volunteering. This will do your heart some good and help put things like the commercialism of the season into perspective.

Lastly, don't stress about that 5th cookie. Enjoy it and move on.

A Fresh Take: Lightened Up Thanksgiving Sides

Watch as Chef Stevie shows you how to turn all those starchy fatty Thanksgiving side dishes into healthier versions that are delicious and nutritious!

A Fresh Take: Pecan Pie

Here Chef Stevie shows you how to make a healthy version of pecan pie.