

Acid Reflux Recovery Diet and Recipes Presents the Perfect Cold Weather Dinner

As the leaves start to turn to fall colors and in the evenings we are tempted to sit by a warm fire, hearty food comes to mind. The fall and winter bring a host of root vegetables, squashes greens and fruit from which hearty meals can be easily made. The challenge is to keep these dishes healthy – that means keeping them as alkaline as possible.

When attempting to reverse the symptoms of acid reflux, diet is probably the most important consideration. That old cliché, “You are what you eat”, has never been more true. If you eat food and drink beverages which are acidic in nature, then it follows, that you will be acidic in nature, as well. If you eat a diet which mainly consists of so called “convenience food”, you don’t stand a chance of being alkaline.

In order to defeat the acid reflux condition, one must strive to correct the pH factor of the body. 7.5 pH is the ideal alkaline body level. You can test the pH level of your saliva with pH paper, which can be purchased at any pharmacy. Some medical authorities claim that all illness, including cancer, cannot exist in an alkaline environment. If that is true, it is certainly food for thought!

It is important to remember that the acid reflux condition could not perpetuate itself without a damaged esophagus. In order to heal this affliction, the esophagus must be allowed to repair. This can be accomplished by eliminating food and drink that are irritants and, or acidic. Avoiding anything which relaxes the LES (lower esophageal sphincter) is another important consideration. The LES is the muscular valve which separates the esophagus and the stomach. It is when this valve relaxes, that acid and pepsin splash up from the stomach into the esophagus and throat, causing acid reflux.

The hydrochloric acid in the stomach has been compared in strength, to the acid in a car battery. With acid reflux, the constant assault of acid causes little lacerations to develop on the lining of the esophagus. Until these lacerations have had a chance to heal, spicy foods, such as acidic tomato products, hot peppers, raw garlic and raw onions should also be eliminated from the diet. They just further irritate the condition.

Smoking, drinking alcohol and eating chocolate also relax the LES, thus impeding the healing process.

The key to acid reflux recovery is to eat alkaline, easy to digest nourishing food until the esophagus has healed. Eating early, allowing at least three hours before lying down is an essential habit to develop. Eating slowly and chewing food completely in a relaxed, pleasant and stress free environment is of paramount importance, as well.

I have listed a few of my favorite hearty fall and winter recipes that I enjoyed during my own recovery period. Cooking meat, vegetables, fruit and shellfish in liquids produce delicious dishes which can be made quickly and easily. I have employed a technique called "braising" for the main dish below. It is one of my favorite cooking methods, because it concentrates flavor in a one pot dinner. I have also included a seasonal soup starter and a special desert to complete the perfect cold weather dinner.

Try doubling the main dish and desert recipes so that you can have them later in the week.....less time in the kitchen. Remember, that cooking from scratch instead of relying on convenience foods is a better approach to good health, in general. It's also nice to know what you're really eating.

I hope that you enjoy the following seasonal recipes. Even though I have cured myself of acid reflux, I still serve these wonderful hearty dishes on a regular basis. The entire family should enjoy these, too. Well, the children might not like the oysters, but you certainly will. This menu is great for entertaining, as the main and last courses are made in advance and the first course is a breeze. For those of you who live in warmer climes, remember that winter is a state of mind.

Bon appetite!

BRAISED CHICKEN WITH TURNIPS AND ONIONS

This is a rustic country-style dinner dish which truly embodies the concept of "Comfort Food". Unlike thick cuts of meat, braising chicken takes a fraction of the time and the chicken absorbs all the flavors of the vegetables and liquids. Mashed

potatoes are a perfect accompaniment. This is a serving for four and requires about an hour to prepare.

1 (3 ½ lb.) chicken, cut into 8 serving pieces
½ cup flour for dredging
Olive oil
2 medium sweet onions roughly chopped
4 medium turnips peeled and sliced into ½" pieces *
3 cloves of garlic, finely minced
2 cups chicken stock
2 cups white wine or dry vermouth
2 sprigs of thyme or ½ tsp. dried
1 tbsp. parsley, chopped

Pat chicken dry and season with salt and pepper. Dredge in flour and set aside.

Heat a heavy skillet to medium high and add enough olive oil to coat well

Brown chicken pieces skin side down and turn over in about 7 minutes (This can be done in two batches, if necessary)

Transfer browned chicken to a plate and cover to keep warm

Pour off all but 2 tbsp. of the fat and lower heat to medium low

Add onions and cook covered, stirring occasionally until soft and lightly golden

Add turnips and garlic and cook uncovered for five minutes stirring occasionally to keep onions from burning

Return browned chicken to skillet and mix with vegetables to coat both sides, arranging chicken skin side up

Pour stock and wine over chicken mixture

Sprinkle with thyme

Cover and lower heat to gently simmer until chicken is cooked through and turnips are tender, about 30 to 40 minutes

Transfer chicken and vegetables onto a serving dish

Reduce sauce over high heat, if needed, to thicken

Season sauce with salt and pepper to taste and pour over chicken and vegetables

Sprinkle with parsley

***Parsnips may be substituted for the turnips, or a mixture of the two.**

CREAMY NEW ENGLAND STYLE OYSTER STEW

I have heard rumors that oysters are a bit acidic; however, they have never given me indigestion. I confess that this is a rather rich dish, but a small serving will give you more pleasure than pain. One has to spoil themselves occasionally.

1 ½ tbsps. unsalted butter

1 dozen freshly opened oysters (or the freshest you can find) with liquid

1/8 tsp. celery salt

1 ½ ounces sherry

Splash of Worcestershire sauce to taste

Cayenne pepper

1 ½ cups whole milk with a little cream added

Chives, chopped

Oyster crackers

Into a double boiler place butter, oysters with liquid, celery salt, sherry and Worcestershire sauce (water in the bottom pan should not touch the top pan)

With a wooden spoon, stir until the oysters are just curling on the edges (do not overcook), about a minute

Pour in milk mixture and continue stirring

Remove from heat just before the boil and serve immediately

Sprinkle each serving with a little cayenne pepper

Garnish with chives

Offer oyster crackers on the side

POACHED ANJOU PEARS IN RED WINE

You have to plan a little ahead for this dish. The pears should be ripe, but still springy to the touch. Buy them a week ahead and place in a paper bag with a banana. Don't ask me why, but this works. Choose pears with the stem in tact.

8 smallish red Anjou pears

Juice of one lemon

1 cup extra fine granulated sugar

2 cups red wine

¼ tsp. vanilla extract

1 cinnamon stick

Carefully peel pears to the stem (the stem comes in handy for turning and for presentation)

**Coat each peeled pear with lemon juice and set aside
Into a saucepan place the sugar, wine, vanilla and cinnamon
Stir over medium heat until the sugar is dissolved
Add pears and reduce heat to a gentle simmer, covered
Poach pears until they are just tender, about 10 to 20 minutes,
depending upon the size of the pears, turning once
Remove from heat and allow pears to sit in liquid, turning again
so that color is even, another 20 minutes
Remove pears from liquid to desert plates
Reduce liquid over medium high heat to a syrupy consistency
and pour over pears
Serve with a dollop of whipped cream and a sprig of mint**

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way, go to: <A HREF="http://www.refluxgoneforever.com"
target=_blank>http://www.refluxgoneforever.com**