



Health Literacy: What is it and why does it matter?

Health literacy refers to your capacity to obtain, process, and understand basic health information and services needed to make good decisions about your health. It can help you prevent health problems from happening and can help you to better manage health problems and health-related situations.

Health literacy is important to everyone because taking care of your health and the health of your family is part of everyday life, not just when you visit a doctor, clinic, or hospital. When you aren't comfortable with your health literacy, it can affect your ability to

- Get the medical care you need. This includes preventative care which can help prevent disease.
- Take medications correctly.
- Manage a disease, especially a chronic disease.
- Lead a healthy lifestyle.
- Fill out complex health forms.
- Understand the connection between behaviors and health.
- Locate culturally competent providers and services.

You can improve your health literacy by communicating with your health care provider. Doctors, nurses, dietitians, and other providers are there to help you and you can make the most of your appointments by

- Writing down your health concerns and a description of your symptoms before your appointment. Make sure to include when the symptoms started and what makes them better or worse.
- Asking a friend or family member you trust to come to the appointment with you.
- Taking notes during your appointment.
- Asking questions until you understand your diagnosis and any treatments. You can also ask for written instructions.

Food Safety Tips

At holiday and game day parties, dips are a popular snack to have on hand. But double dipping, or dipping food in a dip, taking a bite, then dipping the food again, can spread bacteria and viruses from one person's mouth to everyone at the party. You can help prevent this by adding spoons to the dip, cutting vegetables into one-bite sizes, or putting a sign on the table reminding people not to do it.



Apply for SNAP

If you need help with food, apply for SNAP today! The Greater Boston Food Bank can help you apply for SNAP benefits. Contact us to find out if you are eligible, want to apply, or want support on your existing case.

CALL: (617) 598 5022
OR VISIT:
GBFB.org/SNAP



Pumpkin Mac and Cheese

This homemade macaroni and cheese uses a can of pumpkin to give it a boost of fiber and a slightly earthy flavor.

Ingredients

- 1/2 pound [penne pasta](#) (or a short pasta like macaroni or bowtie)
- 2 tablespoons [butter](#)
- 2 tablespoons [all purpose-flour](#)
- 1/2 teaspoon [salt](#)
- 1/2 teaspoon [ground black pepper](#)
- 1 1/2 cup [low fat milk](#)
- 1 1/4 cup [shredded cheddar cheese](#)
- 1 15 ounce [can pumpkin](#) (not pumpkin pie filling)
- 1/2 cup [soft breadcrumbs](#)
- 1 tablespoon [olive oil](#)

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.
2. Cook pasta in a large pot following package directions and drain it before it's completely cooked through (it will continue to cook in the oven). Add pasta back to the pot.
3. In a medium saucepan melt butter over medium heat. Stir in flour, salt, and pepper then add milk. Cook and stir over medium heat until slightly thickened and bubbly. Stir in 1 cup of cheese and the can of pumpkin until cheese is melted.
4. Coat pasta with cheese sauce; mix thoroughly. Transfer pasta to an ungreased 8-inch (2-quart) square baking dish.
5. In a small bowl combine breadcrumbs, 1/2 cup of cheese, and oil, sprinkle over pasta. Bake, uncovered, for 30 minutes or until bubbly and top is golden.
6. Let stand 10 minutes before serving.

Makes 8 servings

Nutrition Facts

Pumpkin Mac and Cheese
Amount Per Serving

Calories 231	Calories from Fat 108
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 12g	18%
Saturated Fat 6g	30%
Trans Fat 0g	
Polyunsaturated Fat 1g	
Monounsaturated Fat 4g	
Cholesterol 27mg	9%
Sodium 343mg	14%
Potassium 239mg	7%
Total Carbohydrates 23g	8%
Dietary Fiber 3g	12%
Sugars 5g	
Protein 9g	18%
Vitamin A	199%
Vitamin C	4%
Vitamin D	0%
Calcium	17%
Iron	9%

LOOKING FOR RECIPE INSPIRATION?

Check out Click 'N Cook®, our online recipe database at clickncook.org



What can you do with: Apples



Apples are one of the world's most popular fruits and are members of the rose family!

- Choosing: Select unbruised apples that feel firm and heavy in your hand.
- Storing: Store apples in the crisper drawer of the refrigerator. Apples kept at room temperature will ripen quickly.
- Preparing: Apples can be eaten raw or cooked. Two-thirds of the fiber and lots of antioxidants are in the peel, so don't peel them!
- Uses: Apples can be eaten plain, used in salads, as a topping for oatmeal or yogurt or as an added sweetener in sauces and baked goods. Try adding nut butter to apple slices!
- Nutrition: Apples are naturally fat-free and cholesterol-free. They are a good source of fiber making them a good snack choice.
- Fun Facts: Over 2,500 varieties of apples are grown in the U.S., and they float because they are 25% air! The first apple trees planted in the U.S. were in the Massachusetts Bay Colony.

A CLICK N' COOK RECIPE
MORE AT: CLICKNCOOK.ORG

Baked Streusel Apples



Ingredients

- 6 small [Pink Lady or Gala apples](#) (or other apples)
- 1/2 cup [all purpose-flour](#)
- 3/4 cup [packed light brown sugar](#), divided
- 1/4 cup [old-fashioned oats](#)
- 1/8 teaspoon [salt](#)
- 4 tablespoons [butter](#)
- 1 teaspoon [apple pie spice](#)

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 400°F. Trim 1/2 inch off the tops of the apples and scoop out the cores, leaving the bottoms intact. Arrange on a large microwave-safe plate. Cover with plastic or large bowl and microwave 3 minutes.
2. In a medium bowl, combine the flour, 1/4 cup brown sugar, oats, and salt. Cut 4 tablespoons butter into small pieces and work into flour mixture with hands until coarse crumbs form. Set aside.
3. Put apples in a large baking dish. Add 1/2 cup water to dish. In a small bowl, combine the remaining 1/2 cup sugar and apple pie spice and divide among apples. Cover baking dish tightly with foil and bake 10 minutes.
4. Remove foil and fill each apple with streusel topping. Bake another 15 minutes, until apples are tender, and streusel is golden brown.



Breast Cancer Awareness Month

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month, an annual campaign to raise awareness about the impact of breast cancer. Breast cancer is the second most common cancer among American women (skin cancer is the most common), and mammograms are the best way to find breast cancer early. These types of screenings can find cancer before it is big enough to feel in a self exam or cause any symptoms, and when found early it is easier to treat.

Many factors over the course of a lifetime can influence breast cancer risk - there is no one, single risk factor. There are some factors you cannot change, like your age, genetics, sex, and family history. But there are some risk factors you do have control over and can change.

- **Physical activity.** Women who are not active are at higher risk for developing breast cancer.
- **Being overweight or obese after menopause.** Older women who are overweight or obese are at higher risk than women who are in a normal weight range.
- **Taking hormones.** Some hormone replacement therapy taken during menopause can raise cancer risk when taken for more than 5 years.
- **Drinking alcohol.** Studies show a woman's risk for breast cancer increases with the more alcohol she drinks.
- **Poor diet.** A diet high in saturated fat and low in fruits and vegetables can increase your risk.

Information from [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Breast Cancer Awareness](#)



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National Apple Month

National Popcorn Poppin' Month

World Mental Health Day

October 10

National School Lunch Week

October 11-15

World Food Day

October 16

National Pretzel Day

October 26

National Candy Apple Day

October 31