

## PRODUCE ITEMS OF THE MONTH ARE SWEET POTATOES & PERSIMMONS

At St. Vincent we believe in treating the whole person - mind, body and spirit. Therefore, you will find that these newsletters do the same thing...you'll be offered information addressing all three aspects of a person. We hope you enjoy the newsletters and that you find them useful for keeping your family healthy and happy. Thank you for reading!

### PRODUCE SELECTION:

#### Sweet potato:

- Choose firm, dark, smooth sweet potatoes without wrinkles, bruises, sprouts, or decay.
- Sweet potatoes spoil rapidly. To keep them fresh, store them in a dry, cool (55-60°) place such as a cellar or pantry.
- Brush off any excess dirt before storing your sweet potato, but do not wash them until you are ready to cook them because the moisture from washing will increase their chance of spoiling.

#### Persimmons:

- Choose persimmons that are round, plump and brightly colored. Yellow patches indicate that the fruit is not yet ripe.
- Ripen persimmons at room temperature until they are ready to eat.
- Once ripe, you can refrigerate them for up to three days.

### HEALTHY BODY FOCUS: Safe Toys & Gifts Month

*January:* the beginning of a new year, the month everyone decides to go back to the gym or get in shape, the month for changes, the month for new beginnings. January is also Thyroid Awareness Month, when this tiny gland gets some much needed coverage.

*Thyroid 101:* The thyroid is a small gland located in the base of your neck that is part of the endocrine system. It is responsible for various functions including metabolism, regulating body temperature, cognitive function, digestion and much more. In other words, the thyroid affects the entire body and when it is not working properly you will definitely feel the effects.

*Thyroid Problems:* Many people are somewhat familiar with the condition known as hypothyroidism, which is the condition where the thyroid gland is in a sub-optimal state and not producing enough of the thyroid hormones necessary for the body to function. While this condition counts for many people that are suffering from thyroid dysfunction, there are various other conditions, as well. These conditions include hyperthyroidism (thyroid gland in an over-active state), Graves' disease and Hashimoto's disease (autoimmune diseases), goiter (thyroid enlargement), thyroid nodules (growths on the thyroid gland that can be caused by another condition, i.e. Hashimoto's), and thyroid cancer.

*Dysfunction Symptoms:* The symptoms vary depending on the condition, but there are many warning signs that something is not right. There are over 300 symptoms that indicate thyroid dysfunction, the most common ones being:

- Cold hands/feet (hypothyroidism)
- Dry skin (hypothyroidism)
- Unexplained weight gain (hypothyroidism)
- Unexplained weight loss (hyperthyroidism)
- Loose bowels/diarrhea (hyperthyroidism)
- Vision issues (Graves' disease)
- Difficulty swallowing (goiter/thyroid nodules)

The best way for you and your doctor to determine if you have a thyroid issue is through a series of blood tests.

### HELPING YOUR CHILD EAT HEALTHY

Most children don't regularly eat persimmons...and may have never even heard of them! Here are some tips on how to incorporate them into your diet:

1. Blend 2 persimmons with one cup of coconut milk and a pinch of ground ginger for a yummy smoothie.
2. Dice persimmons to use as a topping for your morning oatmeal.
3. Slice a persimmon and top with lime juice, salt and a bit of chili powder.

Sweet potatoes are a very versatile vegetable and most children seem to enjoy the taste. Try these new options:

1. Sweet potato fries! Same as a French fry but use a sweet potato instead and bake in your oven with a bit of salt. Take a look, also, at the Sweet Potato Tater Top recipe below.
2. Serve just like a baked potato but top with cinnamon-sugar and vanilla yogurt. Apple sauce or a drizzle of maple syrup also make good toppings.
3. Dice sweet potatoes along with your other favorite wintertime vegetables and roast in the oven until tender. Add whatever spices you prefer...salt, pepper, rosemary, etc.



Sweet Potato	
Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 1 sweetpotato, 5 (130 g)	
<b>Amount Per Serving</b>	
Calories 112	Calories from Fat 1
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 0g	0%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 72mg	3%
Total Carbohydrate 26g	9%
Dietary Fiber 4g	16%
Sugars 5g	
Protein 2g	
Vitamin A 369%	Vitamin C 5%
Calcium 4%	Iron 4%

\*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.

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Persimmon	
Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 1 fruit without refuse 25g (25 g)	
<b>Amount Per Serving</b>	
Calories 32	Calories from Fat 1
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 0g	0%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 0mg	0%
Total Carbohydrate 8g	3%
Dietary Fiber 0g	0%
Sugars 8g	
Protein 0g	
Vitamin A 0%	Vitamin C 27%
Calcium 1%	Iron 3%

\*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.

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### RECIPE CORNER

#### SWEET POTATO TATER TOTS

##### Potato filling

- 3 medium sized raw Sweet Potatoes, peeled and grated
- 2 Tbsp Butter, melted
- 1/4 cup All Purpose Flour
- 3/4 cup Parmesan Cheese
- 1/2 tsp Dried Basil
- 1/4 tsp Black Pepper
- 1/8 tsp Salt
- 1/8-1/4 tsp Cayenne Pepper (optional)

##### Coating:

- 1 egg
- 1/2 cup milk
- 1 cup Panko

##### Instructions:

- In a medium sized bowl, take the grated sweet potatoes and thoroughly combine with the melted butter.
- In a separate bowl, combine the flour, cheese, basil, black pepper, salt, and Cayenne Pepper and whisk together.
- A couple of tablespoons at a time, pour the dry ingredients into the bowl with the sweet potatoes so they are evenly mixed.
- 1 Tablespoon at a time, shape the tater tots with your hands, and place on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper. Repeat until all the sweet potato mixture is used up, about 25-36 tots.
- Prepare the egg wash by whisking together the egg and the milk in a small bowl.
- Put the Panko crumbs in a separate bowl.
- To coat the tots, dunk each tot first in to the egg wash, then roll the coated tot in the Panko crumbs until covered, then place back on to the baking sheet.

Bake the tots in an oven preheated to 400° F for 25-30min until the tops are brown.