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## ***Winter Foods to Keep you Happy and Healthy***

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As the winter temperature drops and the days are shorter, many of us become less active. So, this time of year, making sure we eat a nutritious balance of foods is more important than ever. While limiting added sugar, saturated fats and sodium is important to overall health, some foods can also have great benefits to our energy level, focus and mood, so eating a well-balanced diet is essential. Consider the following foods when meal planning this season:

### **Salmon**

Recent studies have linked fish consumption with lower risk of depression. Salmon is packed with omega-3 fatty acids, which have been shown in some studies to help manage depression. Salmon also contains specific proteins that are important in mood regulation.

Try salmon broiled or grilled using heart healthy olive oil and low sodium marinades.

### **Clementines**

These winter citrus fruits are packed with fiber, which can help regulate your digestive system, and Vitamin C, which helps boost your immunity to fight off those winter colds.

### **Winter Squash**

Winter squash is rich in vitamin A and carotenoids, which benefits heart health and immunity while promoting healthy skin. Also a good source of fiber, squash can help control blood sugar levels.

Try roasting butternut squash with some cinnamon or a little maple syrup for a delicious and healthy side dish.

### **Sweet Potatoes**

Another great source of fiber, sweet potatoes also are packed with vitamin A and potassium. Their mellow, sweet taste works in all kinds of recipes. Sweet potato puree also can be used in foods including macaroni and cheese, oatmeal and brownies. Try swapping in baked sweet potatoes as an alternative to French fries.

### **Cauliflower**

This veggie has a very high phytochemical content, which potentially may help prevent cancer and inflammation. It is rich in vitamins C and K, which promotes a healthy immune system and healthy bones. Cauliflower also is a good source of folate, which is essential to help prevent anemia.

A relatively low carbohydrate food, consider making cauliflower "rice" in a food processor to help better control blood sugar levels in dishes which typically use white rice.

### **This Month's Featured Vegetable:**

### Cabbage

Long touted as a "diet" food, cabbage does indeed have many potential health benefits.

Although you should avoid any diet that encourages you to eat excess amounts of this tasty veggie, consuming moderate amounts will give you a nutritious boost of vitamin K, vitamin C and vitamin B6. It is also a very good source of dietary fiber, potassium, folate and all for less than 20 calories per cup.

Pureeing cabbage, cooking it by boiling, and adding spices during cooking can reduce the gas-producing effect that may keep you from enjoying this healthful item.

