

The WellFem-in-Law®

A column on well-being for I.O.W.A.

Column #3-2002: Dear I.O.W.A:

Flaxseed & Men...

No sooner had I hit the *send* button on my computer for the Feb. 02 column than I received information regarding new studies on the value of flaxseed for prostate health for men. According to Dr. Williams, writing in *Alternatives*, Vol. 9, No. 8, February 2002, at p. 62, our sedentary lifestyle along with poor dietary habits has led to prostate problems being “one of the most common problems in older men.” Dr. Williams recommends daily use of flaxseed and cites Dr. Demark-Wahnefreid at Duke University who “recently reported that the compound called lignan in flaxseed slows prostate tumor growth by binding to the male hormone testosterone and removing it from the body. This action is important because the body normally converts testosterone to 5 dihydroxy-testosterone, which promotes prostate cancer. See: *Urology* 01,58(1): 47-52). (There is also some good information on understanding PSA tests, so if you need more information on this, email me for the cite.)

Armed with this information, I asked my husband to join me in having the daily smoothies with ground flaxseed. Now I make enough for both of us. We especially have been enjoying using fresh pineapple with the banana and ground flaxseed. To make a complete breakfast, I often add about 1/2 cup of *plain* (i.e. without the sugar) yogurt. This makes a terrific start to the day. Sometimes I use vanilla for additional flavoring.

Last month I promised to pass along the recipe with the dried cherry vinaigrette. I have now learned from the company that makes this particular type that they call it *Cherry Berry Dressing & Marinade*. (If you can't find such a product or similar one locally and would like the 800 number please email me.)

Grilled Chicken Breast Salad with Cherry Vinaigrette Sautéed Onions

1pkg. Smaller sized chicken breasts (4 1/2 breasts in package – use 2) OR
1 pkg. Tenderized chicken breasts (2 in package)
Herbs to sprinkle on the chicken breasts (I use a commercial combination with oregano, savory, rosemary and other herbs)
1 tbsp. Olive oil
1 medium size onion, chopped
3 cloves of garlic, thinly sliced/chopped if desired
1/4 cup + Cherry Berry Vinaigrette dressing
1 tbsp. Honey
1 tbsp. Molasses
1 tbsp. Cornstarch
salt and pepper to taste

Grill chicken breasts (either already tenderized or small breasts) with a sprinkling of herbs you like or plain. I like to grill in my counter-top convection/toaster oven, as it does not dry

the meat out as much as the big broiler in my oven. If you use the oven broiler, keep a closer eye on the process. Be sure to brush the grill pan lightly with olive oil so the meat will turn easily.

Meanwhile, prepare each plate with a salad base using red leaf and green leaf lettuce and a handful of the small lettuces from a variety package

In a non-stick pan, sauté onions (chopped) using about 1 nice sized onion for 2 people. For a low fat sauté, put just a small amount of olive oil in the pan and use the lid first with some salt on the onions, which will make them sweat. They will mostly cook in that, take the lid off after a few minutes, letting the steam evaporate along with the rest of the cooking water from the onion; they will then become nearly translucent. Add finely minced garlic after you remove the lid. If the garlic goes in too soon, it gets too brown and that is not what we want. Add the *Cherry Berry* with the honey and molasses (you could substitute dark brown sugar...try to stay on the more “unrefined” side of the sweetener.)

Add approximately 1 rounded tbsp. of cornstarch pre-softened in a small amount of water. (The actual amount of cornstarch needed will depend on how much liquid you have with the onions.) Do a slow simmer on this and watch the sauce thicken. Here you will have a chance to make adjustments...too sour, add more sweetener or too sweet, add a dash or two more of the vinaigrette.

By now the chicken should also be done. Remove it from the pan onto a cutting board. Carefully slice the meat diagonally, keeping the breast together, and with a large spatula, lift the meat and carefully place it on top of the salad. It presents so nicely this way.

Cover the chicken breasts with the *Cherry Berry Sautéed Onions*. Serve with a piece of crusty bread from your favorite bread maker. If you want to have side dishes, consider some freshly steamed carrots, sliced on the diagonal. They look great that way. Broccoli freshly steamed is also good, but won't show up as well with all of the other greens. A side dish of Jasmine rice is also a wonderful complement. You can dress this meal up and make it a larger one or by staying with just the salad without the side dishes, you have a good protein dish with greens. This is a perfect meal to add a little wine if this suits your preference.

Notes on Meal Presentation...

Now that we have this idea for a good tasting and good looking meal...let's take a minute to talk about presentation. My cupboard has dishes that I bought in the late 60's. They are still good dishes. I have some other stoneware added since. All of these have acquired the occasional chip or so. I was lamenting about this to my mother one day and the next time I saw my sister, she handed me a box from my mother. To my surprise, there was a set of dishes, complete for 3. (Not 4 as usual...the story goes on.)

It seems my mother was at one of her local department stores during “sale” day and found this normally \$70 set of stoneware for \$7...yes \$7! Somehow the 4th place setting had been used for display and had disappeared. These dishes are spectacular in design and color. They also have no chips. So while my husband uses our “really everyday” dishes for his

breakfast and lunch, when I make supper/ dinner, I use the “new” dishes which just make everything look good to begin with.

Now, I have two thoughts on this matter. First of all, isn't this the kind of sale price Miki McGovern would love? And second, when we are busy with the day, the evening meal becomes something that just gets thrown together and we eat...and go on to the next matter on our schedule.

Yet, there is a lot to be gained by making the evening meal into its own form of meditation while we *mindfully* prepare our food and present it, again, *mindfully*. I think that the result is we enjoy these meals more...and that in itself is healthier for our own bodies...to eat in enjoyment rather than hectic stress.

Another benefit seems to be more appreciation from those who are eating with you! I have noticed that as I think of meal ideas, how that meal will present is now a component of the decision process of “what to make for supper/ dinner.” (Oh, yes, I should note, that like probably most of you, I do have a set for eight of “good china” in the china cabinet that is *reserved* for special company!)

On continuing our QiGong Practice...

If all you have in the morning is just a very few minutes to yourself, try this... In a quiet area by yourself, stand with your arms by your side, relax your body, soft knees, bottom tucked in a bit. Take a couple of breaths into the belly, which will help you relax down into your legs even more. Then move your hands toward your lower belly as if you are holding an imaginary large bowl (bread making size). Hold that bowl and breathe into the lower belly for a minute or so. Move your hands in a bit, making the bowl into a small mixing bowl. Hold that bowl and breathe into the lower belly for another minute or so. Concentrate on breathing into the area right behind the bowl. Now move your hands inward so you are holding a very small bowl, like a desert dish. Breathe into the lower belly. Finally, visualize the energy coming into that bowl and now into you as you bring your right palm onto your belly followed by the left on top of the right. Stand and breathe deeply for a moment and feel the fresh energy in your body. Go into the day having first taken care of your *self* so that you may better take care of others.

*Attend the present to deal with the past; thus you grasp the continuity of the Way which is its essence.
Tao Te Ching, No. 14 Mystery*

Meanwhile, be good to yourself. Keep deep breathing...new studies show a connection with weight loss. 'Til next time, when we'll explore more on body-mind-spirit issues affecting our health in “The WellFem-in-Law™” column.

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