

## RECIPE OF THE MONTH

### Salmon Chowder

#### INGREDIENTS

- 1 tablespoon canola oil
- 1/3 cup chopped carrot
- 1/3 cup chopped celery
- 4 cups reduced-sodium chicken broth
- 1½ cups water
- 1 12-ounce skinned salmon fillet, preferably wild-caught
- 2½ cups frozen cauliflower florets, thawed and coarsely chopped
- 3 tablespoons chopped fresh chives or scallions, or 1½ tablespoons dried chives
- 1 1/3 cups instant mashed potato flakes (see Note), or 2 cups leftover mashed potatoes
- ¼ cup chopped fresh dill, or 2 teaspoons dried tarragon
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- Freshly ground pepper to taste

#### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Heat oil in a large saucepan or Dutch oven over medium heat. Add carrot and celery and cook, stirring frequently, until the vegetables just begin to brown, 3 to 4 minutes. Add broth, water, salmon, cauliflower and chives (or scallions) and bring to a simmer. Cover and cook, maintaining a gentle simmer, until the salmon is just cooked through, 5 to 8 minutes. Remove the salmon to a clean cutting board. Flake into bite-size pieces with a fork.
2. Stir potato flakes (or leftover mashed potatoes), dill (or tarragon) and mustard into the soup until well blended. Return to a simmer. Add the salmon and reheat. Season with salt and pepper.

**NOTES:** Instant mashed potato flakes is not a product that we typically use in our recipes, but we love how it gives creamy texture to soup without adding extra fat. Look for a brand that has the fewest ingredients possible (and therefore little to no artificial additives or flavoring). At our local market, the store brand was the best choice.

**TIP:** To skin a salmon fillet, place on a clean cutting board, skin side down. Starting at the tail end, slip the blade of a long, sharp knife between the fish flesh and the skin, holding the skin down firmly with your other hand. Gently push the blade along at a 30° angle, separating the fillet from the skin without cutting through either.

<http://www.eatingwell.com/recipe/252456/salmon-chowder/>



# VIM & VIGOR

A Health Newsletter Serving the North Coast Schools Medical Insurance Group

Vol. 27, No. 5 | May 2019

## PLAN UPDATES

From the JPA Office

There are several changes to our plans for the upcoming year that will be effective on July 1, 2019, as noted below:

#### TELADOC MENTAL HEALTH

Teladoc will now offer Mental Health counseling as part of their program for NCSMIG. Medical plan members age 18 and over may speak with a licensed California therapist for telephone or video appointments. Coverage includes appointments with a psychiatrist, psychologist, licensed clinical social worker, counselor, or therapist.

#### TELADOC CO-PAY DECREASE

The co-pay for Teladoc appointments, whether for Medical or Mental Health benefits, is dropping from \$15 to \$10! Co-pays for Teladoc appointments are paid at the time of service by credit card. Teladoc provides excellent service, quick appointment times, and costs the member and the program substantially less than an appointment with a brick-and-mortar office visit. Did you know you can even upload photos via your Teladoc account on their website or app for your doctor to look at during your appointment? Teladoc is quick, convenient, and cost effective.



#### LIFE INSURANCE

All active employees will now be covered by a \$5,000 life insurance plan. This insurance is not available for retirees or dependents. Coverage is provided by Guardian Life Insurance Company of America. While we hope no one has to use this coverage, employees should remember to include it in their estate planning, in addition to any coverage they may have through membership in employee groups, such as the CTA or CSEA.

#### EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (EAP)

As part of the Medical program, enrolled members will now have access to a 24/7

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**Blue Shield of California**  
www.blueshieldca.com • 855-256-9404



**Vision Service Plan VSP**  
www.vsp.com • 800-877-7195



**CVS/Caremark**  
www.caremark.com • 844-207-2081



**Guardian**  
www.guardiananytime.com • 800-541-7846

■ Blue Shield 24/7 Nurse Line: 1-877-304-0504 ■ Teladoc 24/7 Physicians: 1-800-835-2362

# VITAMIN D DEFICIENCY

If you shun the sun, suffer from milk allergies, or adhere to a strict vegan diet, you may be at risk for vitamin D deficiency. Known as the sunshine vitamin, vitamin D is produced by the body in response to skin being exposed to sunlight. It also occurs naturally in a few foods – including some fish, fish liver oils, and egg yolks – and in fortified dairy and grain products.

Vitamin D is essential for strong bones because it helps the body use calcium from the diet. Traditionally, vitamin D deficiency has been associated with rickets, a disease in which the bone tissue doesn't properly mineralize, leading to soft bones and skeletal deformities. But increasingly, research is revealing the importance of vitamin D in protecting against a host of health problems.



## SYMPTOMS AND HEALTH RISKS OF VITAMIN D DEFICIENCY

Symptoms of bone pain and muscle weakness can mean you have a vitamin D deficiency. However, for many people, the symptoms are subtle. Yet, even without symptoms, too little vitamin D can pose health risks. Low blood levels of the vitamin have been associated with the following:

- Increased risk of death from cardiovascular disease
- Cognitive impairment in older adults
- Severe asthma in children
- Cancer

Research suggests that vitamin D could play a role in the prevention and treatment of a number of different conditions, including type 1 and type 2 diabetes, hypertension, glucose intolerance, and multiple sclerosis.

## CAUSES OF VITAMIN D DEFICIENCY

- You don't consume the recommended levels of the vitamin over time. This is likely if you follow a strict vegan diet, because most of the natural sources are animal-based, including fish and fish oils, egg yolks, fortified milk, and beef liver.
- Your exposure to sunlight is limited. Because the body makes vitamin D when your skin is exposed to sunlight, you may be at risk of deficiency if you are homebound, live in northern latitudes, wear long robes or head coverings for religious reasons, or have an occupation that prevents sun exposure.
- You have dark skin. The pigment melanin reduces the skin's ability to make vitamin D in response to sunlight exposure. Some studies show that older adults with darker skin are at high risk of vitamin D deficiency.

## TREATMENT FOR VITAMIN D DEFICIENCY

Treatment for vitamin D deficiency involves getting more vitamin D -- through diet and supplements. Although there is no consensus on vitamin D levels required for optimal health –

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# HEALTH SCREENING SCHEDULE

DATE	TIME	SCREENING LOCATION
Monday 5/6/19	6:30 - 9:00 AM	<b>Butte Valley High School - Library</b> Contact for sign up: Sheilah Reynolds (530) 397-4000
Tuesday 5/7/19	6:00 - 9:00 AM	<b>Yreka Elementary School</b> <b>Jackson Street Elementary School - K1 Room</b> Contact for sign up: Donna Tudor (530) 842-1168
Wednesday 5/8/19	6:30 - 9:00 AM	<b>Jefferson High School - Room 4</b> Contact for sign up: Debbie Goltz (530) 926-3006 x1102
Thursday 5/9/19	6:00 - 9:30 AM	<b>Middletown High School - Tallman Gym Foyer</b> Contact for sign up: Kriss Davis (707) 987-4100

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Employee Assistance Program, or EAP, as it's commonly known. The EAP offers a plethora of assistance programs, including, several free counseling sessions per year, tobacco cessation coaching, college planning resources, bereavement counseling, employee discounts for multiple products/services, tax consultation, will preparation, legal and financial consultation, and more. The objective of the EAP is to assist members with confidential, personal, and web-based support on a wide variety of important and relevant topics, such as stress management, dependent/elder care, nutrition, fitness, and legal/financial issues.

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and it likely differs depending on age and health conditions – a concentration of less than 20 nanograms per milliliter is generally considered inadequate, requiring treatment.

Guidelines from the Institute of Medicine increased the recommended dietary allowance (RDA) of vitamin D to 600 international units (IU) for everyone ages 1-70, and raised it to 800 IU

## LIVONGO FOR THE PINE PLAN

While the FREE Livongo diabetes management program has been available through CVS/ Caremark for all plans with their pharmacy program, it has not been available for those members enrolled in the Pine HSA (health savings account) Plan through Blue Shield. Members enrolled in the Pine Plan will be contacted directly with instructions on how they and their eligible dependents may sign up through our direct Livongo contract.

## PINE PLAN PHARMACY

Blue Shield will be changing the pharmacy benefit for the Pine Plan, effective July 1, 2019. A separate mailer for Pine Plan changes will be mailed directly to the enrollee's home.

for adults older than age 70 to optimize bone health. The safe upper limit was also raised to 4,000 IU. Doctors may prescribe more than 4,000 IU to correct a vitamin D deficiency.

If you don't spend much time in the sun or always are careful to cover your skin (sunscreen inhibits vitamin D production), you should speak to your doctor about taking a vitamin D supplement, particularly if you have risk factors for vitamin D deficiency.