

# INVITING IDEAS

## Get into the 'swim' of summer with a friend

With the weather finally beginning to break, most of us are starting to panic about the weight we've put on during the winter. Swimsuit weather has a tendency to initiate that kind of panic. Now it's time to do something about it.

With all that is available - specific diets, diet-related foods, including diet sodas, appetite suppressants, and exercise equipment, why does it seem so difficult to lose weight on your own? It seems to be much more palatable to lose weight with another person - a spouse, friend, or family member.

Several years ago, while complaining to a friend that I still hadn't lost the weight from giving birth - my standard line was, "I just had a baby" (11 years earlier). My friend totally lost sympathy for me and talked me into joining

Weight Watchers with her. We both stuck to our diets and lost a considerable amount of weight. My friend being 10 years younger, 5 feet 10 inches tall, and gorgeous to begin with, made me a bit crazy by losing the weight a lot quicker than I did - but it worked! Losing weight in whatever method you choose, works well when you do it with someone - there's something to be said for dieter's camaraderie.

Get a group together, or just one friend, and walk on scheduled days - then plan to have a low-fat lunch together. By making it an event you won't feel punished - deprivation does not work well for me. If you plan to go on a specific diet with your weight-reduction partner, it is best to check first with your family doctor, and make sure the diet is safe for you.

'Tis the season for lots of fresh vegetables, salad greens and fruits - incorporate them into your specific plan and make watching your weight fun - get some exercise, and change your lifestyle to a healthy one - you'll be surprised how quickly you get into that swimsuit, and are able to stay in it.

"Craig Claiborne's Gourmet Diet Cookbook" by Craig Claiborne with Pierre Franey (copyright 1980, Times Books) with an introduction by Jane Brody, contains some of my favorite recipes. The following is very low in fat and calories.

### DILL AND YOGURT SOUP

- 4 cups unsalted chicken broth (homemade or prepared)
- 1 egg yolk
- 2 teaspoons flour
- 1 1/2 cups plain yogurt
- Freshly ground black pepper to taste
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh dill

Combine about 1/4 cup of broth, the egg yolk and flour in a mixing bowl. Beat with a wire whisk until smooth.



RUTH MOESAK JOHNSTON

Put the yogurt in a mixing bowl and beat in the yolk mixture. Add a generous grinding of pepper.

Bring the remaining broth to a boil. Spoon about 1/4 cup of the hot broth into the yogurt mixture, stirring. Pour and scrape the yogurt mixture into the broth, stirring vigorously with a whisk. Bring just to the boil, stirring constantly from the bottom. Do not boil or the soup will curdle. Stir in the dill and serve hot, or chill and serve cold. Serves 6.

I am always looking for scallop recipes, my husband loves them, and they are low in cholesterol. The following recipe is from one of the newer Weight Watcher cookbooks - "Quick Meals in 30 Minutes or Less" (published by (Macmillan, a Simon & Schuster Macmillan Company, 1995).

### SCALLOPS WITH HERB SAUCE

- 1/2 cup packed fresh flat-leaf parsley leaves
- 1/2 cup packed fresh basil leaves
- 3 tablespoons low-sodium chicken broth
- 2 tablespoons fresh thyme leaves
- 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 1/2 garlic clove, minced
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground pepper
- 15 ounces sea scallops

In a food processor or blender, combine parsley, basil, broth, thyme, lemon juice, oil, garlic, salt and pepper; puree until smooth. Set aside.

Spray large non-stick skillet with non-stick cooking spray; place over medium heat. Add scallops, cook, turning once, 2-3 minutes on each side, until golden brown and heated through. Remove from heat; transfer scallops to medium bowl. Let skillet cool slightly.

Pour reserved herb mixture into cooled skillet; cook over medium heat, stirring constantly, 1-2 minutes, until heated. Pour over scallops; toss to combine. Serves 4.

Ruth Moesak Johnston is an author and food columnist who lives in Franklin.

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