

Easy Butternut Squash Soup /Serves 6



Recipe courtesy of loveandlemons.com

Served piping hot with a hunk of crusty bread, this creamy, nourishing butternut squash soup recipe is fall comfort food at its best.

Prep Time: 10 mins
Cook Time: 35 mins
Total Time: 45 mins

Ingredients:

- | | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil | 1 tablespoon chopped fresh sage |
| 1 large yellow onion, chopped | ½ tablespoon minced fresh rosemary |
| ½ teaspoon sea salt | 1 teaspoon grated fresh ginger |
| 1 (3-pound) butternut squash, peeled, seeded, and cubed | 3 to 4 cups vegetable broth |
| 3 garlic cloves, chopped | Freshly ground black pepper |

Directions:

1. Heat the oil in a large pot over medium heat. Add the onion, salt, and several grinds of fresh pepper and sauté until soft, 5 to 8 minutes. Add the squash and cook until it begins to soften, stirring occasionally, for 8 to 10 minutes.
2. Add the garlic, sage, rosemary, and ginger. Stir and cook 30 seconds to 1 minute, until fragrant, then add 3 cups of the broth. Bring to a boil, cover, and reduce heat to a simmer. Cook until the squash is tender, 20 to 30 minutes.
3. Let cool slightly and pour the soup into a blender, working in batches if necessary, and blend until smooth. If your soup is too thick, add up to 1 cup more broth and blend. Season to taste and serve with parsley, pepitas, and crusty bread.

Store it in the fridge for up to 4 days, or freeze it for up to a few months.

This newsletter is published quarterly and provides information and resources for caregivers and older adults. Information and comments are welcomed and should be sent to, Lori.Mayer@Genesishcc.com. You may also contact Lori Mayer at 610-925-4138.

genesishcc.com

PG 4 FALL 2021

www.genesishcc.com

515 Fairmont Avenue
Towson, MD 21286



Genesis Today

FALL 2021

INSIDE

Page 2 Heroes of the Front Line | 3 Recognizing and Preventing Caregiver Burnout | 3 No More Cabin Fever!



National Assisted Living Week celebrates the dedication of essential staff during trying times.



“The greatness of a community is most accurately measured by the compassionate actions of its members.”

As the COVID-19 pandemic dramatically changed our lives over the course of a year and a half, assisted living facilities were especially impacted. Residents, staff members, and caregivers alike faced a disruption in their daily routines. Through it all, however, essential staff never wavered in displaying the compassion needed to fulfill their roles and stay focused on the needs of those in their care.

This year’s National Assisted Living Week theme, “Compassion, Community, Caring”, celebrates the amazing care provided by essential staff in assisted living communities across the country. These dedicated professionals continued to do their jobs with extraordinary grace, while confronting the challenges of the pandemic.

Residents rose to the challenge, too. National Assisted Living Week also honors

the individuality of residents and the bonds that were formed while adhering to safety protocols and requirements. Despite being physically apart, residents, caregivers and family members continued to foster a sense of community that helped them get through a trying time together.

During National Assisted Living Week, assisted living communities will be organizing activities and events to help residents celebrate the importance of family and staying connected to friends and loved ones — no matter what. The celebration is a testament to what can be overcome and achieved through “Compassion, Community, Caring.”

National Assisted Living Week is September 12 – 18, 2021. For more information, visit www.ahcancal.org/Education-Events/Pages/NALW.aspx

caregivers’

corner

Share a laugh: It’s therapy for both of you

“A day without laughter is a day wasted.”

So said Charlie Chaplin, a man who knew a thing or two about making people laugh. His words ring true more than you may realize. Even in grim circumstances, laughing can help you keep things in perspective.

Consider your own everyday circumstances. While tending to the needs of an elderly loved one can be frustrating or stressful at times, there is no denying that caregiving also has its humorous moments. And when those moments occur, it’s okay to laugh. In fact, one person’s laughter can send a positive, comforting message to another. Think of it this way: if a caregiver doesn’t get upset, the person in their care is less likely to get upset.

Laughter is the best medicine (literally!).

Experts say that laughing is beneficial to both your mental and physical health. Here are some surprising ways that laughter can improve your overall well-being:

- **Pain relief.** Laughing releases endorphins that can have an opiate effect, thereby increasing pain tolerance.
- **Better blood flow.** Laughter causes the insides of blood vessels to dilate, increasing blood flow to bodily tissues. Regular laughter can even lead to a reduction in systolic blood pressure and heart rate.
- **Stronger immune responses.** Laughter can increase the production of antibodies, which has a positive effect on the immune system.

And of course, there’s the added benefit of an elevated mood. There’s no denying that caregivers and their elderly loved ones need frequent boosts to their spirits. You can meet that need by finding ways to laugh together despite the challenges and stress you face every day. There are even programs, such as laugh yoga classes, that can help to make laughter come more naturally and easily.

You’ll quickly discover that laughter is, and will always be, a powerful form of therapy.

Genesis

Genesis Senior Living Communities

ALABAMA

Hilltop at Glenwood, Florence
Magnolia Village, Independent Living, Gardendale

ARIZONA

Mesa Christian Residential Care Center, Mesa

COLORADO

Cheyenne Place Independent Living, Colorado Springs

CONNECTICUT

Glen Crest Independent Living, Danbury
Groton Regency Retirement, Groton
St. Joseph's Center, Trumbull

IDAHO

Sunny Ridge, Nampa

KENTUCKY

Edmonston Center, Brownsville
Heritage Place, Owensboro

MAINE

Harbor Hill Center, Belfast
Orono Commons, Orono
Windward Gardens, Camden

MASSACHUSETTS

Heritage Woods, Agawam

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Granite Ledges of Concord, Concord
Partridge House, Hampton
Langdon Place of Nashua, Nashua
Langdon Place of Keene, Keene
Langdon Place of Dover, Dover
Langdon Place of Exeter, Exeter
Mineral Springs, North Conway

NEW MEXICO

Village at Northrise - The Hallmark, Las Cruces
Village at Northrise - Morningside, Las Cruces
Village at Northrise - Desert Willow II, Las Cruces

PENNSYLVANIA

Laurel Center, Hamburg
Lehigh Commons, Macungie
Highgate at Paoli Pointe, Paoli
Sanatoga Court, Pottstown
Berkshire Commons, Reading
Mifflin Court, Shillington

WEST VIRGINIA

Wishing Well Assisted Living Community at Fairmont Campus, Fairmont Call

Call 866-745-2273 or visit genesishcc.com to learn more.

Heroes of the Front Line:

“We dug our heels in and worked long hours.”



They may not think of themselves as “heroes,” but the millions of health care workers across the country who played life-saving roles in the fight against COVID-19 certainly deserve accolades. Many of these compassionate humans put their own lives at risk, working overtime — and then some — in their efforts to keep patients safe and alive.

Circumstances were particularly challenging for assisted living facility staff who made personal sacrifices in caring for COVID-19's most vulnerable victims. Many residents in their care felt lonely and understandably scared. It was up to staff and family caregivers to reassure and comfort patients, all while trying to keep their own spirits up.

Coming to terms with the fallout

Even now, as the stress on medical facilities has eased, many health care professionals continue to confront the emotional and mental impact of the pandemic. Doing their jobs under such extraordinary circumstances was an emotional roller coaster that affected their personal lives.

“It was a one-of-a-kind situation,” said Michelle Mullin, a recently retired public health nurse for the Bucks County Health Department in Pennsylvania. When COVID-19 became a public health crisis, Michelle and her colleagues were reassigned duties to exclusively address the pandemic. Michelle's new role was in a call center, where she provided information to an increasingly concerned public, and determined who should or should not be tested based on strict criteria.

“Anyone with a cold or flu would call in a panic,” said Michelle. “Everyone thought they had COVID.” In the early months of the pandemic the call center received several thousand calls. “We answered each and every call. We dug our heels in and worked long hours.”

When lacking resources, be resourceful

The do-what-it-takes mentality that Michelle described became a common theme in all aspects of confronting the virus. Throughout the country and around the world, health care professionals found ways to deal with an unprecedented situation.

In Bangalore, India a doctor whose hospital lacked sufficient personal protective equipment (PPE) layered scrubs on top of scrubs in an effort to avoid exposure.

In the Virgin Islands a physician from the University of Pennsylvania lent his skills to a hospital recently damaged by a hurricane, where there were not enough medical professionals to meet the increased demand.

In Toronto, Ontario a physician assistant set up iPads so that hospitalized patients could talk to loved ones at a time when in-person visits were not permitted.

In London, England a retired doctor-turned-biotech-executive, returned to practicing medicine at a renowned hospital to help treat COVID-10 patients.



Scenarios like these underscore the tremendous impact the COVID-19 pandemic had on how health care is delivered and received. In retrospect, it is clear that countless lives were saved due in no small part to the tireless, selfless contributions of frontline workers.

Showing appreciation means so much

So many other health care professionals have stories of their own that may never be heard, despite being appreciated by those who received their help. In the midst of all the hard work and stress, health care workers did occasionally experience some bright spots — moments when they realized their work was making a difference.

Michelle Mullin concurs: “We (in the call center) would get thank-you notes from people who were so grateful for the help and answers we provided that they weren't getting elsewhere. We read every note and hung them all up on the wall. Those little gestures of kindness meant the world to us.”

In the spirit of the National Assisted Living Week theme of “Compassion, Community, Caring,” we should all make a point to express heartfelt gratitude to those who answer the call of duty every day.

Recognizing and Preventing Caregiver Burnout

If you're one of the millions of adults in the United States who care for an elderly, chronically ill, or disabled loved one, you may find that the experience occasionally takes its toll on you. In fact, according to Pew Research Center, 32% of caregivers describe their duties as stressful.

Careful, though: If you're starting to feel like you're reaching your breaking point, you may well be on the road to caregiver burnout. It might be time to start focusing on your own needs a bit more.

Here are some signs that you may be approaching (or already experiencing) caregiver burnout:

Chronic fatigue. Your sleep habits have changed, or you constantly feel tired with no real explanation.

Frequent illness. If you find yourself getting headaches, colds, or the flu more often than normal, your immune system may be compromised by stress.

Angry outbursts. You may lose your temper more than usual and take it out on those around you — even if they are not the source of your frustration.

Withdrawal and/or Depression. Instead of lashing out, you may draw yourself inward

and avoid people, or you find less enjoyment in the activities that once gave you pleasure.

Lack of focus. You can't fully concentrate on the task at hand, such as cooking dinner or reading a book. Or maybe you've begun to neglect your appearance and self-care.



Another serious symptom of caregiver burnout is “compassion fatigue.” While you once cared for someone out of love and concern and played an active role in addressing their health issues, your heart is just not in it anymore. You're overwhelmed by responsibility; you struggle to be kind and feel devoid of compassion. That's when you know it's time to make a positive change.

So what can you do about caregiver burnout?

It's okay to take some time for yourself, and respite care is a prudent and effective way of doing so. Taking a temporary break while ensuring that a loved one continues to receive proper care can alleviate stress and emotional fatigue and even prevent burnout.

There are a number of ways to take advantage of respite care. The most obvious may be to get someone to take over for a while. If you don't have friends or family members who are willing or equipped to help out, seek assistance from respite care resources in your community — including adult day care, in-home meal delivery and volunteer programs to support older adults. You could also hire a professional in-home caregiver to provide a few hours of relief each day, or even live in your home full-time while you take some time away.

What's more, many assisted living facilities offer short-term respite care stays with comfortable accommodations. The facility will create a personalized care plan based on your loved one's specific needs.

Ultimately, it's important and reassuring to know: There is support available, and there are strategies for taking care of yourself. Chances are, respite care will even make you a better caregiver.

No more cabin fever: Getting back to life as we know it



At any age, it's important to stay active and have a bit of fun. Now that the pandemic restrictions have eased, it's time to get together with friends, family, and other residents to once again enjoy group dining and socializing on a daily basis.

Now you can start planning activities that make you laugh, lose track of time, or feel like your younger self again. Group activities, in particular, provide social contact and create a sense of community. Assisted living communities offer a wide range of activities to appeal to a variety of interests and abilities. Here are some of the ways you can spice up your life:

Tap into your creative side with arts and crafts. Attend classes for painting, woodworking, quilt-making, or another craft that inspires you. Not only is the creating part fun, the finished work brings a feeling of pride.

Discover easy ways to stay fit. Many assisted living facilities make fitness more easily accessible with low impact activities such as meditation, tai chi, yoga and chair yoga.

Get together for game night. Match wits, create some friendly competition, and enjoy a few hearty laughs by playing board games or testing your trivia knowledge. An added bonus: Playing games helps to keep your brain sharp.

Go ahead, belt it out! Everyone should try his or her hand (or voice) at karaoke at some point in their life. You may be surprised at how much you enjoy it.

Let your imagination run free. Consider joining, or even starting, a book club with other residents. Or attend writing workshops to get in touch with your inner Hemingway.

Beyond the benefit of just having a good time, “playing” contributes to a healthier and happier life. Studies have shown that participating in fun activities can maintain or improve your memory; enhance your state of mind; improve physical vitality; and even extend your life.

Perhaps best of all, participating in group activities is a great way to make new friends, strengthen relationships, and ward off loneliness. When you engage in regular activities, you'll always have something to look forward to — and you may even discover a new passion or two along the way.

