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**Fun Ideas
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health news

THE INFORMATION YOU NEED TO STAY WELL
by GINA ROBERTS-GRAY

cut your cancer risk

Getting enough vitamin E from almonds, sunflower seeds, mustard greens, spinach, peppers, and cooking oils may reduce the risk of bladder cancer by about 35%, says a new study published in the medical journal *Cancer Causes Control*. Women should get 15 mg per day of vitamin E; ¼ cup of almonds contains about 9 mg of vitamin E.

FRESH STRAWBERRIES HAVE IT ALL

"They're an excellent source of vitamin C, folate, and dietary fiber, which all play key roles in heart health," says Jackie Newgent, a registered dietitian and author of the *Big Green Cookbook: Hundreds of Planet-Pleasing Recipes and Tips for a Luscious Low-Carbon Lifestyle* (Wiley).

One cup of strawberries has 50 calories; a dollop of low-fat non-dairy whipped topping adds only 10 more. If you go the extra mile and pick a pint or two yourself at a farm, you'll burn a few calories, too. You already know that strawberries are a great way to wake up a bowl of cereal, a cup of yogurt, or a morning smoothie. But try them with savory foods, too. For a surprising pop, toss strawberries into summer salads with balsamic vinegar and a drizzle of olive oil.

SCRATCH THE ITCH

Pesky plants are one of the perils of the season, but they don't have to ruin your summer. Brushing up against poison ivy (or its cousins, oak and sumac) can provoke an exasperating, itchy rash on the skin. While there's no cure, you can ease the symptoms. Over-the-counter lotions from Aveeno, Benadryl, and Zanfel wash away the poisonous oil or soothe the itch with hydrocortisone or antihistamines, but the home remedies below can also help. "Less is more when it comes to treating poison ivy," says Susan Stuart, M.D., a La Jolla dermatologist and faculty member at the University of California San Diego. "Avoid soaps, scrubs, and abrasive cloths," she says, which could spread the rash. The rash usually dries up and fades away in a week or so.

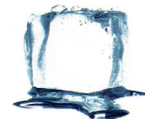


OATMEAL

Make a small bowl of unflavored oatmeal and let cool to room temperature. Apply the paste to the rash and let dry. Rinse off with tepid water.

BAKING SODA

Mix 3 teaspoons of baking soda with 1 teaspoon of water to form a thick paste. Lightly apply the paste to the rash, and let it dry. Rinse off with tepid water.



ICE CUBES

Lightly rub an ice cube across the afflicted areas to cool the tissue and reduce the inflammation.



EPSOM SALT

Make a paste to use as a topical remedy or take a hot soak with salts added to the bath. Magnesium sulfate helps reduce swelling and draws moisture out of the rash.