



Thyme to Celebrate National Herb Week

Your health is important.

Because the Youens and Duchicela Clinic believes this, the following is brought to you in an effort to provide wellness information that you can use to help manage and maintain your health.

This week, the focus is on using herbs in place of unhealthy additives to food.

The International Herb Association (IHA) has dedicated the first week in May of each year to the celebration of herbs, leading to and culminating on Mother's Day. Its purpose, in part, is to develop and coordinate national attention on herbs and their uses.

Herbs are types of plants prized for a particular quality. People use herbs every day in a variety of ways. Most have a rich flavor and scent that make them immediately recognizable.

Using herbs is one way to not only add robust flavor to dishes when cooking, but their use can also help facilitate lifestyle and diet changes. For those who are working to manage diabetes, hypertension, obesity, or high blood pressure, using herbs in place of unhealthy spices—especially those containing large amounts of sodium—can help lower symptoms associated with too much salt intake.

Cooking with herbs can make bland dishes more flavorful and can make trying new dishes exciting. Instead of reaching for the salt and pepper the next time you think your food needs a kick, try adding some zest using these techniques:

SPRINKLE FRESH HERBS atop a garden salad in place of fattening dressing.

TOSS ROSEMARY SPRIGS with chopped potatoes instead of butter and oil.

SPREAD HERBS atop fish when baking or grilling instead of salt.



ADD CHOPPED PARSLEY to chicken or tuna salad for flavor.

WHISK BASIL LEAVES into scrambled or fried eggs.

STIR OREGANO into prepared soups instead of seasoned salt or pepper.

SERVE MINT SPRIGS with freshly brewed tea in place of sweetener.

SUBSTITUTE "HERBAL BUTTER" for recipes which call for butter, especially in the case of frying; the strong taste of herbs may make you use less.

There are hosts of other uses for herbs as well, so be creative! Using them in the kitchen can make it more enjoyable to cook and eat freshly-prepared foods.

Some herbs—aside from culinary uses—are used in alternative medicine practices. If you desire this or have questions, please consult your physician.

For more information and to learn more about dill, the 2010 IHA "Herb of the Year," visit www.iherb.org.

The information provided here is not to be used as a substitute for medical attention. Remember that, should you have specific medical questions or desire more information, contact your doctor.