



## Splitting Medications- Is it Safe?



Medications are expensive. In a recent survey done by the Center for Studying Healthcare System Change in Washington, D.C., eight percent of respondents said they did not fill a prescription written by their physician

because of the cost. For some medications, splitting the pill in half is a money saver, but for certain types of medications, this is not safe. Capsules, extended release medications and coated pills are some types of medicines that cannot be split.

Ask your pharmacist or doctor if your prescription can be safely split. If it can, your doctor may be willing to write you a prescription for the higher dose. Then have your pharmacist demonstrate how to split your pills with a pill splitter. Do not use a kitchen knife or other sharp object to split your medication as this may lead to uneven splitting of the pill which can cause inaccurate doses.

There are also government programs and non profit organizations that will help seniors purchase medications for those

with limited incomes. Not taking required medications can be very detrimental to your health and ultimately cost more in long term health care.

## Plastic Bottles and Your Health

Bisphenol A is the chemical used in the manufacturing of plastic bottles that has recently been under scrutiny. Bisphenol A is also found in the lining of aluminum cans, dental composites and dental sealants. The health concerns associated with this chemical include cardiovascular disease, diabetes, liver disease and disruptions of the endocrine system.

Bisphenol A or BPA as it is commonly known, was banned in baby bottles in Canada. In the United States, the House of Representatives and the Senate have announced legislation that would establish a ban on BPA in containers that are used for food and beverages. In June 2009, the Food and Drug Administration announced they would review research to determine the safety of BPA.



## Insomnia and Your Health

Having trouble sleeping? Adults need seven to nine hours of sleep each night. Chronic insomnia is a great problem among seniors and should be treated. Research has shown that lack of sleep can lead to an increase in falls due to exhaustion, confusion and may also be associated with high blood pressure and depression.

## Make at Least Half of Your Grains Each Day Whole

At least half of the grains we eat each day should be whole grains. Whole grain pasta, brown rice and less known grains such as faro or quinoa are becoming more available. There is even whole grain white flour. Whole grain white flour has a lot of the properties of refined white flour, light color, mild taste, but it provides the nutritional benefits of whole grains: increased fiber, minerals, vitamins and antioxidants. White whole wheat flour is made from white wheat instead of red wheat. This gives the flour a milder flavor which is more like refined white flour made from red wheat flour. So if you do not eat whole grain breads because you do not like the nutty, stronger flavor of whole grains, give whole wheat white flour a try and strive to make at least half your grain servings whole grains-for your health.



## Chicken with Squash and Brown Rice

1 cup uncooked brown rice  
2 cups low sodium chicken broth  
2 tablespoons olive oil  
1 large sweet onion  
½ red bell pepper  
½ yellow bell pepper  
1 zucchini  
2 cups cooked chicken breast  
1 tablespoon teriyaki sauce  
1 egg, beaten  
salt and pepper to taste

Cook brown rice using chicken broth instead of water, according to the package directions. Set aside.

Wash and chop the onion, peppers and zucchini. Cube the chicken.

In a large sauté pan, heat the olive oil at medium high heat. Add the chopped vegetables and sauté for 5 minutes or until the vegetables are just tender. Add the chicken and teriyaki sauce. Cook for an additional minute. Add the egg and cook until the egg is completely cooked. Stir in the rice. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Makes 5 servings.

### **Nutritional Value per serving:**

Calories 327  
Fat 9 grams  
Carbohydrates 36 grams  
Protein 24 grams  
Sodium 460 milligrams

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*This newsletter has been partially funded by USDA's Food Stamp Program. The Food Stamp Program provides nutrition assistance to people with low income. It can help you buy nutritious foods for a better diet. To find out more contact the Center for Civil Justice, 1-800-481-4989.*