

Recipes for a warmer winter

Delicious ways to keep you warm



Ratatouille pasta



Fish pie



Beef Stroganoff



Lemon Sponge Pudding

Contents

Introduction	3
Mushroom soup	4
Lentil curry	6
Ratatouille pasta	8
Beef stroganoff	10
Fish pie	12
Ginger and chocolate cake	14
Microwave mini lemon sponge puddings	16
Fairly fat free loaf	18





#LoveLaterLife



Emily, Age NI Volunteer

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Introduction

Winter isn't everyone's favourite season but it is the perfect excuse to cook up some heart-warming comfort food. Inside this booklet you'll find some delicious recipes to help keep you warm and full of energy this winter – give them a try!

Nutritious food helps us to stay warm and well in cold weather when we are all a little more vulnerable to poor health and illness.

We've also included some useful tips for remaining as comfortable as possible during the colder, darker winter months. For more information about preparing for winter visit **ageni.org/winterwrappedup**

And remember, if you or someone you know needs our help to deal with issues including health, housing, money or care, contact the Age NI Advice Service on freephone **0808 808 7575**.

We'd love to hear how you're enjoying our recipes so if you're cooking up a storm, let us know on Twitter or Facebook! Share your feedback and pictures with us using **#lovelaterlife**

So, whether you're serving up a stroganoff or loving your lentil curry, enjoy and happy cooking!

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Age NI is the leading charity for older people in Northern Ireland. We deliver care services, provide advice and advocacy and influence our decision-makers to improve later life for us all.

Mushroom soup



Soup is always a favourite on a cold winter's day, either for a lunch with a crusty roll, or as a starter for dinner.

This soup is creamy and warming and the mushrooms contain fibre and many vitamins and minerals to support the body, including B vitamins and potassium.

Serves 2

Preparation time

15 minutes

Cooking time

20 minutes

Ingredients

25g/1oz butter

1 onion,
finely chopped

1 green pepper,
finely chopped

1 leek,
finely chopped

1–2 garlic cloves,
peeled crushed

300g/10½oz
mushrooms,
ideally button or
chestnut, sliced

2 tbsp plain flour

450ml/16fl oz
vegetable stock

450ml/16fl oz milk

1 tbsp finely
chopped parsley

Method

Melt the butter in a pan over a low heat, and gently sweat the onion, green pepper, leek and garlic until they start to soften.

Increase the heat and add the mushrooms to the pan, stir until well combined. Continue to fry until the mushrooms are cooked. Stir in the flour, and cook for one minute. Remove the pan from the heat and add the stock a little at a time, stirring well between each addition.

Once all the stock is added, return the pan to the heat, bring to the boil, reduce the heat and simmer for a few minutes. Pour in the milk and bring to a simmer. Stir in the chopped parsley and add freshly ground black pepper to taste.

Cold weather reminder

Food is fuel

Hot meals and drinks help keep you warm. Include a good range of foods in your diet and aim for five portions of fruit and vegetables each day, so that you're getting plenty of nutrients and vitamins. Remember that frozen vegetables are as good as fresh.

Lentil curry



Lentils are a good low-fat source of protein. They are easy to cook and can be stored in the cupboard to be used again.

This can be a main meal for two with some salad or bread, or a side dish for four.

Serves 2 - 4

Preparation time

5–10 minutes
(excluding soaking of lentils as per pack instructions)

Cooking time

25–30 minutes

Ingredients

- 170g/6oz lentils
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 small apple
- 1 garlic clove, crushed
- 1½ tbsp olive oil
- 1 tsp curry powder
- 1 squeeze lemon juice
- 1 small tin baked beans
- 8cm/3in chopped cucumber

Method

Wash and soak the lentils as per instructions on the packaging.

Add the bay leaf to the lentils and boil in water until tender, then drain.

Heat up the baked beans in a pan.

Peel and chop the onion and apple, and add to the crushed garlic and curry powder and fry in olive oil for 15 minutes until soft and browning.

Add the lentils, baked beans and lemon juice to taste, and accompany with cucumber pieces.

Cold weather reminder

Keep warm and well – 64°F (18°C) is the ideal temperature for your bedroom

Consider having the heating on in your bedroom at night. It is important to ensure that your bedroom temperature does not fall below 65°F (18°C). You may be entitled to help to pay your energy bills, insulate your home and install central heating – for more information and to get a copy of *Winter Wrapped Up* (our guide to staying warm, well and connected in winter) contact the Age NI Advice Service on freephone **0808 808 7575**.

Ratatouille pasta



This dish contains lots of vegetables including garlic to provide vitamins and minerals that support immunity, something we all need in the winter months. Basil contains Vitamins A and C as well as iron and calcium.

Serves 2

Preparation time

10 minutes

Cooking time

30 minutes

Ingredients

200g/7oz sweet potatoes, peeled and cut into wedges

200g/7oz parsnips, peeled and cut into large pieces

200g/7oz carrots, cut into large pieces

2 red onions, quartered

Olive oil

75ml/5 tbsps clear honey

Salt and pepper to season

150g/6oz dry pasta – choose whichever shape you prefer

3–4 garlic cloves, peeled and crushed

1 tin of chopped tomatoes

A small bunch of basil, torn

Method

Preheat the oven to gas mark 6/200°C/400°F. Place all the vegetables on an oven tray and drizzle with the olive oil and honey and season. Roast in the oven for about 20 minutes until all the vegetables are tender and browned.

While the vegetables are in the oven, cook the pasta according to packet instructions.

Remove vegetables from the oven and put them in a saucepan, along with the crushed garlic and chopped tomatoes.

Bring to the boil and simmer gently for a few minutes stirring in some basil leaves.

Pour over the pasta to serve and garnish with torn basil.

Cold weather reminder

Keep warm and well – keep your bedroom windows closed at night

It's a common misconception that sleeping with the window open is healthy. In fact, breathing in cold air can increase the risk of chest infections. That's why it's important to always shut your bedroom windows at night during the winter months. Install a carbon monoxide alarm in each room that has a gas appliance. Adding several layers of covers to your bed at night will also trap in the warm air. Having a hot drink before bed and keeping one in a flask by your bedside are good ideas too.

Beef stroganoff



Traditionally stroganoff is made with beef, but this can be replaced with turkey or chicken if you want to keep costs down or prefer less fat in the meal. All are good sources of protein for growth and repair of the body.

Brown rice contains more fibre than white and takes a little longer to cook. You can substitute with noodles or pasta which are also good sources of carbohydrates to provide the body with energy.

Serves 2

Preparation time

15 minutes

Cooking time

20–30 minutes

Ingredients

1 cup of rice (a normal drinking mug filled to the top is usually a good amount of rice for two people)

1 onion, thinly sliced

3 cloves of garlic, crushed

300g/10oz rump steak or frying steak

A splash of olive oil

125g/4oz of frozen peas

125g/4oz chestnut mushrooms, sliced

4 tbsps sour cream

A bunch of fresh parsley, chopped

Method

Boil a saucepan of water. Rinse the rice in a sieve then add to the water. Leave to simmer for about 15 minutes or until the rice is cooked (if using brown rice add another 10 minutes to cooking time).

Chop the onion into small pieces and peel and crush the garlic.

Using a different chopping board and knife, trim any fat off the meat, then cut it in to thin strips (about 1cm across), and season with pepper.

Heat a large frying pan, add a splash of olive oil and fry the onions and garlic for 2–3 minutes over a medium heat.

Add the beef to the pan and simmer for 3–4 minutes until browned.

Add the mushrooms and keep stirring until they are browned and soft.

Add the peas and stir into the mixture with a wooden spoon. Keep the pan on a medium heat and let everything cook.

Take off the heat and stir in 3–4 spoonfuls of sour cream, and some finely chopped parsley.

Drain the rice in a sieve and pour boiling water over it to remove the starch. To serve, spoon the stroganoff on top of the rice.



Fish pie



Fish is always a good choice once or twice a week. White fish contains low fat protein and oily fish such as salmon is a good source of the omega 3 fats that doctors recommend for their heart protective properties.

This fish pie provides a balanced meal for those winter evenings, with potatoes for carbohydrate and vegetables giving vitamins and minerals. You can add chopped parsley instead of cheese to the sauce to lower the saturated fat content.

Cold weather reminder

Keep warm and well – 70°F (21°C) is the ideal temperature for your living room

It's best to try to keep the temperature throughout your home stable, as sudden changes in temperature can be dangerous. If it's not possible for you to do this, close the doors to rooms you aren't using and try to keep the temperature in your living room at 70°F (21°C) or more. It's harder to judge temperatures as we grow older, so keep a thermometer handy to detect any changes.

Serves 2

Preparation time

5 minutes

Cooking time

60 minutes

Ingredients

A packet of prepared fish for fish pie or a selection of mixed chopped fish such as smoked haddock, cod and salmon (330g or 12oz approx.)

¾ pint/450ml of milk

450g/1lb potatoes

1 leek, chopped

75g/3oz butter

1 tbsp plain flour

Black pepper

1 tbsp chopped chives

50g/2oz grated cheddar cheese

Method

Put the fish in a shallow saucepan and add the milk. (If the fish has skin on, put it in skin side up to prevent it from sticking). Put the lid on and bring to the boil, then simmer for five minutes. Turn off the heat and leave to cool.

Meanwhile peel and chop the potatoes, and boil for 20–25 minutes. Once cooked, drain the potatoes, and mash with a little extra milk or butter. Steam or boil the leeks for seven minutes until soft.

Once the fish is cool enough to handle, pour the milk it was cooked in into a bowl or measuring jug, and flake the fish into an ovenproof shallow dish, discarding any skin or bones. Add the leeks.

Melt the butter in a saucepan, and add the flour. Cook over a low heat for a couple of minutes, stirring all the time, then add the milk that the fish was cooked in, a little at a time until it thickens. Season with chives and pepper. Whisk to ensure there are no lumps and then keep stirring, adding a little extra milk if needed, to make a thick, smooth sauce. Take off the heat and stir in half the grated cheese.

Pour the sauce over the fish and leeks. Cover evenly with the mashed potato and use a fork to make patterns on the surface. For extra flavour, add the other half of the grated cheese to the top.

Bake in a moderate oven on gas mark 4/180°C/350°F for 20 minutes, or until the top is golden and the fish mixture underneath is bubbling. Serve with peas, runner beans or broccoli.

Ginger and chocolate cake



This is a favourite recipe for the cold winter months and it's sure to put a smile on the faces of family and friends during the colder, darker days!

Serves 6 - 8

Preparation time

15 minutes

Cooking time

30 minutes

Ingredients

200g / 7oz butter (room temp)

50g / 2oz cocoa powder

4 tbsp milk

3 medium eggs

175g / 6oz self raising flour

1tsp baking powder

1tsp ground ginger

250g / 10oz caster sugar

2 pieces stem ginger, finely chopped

For Icing:

225g / 8oz icing sugar

100g / 3.5oz butter, softened

2tbsp milk

2 pieces stem ginger, finely shredded

Method

Preheat oven to 180 deg C (160 C fan oven) Mark 4. Grease and line two loose bottom, round sandwich tins 20cm (8in) Put cocoa powder in large heatproof bowl. Stir in 6 tbsp boiling water, then add milk. Mix until smooth

Add remaining cake ingredients and combine with an electric whisk for 1-2 min (or a wooden spoon for 3 min)

Divide cake mixture equally between prepared tins, and level. Bake for 25-30 mins or until cakes are shrinking away from sides of tins and spring back when lightly pressed in the centre. Let cakes cool for a few mins in their tins, then turn out onto a wire cooling rack and peel off paper.

For icing sift icing sugar into a large bowl. Add butter, stem ginger syrup and milk then beat together with electric whisk or wooden spoon until blended.

Transfer one cake to a plate and spread over half the icing. Put the second cake on top and cover with remaining icing. Decorate edges with shredded stem ginger.

Microwave mini lemon sponge puddings



Something sweet after dinner is always a comfort on a cold winter evening, and it is healthier if you can make it yourself from fresh ingredients. Lemons contain vitamin C and an egg is full of goodness.

This dish is quick and cheap. These sponge puddings keep well, so any left over puddings can be put in the fridge or freezer for another day.

Serves 4

Preparation time

10 minutes

Cooking time

70–80 seconds
depending on
microwave

Ingredients

50g/2oz
softened butter

50g/2oz
caster sugar

1 lemon,
zest and juice

1 large egg
50g/2oz
self-raising flour
3 tbsps of
lemon curd
(or other jam
as preferred)

Method

Grease individual ramekin dishes or small tea cups. (Make sure they are suitable for use in the microwave).

Beat the softened butter, sugar and the grated zest of the lemon with one teaspoonful of lemon juice until light and fluffy, then beat the egg lightly and add slowly to the mixture.

Add sifted flour slowly and beat until absorbed.

Spoon the mixture into the dishes – do not fill above half way as the mixture rises very quickly and is very hot. Cover with a loose lid or cling film and microwave for 70 seconds.

Once the 70 seconds is over, let the pudding stand for 10–20 seconds before testing if it's spongy (the heat transfers with time so it might not seem cooked straight away). To test, carefully press with a finger to see if spongy. If it isn't, try another 10 seconds but do not microwave for too long or the sponge will harden.

In a separate dish, mix a teaspoonful of lemon juice with the lemon curd or jam and heat for a few seconds in the microwave.

Turn the sponges out onto plates and spoon the lemon curd or jam over the top.

Serve on its own, with hot custard or a little cream.

Fairly fat free loaf

Natural fruit sugars are present in the dried fruit, so there is no need to add any other sugars or sweeteners.

No fat is needed as the dates keep it nice and moist. Along with the wholemeal flour, the ingredients provide a slow release of energy and even some vitamins and minerals.

Preparation time

5-10 minutes

Cooking time

1½ hours

Ingredients

340g/12oz mixed dried fruit

170g/6oz chopped dates

2 oranges

A mug of hot brewed tea

340g/12oz wholemeal flour

1 egg

Method

In a mixing bowl, stir the fruit with the zest and juice of both oranges. Pour in the hot tea and leave covered overnight to soak in a cool, dry place.

The next day add in all the other ingredients and mix together. Pour into a greased/lined loaf tin.

Turn your oven on to gas mark 2/150°C/300°F and bake the cake in the middle of the oven for about 1½ hours until the sides start to shrink from the side of the tin and a knife comes out clean from the centre of the cake.

Leave to cool and slice like a loaf.

Cold weather reminder

Keep your spirits up

It's not unusual to feel a bit down in winter particularly when the days are short and it's dark early. Try to keep to your usual routines and if you can't visit friends make sure that you phone them regularly for a chat. It helps to do something you enjoy every day. If you feel down for several weeks and it's stopping you going out, making you feel listless and lacking energy, it's very important to share these feelings with someone, perhaps a friend or your GP.

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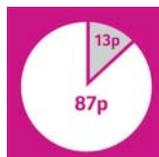
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