

Vegan Sweet Potato Soup with Kale

Prep Time: 10 minutes Cook Time: 15 minutes Total Time: 25 minutes Yield: 6: Vegan, Gluten Free

Ingredients

2 large sweet potatoes
2 15 oz. cans full fat coconut milk
4 handfuls of chopped kale
1 onion, chopped
1 1/2 – 2 apples, chopped
Salt, pepper, curry (optional)
Roasted pine nuts for garnish

Instructions

 Start out with preparing the ingredients. Peel and dice the sweet potatoes. Wash and chop the kale, onion, and apples.

- 2. Bring the coconut milk to a boil in a large saucepan. Add the sweet potato dices and cook on medium heat for about 5 minutes.
- 3. Add the kale, onion, and apples to the saucepan. Season with salt, pepper, and optionally curry according to taste. Let simmer for another 10 minutes.
- 4. In the meantime, roast the pine nuts in a frying pan.
- 5. Serve the stew hot with a good amount of the roasted pine nuts.





Breast Cancer: Knowing Your Risk Could Change Your Life

By Dr. Michele Couri, MD, FACOG, ABIHM

For the most part, I would say that women would agree that screening for breast cancer with annual mammography is very important. However, mammography is effective at detecting breast cancer but does nothing for PREVENTION. In fact, do you truly understand what YOUR personal risk of developing breast cancer is?

In the general population, 12% of women, or 1 in 8, will develop breast cancer over the course of a lifetime. However, in our practice, we see many women who have a much higher lifetime risk of developing breast cancer – 20 – 30% lifetime risk or greater. How do we identify these women and is YOUR risk of developing breast cancer elevated?

70% of breast cancer cases are due to sporadic causes which means

that only 30% is attributable to genetic factors. Of the cases that are genetic in origin, 5-10% are related to the breast cancer genes (BRCA 1 and 2), and 10-15% are seen in family clusters. Factors that increase the risk of breast cancer include early puberty (before age 12) and late menopause (after age 55). Women who go through menopause after age 55, have a two-fold increase in breast cancer compared to women who enter menopause younger than age 45. Women who have never been pregnant and women who are older at the time of their first pregnancy both share an increased risk of developing breast cancer. Women who have their first birth older than age 30 are at twice the risk of developing breast cancer than

women who have their first birth at age 20. The risk is highest for women who have their first child after age 35.

Another risk factor for breast cancer is having dense breasts. Dense breasts have less fatty tissue, and the degree of tissue density correlates directly with the increased risk of mammographic failures in detecting cancer. Women with heterogeneously dense and extremely dense breast tissue should be offered second imaging modalities like breast ultrasound as a means to increase cancer detection over standard mammography alone. In addition, women with dense breasts should choose 3D mammography or tomosynthesis which has a better detection rate with less likelihood of "missing" cancer due to its enhanced visualization of dense tissue. If you are unsure if your breast tissue is dense or not, I encourage you to educate yourself and ask your provider to help you interpret your most recent mammogram report.

Lastly, lifestyle factors play a significant role in breast cancer risk. In fact, 30% of breast cancers can be attributable to poor lifestyle and could thus be prevented. Obesity, lack of exercise, alcohol intake, and eating a Standard American Diet lacking adequate intake of vegetables and fruits and high in sugar and unhealthy fats all increase the risk of developing breast cancer. Obesity increases

the risk of postmenopausal breast cancer and increases the risk of relapse after breast cancer diagnosis. It also decreases the response to chemotherapy and decreases survival. Alcohol intake increases the risk of breast cancer, and the risk increases with just three drinks per week. Binge drinking increases the risk, and the risk is associated with cumulative alcohol intake over a lifetime.

So, back to the original question how do we identify women at higher risk of developing breast cancer? Knowing each woman's individual risk of breast cancer is very important and drives decision making to help lower or modify that risk. At the Couri Center, we offer genetic testing for hereditary breast and ovarian cancer with the Myriad myRisk® Hereditary Cancer Panel. This cancer test is a 29-gene panel that identifies an elevated risk for eight hereditary cancers including breast, ovarian, uterine, colorectal, pancreatic, gastric, prostate, and melanoma. In addition, the testing also includes a breast cancer riskScore[™] which uses clinical risk factors and genetic markers to provide women with their remaining lifetime and 5-year risk for developing breast cancer. It is personalized, precision medicine at its finest.

Knowing one's personal risk of breast cancer is powerful because we can use that information to potentially change the trajectory of cancer. We can provide education about ways to lower

personal risk as well as make recommendations for additional screening modalities to aid in detecting cancer or pre-cancer at their earliest stages. In fact, we have developed a personalized, lifestyle-based program called Prevent, which uses individualized testing and other innovative tools to help women lower their risk of developing cancer. Stay tuned, as more information about Prevent will be showcased in the January/February 2019 newsletter. You deserve the very best in personalized medicine. Knowledge is power – rest assured that we are here to empower you to know your risk and use it to outsmart cancer.

To Your Health,

Dr. Couri



Want to learn more?

Join Dr. Michele Couri's breakout session:

New trends in Breast Cancer

Prevention & Screening -
What's Hiding in Your DNA?

Empower yourself with knowledge

That just may save your life.

December 4 Women of Influence Forum Par-A-Dice Hotel Casino – East Peoria Peoria Magazines presents the sixth annual Women of Influence Forum, a half-day of breakout sessions, panels and inspiring presentations. Enjoy breakfast, take part in multiple breakout sessions and feature presentations, & network with other community leaders. This annual event is a tribute to women in the workplace and an inspirational way to bring the community together and empower female leaders.

Visit: peoriamagazines.com/woi for tickets and more information.



All women should be concerned about their vaginal health, but what constitutes a healthy vagina? Is it normal to have vaginal discharge? While it depends somewhat on a woman's age, the vagina generally has an acidic pH, contains abundant quantities of beneficial bacteria that help fend off infections, and is naturally lubricated. That's a longwinded answer to say, yes, vaginal discharge is healthy and good (most of the time.)

A healthy vagina secretes small amounts of discharge. While some women might not even be aware of it, others "can notice anywhere up to a teaspoon or tablespoon of discharge a day," says Leah Millheiser, MD director of the female sexual medicine program at Stanford University Medical Center in Palo Alto, California. "Discharge is a normal physiologic reaction — it's essentially shedding of cervical and vaginal cells." It's important to realize that discharge can and will change in appearance and consistency throughout a single menstrual cycle:

The days immediately after your period:

Expect little to no discharge. Some women report "dryness" during this time, but over the next several days, the discharge will likely increase and appear yellow, cloudy, or white in color, and may be sticky.

Days approaching ovulation:

Before an egg is released, up to 30 times more mucus is produced than after ovulation! It is also more watery and elastic and may be



Vaginal Discharge 101

By Hope Placher, MMS, PA-C, IFMCP

cream-like in appearance.

Ovulation (Around day 14)

Discharge can be at its highest in the days around ovulation, with an egg-white color and consistency—this is sometimes called ovulation discharge.

Days after ovulation and before you menstruate

Less discharge may be present, and it may have a thicker consistency.

So what are signs that vaginal discharge is not normal?

- Pus-like
- White and clumpy (like cottage cheese)
- Grayish, greenish, yellowish, or blood-tinged
- Foul- or fishy-smelling

 Accompanied by itching, burning, a rash, or soreness

If you experience any of the above symptoms, I recommend that you schedule an appointment for a physical exam. We are able to take a detailed history of your symptoms, check your pH and collect a vaginal culture to send to the lab to help get your body back in balance quickly.

Hope Placher, PA-C

IMPORTANT LILETTA IUD UPDATE:

As of October 2018, the FDA has approved the Liletta IUD for pregnancy prevention for up to 5 years. Previously the only difference between Liletta and Mirena was the duration it was approved for contraception; with this new change, there is no difference in the approved duration for contraception. The Liletta is often a lower cost IUD, which makes it a great alternative for patients when their insurance may not cover other contraceptive devices.

Does anyone remember the musical "South Pacific?" I'm sure there are some that do. It was one of my favorites, as a child. I certainly never imagined I would have the opportunity to experience "Bali Hai—is calling...where the sky meets the sea. A special island." Fortunately, due to my husband's speaking engagements with the International Institute of Welding, I found myself in the South Pacific, "where the skies meet the sea." I would like to share some of my impressions as we explored this beautiful island. I also would like to request prayers for the safety and recovery of the wonderful people in those islands that experienced the earthquakes this past summer. Everywhere we toured were signs for "Tsunami Evacuation Route" and directions to get to the highest hotel floor or tallest area for safety.

Aside from the threat of earthquakes and tsunami waves that they have lived fearing for years, the beauty is magnificent. Bali is just one of many Indonesian Islands in the Indian Ocean and the Bali Sea. White beaches, tropical palm trees, Hindu temples on every corner, and friendly people abound. We had the opportunity to stay in some beautiful hotels, the first was the Nusa Dua Hotel and Spa, the oldest on the island. They had planted trees and palms to shade the beach for the preservation of natural beauty rather than umbrellas over the chairs for shade. The bottled water, which was all that we drank due to the lack of sanitation services on the island, was in glass bottles very colorfully decorated with flowers typical of



A Glimpse of Bali, Indonesia

By Terry Polanin, APN,

the scenery. The flowers were magnificent in the hotels and along the streets. Many begonia and tropical flowers. One of the hotels that we stayed in had a jungle-like atmosphere with a swim-up pool and steps going onto the patio and the room, surrounded by beautiful trees and plants.

The country is stricken with poverty, as are many countries outside the United States. The average salary for one month's work in Bali is about 200 American dollars with the average rent of a two-bedroom apartment being around \$50. Some people work for the hotels or drive taxi cabs for a living, such as the young man who took us on a full day tour in a nice vehicle (similar to Uber) only charging us \$55 and would not accept a gratuity. The people

seem to appreciate the positive aspects of their life, not focusing on the things they don't have. We were continually impressed with the spirituality and kindness of the Balinese people, as well as the noted lean-ness of the people. We, in the bountiful USA, could take some lessons.

In talking with the native
Balinese, it seemed obvious that
their faith and family were
uppermost in their lives. The
Balinese do have minorities of
Christian, Muslin, and Buddist
religions, but primarily most of
the Balinese people practice
Hinduism. Balinese Hinduism,
called Agama Hindu Dharma,
originated from Java and
Shivaism and Buddism. It's a
combination of Indian
philosophy with indigenous

Balinese beliefs that nature is "power" and each element is subject to influence from the spirits. Ancestor worship is common while spirits and ancestors are treated with respect. They are housed in a shrine and given "offerings" made from agricultural products, such as rice and flowers. Each home, each place of business, often cars, and certainly temples will have "offerings" in front of them as you walk along. They are little boxes made of bamboo with objects "offered" to the spirits and Gods for protection against evil. Hinduism is built on five pillars of faith: a Supreme God; belief in the soul as the universal principle of life; belief in the fruition of one's deeds (giving and helping others), and belief in the ultimate release (moksa-like heaven). The community revolves around family and religion. The family worships common ancestors in the family shrine of each household. Temples are built inside homes, as well as in the community. It is not uncommon to see temples in the middle of a home or just in the middle of a business area. The family "compound" is bordered by brick or a fence to protect the family from dangerous "influences." The children are taught family household chores and religious practices. Often outside the compound is a fruit garden. We also saw very few "homeless" people on the streets as you see in America. Gede, our guide, said it is because the government goes into homes to evaluate if the family needs help

with food, shelter, or schools. Then they are given the help they need and help to find a job. They try to "take care of one another," he explained. Again, going along with the necessary foundation focusing on family and religion, taught in homes throughout the country. Probably a reason that crime is so low in Bali, as well.

There are many statues and symbols of their "Gods" who are protecting them from evil spirits. In the temples, one of the Hindu faith only would enter the temple to find "balance" and leave from an exit door with positive feelings, leaving evil spirits behind. Rice is applied to their foreheads after one prays to give "positive energy" to your soul. The Balinese offer prayer three times daily for protection, asking for a good day and good fortune.

Most of the Balinese still work in the agricultural sector which includes wet and dry rice fields, cattle and poultry farming, and fisheries. They work communally organizing themselves from planting time to harvesting in their small communities. Their work is labor-intense, and their food is primarily vegetables, rice, and fish. We were impressed by the leanness of society. It was very rare to see anyone from Bali that was overweight or considered obese. Their culture promotes a more active lifestyle, often out of necessity, as well as lean, healthy foods in the vegetables and "sticky rice" being staples, as well as fish and chicken. I saw a book entitled. Food and Life, The Art of



Nourishment, by Dr. Nadia Volf, which I felt conveyed their spirit of nourishment, so obvious in the people. "All our life is thus exalted by the magic power of art—for each of our five senses, man has created art. For the taste buds and taste, cookery—the art of preparing foods offered by nature. Art that bears us off into dreams, allows us to touch everyday beauties, insists unceasingly on the simple happiness of existing, and wakes in us infinite, previously unimagined possibilities." The buffets that we enjoyed were often multi-cultural with cuisine from China, Japan, India, Bali, and Western.

We met a young man who took us around the island for several days, and when asked about their religion and culture, he replied: "Everybody tries to be friendly. We know we have one life and want to do good. We want to be happy with family and friends. That is the way in Bali. Try not to get angry, but be patient with one another. Helps protect us from evil spirits." A philosophy I will never forget...

Happy, healthy holidays to you,

Terry Polanin, MSN, APN, Family Nurse Practitioner Women are complex creatures, as many of our husbands already know. We are often headstrong, goal-oriented and stubborn. We are also mothers, professionals, calendar-organizers, and chauffeurs. Life throws many things at each of us, but for many women, physical signs and symptoms are pushed aside due to lack of time and importance. At the Couri Center, we pride ourselves listening to our patients. We believe that each patient is different from the next, and each should be treated as such.

Dr. Couri has created a group of outstanding professionals who truly understand women and women's healthcare. Her 'toolbox' is full of options that have proven time and time again to be lifechanging. TLC™: Total Lifestyle by Couri is a resource for women who feel unbalanced, unhealthy and are looking to improve their overall health and well-being. TLC™ aims to piece together all of the issues that are often forgotten in women's healthcare: hormones, food sensitivities, extensive labs, dietary changes, exercise, and proper supplementation. This customized program has helped countless women regain their health, outlook, energy, and body.

Read Susan's amazing journey through TLC™ in 2018:

Explain what your life was like before the TLC™ program.

Life before the TLC^m program wasn't much of a life. One day when my husband and I were









Determined to Regain Her Heath

By Leslie Rusch-Bayer, RD, LDN, CPT

talking, he remarked that he felt as though no one could ever understand how bad I honestly felt. He thought I was literally dying until I met with Leslie and started the TLC program.

I was nauseous every moment of every day. I suffered from migraines, IBS, fibromyalgia, chronic fatigue, inflammation and swelling, depression, anxiety, and insomnia. I underwent many rounds of testing to check for intestinal issues, trouble swallowing and persistent coughing. I was diagnosed with diabetes in 2009. My exhaustion was over the top. Housework was nearly impossible. I would do ten minutes of work then rest about an hour before I could do 10 more minutes of work. If I had to make a trip into Peoria from my hometown of Henry, it ended up a miserable

day because I would do as many errands as possible to save on gas and drive time. I carried extra clothes and knew where every bathroom was just in case I had stomach problems. My anxiety level was extreme. Because I no longer had any strength, I could barely get groceries in the house. I had to purchase lighter pots and pans and an electric can opener because I had no strength. Sleep was non-existent. When I did rest, it was poor, so I never felt rested. I barely had any motivation or drive to do anything. I no longer wanted to live a long life. Life was not enjoyable.

I almost didn't do the TLC™
program knowing I would have to
make the trip to Peoria twice a
week. It took time to see
improvement once I started, but as
time went on I felt better, I was

able to sleep and each week continued to improve!

What methods did you try to fix your symptoms before TLC™?

I have been to two sleep centers, met with several doctors and specialists, tried medications, worked on my diet and incorporated exercise. I've done Weight Watchers, Curves, Nutri System, Seattle Sutton, and contemplated Jenny Craig. I have met with dietitians, endocrinologists, gynecologists, gastroenterologists as well as having many tests and procedures. Nothing helped. I gave up.

What was appealing about the TLC™ program?

I loved the idea that I was going to a comfortable environment full of friendly faces that felt less like a massive medical complex. The purpose of finding something that would help me feel better and hopefully look better was extremely exciting. I felt as though the Couri Center really cares about all of their patients and genuinely wants to help everyone live a happier life.

How did you feel after reviewing your pre- TLC™ labs? Did you learn anything new?

I was absolutely SHOCKED! I learned that my so-called healthy, carb-conscious diet was causing inflammation, giving me GI problems, migraines, exacerbating my fibromyalgia, and affecting my sleep. I couldn't believe it when after a few weeks Leslie suggested that decreasing my chronic inflammation could positively impact my diabetes. I never imagined the potential of stopping my diabetes medications. I also loved being able to see different deficiencies in my labs. My supplement recommendations were tailored just to me, and I was given a full explanation of why each supplement was recommended. I was left wondering why all those doctors and specialists hadn't figured any of this out.

I did have moments of doubt. It was at that moment when Leslie said: "you are not crazy and you are not fat" that I was able to switch my attitude to "let's get this started!" I learned that everything I knew about nutrition was only basic recommendations for "most" people, and I did NOT fit into that mold. I knew THAT day my life was going to change for the better. I just had no idea how much better it was really going to get.

Did you struggle with the dietary changes recommended for you? Do you feel satisfied with what you are eating?

My struggle with dietary changes only came when shopping. It did take me a little longer because I was reading each and every label to understand the ingredients. I also found that I spent more time in the produce section than I ever had. When it came to actually eating within my dietary changes, I had no struggles, especially when I started feeling better. I could not wait for the constant nausea to go away. It

took about 2 months before I noticed a difference in how I felt, but I immediately saw how I was not starving all the time. I would eat a meal and be satiated until my next meal. I couldn't believe how easy it was to stick to my food plan.

Tell us about the changes and challenges you experienced throughout the program.

First, and foremost, I had been going to the gym only when my gym buddy was going. I could not bring myself to go on my own. I was ashamed of my body and was sure people would be judging me on my looks, how slow I walked and lack of athletic clothing. I felt horrible each time I got on the treadmill, and my workout buddy would walk faster than me. Even at a low speed, I could not talk while walking on the treadmill. I felt trapped in the clothes I was wearing. I always felt the need to hide in large clothing. I did not want others to see what I saw in the mirror.

Finding motivation to get up and move was difficult in the beginning. I was wearing my Fitbit that came complimentary with TLC™ and felt tethered to it. The stress of wanting so badly to feel better finally, look better and improve my strength was hard at the start.

What did your end of TLC™ labs reveal?

My labs revealed that everything was improving! It also saw two of my A1C (blood sugar) results were

the lowest they have been in years! My primary care doctor told me to stop taking my diabetes medications. This left me feeling euphoric!

How do you measure your success? How have YOU changed since beginning the program?

My outlook has changed immensely! I know I am successful because I have no problem sticking to MY way of eating. I still enjoy lots of different foods, and I work out (by myself) 4-5 days a week. I have been signing up and walking 5k's and I workout with a local exercise group. Not only is my success 'measured' in the 34 inches I've lost off my body, but by the changes in clothing sizes and the new found confidence I have. I no longer hide behind my clothes. I am out there for the world to see.

Was the program hard?

The hardest part of the program was getting myself to sign up and show up to the consultation with Leslie.

Would you recommend this program to a girlfriend?

I have been recommending this program to everyone that compliments me or asks me what I have done to lose so much weight! I cannot say enough wonderful things about the Couri Center and the TLC™ program. I'm so very thankful I took that first step into a new life!

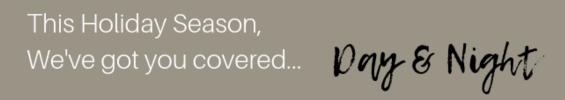
How is TLC™ and the Couri Center different than other programs or offices?

It's such a welcoming atmosphere. I love all the smiling faces greeting me. As I continued my visits with Leslie, I found other employees checking up on me and giving me encouragement and compliments. I never felt belittled, like a failure, or like they were too busy for me. Not only does everyone care about helping me through the program, but they genuinely wanted to know how I was doing and feeling. I love that Dr. Couri is top-notch at following my progress. I always feel like I matter.

-Susan, TLC 2018

If you would like more information about <u>TLC™</u>: <u>Total</u> <u>Lifestyle by Couri</u> programs, please <u>schedule a</u> complimentary consultation.

Leslie Rusch-Bayer



Complimentary Consultations + NIA24/SkinCeuticals gift with purchase*





DIY Spa Treatments

By Leslie A. Gilstrap, Licensed Esthetician

Everyone needs a little spa time. This winter, why not indulge right from the comforts of home? Facial rolling and dry brushing are two ways you can give your skin a DIY pick-me-up from home. Facial rolling with a Rose Quartz Roller is an ancient Chinese practice that has been used to improve complexion and many other skin benefits. Dry brushing is relatively new but often used by massage therapists premassage or body treatment.

Rose Quartz rollers are packed full of minerals, including silicon, magnesium, iron, and oxygen. If you purchase a roller make sure you're getting a 100% natural stone. With frequent rolling, the skin will experience numerous benefits:

Lymphatic drainage (releasing

toxins built up over time)

- · Reducing inflammation
- Increasing circulation
- Increasing the absorption of skin care products
- Temporarily lifting and firming the skin
- Diminishing dark circles.

My personal Rose Quartz Roller is kept in the refrigerator, so it's nice and chilled when I use it. The treatment itself is easy; roll on clean skin or over skincare (i.e., serums, moisturizers, masks) in an upward outward motion towards temples. A light touch is all you need to reach the lymphatic system. In fact, less pressure is better; you don't want to pull or tug the skin. Results are instantaneous. For instance,

my area of concern is dark circles so I may roll the eye area more often. You can also roll your neck moving in a downward motion towards the collarbones.

Dry brushing is an even easier treatment to practice at home. This will exfoliate dead skin cells off and detoxify the skin and can also diminish the appearance of cellulite-temporarily. You'll want to use a stiff brush and work in upward motions, starting at the feet and working up the legs, across the midsection and up the arms. Some people like a long-handled brush but I like a more compact brush. I feel like I have more control. Brushing speeds up the circulatory system, which increases blood flow, so I like to do it in the morning for an energizing start to my day. After dry brushing, your cleansing, serums and moisturizer products will penetrate better, leading to more radiant, glowing skin.

As far as the cellulite goes, there is no documented evidence that dry brushing will get rid of cellulite permanently. However, I see a temporary difference right after as far as dimpling goes. Cellulite is caused by stagnant toxins that break down connective tissue, which in turn leads to texture underneath the skin. The smoothing effect is most likely caused by the slight swelling/plumping of the skin. Either way, I'll take it.

A few of my favorites:

- Jenny Patinkin Rose Quartz Roller
- Argan Republic Rose Quartz Roller
- ecotools Dry Brush

To Healthy Skin,

Leslie Ann



These are a few of our favorite things...



Holiday BOGO! Buy any laser hair removal package; get second package 1/2 OFF. (The second package of equal or lesser value; valid during June-Nov. 2019). *Plus earn STUDIO REWARD dollars with purchase!* Sale ends 12-31-18.



Buy 3; Get 1 FREE! Now thru 12-31-18. Great for stocking stuffers!



Get the gift you REALLY want this year! Suggest a Couri Center gift card and enjoy all your favorite treatments!





Day

NIA24 Skin Strengthening Complex Repair Cream Sale \$84 / Reg. \$93 Sale ends 11-30-18. SkinCeuticals CE Ferulic Triple Antioxidant Serum Sale \$149 / Reg. \$166 Sale ends 11-30-18.



night

NIA24 Intensive Recovery Complex Restorative Cream Sale \$106 / Reg. \$118 Sale 12-1 thru 12-31-18.

SkinCeuticals Resveratrol B E Antioxidant Night Serum Sale \$137 / Reg. \$153 Sale 12-1 thru 12-31-18.

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