



# the CommonHealth Compass



## Chicken or Turkey Potpie

### Ingredients

- Cooking spray
- 1 pound skinless, boneless chicken cut into 1/2 inch pieces (or use leftover Thanksgiving Turkey!)
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 3 cups fat-free, less-sodium chicken broth, divided
- 1 bay leaf
- 2 cups refrigerated diced potatoes with onion (such as Simply Potatoes)
- 2/3 cup frozen green peas and diced carrot blend
- 3 TBS all-purpose flour
- 1/2 tsp chopped fresh thyme
- 1/4 tsp black pepper
- 1/4 tsp dried rubbed sage
- 1/4 (15 ounce) package refrigerated piecrust dough

### Directions

1. Preheat oven to 425°.
2. Heat a large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Coat pan with cooking spray. Add chicken to pan; sprinkle with salt. Sauté 5 minutes or until browned and done. (If using leftover turkey from Thanksgiving, skip this step.)
3. While chicken cooks, bring 2 1/2 cups broth and bay leaf to a boil in a large saucepan. Add potatoes; cover and cook over medium-high heat 8 minutes. Stir in peas and carrots; cover and cook 2 minutes. Stir in chicken. Combine remaining 1/2 cup broth and flour; stir into potato mixture. Reduce heat to medium; cook 2 minutes or until bubbly and thick. Remove bay leaf. Stir in thyme, pepper, and sage.
4. While potato mixture cooks, cut piecrust dough crosswise into 12 strips. Arrange on a parchment-lined baking sheet. Bake at 425° for 7 minutes or until browned and puffy. Top poultry mixture with piecrust strips. (Serving Size: 1 1/4 cups poultry mixture and 3 piecrust strips.)

Number of Servings: 4.

### Nutritional Information

Calories: 316.7, Total Fat: 9.4 g, Cholesterol: 55.0 mg, Sodium: 1,070.0 mg, Total Carbs: 28.6 g, Dietary Fiber: 2.8 g

Recipe adapted from <http://recipes.sparkpeople.com/recipe-detail.asp?recipe=917635>  
Cooking Light Jan/Feb 2010

## CommonHealth Features New Fitness Program



### Time for Change

### Moving Forward with Fitness

We are surrounded by statistics about how unhealthy Americans are...name the health issue and it is more than likely affected by physical activity. Ask most people if they think exercise is important, and you'll get an overwhelming YES. But, unfortunately, it usually gets shoved aside as other details in life demand our time and attention. Starting and sticking with exercise isn't easy.

Interestingly, it's not our body but OUR MIND that is the biggest hurdle that keeps us from exercise. We love to stay with what we know and when we change something (like starting an exercise program), there is almost always resistance - which comes through as the excuses we make for not exercising.

And boy, can we come up with excuses! We don't have the time OR the money, we're too tired, too fat, too weak, or too embarrassed, we don't like it, don't know how to do it and don't want to do it .....on and on the list goes.

**Moving Forward with Fitness** will help you break through the most common barriers to exercise: time, money, skill and enjoyment. We'll examine each of these and provide some effective ways around them. The program includes simple ideas for building an active lifestyle, so ditch the excuses and check it out!

This program is available through February 2012. Visit [www.commonhealth.virginia.gov](http://www.commonhealth.virginia.gov) for additional program information and resources.

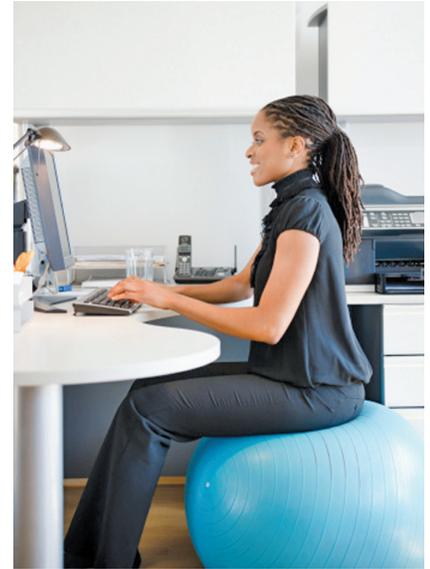
# Adding Physical Activity to Your Normal Day – Fitting It All In!

It's hard to find time to exercise, especially for those of us who work in an office. Exercising at work may seem impossible, but it's one option for staying fit and keeping your energy up. It takes some creativity, but there are opportunities to exercise at work if you pay attention. All it takes is a little planning and some inspiration to squeeze in a little movement all day long.

## The Basics

You probably know a few tricks for staying active at work. Taking the stairs when you can, parking further away from the door and walking around the office when you can are good places to start. Beyond that, there are a few other options to keep you moving:

- Sit on an exercise ball instead of a chair. This will strengthen your abs and back and you'll work on your posture without even trying.
- Set an alarm to go off every hour to remind you to stand up and move around. Even if you just swing your arms or take a deep breath, you'll feel more alert.
- Use the restroom on another floor and take the stairs
- Use a pedometer and keep track of how many steps you take. Aim for 6,000 to 10,000 steps a day.
- Leave something important in your car (your lunch, your briefcase, etc.) so you have to run out to get it (and take the stairs)
- Deliver documents or messages to co-workers in person rather than by email
- Go to the mall for lunch and park on the opposite end of the food court. Don't forget to buy something healthy.
- Get a headset for your phone so you can move around while you talk.



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## There's Still Time to Get a Flu Shot!

Pass by almost any drug store and you will see a "flu shots available here" sign, even in late fall. Getting a flu shot is a great way to protect yourself and your family against illness during the winter months. According to the Centers for Disease Control, flu season can last into May so getting vaccinated later in the flu season can still provide protective benefits. It only takes about two weeks after vaccination for antibodies to provide protection against influenza viruses.

The best part of all for state employees is that most state health plans offer free flu shots at participating pharmacies! Just be sure that your local retail pharmacy takes part in the Commonwealth's flu shot program. For your convenience, a link is posted on the DHRM website at [www.dhrm.virginia.gov](http://www.dhrm.virginia.gov) with more information.

### Take these steps:

- Go to the link shown above and look at the local participating pharmacy list for your health plan.
- If your retail drug store is listed, call them to verify that the pharmacy is participating in the Commonwealth of Virginia flu shot program, and ask if you need an appointment.
- If you get a flu shot from a clinic or third party vendor, you will have to pay for it. Flu shots received at non-network pharmacies and clinics will not be covered.
- Once you have the information, go to the pharmacy and present your COVA Care, COVA Connect or COVA HDHP health plan ID card.
- Get your flu shot at no charge. It is covered by your prescription drug benefit.

Your plan's wellness benefit also will pay for flu shots given at in-network doctor's offices. Kaiser Permanente members have access to free flu shots at participating Kaiser medical centers. If you see the doctor for another reason, a copayment may apply.

For more information on the 2011-12 flu season, visit the Virginia Department of Health's website at [www.vdh.virginia.gov](http://www.vdh.virginia.gov).

## Holiday Happiness or “Dust if You Must”

It seems like the holiday season starts earlier each year, and our obligations and list of things to do seems never-ending. Is there a way you can make the holidays happier and more enjoyable?

Absolutely! Why not re-focus on what's really important? Research shows that money and all of its trappings only give us a temporary happiness fix. The gift time with your family and friends is what gives us lasting happiness from the good memories that quality time creates. When all is said and done, it is not the stuff that endures or sustains us. It is the priceless memories of our experiences.

### Tips for building happy memories this holiday season:

- **Be choosy with your time** – delegate tasks and discuss with your family and friends what each member can help with.
- **Change your outlook about gift giving** – draw names instead of giving to every person in the family or donate to a charity instead of buying a gift.
- **Give the gift of time** – spend time with those you care about or reunite with a long lost friend.
- **Volunteer by helping others** – help at a food pantry, food kitchen, toy drive or be a bell ringer or a helper for a local cause.
- **Work smarter, not harder** – preparation is the key. Do as much as you can ahead of time so you can enjoy the event as much as your guests!
- **Eat more sit down slow meals with family or friends** – This is an excellent chance to share fun times, get support and just laugh and share!
- **Turn off all electronic media except for relaxing background music** – this pause will give you a chance to complete tasks that may be causing anxiety. And others around you can also relax.
- **Take time for yourself to just be** – we do not have to spend every minute with others. Take time to reflect on your year and what you want in the New Year.
- **Push your own relax buttons** – reward yourself when you complete important tasks. Go to a movie, play golf, enjoy a special meal or curl up with a good book.
- **Check in with those struggling** – make a point to see if elderly neighbors need help or if a friend in crisis needs a listening ear. Depression can worsen over the holidays so outside help may be needed.
- **Smile** – research shows that just acting happy and smiling at others helps you and everyone you meet!

### Feeling overwhelmed?

As much as we may try, it's easy to fall into the hectic pace of the holiday season. If you find yourself feeling overwhelmed, ask yourself two questions: Is it important? Can I control it?

If the answer to either question is NO, then don't spend your time and energy on it! Only choose to spend time and energy on things that are important and that you can control!

Don't be afraid to get outside help. Your Employee Assistance Program is here to help families dealing with stressful issues. All state health plans offer up to four free counseling sessions on any issue, including legal and financial topics. Sessions may even be conducted over the phone. For more information, contact your health plan or visit <http://www.dhrm.virginia.gov/genlbenefits/employeeassistance.html>.

So “Dust if you Must”...OR start using these tips today to give your holidays more meaning and a deeper sense of purpose.

### Adding Physical Activity to Your Normal Day – Fitting It All In!

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Be creative. Any movement is better than none, so don't feel like you have to do sprints all day long. Adding short bouts of exercise throughout the day will help you burn more calories and will also reduce stress so you can easily smile at your boss when she piles more work on you.

By Paige Waehner, **About.com** Guide

**About.com** Health's Disease and Condition content is reviewed by a Medical Review Board.

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# CommonHealth Compass

## An Ounce of Prevention is Worth It!

In planning for the year 2012, have you included a wellness check-up? Annual health exams and screenings are important because they can help to identify potential health problems in the early stages, when they may be easier to treat.

Getting a yearly physical and cancer screenings helps you take care of yourself so you will be there for your children and grandchildren. And it's free! Your state health plan pays the cost of an annual checkup and preventive screenings for breast, uterine, prostate and colon cancer. You can find out more in your health plan member handbook.

In addition to getting regular screenings at your doctor's office, CommonHealth offers free confidential health checks for all state employees. Ask your local CommonHealth coordinator if it is time for your agency to have a health check. At the screening, participants will instantly learn their blood pressure, cholesterol, Diabetes Risk Assessment, and Body Mass Index (BMI). Over the years, these screenings have identified previously unknown health risks such as high blood pressure and high cholesterol for many employees. All state employees may participate and you do not have to be covered by the state's health plan. Retirees and dependents (18 years or older) who are covered under a state plan also may participate. Visit the CommonHealth website at [www.commonhealth.virginia.gov](http://www.commonhealth.virginia.gov) for more information.



Have you had YOUR annual inspection?

NOVEMBER 11 VIRGINIA SAFETY APPROVAL EXPIRES 12

YOUR wellness check-up and routine cancer screenings are FREE under your health plan.

Visit [www.dhrm.virginia.gov](http://www.dhrm.virginia.gov) or contact your plan.

Commonwealth of Virginia  
  
 VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Early detection of health risks is important in preventing chronic diseases. Your health is ultimately your responsibility, and paying attention to important health screenings is one of the most important things you can do to live a long and vital life. So see your doctor about an annual check-up and cancer screenings. And when a health check is scheduled, sign up. You will be so glad you did!

## These Employees Took a "No Phone Zone" Pledge!

CommonHealth's recent *Just Drive VA* program was a huge success. Employees learned how to avoid distractions while driving, prevent impaired driving, and practice good defensive driving. In addition,

CommonHealth launched its "No Phone Zone" pledge website campaign. **2,557** employees pledged not to use their cell phones while driving! The two agencies with the highest number of participant pledges were VDH and DEQ. Congratulations! Thank you to all who pledged to make our roads safer.



Visit CommonHealth Online!

[www.commonhealth.virginia.gov](http://www.commonhealth.virginia.gov)

If you have any questions, comments or concerns, please e-mail us at [wellness@dhrm.virginia.gov](mailto:wellness@dhrm.virginia.gov)



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