



# the CommonHealth Compass



## Chicken or Turkey Potpie

### Ingredients

Cooking spray

- 1 pound skinless, boneless chicken cut into 1/2 inch pieces (or use leftover Holiday 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

## Keep Your Home Safe This Winter

For most of us, fall is a time for preparing for the holidays, pulling out winter clothes, and working on some house projects.

When was the last time you included these items on your fall and winter to-do list?

- Change batteries in smoke alarms
- Check your fire extinguishers
- Locate the fire extinguisher at your office
- Create a “Disaster Supply Kit”
- Check pantry, fridge and freezer for foods that need to be purged.

If you need resources to help with these and other items to keep your home safe, then Home Safe Home can help.

- Attend this program at your employer
- Visit [www.CommonHealth.virginia.gov/tlc](http://www.CommonHealth.virginia.gov/tlc) for helpful handouts and links
- Contact us at [wellness@dhrm.virginia.gov](mailto:wellness@dhrm.virginia.gov) for additional information.

Here is a part of a story shared by one employee after she attended an at-work Home Safe Home program.

*“Have been wanting to tell you all and our lovely CommonHealth lady about how it is beneficial and important to have Sharon & her program. One of her last visits with us she discussed home safety in which she mentioned smoke detectors etc & Radon tests for your home and how this part of VA – particularly west of here (like where I live) is high in Radon. So I got a Radon test and did it a couple wks ago at my current house. The local Health Dept told my dad that the highest rating they’ve heard of in this area is a “13” – mine was 12.5! p.s. – because it was a damp/raining week when I did the first test, it’s recommended that I do another when we dry out some this Spring. When I think of all the sleepovers downstairs in (the) “man-cave” and all the PlayStation/Nintendo playing etc that has happened down there – and my treadmill is down there too & (the) weight room etc...”*

Home Safe Home has helped many employees be safe and secure where their heart is – at home!



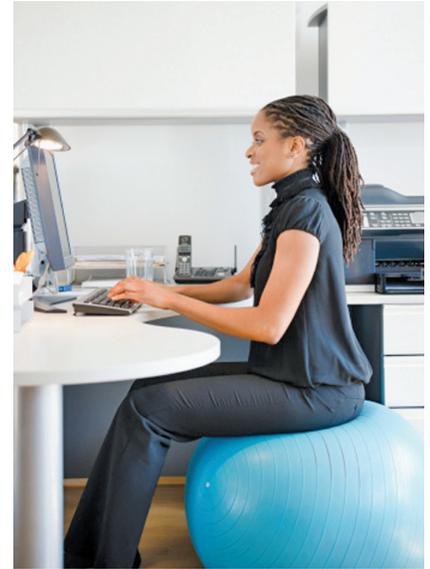
## Adding Physical Activity to Your Normal Day – Fitting It All In!

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 is that most The Local Choice health plans offer free flu shots at participating pharmacies! Just be sure that your local retail pharmacy takes part in the TLC flu shot program. For your convenience, a link is posted on the TLC website at [www.thelocalchoice.virginia.gov](http://www.thelocalchoice.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 Key Advantage or TLC 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 TLC 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.thelocalchoice.virginia.gov/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.

## 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 TLC 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. Ask your local CommonHealth coordinator if it is time for your employees 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 employees, retirees and dependents (18 years or older) who are covered under a TLC plan may participate. Visit the CommonHealth website at [www.commonhealth.virginia.gov/tlc](http://www.commonhealth.virginia.gov/tlc) for more information.

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!



**Have you had YOUR annual inspection?**



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



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

### 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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