

A Letter from Our President & CEO



I hope you are well and warm this winter. The new year is an excellent time to focus on your health. I encourage you to schedule primary care visits and health screenings for you and your family. If

you need a new doctor, you can find one at emersondocs.org.

In this issue of Health Works, you will read about why patients rely on Emerson Health as the regional destination for high-quality healthcare. Our focus on personalized excellence helped Emerson earn several recent awards, including #11 on Boston's Globe Magazine list of Top 100 Women-Led Businesses and national Top Hospital recognition from The Leapfrog Group for the second consecutive year. We are the only hospital in the state to receive this prestigious award.

We are here for you and your family whenever you need care - trusted, safe, and close to home. Thank you for choosing Emerson.

Phristine

Christine C. Schuster, RN, MBA President and CEO

)) Thank you for supporting Emerson.

Please visit emersonhealth.org/donate

In This Issue Advanced Digestive Health Surgical Weight Loss Success Stories



New Resource to Find Local Help, Fast



WINTER 2023

> We are pleased to launch Find Help. a website to search local resources for a wide variety of needs, including food, housing, mental health, childcare, senior care, transportation, and more. Visit emersonhealth.findhelp.com. Bookmark this site for whenever you need quick access to help.

Now Open: Emerson Health **Urgent Care at Maynard Crossing!**

Emerson Health Urgent Care is a convenient alternative when your doctor's office is closed or you do not have a primary care doctor. An urgent care center is the preferred setting for sudden illnesses that require immediate attention but are not life-threatening, such as minor sicknesses or injuries. To learn more about our urgent care centers in Maynard, Littleton, and Hudson, visit



emersonurgentcare.org.

Save the Date – Emerson's 5k Run~Walk for Cancer Care!

Join us for Emerson's 5k Run~Walk for Cancer Care, Saturday, May 6, at NARA Park in Acton or virtually May 1 to 6. Create a team with your friends and neighbors and sign up today. All proceeds benefit patients receiving treatment at the Mass General Cancer Center at Emerson Hospital - Bethke. Register by April 21 and



receive a complimentary athletic shirt! Visit emersonhealth.org/5k. Use promo code HW2023 to receive \$5 off registration. Follow us on social media @EmersonHealth5k.

Where to find us ...

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Letting Go: Find Freedom from Hoarding

aking control of clutter can be challenging for many people.
It is easy to accumulate more than we need and even more challenging to remove excess. So, how do you know when the inability to purge has gone too far?

Hoarding is a mental health disorder that affects about 5% of the population. If you or a loved one struggles with hoarding, local resources can help.

Understanding Hoarding

Hoarding is not about accumulating too many things. Instead, it is the inability to part with possessions. Those who hoard feel the need to save items – regardless of value – even though the clutter makes life difficult and harmful.

Hoarding impacts many aspects of life. Here are some questions to assess if you or someone you know may be hoarding:

- Can you sit and eat at your kitchen table, or is it too crowded?
- Is there room in your bed to sleep?
- Do you argue with loved ones about the possessions around your home?
- Do people avoid visiting because of the condition of your home?
- Have you hurt yourself tripping over clutter?

If you answer yes to some of these, you may need to talk with a professional.

The Root Cause

Anyone can suffer from a hoarding disorder, ranging from mild to severe. While it mostly affects older adults, experts find that many people who hoard experienced trauma, such as abuse or the death of a loved one. Hoarding develops as a way to gain control of the world.

>>To listen to a podcast about hoarding, visit **emersonhealth.org/podcast**.

>>To find mental health professionals who can help with hoarding, visit emersonhealth. findhelp.com.

Clearing a Path Forward

It is important to seek professional care for hoarding. A mental health professional can:

- · Assess an individual for hoarding
- Educate the sufferer and their family members about the problem
- Help identify and address the root cause of the disorder
- Work with individuals to begin parting with things and establish organization

If you think a loved one may hoard, encourage them to get help. Be careful not to:

- Judge or punish them. Hoarding is a mental health issue that requires professional care.
- Try to help by removing their possessions. This can cause extreme anxiety.

These insights were provided by Lynn Faust, program manager of ClearPath, an Emerson Health community partner that supports and educates hoarders.



A Beautiful Recovery

Hair Stylist's Triumphant Return After Traumatic Hip Fracture



I) Listen to podcasts with Emerson orthopedic surgeons, physical therapists, and home care health professionals at emersonhealth.org/podcast.



As he lay writhing in pain after a fall last summer, one of the first things Anthony Terrasi thought about was his career. "I have been a hair stylist for over 50 years. I love it. Many of my clients are my close friends," he explains. But at age 68, Anthony knows well that his career requires long days on his feet at the salon – impossible with a bad hip.

"I slipped in a puddle of water and landed with all my weight on my left hip. I was in agony," Anthony recalls. Strangers ran to help. Soon, an ambulance arrived. "I was born at Emerson. It has been my hospital forever. So I told the ambulance driver to take me there."

As soon as he arrived in the Emergency Department (ED), a team of doctors and nurses assessed him. An X-ray confirmed he had a bad hip fracture that required surgery. Rishi Dave, MD, orthopedic surgeon with Emerson Health Orthopedics, met Anthony in the ED and explained his options. "Due to his younger age and active lifestyle, I recommended a total hip replacement. With this approach, and physical therapy to help his recovery. I knew Anthony could return to his career and everything he enjoys doing," explains Dr. Dave.

Expert, Compassionate Care – Start to Finish

"I did not know Dr. Dave, but after meeting him, he got my vote. His bedside manner is by far the best. He made me feel like I was his only patient in the world," says Anthony. After surgery, Anthony recovered at Emerson, where the team took extra care to manage his pain, which is common with trauma accidents.

"From start to finish, I could not have asked for a better group

of people to take care of me. I was absolutely blown away by the level of expertise and compassion. The nurses were kind and sympathetic. Dr. Dave, his medical assistant, and the anesthesiologist came to check on me. The social worker made sure I would be safe when I returned home. I am very proud of Emerson," he continues.

To keep him on course to a full recovery, Anthony had a nurse, physical therapist (PT), and occupational therapist from Emerson Home Care visit him several times a week. Then, when he could travel, he continued physical therapy for several months at Emerson's Clough Family Center for Rehabilitative and Sports Therapies. "I was a trauma patient, so my muscles and bones were in tough shape from the fall. The PTs got me moving more than I thought I could."

A Grateful Comeback

Today. Anthony is back at the salon. standing at his chair and making clients look beautiful - exactly what he hoped for when he first got injured. "It was a horrendous experience to suffer an accident like this. But if I had to experience it, there is no place like Emerson. I am truly grateful for everyone there."

New at Emerson

Joint Replacements with Robotic **Technology**

Emerson offers Mako robotic-arm assisted surgery, with a real-time 3D virtual joint model, for more precision during joint replacement surgeries. As a result, patients often recover faster with less pain than traditional joint replacements.

Robotic-assisted procedures are performed at Emerson by:



Rishi Dave, MD **Emerson Health** Orthopedics Littleton 978-371-5390



Allis Kim, MD **Emerson Health** Orthopedics Sudbury, Westford, **Groton, Littleton** 978-371-5390



Matthew Sloan, MD Director of Robotics, Orthopedic Surgery, **Emerson Health Orthopedic Affiliates** Concord 978-369-5391

Carol Regains Control of Her Life

With Help from Emerson's Advanced Gastroenterology Team

s a new retiree, Carol LaRosa looked forward to gardening, spending time with friends, and going out for dinner. In March 2022, this all changed when she suddenly lost the ability to digest food properly. Following an extended period of misery after each meal – and going to the bathroom more than a dozen times a day – Carol saw the experts at Emerson Health Gastroenterology. That is when she began to reclaim her life.

Life-Altering Experience

"One day, without any warning, I was no longer in control of my digestive system. I did not understand what was happening. My life shut down because I could not leave home for fear of having an accident. My digestive system was out of control.

"My primary care physician referred me to Emerson Health Gastroenterology. John Dowd, DO, performed a thorough assessment, including labs and imaging tests, then diagnosed me with blocked bile ducts and pancreatic enzyme insufficiency. The common treatment for this is a procedure called ERCP (short for endoscopic retrograde cholangiopancreatography). Due to a surgery I had 10 years earlier that altered the anatomy of my stomach, I needed a more complex procedure.

"Dr. Dowd consulted with Marvin Ryou, MD, a gastroenterologist specializing in complex abdominal issues. Soon after my appointment with Dr. Dowd, I met Dr. Ryou at Emerson.

"Dr. Ryou performed an advanced ERCP procedure called gastric access temporary for endoscopy, or GATE. Using a long flexible tube with a light that is designed for surgically altered anatomy, the procedure allowed him to confirm my diagnosis and clear the blockage. I went home the same day."

Thankful Every Day

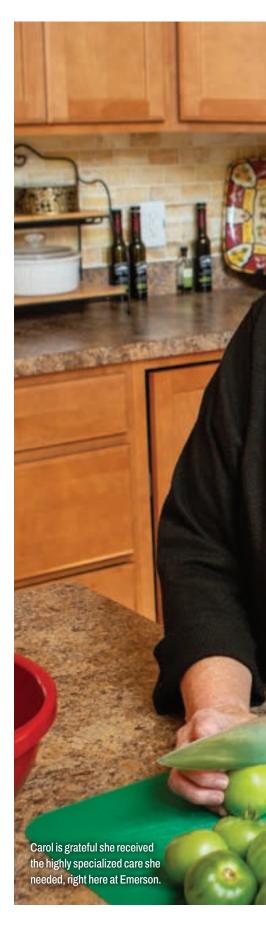
"The gastroenterology team transformed my life. Within a few days, I started to live without fear of sudden attacks. I returned to gardening and enjoying life again.

"Dr. Dowd and Dr. Ryou established a plan to fix my complicated stomach issues and bring normalcy back to my life. They thought through multiple scenarios and developed a comprehensive strategy that I trusted. Most importantly, they took the time to listen and get to know me as a person – not just my symptoms. They answered all of my questions and thoroughly explained the options and outcomes.

"Today, I have no dietary restrictions and do not take any medications for my stomach. I feel like I am alive again! I am thankful every day for the expert care I received at Emerson."

>>> To listen to podcasts with Emerson gastroenterologists, visit emersonhealth.org/podcast.







Advanced Digestive Care at Emerson



Julio Ayala, MD, trained in internal medicine at F.A.
Risquez Hospital and Danbury Hospital-Yale University
School of Medicine and gastroenterology at Yale
University School of Medicine.



John Dowd, DO, trained in gastroenterology and clinical nutrition at Yale University-Norwalk Hospital and advanced therapeutic biliary endoscopy at Beth Israel Medical Center.



Andrea Fribush, MD, trained in internal medicine at Boston Medical Center and gastroenterology at Tufts New England Medical Center.



Jennifer Nayor, MD, trained in internal medicine at The Johns Hopkins Hospital and gastroenterology at Brigham and Women's Hospital.



Marvin Ryou, MD, trained in internal medicine, gastroenterology, and advanced endoscopy at Brigham and Women's Hospital.



Christopher Thompson, MD, trained in internal medicine, gastroenterology, and hepatology at Milton S. Hershey Medical Center and advanced endoscopy at Massachusetts General Hospital and Brigham and Women's Hospital.

)) For information and to schedule an appointment, visit emersonhealth.org/gastro.



Keep Expert Care in Our Community – Support Emerson Health Today

We understand that healthcare is personal. Emerson Health offers expert, compassionate care - close to home. Join Liz in supporting Emerson Health. Please make a gift at emersonhealth.org/donate. Thank you.

"The entire Emerson staff is experienced and caring. Everyone who took care of me was wonderful."

- Liz Kuo, Boxborough

Welcome New Physicians



Endocrinology Donny Chang, MD, PhD Emerson Health Endocrinology Maynard 978-287-8520



Gastroenterology Julio Ayala, MD **Emerson Health** Gastroenterology Concord 978-287-3835



Internal Medicine Maria Al-Homsi, MD Harvard Vanguard at Atrius Health Concord 978-287-9350



Holly Mazur, MD **Acton Medical Associates** Acton 978-635-8700



Rand Nashi, MD **Emerson Health Primary Care** Bedford 339-215-5100



Internal Medicine/ **Pediatrics** Burak Alsan, MD Mass General Brigham Community Physicians Concord 781-259-9292



Ophthalmology Isaiah Giese, MD D'Ambrosio Eye Care Lancaster, Gardner, Worcester, Athol, Acton, Leominster 978-537-3900



I) Learn more about these and other Emerson physicians at emersondocs.org.

7 Sleep Tips

(To Help You Catch More Z's)

There are many benefits to a good night's sleep, including feeling energized and ready for the day. A lack of sleep can cause health issues, such as depression, forgetfulness, and heart disease. Most adults need seven or more hours of sleep a night to stay healthy and feel good. Here are some tips from sleep experts.

Keep a Bedtime Routine
Try to go to bed and wake up at the same time every day. Keep your bedroom quiet, dark, and on the cool side. Avoid electronic devices and large meals before bedtime.

Mind Your Medicines
Some commonly prescribed
medications for heart, blood
pressure, and asthma can disrupt sleep
patterns. The same is true for certain overthe-counter and herbal remedies for coughs,
colds, or allergies. If you have trouble
sleeping, talk with your healthcare provider
to see if your medicines affect your sleep.

Melatonin May Help
Research suggests melatonin
supplements may be helpful for
children and adults if they have trouble
falling asleep. Melatonin is a natural
hormone and generally considered safe for
short-term use. Addiction to it is unlikely;
however, some regular users find it hard
to break the habit

Although you can get melatonin at pharmacies without a prescription, check with your healthcare provider before you take it or give it to children. Ask about possible benefits, risks, and side effects. Experts are unsure about melatonin's long-term effects, so your provider may recommend using it only for short periods.

Allow Enough Time in Bed
Research shows that many people
simply do not allow adequate
time for sleep. This is particularly true
for working adults and teenagers. The
average adult needs seven to nine hours
of sleep, older teens need eight to 10
hours, and younger children need even
more. A good way to tell your basic sleep
need is to think how long you typically
sleep during a relaxing vacation – when
you do not have to set an alarm. Getting
less sleep than is needed increases the
chance of excessive fatigue or sleepiness.

Say "No" to Nightcaps
Too much alcohol before bed
deprives you of deep sleep.
Instead, take a hot bath or drink warm,
decaffeinated herbal tea.

Time Workouts Wisely
Brisk walking and other physical
activities can improve the quality
and length of your sleep at night. Earlymorning and afternoon workouts can aid
sleep, while evening exercise can delay
falling asleep for some people. Replace
aerobic activities at night with simple
stretches, meditation, or yoga to relax and
prepare for bed.

The Last Word on Sleep

Tell your healthcare provider if you snore or feel tired after a full night's sleep, or if your sleep problems interfere with how you feel during the day. Your provider may refer you for a sleep study at Emerson Health's Sleep Center.



To learn about Emerson's Sleep Center and sleep medicine doctors, visit emersonhealth.org/sleep.

Advanced Care and the Great Outdoors Help Local Ranger Recover from Breast Cancer

ature is an essential part of Jennifer Pierce's life. At 48, she has worked as a ranger at some of America's most treasured national parks. She loves educating visitors and hearing about their outdoor adventures. But in November 2020, while she worked at the Grand Canyon in Arizona, her life changed when she was diagnosed with breast cancer after a screening mammogram.

"I received a call asking me to come back for more images. I had no family history of cancer. This was my first inkling that something was wrong," she recalls. Although she lived almost two hours away from the hospital in Arizona, she made the long trek back to the doctor the next day for a follow-up. Then she was told she had cancer.

"In a twist of good fate, at the same time I learned I had cancer, I accepted a new job in Concord, Massachusetts. Relocating to a beautiful area renowned for its healthcare, and newly diagnosed -I knew I would find a great medical team to take care of me," she reflects.

On the Right Trail

To set her up for success, Jennifer and her family researched all the cancer programs in the Greater Boston area. "My sister called and said, 'You have to check out Emerson. It is right near Minute Man Park, has a great reputation, and is affiliated with Mass General.' I knew it was going to be perfect," Jennifer explains.

Soon after she moved from Arizona, she had an appointment with Uma Narayanasami, MD, medical oncologist at the Mass General Cancer Center at Emerson – Bethke. "Everyone I met was kind, reassuring, and had the experience to give me the care I needed. I was in great hands," says Jennifer.

The Emerson team – including Dr. Narayanasami; Elizaveta Ragulin Coyne, MD, breast surgeon; and John McGrath, MD, Mass General radiation oncologist – consulted with Jennifer's physician in Arizona and created a personalized care plan. Her treatment included surgery to remove the cancer, chemotherapy infusions, and radiation treatments - all at Emerson, close to her home.

"Our comprehensive breast health program puts patients at the heart of all we do to provide the latest and most advanced care with the best outcomes possible," explains Dr. Ragulin Coyne. "The multidisciplinary team is experienced in the latest approaches. We take time to get to know our patients and create individualized treatment plans that best target specific cancers - while supporting their unique goals."

The Power of Medicine ... and Mother Nature

Today, Jennifer continues to enjoy her public service work in the community, grateful the cancer is gone. "I am very thankful everything worked the way it was supposed to. The Emerson team helped me understand the options and guided me through every step. I was confident in their approach."

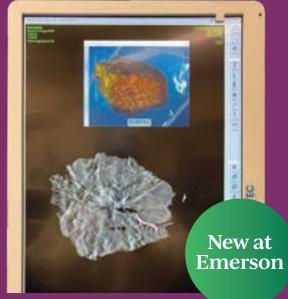
Her journey with cancer helped Jennifer appreciate her connection with the outdoors all the more. "I work in a beautiful place. I have a career I really enjoy where I help visitors discover awe-inspiring nature. The park is truly my healing place."

)) For information about Emerson's nationally accredited Comprehensive Breast Health Program and our affiliation with Mass General, visit emersonhealth.org/breasthealth.



3D Technology Provides Greater Precision

Emerson now has the Mozart System, giving surgeons greater precision in the operating room when removing breast cancer. Mozart uses the latest 3D imaging technology to provide a superior view of surgical margins and reduce the need for additional surgery. Patients benefit from keeping as much breast tissue as possible and a faster recovery.



Physical Therapy Helps People After Cancer Treatment

While cancer treatments save lives, they can leave patients tired and weak. Specially trained physical therapists at Emerson's Clough Family Center for Rehabilitative Therapies help those recovering from cancer prevent and treat symptoms like chemo brain and lymphedema. Physical therapy also helps patients regain strength, reduce fatigue, and reclaim the best possible quality of life.

)) For information, visit emersonhealth.org/cancerrehab.

"I Should Have Done

Surgical Weight Loss Provides Life-Transforming Treatment for Obesity

The decision to undergo surgical weight loss (SWL) is about more than improving health – it is about transforming lives. Kerry Aghoian and Yeison Pinales had weight-loss surgery at Emerson Health.

Just months after their surgeries, they lost significant weight and are healthier and happier. As their weight-loss journeys continue, learn how SWL has already impacted their lives.



e It Sooner."

Yeison

Surgery: Sleeve gastrectomy to reduce the size of the stomach

Bariatric surgeon: David Lautz, MD, FACS, FASMBS

My motivation: I wanted a healthier lifestyle without worrying about high blood pressure and all of the other complications I had.

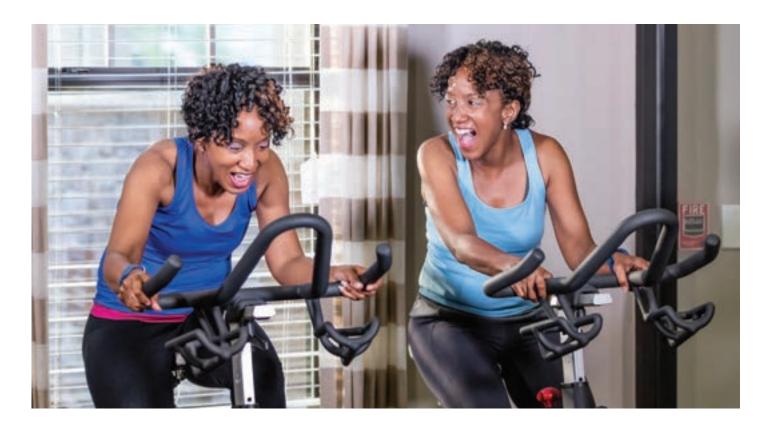
How my life changed:

My life has done a complete turnaround. My health improves daily, and I no longer need blood pressure medication. I can do more physical activities with my family. As a local store owner, I need to stand on my feet from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m., six days a week. I can do that now – no problem. When the store is quiet, I exercise with my colleagues. My journey is not over, but the surgery was the stepping stone to reset my life.

My tip for people considering weight-loss surgery: Do not be scared. Once you have the surgery, you start understanding how life-changing it is.



Before



Demystifying Menopause

Approaching menopause, when a woman experiences the end of her menstrual cycle, is like traveling in a new place without a map. Yet, it is a journey most women experience. Christina Thomas, MD, an obstetrician/gynecologist with Concord OB/GYN Associates, helps demystify this life milestone.

Typically, women reach menopause around the age of 51. Some women's symptoms begin in their late 30s or early 40s, while others may not start until their late 50s. The effects of menopause may last anywhere from a few years after a woman's last period to the rest of her life.

The Heat Is On

The most common sign of menopause is hot flashes, which affect about 87% of women. Hot flashes are when women feel a sensation of extreme heat, mostly in their face and upper body. You may recognize a hot flash when you need to remove a sweater, use a fan, or dash outside for fresh air. Hot flashes often occur at night and may result in damp clothes and sheets.

A Spectrum of Symptoms

Menopausal women may experience a wide array of symptoms, but some have none. Besides hot flashes, women commonly experience skin changes, loss of hair on the head, hair growth on the face, and a decreased libido. Mental changes, such as anxiety, anger, brain fog, and memory impairment, are also known to occur.

The decrease in estrogen and progesterone hormones that marks menopause may lead to vaginal dryness. While women are often embarrassed to discuss it, it is a common complaint.

The Road to Relief

Symptoms may resolve on their own, but treatments are available if needed. The gold standard for severe hot flashes is hormone replacement therapy (HRT). HRT involves taking estrogen and progesterone as prescription medicine. HRT decreases hot flashes, increases libido, and eases vaginal dryness and mental fog. Discuss the benefits and risks of HRT with your OB/GYN.

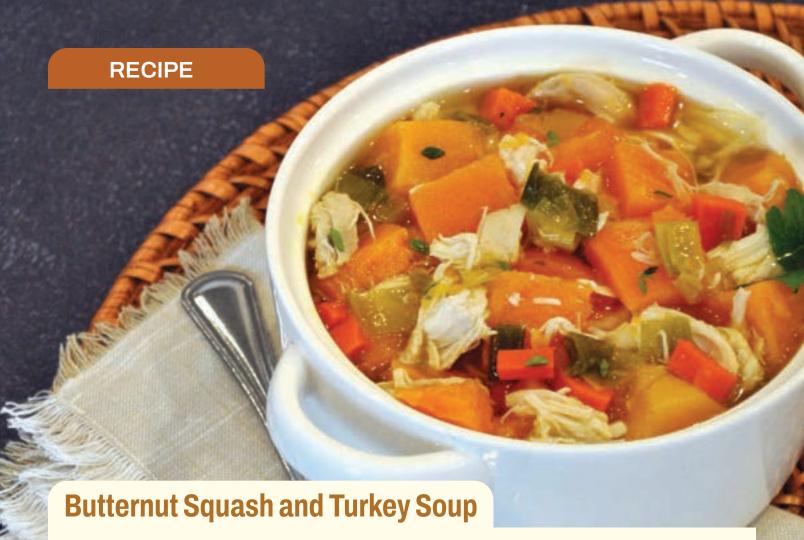
Some women also find relief by eating soy foods or taking supplements. Herbs,

including black cohosh and evening primrose, may be helpful as well. Talk with your provider before taking any herbs or supplements.

Stress-reduction strategies, like exercise, acupuncture, hypnosis, and meditation, may also ease menopause symptoms. A healthy lifestyle plays a role, too. For example, drinking less caffeine and alcohol can help you feel better.

To learn more about menopause, listen to Dr. Thomas's podcast at emersonhealth.org/podcast.

Deliness classes offered at Emerson's Steinberg Wellness Center for Mind and Body can help reduce stress, build muscle, and keep you healthy. Learn more at emersonwellness.org.



Warm up this winter with a bowl of hearty and flavorful soup. Packed with vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants, this low-fat, low-calorie favorite will hit the spot. Roasting the vegetables brings out their natural sweetness, then you can cook the soup in either a slow cooker or on the stove. It also makes great leftovers! Serves 4.

Ingredients

Olive oil spray

3 cups butternut squash, cubed

1 cup yellow onion, diced

1 cup leek, diced

1 parsnip, peeled and diced (about 3/4 cup)

1 medium carrot, peeled and diced (about 3/4 cup)

3 whole garlic cloves, unpeeled*

1/4 teaspoon kosher or sea salt

1 ½ cups shredded turkey breast (about 8 oz., weighed)

32 oz. (4 cups) no-salt-added turkey stock or no-salt-added chicken stock

1/4 tsp. black pepper

4 tsp. fresh sage

2 tsp. fresh thyme

2 tbsp. fresh parsley

*Whole garlic cloves may be replaced with 1 tsp. of minced garlic, found in the produce department of many grocery stores. If using minced garlic, do not roast it. Instead, add it to your slow cooker or pot at the same time as the roasted vegetables.

Slow Cooker Directions

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Spray a large cookie sheet or baking pan with olive oil spray. Add diced vegetables and garlic cloves. Spray again, then sprinkle with ¼ teaspoon salt. Roast for 30 minutes, stirring twice during roasting. Remove from oven. Let the ingredients cool a bit, then squeeze garlic cloves from peels (or instead of the cloves, add minced garlic) into slow cooker and add vegetables, turkey, stock, and pepper. Cook on high for four hours, or on low for eight hours. During the last 30 minutes of cooking, add fresh sage, thyme, and parsley.

Stovetop Directions

If you prefer to make the soup on your stovetop rather than in a slow cooker: After roasting the vegetables (see above for directions), let them cool a bit. Then squeeze the garlic cloves from the peels into a big stockpot (or instead of the cloves, add minced garlic). Add vegetables, turkey, stock, and pepper. Bring to a boil, reduce to low, and cook for one hour. Toss in the fresh herbs during the last 10 minutes of cooking.

Nutrition Facts

A serving is $1\,\%$ cups. Each serving provides 217 calories, 4 g fat (1 g saturated fat, 0 g trans fat), 45 mg cholesterol, 351 mg sodium, 24 g carbohydrates, 6 g sugars, 5 g fiber, 24 g protein.



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