Marion County Florida Extension Service
UF University of Florida IFAS Extension

Wellness Matters

A fresh look at health, nutrition and food safety
brought to you by Nancy Gal, UF/IFAS Extension Agent IV

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To sign up for this newsletter click here.
Contact the agent: nancy.gal@marioncountyfl.org

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Upcoming events

Diabetes Support Group
Mt. Moriah Baptist Church
April 19, May 24, June 7, July 26, Aug. 9, Sept. 13, Oct. 11, Nov. 8, Dec. 13. 2 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.
For information or to register, call May Stafford, R.N. 352-629-3782

ServSafe® Food Manager's Training and Exam
Marion County Extension Service
April 24, July 10, Oct. 16
8:45 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Pre-registration required
888-232-8723

Cost:
$110 for class and exam
$165 for class, book and exam

Timely Tips

Spring is Here … Time to Enjoy Outdoor Physical Activities

Regular physical activity is one of the most important lifestyle habits you can do for your health. It promotes wellness and can increase your chances of living longer. Being physically active helps control weight, strengthens bones and muscles and reduces stress. It also can lower your risk for cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, and certain cancers.

So what is "physical activity" and how active do you need to be to reap the health rewards? Physical activity is any movement of your body that works your muscles and requires more energy than at rest. Examples of healthful activities include aerobic (increases heart-rate), muscle-strengthening, bone-strengthening, and balance and stretching. We all move – the issue is some more than others. For health benefits, physical activity should be of moderate or vigorous intensity or a combination sufficient to increase your heart rate.

Moderate physical activities:
- ♦ walking briskly (3.5 mph)
- ♦ bicycling (less than 10 mph)
- ♦ general gardening
- ♦ water aerobics
- ♦ tennis (doubles)
- ♦ swimming

Vigorous physical activities:
- ♦ walking fast (4.5 mph)
- ♦ bicycling (more than 10 mph)
- ♦ heavy yard work
- ♦ aerobics
- ♦ tennis (singles)
- ♦ swimming laps

The amount of physical activity you need depends on your age with additional considerations for health status, level of ability and other special conditions which should be determined and evaluated by your health care provider.

How Much Aerobic Activity Do You Need?

Adults (18 to 64 years)
- ♦ At least two hours and 30 minutes of moderate physical activity weekly OR one hour and 15 minutes of vigorous physical activity weekly

(It is advised to do strengthening activities such as push-ups, sit-ups and lifting weights at least 2 days a week.)

Children and Adolescents (6 to 17 years)
- ♦ 60 minutes or more daily

Note: Aerobic activity needs to be sustained for at least 10 minutes at a time.

Just about everyone – regardless of age and abilities can benefit from physical activity. So what are you waiting for … go outside and enjoy this wonderful weather.

Sources: Physical Activity for Everyone - Centers for Disease Control
http://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/everyone/guidelines/index.html

Physical Activity - United States Department of Agriculture
http://www.choosemyplate.gov/physical-activity/what.html

The Effects of Stroke on Eating*
Wendy Dahl, Ph.D., R.D.
Assistant Professor - Nutrition Extension Specialist
University of Florida
Food Science and Human Nutrition

Hospice Auditorium
April 20 10:30 to noon

Nutrition As We Age*
Linda Bobroff, Ph.D., RD, LD/N
Professor - Nutrition Extension Specialist
University of Florida
Family, Youth & Community Sciences

Hospice Auditorium
May 11 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

*Please call Munroe Regional Medical Center Prestige 55 Program at 352-671-2153 for more information.

News You Can Use

Protect Your Family from Illness - Clean & Sanitize Your Kitchen

Because the kitchen is the main place for food preparation and eating, it is also a prime location for disease-causing microorganisms that can cause foodborne illness. You can protect yourself and your family by preventing the spread of germs by first cleaning counters, pots, pans, utensils, dishes, knives and cutting boards and then sanitizing all surfaces.

To reduce the risk of foodborne illness, it is necessary to first clean the surface before sanitizing. Initially, the surface needs to be cleaned with warm soapy water to remove residues such as dirt and other debris that might be visible. Then the surface can be sanitized, which reduces the number of organisms to a safe level. The most common organisms that cause foodborne illness in the kitchen are *Salmonella*, *Campylobacter*, and *Norovirus.*

While cleaning should be continuous throughout the food preparation process, the frequency of sanitizing will depend on your particular situation. Consider the vulnerability of your family members. Persons at greatest risk for foodborne illness include infants and young children, elderly, pregnant women, and those with weakened immune systems caused by diabetes, AIDS, cancer therapy, and bone marrow and organ transplants. Whether your family has special needs or not, it is fine to sanitize daily.

The most common home sanitizer is chlorine bleach. When properly diluted, it is a very effective sanitizer. The recommended concentration for food-contact surfaces is one scant teaspoon of chlorine bleach to one quart water. Since detergents and dirt interfere with chlorine's ability to kill microorganisms, the surface must first be cleaned. Make sure to use non-scented household chlorine bleach. Bleach with added fragrances is not safe for food surfaces. In addition to chlorine bleach, hydrogen peroxide and vinegar are also effective household sanitizers. Remember, always properly dilute the sanitizer with clean water according to the manufacturer's instructions.

Here are simple steps for cleaning and sanitizing:

Cleaning ~ wash with warm soapy water, rinse with clean water, and air dry or use a clean paper towel.

Sanitizing ~ spray surface with sanitizing solution, leave on for recommended amount of time (chlorine bleach solution is usually at least one minute), and air dry or use a clean paper towel.

Warning:
Never mix chlorine bleach and ammonia!
Never mix hydrogen peroxide and vinegar!

For more information on different sanitizing solutions:
Cleaning and Sanitizing the Kitchen: Using Inexpensive Household Food-Safe Products
University of Florida/IFAS Extension Service
http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/fy1280

New USDA SuperTracker … A Great On-line Wellness Tool

Great News!

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack recently released SuperTracker, the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) newest, most comprehensive high-tech web tool to help Americans make healthful food and physical activity choices. It is based on the USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2010 - focusing on helping individuals develop permanent healthy lifestyle practices to reduce their risk of chronic disease and maintain a healthy weight.

The SuperTracker is free and offers an array of easy to use features to offer individuals the tools to:

- Individualize recommendations for daily calorie and physical activity needs.
- Personalize features to create a comprehensive program based on goals - supported by virtual coaching, to monitor weight and activity, along with the ability to record progress.
- Track foods and physical activity from a large database of popular foods and activities.
- Evaluate progress with a variety of simple to in-depth reports.

The SuperTracker website features eight sections:

Daily Food Plans
How Many Calories Does Physical Activity Use?
Calories Count Chart for Mixed Foods
Empty Calories Chart
Solid Fats Chart
Body Mass Index (BMI) Calculator
Portion Distortion
Food Labeling

Your direct link to the USDA SuperTracker: http://www.choosemyplate.gov/supertracker-tools.html

Visit these sites for more information about healthy lifestyles:
United States Department of Agriculture - Choose MyPlate
www.choosemyplate.gov

United States Department of Agriculture - Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2010
http://www.cnpp.usda.gov/dietaryguidelines.htm

images: USDA Choose MyPlate http://www.choosemyplate.gov

♦Melons grow on the ground and are exposed to microorganisms from dirt. Make sure to wash well with tap water and a food brush before cutting.

Cantaloupe

Nutritional Value

1 cup, balls

Calories	60
Protein	1.5 grams
Carbohydrate	15 grams
Dietary Fiber	2 grams
Potassium	473 milligrams
Vitamin A	5986 IU*
Vitamin C	65 milligrams

* International Units

Reference:
USDA Nutrient Data Laboratory
http://ndb.nal.usda.gov/ndb/foods/show/2372

Food Safety Tips ~

♦ ***Whole Melon***
Ripen at room temperature for two to four days; when fully ripe refrigerate for up to five days.

♦ ***Cut Melon***
Melon that has been cut is perishable and should be kept refrigerated.

Produce Picks

Melons are part of the plant family Cucurbitaceae which includes cucumber, cantaloupe, watermelon, summer squash, and winter squash. Florida's peak harvest time for melon depends on the variety, but typically is March through July. Known for their sweet and juicy flavor, they are one of the most popular fruits in the United States. They are low in calories per serving and a good source of vitamins A and C as well as potassium. Besides the most popular varieties - cantaloupe, honeydew, and watermelon, some of the lesser know melons that are just as tasty are Casaba, Crenshaw, Persian, Santa Claus, and Sharlyn.

Preparation couldn't be easier … wash the outside with a vegetable brush and tap water to remove any surface residue. Then cut in half, scoop out the seeds and strings, and cut to the desired size – quarters, halves, cubes or balls.

Cuisine Corner

Cantaloupe Salsa

Ingredients:

½ large ripe cantaloupe, rind, strings and seeds removed
¾ cup finely diced red bell pepper
¼ cup finely chopped cilantro
3 tablespoons finely chopped scallions
juice of one lime
pinch of salt and hot pepper flakes, if desired

Directions:

1. Cut cantaloupe into very small diced pieces.
2. In a large bowl, mix diced cantaloupe with red pepper, cilantro, scallions and lime juice.
3. Add pinch of salt and red pepper flakes, if desired.
4. Cover and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes to blend flavors.
4. Serve with grilled or broiled fish, chicken, or steaks.

Yield: 4 servings

Nutrition information per serving:
45 calories; 0 grams fat; 90 milligrams sodium; 11 grams carbohydrates; 2 grams fiber; 9 grams sugar; 1 gram protein; 90% vitamin A; and 160% vitamin C.

Provides approximately ¾ cup of fruits and vegetables per serving.

Source: Centers for Disease Control – Fruits and Veggies Matter
http://www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov/index.html
http://www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov/month/melon.html

More About Eggs …

Making Hard-boiled Eggs:

♦Place a single layer of uncracked eggs in a saucepan.

♦Add tap water to at least one inch above the eggs.

♦Cover the pan, bring the water to a boil, and carefully remove the pan from the heat.

♦ Let the eggs stand (18 minutes for extra large eggs, 15 minutes for large, 12 minutes for medium).

♦Immediately run cold water over the eggs. When the eggs are cool enough to handle, remove from water and place in an uncovered container in the refrigerator.

♦ Use hard-cooked eggs within one week.

Calls to the Agent

Question: What are the food safety guidelines for Easter and Passover eggs?

Answer:

Spring religious holidays present a variety of egg safety challenges. Whether raw or cooked, eggs are perishable, and should be handled carefully to prevent foodborne illness. As a general rule, purchase clean, uncracked eggs before the "Sell By" or "Expiration" date. Keep eggs in their original carton in the refrigerator (40°F or below) until ready to use. Raw shell eggs stored in the refrigerator are safe to eat three to five weeks from the date of purchase. Hard-cooked eggs stored in the refrigerator should be eaten within one week. Always wash your hands with soap and warm water before and after touching eggs. Eggs kept out of the refrigerator for more than two hours should not be eaten.

~ Easter Egg Hunt and Decorations ~

If you will eat the hard-cooked eggs you decorate and hunt, use food grade coloring and make sure not to crack the eggs. During cooking the protective coating is washed away, leaving open pores for harmful bacteria to get inside. Discard any cracked eggs. Hide eggs away from dirt, pets and other sources of bacteria. The total time for hiding and hunting eggs should not exceed 2 hours. Easter bread with decorated cooked eggs are considered a decoration and should not be eaten because it is kept at room temperature.

~ Passover Seder Plate Eggs ~

Hard-cooked eggs that are to be eaten as part of the Seder dinner celebration should be kept in the refrigerator until ready to be served. However, the hard-cooked egg on the Seder plate should be eaten only if it has been out of the refrigerator for less than two hours.

Question: Does it matter how long vegetables are blanched?

Answer:

Blanching is a very important step in the freezing process of most vegetables. It is a partial heat treatment best accomplished in boiling water. The blanching time is crucial and varies with the type and size of the vegetable. Under-blanching stimulates the activity of enzymes and is worse than no blanching. Over-blanching causes loss of color, flavor, vitamins, and minerals.

For more information on egg safety:
http://www.fightbac.org/safe-food-handling/safety-in-all-seasons/130-eggs-tra-care-for-spring-celebrations-
http://www.fsis.usda.gov/News_&_Events/NR_032105_01/index.asp

For more information on blanching and freezing food:
National Center for Home Food Preservation
http://nchfp.uga.edu/how/freeze.html

Meet the Agent

Nancy Gal, Family and Consumer Sciences Agent IV, has been on the faculty of the University of Florida/IFAS Marion County Extension Service since 1987.

She teaches health, nutrition and food safety to adults and youth promoting wellness and disease prevention. Her areas of specialty include type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, weight management and food safety for home and commercial food handlers. Nancy is well known for her diabetes education programs and has served on the Florida Diabetes Advisory Council and Florida Alliance for Diabetes Prevention and Care. Her professional accomplishments include international, national and state recognition for her work with Dr. Linda Bobroff, Extension Nutrition Specialist, on the development of the University of Florida/IFAS Extension's ***Take Charge of Your Diabetes*** program.

She has also co-authored UF Electronic Database Information System (EDIS) and for-sale Extension publications including five diabetes publications and *Munchy Adventures*, a 4-H healthy lifestyles curriculum for youth.

Nancy has been honored for her excellence in program development and teaching receiving the National Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences Distinguished Service Award, Epsilon Sigma Phi - National Honorary Extension Fraternity Mid-career Service Award, National Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences Program Excellence Through Research Team Award, Florida Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences Program of Excellence Awards and the University of Florida's Sadler Distinguished Extension Professional and Enhancement Award.

What is Extension?

Extension is a partnership between state, federal and county governments to provide scientific knowledge and expertise to the public. The University of Florida, together with Florida A&M University, administers the Florida Cooperative Extension Service.

University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF/IFAS) is a federal, state, and county partnership dedicated to developing knowledge in agriculture, human and natural resources, and the life sciences, and to making that knowledge accessible to sustain and enhance the quality of human life.

At the University of Florida, Extension is located in the Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS), along with the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences (CALS) and the Florida Agricultural Experiment Station, and is called UF/IFAS Extension.

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