

have the  
courage  
to live life  
the way  
you want  
to.

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# FCH Newsletter

## Act FAST to Identify a Stroke

Identifying and treating a stroke as quickly as possible can save brain cells, function and lives.

The National Stroke Association has devised the FAST checklist to help determine whether a person is having a stroke.

### Act FAST

If the answer is yes to any of the questions below, there's a high probability the person is having a stroke:

- **Face:** Ask the person to smile. Does one side of the face droop?
- **Arms:** Ask the person to raise both arms. Does one arm drift downward.
- **Speech:** Ask the person to repeat a simple sentence. Are the words slurred? Does he or she fail to repeat the sentence correctly?
- **Time:** Time is important! If the answer to these questions is yes, call 911 or get to the hospital fast!

Adapted from an Article by Harvard Health Publishing

## DASH Diet: Healthy Eating to Lower Blood Pressure

Adapted from an Article by Mayo Clinic Staff

DASH stands for Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension and it is a lifelong approach to healthy eating that is designed to help treat or prevent high blood pressure. The DASH diet encourages you to reduce sodium intake and eat a variety of foods rich in nutrients that help lower blood pressure such as potassium, calcium and magnesium.

The DASH diet emphasizes vegetables, fruits and low-fat dairy foods—and moderate amounts of whole grains, fish, poultry and nuts. The two versions of the DASH diet (standard DASH and lower sodium DASH) both aim to reduce the amount of sodium in your diet compared to what you might get in a typical American diet by keeping daily sodium intake to less than 2,300 mg per day.

Both versions of the DASH diet include lots of whole grains, fruits, vegetables and low-fat dairy products, as well as some fish, poultry and legumes and encourages a small amount of nuts and seeds a few times per week. You can eat red meat, sweets and fats in small amounts. The DASH diet is low in saturated fat, cholesterol and total fat.

Based on DASH, recommended servings from each food group (based on a 2,000 calorie per day plan) are:

- 6 to 8 servings of grains per day
- 4 to 5 servings of vegetables per day
- 4 to 5 servings of fruits per day
- 2 to 3 servings of dairy per day
- 6 or less servings of lean meat, poultry and fish per day
- 4 to 5 servings of nuts, seeds and legumes per week
- 2 to 3 servings of fats and oils per day
- 5 servings or fewer per week

Drinking too much alcohol can increase blood pressure so the Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommends that men limit alcohol to no more than two drinks per day and women to one or less.

The DASH diet doesn't address caffeine consumption. The influence of caffeine on blood pressure remains unclear, but caffeine can cause your blood pressure to rise temporarily. If you already have high blood pressure, talk to your doctor about your caffeine consumption.

The members of Texas A&M AgriLife will provide equal opportunities in programs and activities, education, and employment to all persons regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation or gender identity and will strive to achieve full and equal employment opportunity throughout Texas A&M AgriLife.

# Choosing Safe Toys

Adapted from an article for Kid's Health

Millions of toys are on the market and hundreds of new ones hit the stores each year. Toys are fun and an important part of child development but each year scores of kids are treated for toy-related injuries.

Manufacturers follow certain guidelines and label most toys for specific age groups but supervising play is still important.

Here are some guidelines to keep in mind when shopping for toys:

- Toys made of fabric should be labeled as flame resistant or retardant
- Stuffed toys should be washable
- Painted toys should be covered with lead-free paint

- Art materials should say nontoxic
- Crayons and paints should say ASTM D-4236 on the package, which means that they've been evaluated by the American Society for Testing and Materials.

Steer clear of older toys, even hand-me-downs from friends and family. Those toys may be cost-effective but they may not meet current safety standards and may be so worn from play that they can break and become hazardous.

## The Right Toys at the Right Ages

Always read labels to make sure a toy is appropriate for a child's age. Guidelines published by the CPSC and other groups can help you make those buy-

ing decisions. Still, use your own best judgement—and consider your child's temperament, habits and behavior whenever you buy a new toy.

You may think that a child who's advanced in comparison to peers can handle toys meant for older kids but the age levels for toys are determined by safety factors and not by intelligence or maturity.

After you've bought safe toys, it's also important to make sure kids know how to use them. The best way to do this is by supervising play. Playing with your kids teaches them how to play safely while having fun.

## Agrilife Extension Announces Path to the Plate Initiative

Path to the Plate is a research-based education program that helps consumers understand how their food choices impact their health.

It helps consumers understand how their food choices impact their well-being by making the connection between agriculture and health.

By understanding more about the path their food takes to their plate—how it's grown and produced—consumers can make better food choices for themselves and their families.

Using researched-based information, Path to the Plate aims to dispel popular myths and misconceptions about food production practices.

This material was funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.

## Color Your Plate in Honor of National Nutrition Month

By Wren Fair

March is National Nutrition Month and fortunately this is also the time of the year that all different kinds of colorful, nutritious produce become seasonal and more affordable.

For optimal health, the USDA recommends that half your plate be comprised of fruits and vegetables. Try and incorporate nature's vast array of colors into your diet for the best nutrient benefit. There are so many different types of fruits and vegetables to choose from, you can easily find something you like.

Want to join the FCH Committee? Call 409-374-2123 to find out when our next meeting is!

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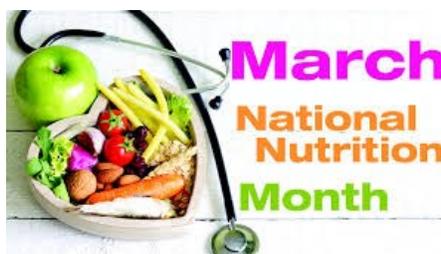
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