

Healthy Happenings

January 2021



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FAMILY & COMMUNITY HEALTH

Welcome to the first issue of "Healthy Happenings"! This is a monthly newsletter with healthy tips, recipes, and information on the Family & Community Health programs of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service in Hidalgo County.

PRACTICE MINDFULNESS

We are expanding our educational programs to include Mental Health programs. Flip to the Upcoming Events to see the details on Mental Health First Aid certification and the Stress Less with Mindfulness Program.

COOKING WELL

A healthy cooking school designed to help people with or without diabetes and anyone that prepares food for them. Register today at <https://hidalgo.agrilife.org/cooking-well/>

BAKED POTATO SOUP

by Dinner Tonight Healthy Cooking School

We have had a few chilly days lately and what better way to warm up than with some hot soup. However, most of our favorite soups are high in calories and are cream based. This is a great recipe that cuts the carbs and the calories all while still keeping you warm! Try it today!

Click below for the Recipe:
[Baked Potato Soup](#)





MINDFULNESS: COPING WITH STRESS

Stress can affect our bodies and minds in powerful ways; from raising our blood pressure, to causing muscle pain. Becoming mindful and being able to identify how stress is affecting our thoughts and body is the first step in learning how to cope with stress healthfully.

Mindfulness starts with breathing. Try to only focus on your breathing for a few minutes. Acknowledge sounds or thoughts without judgement and then return your focus to your breathing.

Try a Body Scan. Focus on one part of the body at a time for several moments. Focus on your toes then gradually moving your attention to the soles of your feet, then up your legs and body.

Speak to yourself kindly. Think of someone for whom you have unconditional love. Then address yourself as if you were talking to that person.

NEW YEAR, NEW OPPORTUNITIES



Be A Part of Something BIG

In the United States, 86% of all health spending is related to chronic conditions – things like diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol and many others. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, these costs can be managed and potentially reduced through education and lifestyle modification.

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service in Hidalgo County is seeking participants for its Master Wellness Volunteer Program. Master Wellness Volunteers (MWV) undergo 40 hours of training on health, nutrition and food safety and are then empowered to provide outreach and education, helping reduce the burden of chronic conditions in Texans and Texas' communities. Not a health professional? Not a problem! We welcome participation from anyone interested in promoting health and wellness: college students, employees, retirees – anyone!

Opportunities to serve are wide-ranging: giving presentations for local community groups, assisting with healthy cooking demonstrations, participating in health fairs and much more. Because each community is different, MWVs work with the County Extension Agent and other stakeholders to identify needs and opportunities to help make a local difference. Because MWVs come from diverse backgrounds, they're often able to identify novel topics, audiences and resources in the area.

In January, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service will convene a statewide training for Master Wellness Volunteers...and you don't even have to leave your county. Two in-person sessions will be held at your local county Extension office or via video conference; the rest of the training will be conducted online. It's never been easier to give back to your community!

For more information about the Master Wellness Volunteer Program, visit <http://agrilife.org/mwv>
For more information regarding the statewide training, contact Andrea Valdez at 956-383-1026 or at andrea.valdez@ag.tamu.edu. View the Training dates [here](#).

See you in January!

“Somewhere along the way, we must learn that there is nothing greater than to do something for others.”
-Martin Luther King Jr.

Upcoming Programs & Events

January 7, 14, 21, 28, 2021: Cooking Well Program
Register [here!](#)

January 14, 2021: Master Wellness Volunteer (MWV) Program
Registration Deadline

January 19, 2021: MWV State Cohort First Session

January 18, 2021: Martin Luther King Jr. Day (Extension office closed)

Keep a look out for February 2021:

Week of February 8, 2021: Dinner Tonight Virtual Healthy Cooking School via Facebook Live Group. Stay tuned for details.

Coming Soon for March & April 2021:

NEW Stress Less with Mindfulness Program

Mental Health First Aid Certification (Also available for groups on request)



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Welcome to the new "Healthy Happenings!" You have received this newsletter because you have registered or attended an AgriLife Extension Program in Hidalgo County. Thank you so much for your support of our educational programs and I hope you enjoy this newsletter. If you have any questions or would like more information on our programs please contact me at 956-383-1026 or andrea.valdez@ag.tamu.edu.