

TEXAS A&M AGRI LIFE EXTENSION

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HOW CAN WE HELP? HUTCHINSON COUNTY EXTENSION NEWSLETTER



**Happy
Easter**

Texas AgriLife
Extension
Hutchinson County

Megan Parr-County
Agent Family & Con-
sumer Sciences

Kristy Synatschk-
County Agent Agricul-
ture & Natural Re-
sources

LaDawna Mack-
County Support Staff

p: (806) 878-4026
f: (806) 878-4021
hutchins@ag.tamu.edu
hutchinson.agrilife.org

A GOOD NIGHTS REST IS BEST

Humans devote about one-third of their lives to one activity but think little about it – until they cannot do it. This activity has a calming effect, often leaves one feeling refreshed and promotes overall wellness. What is this activity? Sleep. As people age they tend to have a harder time falling asleep and more trouble staying asleep. It is a common misconception that sleep needs decline with age; but, our sleep needs remain constant throughout life. Insomnia is the inability to sleep and occurs more frequently among older adults. Insomnia may create serious effects, complicating other conditions or making a person too tired to function normally during his waking hours. If you experience insomnia at least a few nights per week or more, it is worthwhile to speak to your health provider about your trouble sleeping and any effects your insomnia may have on your body. Certain conditions are related to increased sleep problems: Hypertension is associated with both snoring and sleep apnea. The hot flashes, changes in breathing and decreasing hormonal levels associated with menopause may lead to trouble sleeping. Many cancer patients experience sleep problems. Acid reflux may cause difficulty falling and staying asleep. Heartburn sufferers experience nighttime burn, causing discomfort and awakenings. This is more likely to occur while resting your back. Depression is most

closely associated with insomnia and is a risk factor for having difficulty sleeping. This is especially true for those who have chronic insomnia. The pain and discomfort of arthritis may make it difficult to sleep through the night.

In addition, the medications used to treat these conditions and other medical conditions may adversely affect your ability to sleep. You may try the following to improve your sleep: Use your bed and bedroom for sleep only. It is best to take work materials, computers and televisions out of the sleeping environment. Maintain a regular bed and wake time schedule, including weekends. Create a good sleep environment that is dark, quiet, comfortable and cool. Sleep on a comfortable mattress and pillows. Finish eating at least two to three hours before your regular bedtime. Exercise regularly, completing your workout at least two hours before bedtime. Avoid alcohol, nicotine and caffeine – used close to bedtime, they can lead to poor sleep. If sleep problems persist, they may be a sign of a larger issue that could adversely affect your health. See your health provider and discuss your sleep problems with him or her to try to determine the cause of your sleep issues. Your body and mind work very hard for you and you owe both the seven to eight hours of sleep per night that they deserve.

**A Clean Refrigerator, is a
Happy Refrigerator!**

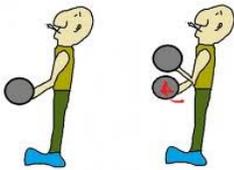
Spring cleaning is a tradition for many households. Yet, when it comes to cleaning, the refrigerator is frequently ignored. The reality is that it's very important that we keep our refrigerators clean as part of a healthy lifestyle. It's also important that we keep an inventory of what's inside our refrigerators and how long it's been there. Regular cleaning will make taking an inventory much easier. A clean, well-organized refrigerator runs more efficiently, which saves money. A clean refrigerator will also smell and look better. Cleaning your refrigerator regularly can help you avoid eating foods that are no longer safe to consume. More importantly, regular cleaning will eliminate much of the bacteria that can accumulate between thorough cleanings. Taking a careful, regular inventory of the contents of your refrigerator

can help you avoid buying something that you already have, which will save money. Regular checks of your refrigerator will also enable you to check to make sure foods are sealed properly and to throw out left-over foods that have been stored more than a week. By sealing foods properly and discarding left-over foods that have been in your refrigerator over a week, you will greatly reduce your risk of consuming spoiled foods. Remember to check the expiration dates on dairy products like milk, eggs, and mayonnaise. A helpful tool that some use to keep track of the amount of time left-over dishes have been in the refrigerator is to write the date you put the left-over item in the refrigerator on a piece of tape and place the tape on the container.

Exercise: It Does a Body Good!

Exercise can be done at any age! It is a vital part of everyday life and has many important benefits. Each month, we will be featuring a new low impact exercise that anyone can do, at any age. This month's feature exercise is the **Bicep Curl**. This strengthens upper-arm muscles. Sit in an armless chair, with your back supported by the back of the chair. Keeping your feet flat on the floor, shoulder width apart, hold your hand weights in your hands. Begin with your arms straight down at your side, palms facing in toward your body. Take 3 seconds to lift your left hand weight toward your chest by bending your elbow. As you lift, turn your left hand so that your palm is facing your shoulder. Hold the position for 1 second. Take 3 seconds to lower your hand to the starting position. Pause, then repeat with right arm. Alternate until you have repeated the exercise 8-15 times on each side. Rest, then do another set of 8-15 alternating repetitions. Be sure to consult your doctor before engaging in any physical activity, as we do want you to injure yourself. Check back next month for the next monthly exercise!

BICEP CURLS



Muffin Meat Loaf

(cost per recipe: \$3.89; per serving: \$0.65)

Ingredients

- 1 egg
- 1/2 cup non-fat milk
- 3/4 cup oats
- 1 pound lean ground beef
- 3 Tablespoons chopped onion
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 cup grated cheese (any variety)



Instructions

1. Preheat the oven to 300 degrees.
2. Combine all ingredients and mix well. (*Do not over mix; too much mixing can make the meat loaf tough*).
3. Spoon mixture into greased muffin cups.
4. Bake for 1 hour, or until temperature in center of meat loaf is 160 degrees.
5. Cool slightly before removing from muffin cups

A Recipe for You!

Coming Soon!!

The community-wide Health Fair will be held on April 12th on the Frank Phillips College Campus in the Access and Innovation Building. The Health Fair committee urges each citizen and business to mark this date on their calendar and make an effort to attend to gain knowledge on health, safety and wellness practices and take part in various screenings that will be offered. The Health Fair committee is extending the hours of the health fair to encourage and allow more to attend. Golden Plains Community Hospital will be offering fasting blood screening beginning at 8:30 a.m. All other booths at the health fair will be open from 9:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. and will stay open continuously during that time.



Extension programs serve people of all ages regardless of socioeconomic level, race, color, sex, religion, disability or national origin.

The Texas A&M University, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating.