

*Lubbock County  
 Family Network*



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**LOWING YOUR RISK OF HEART DISEASE**

February is American Heart Month. The centers for Disease Control and Prevention report that heart disease is the leading cause of death for men and for women. Every minute, someone in the United States dies from a heart disease-related event. While age and family history are risk factors that cannot be changed, the good news is that 80% of heart disease and stroke can be prevented.

**What are my risks for getting heart disease?**

Ask yourself these 3 questions:

**1. How many risk factors do I have?**

<p><u>Major risk factors</u> are those that research has shown significantly increase the risk of heart disease. The more risk factors you have the greater your chance of developing it.</p>	age	<p><u>Non-Modifiable</u>          These risk factors cannot be changed.</p>
	gender	
	family history	
	high blood cholesterol	<p><u>Modifiable</u>          Any person can make changes to these risk factors, even modest improvements to your health will make a big difference.</p>
	high blood pressure	
	physical inactivity	
	obesity and overweight	
	smoking	
	diabetes	
	poor diet	

**2. Do I know Life's Simple 7<sup>®</sup> keys to prevention?**

- **CONTROL CHOLESTEROL**  
 98.9 million Americans age 20 and older have total blood cholesterol levels of 200 milligrams per deciliter (mg/dL) or higher.
- **MANAGE BLOOD PRESSURE**  
 Approximately 90% of all Americans will develop hypertension over their lifetime and 1 in 3 adults has high blood pressure, yet, many people don't even know they have it.
- **REDUCE BLOOD SUGAR**  
 Heart disease and stroke are the No. 1 causes of death in people with type 2 diabetes.
- **EAT RIGHT**  
 When you eat a heart-healthy diet you improve your chances for feeling good and staying healthy - for life!
- **LOSE WEIGHT**  
 More than 2/3 of our American adult population is overweight, with 1/3 of us in the obese category.
- **GET MOVING**  
 Over 50% of American adults, age 18 and older, do not get the recommended at least 150 minutes a week of moderate to vigorous physical activity.
- **STOP SMOKING**  
 Among Americans age 18 and older, more than 19 million women and 24 million men are smokers.

**3. Am I making an effort or making excuses?**

Top "barriers" to healthy living from a recent survey of website visitors to heart.org:

14% - Costs too much to eat healthy.  
Think again! Try our tips to save you money and time:  
[heart.org/healthytips](http://heart.org/healthytips)

18% - Don't want to stop eating foods they like.  
Then DON'T! Just find healthy ways to prepare them here:  
[heart.org/recipes](http://heart.org/recipes)

12% - Too busy taking care of others to take care of myself.  
To do the best for our loved ones, we must make an effort  
to be in the best possible health ourselves.  
[heart.org/caringforyourself](http://heart.org/caringforyourself)

7% - I don't really know how to take care of my heart.  
You're in luck! We have all the heart-health information  
you need. [Heart.org/conditions](http://Heart.org/conditions)

27% - I live a heart-healthy lifestyle.  
Great job! Learn more about preventing heart disease at any  
age: [heart.org/atanyage](http://heart.org/atanyage)

14% - Don't like exercising.  
Keep trying! Here are our top 5 tips to loving exercise – or  
at least not hating it: [Heart.org/lovingactivity](http://Heart.org/lovingactivity)

17% - Don't have time to exercise regularly.  
Don't worry, 10 minutes, 3 times a day is all it takes.  
[Heart.org/take10](http://Heart.org/take10)

Source: Cassandra Vanderpool, MS, RDN, LD NMSU Cooperative  
Extension Diabetes Coordinator (in the Roosevelt co., NM Extension H  
Ec. Newsletter, Feb/March 2016.

## NUTRITION AND MEMORY

*Alzheimer's disease* is one of the most common forms of dementia, which detrimentally affects memory, causing a slow decline in thinking and reasoning skills (Alzheimer's Association, 2015). In 2013 Alzheimer's disease affected as many as five million individuals in the United States. Alzheimer's is considered a chronic condition that is the fifth leading cause of death in the U.S. There are still many things unknown about this progressive disease, especially the causes. However, research has discovered the following:

- Age is the best known risk factor
- Genetics may play a role
- Changes in the brain occur years before the symptoms appear

There are currently no cures known for Alzheimer's disease; however, researchers are constantly studying and providing new evidence. A large amount of evidence suggest the following:

- Education, diet and environment may play a role in the development of the disease.
- Physical, mental and social activities may serve as protective factors.
- Some risk factors for heart disease and stroke may increase risk of Alzheimer's.

As time goes on, studies show that nutrition is a large factor in preventing, delaying and/or treating many chronic diseases. A literature review was completed to develop a set of dietary and lifestyle guidelines to contribute to Alzheimer's prevention (Barnard, et al., 2014). The following seven guidelines are the product of that study.

1. Saturated and trans fats should be minimized in the diet. Saturated fats are found in meat, dairy and certain oils (palm and coconut). Trans fats are in many pastries and fried foods. Trans fat is listed as "partially hydrogenated oils" on labels.
2. The primary staples of the diet should be vegetables, fruit, whole grains and legumes; instead of dairy and meats.
3. Vitamin E, as with other nutrients, should come from food and not supplement if possible. Vitamin E supplements do not replicated the range that Vitamin E in food does. Foods rich in this vitamin include spinach, red bell peppers, tomatoes, mangos and papayas.
4. Vitamin B12 should be part of the daily diet. Therefore, it is important to consume fortified foods or a B12 supplement. The best sources for this nutrient are animal products; however, it may be best to rely on eggs and fish for the most part. Additionally, soy milk and soy products, which are fortified with B12 are great plant derived sources. Many times a supplement and food sources are not enough. It is important to get blood levels tested in case a B12 shot is required regularly.
5. Multivitamins taken should not include iron and/or copper supplements, unless directed by your physician. Some studies show that high intake of copper and iron, in addition to high saturated fat, had a cognitive decline comparable to 19 years of aging.
6. Minimize exposure to aluminum, which include cookware, antacids and baking powder. The role of aluminum in brain function is still being studied; however, some studies show that even a modest increase resulted in cognitive decline. Lastly aluminum has no role in our human biology.

It is important to understand that we are what we eat. Although many diseases also have different influencing factors; such as environmental, social and biological that need to be considered, it is important to take care of ourselves from the inside out. It is vital for everyone to implement a healthy diet in addition to physical activity into his or her daily lives. Even though there is no current official diet that can prevent memory decline, there are studies that give evidence for promising guidelines to follow.

For more information on Alzheimer's disease, visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) and the Alzheimer's Association website [www.alz.org](http://www.alz.org). Talk to a physician if you or a loved one are experiencing significant memory decline. Remember, Alzheimer's and other types of dementia are NOT normal signs of aging.

Source: Tonya Ney, BS, NMSU Dietetic Intern in Roosevelt County, NM Extension H Ec. Newsletter, Feb/Mar 2016.

## **CONSUMERS NEED TO KNOW STEPS FOR ADDRESSING UNWANTED CALLS, TEXTS**

People who are annoyed by robocalls coming to their landline and unwanted calls or texts to their mobile phone should know the steps to stop them, said a Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service specialist.

"If the number of unwanted or unknown calls you receive on your landline – provided you still have one – or your cell phone has been excessive and you are tired of the disruption, the Federal Communications Commission and the Federal Trade Commission offer some excellent consumer guidelines to address them," said Nancy Granovsky, AgriLife Extension family economics specialist at College Station.

According to the Federal Communications Commission, robocalls and telemarketing calls are among their top consumer complaints. Per commission rules, anyone making a telephone solicitation call must provide their name, the name of the person or entity on whose behalf they are calling, and the phone number and address where that person or entity can be contacted.

The FCC also prohibits phone solicitation calls to homes before 8 a.m. or after 9 p.m. In addition, telemarketers are required to comply immediately with any do-not-call requests made by the consumer during the call. FCC rules limit many types of robocalls, but some are permissible with prior consent. The rules also differ in relation to calls made to landlines as opposed to cellular phones.

According to the Federal Trade Commission, the law allows political calls, calls from charitable organizations, informational calls, calls about debts owed and phone surveys, as well as calls from companies with which the consumer has done business or has given permission to call. But if it is an unwanted sales call or robocall with a recorded message about a product, service or winning something, the FTC tells consumers there is a good chance it is a scam.

"Handling robocalls may provide a 'teachable moment' for family members who have their own cell phones and numbers too," Granovsky said. "Convene a family meeting and share the steps to take. For younger or older family members, you may need to be the one to provide direct help."

Whether telemarketing calls or calls for informational purposes, any non-emergency robocall requires the consumer give permission for the call to be made to a wireless number, she said.

"Consumers can revoke permission to be called or texted and the caller must allow them to do that in a reasonable way," she explained.

"And consent to be called or sent texts is forbidden as a condition of a sale or other commercial transaction."

Granovsky said wireless and landline home phones are protected against telemarketing robocalls made without prior consent, but emergency or urgent calls or text alerts "for the public good," such as those related to health, fraud or missing persons, are allowed without prior consent.

"And although it is probably not a good idea to ignore such alerts, consumers still have the right to stop even these calls or texts if they choose to do so," she said.

To prevent unwanted calls Granovsky said the FCC and FTC provide some advice, which includes:

- Registering on the Do Not Call registry at <http://www.donotcall.gov/>.
- Contacting the phone company to see if they offer robocall-blocking technology. If they do, provide them with the numbers of those unwanted callers.
- If the phone company does not offer robocall-blocking technology, consider buying a commercially available blocking device.
- Telling unwanted callers not to call and writing down their number and when the request was made to not call again. If the calls continue, contact the FCC and make a complaint.
- For unwanted calls on wireless phones, look into blocking apps offered through the mobile app store or marketplace.

Granovsky said sometimes people will continue to receive unwanted calls even after they have contacted the Do Not Call Registry or have requested their phone provider block the number.

"If these calls persist, just hang up and report the number to the Federal Trade Commission," she said. "If you punch buttons or try to ask for a person you can tell to take you off their list, this may just lead to further unwanted calls and annoyance."

To contact the FTC and report a complaint, call 1-888-382-1222 or go to <http://complaints.donotcall.gov/>.

“If you get a suspicious text message on your cell from an unrecognized number, whatever you do, do not text back or click on any embedded link,” she said. “Report it to your phone provider and to the FTC at 1-888-382-1222 or <http://ftc.gov/complaint>

For more information, go to: <http://bit.ly/2f4gatg> or <http://bit.ly/1U921W8>

Source: *AgriLife Today* August 8, 2017

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## **IT'S ‘DECISION TIME’ FOR THOSE APPROACHING INCOME TAX FILING DEADLINE**

Many people still will wait until after the April 15 deadline to file and need to understand the consequences of filing late, said a Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service family economics expert.

“According to the IRS, the penalty for filing late is 5 percent of the amount of any additional taxes owed for every month – or portion of the month – the return is late, up to a maximum of 25 percent,” said Joyce Cavanagh, AgriLife Extension specialist in family economics, College Station. “Taxes filed more than 60 days after the due date have a minimum penalty of \$135 or 100 percent of the unpaid tax, whichever is smaller.”

Cavanagh said it is best to file all tax returns that are due, regardless of whether or not you can pay in full.

“The IRS can penalize taxpayers for both failing to file a tax return and failing to pay taxes they owe by the deadline,” she said. “Filing on time eliminates any penalty for filing late, but the taxpayer will still be charged a penalty and interest on any tax that isn’t paid. It is best to file on time and pay as much as possible by the deadline, then pay the remainder as quickly as possible to reduce the interest and penalties.”

Additionally, if taxpayers choose to not file a return they risk losing any refund they may have.

“You need to file a return within three years of the return deadline to claim any refund for withholding or estimated taxes,” Cavanagh said. “The same rule applies if you wish to claim tax credits such as the Earned Income Credit.”

The IRS makes it possible for taxpayers to make payments by phone, online or by check or money order. There’s even an IRS2Go app for paying with your mobile device.

She also noted it might be worthwhile to get a loan or pay taxes using a credit card, especially if the fees charged are less than penalties imposed by the IRS.

“You really don’t want to wait for the IRS to send you a bill for your taxes,” Cavanagh said. “The IRS has an Online Payment Agreement tool on its IRS.gov website, where you can make arrangements to pay your taxes over time. You can also file a Form 9465, which is their Installment Agreement Request, along with your tax return. The IRS may let you set up a direct debit agreement where your payment will be automatically debited monthly, so there’s no need to remember to write and send them a check each month.”

Cavanagh said ignoring a tax bill may lead to collection actions, which could include wage garnishment or putting a lien on property.

“The IRS will work with taxpayers suffering a financial hardship, so it’s best to contact them to talk about payment options,” she said.

Cavanagh said taxpayers can also request an automatic six-month tax extension (<https://www.irs.com/articles/what-you-need-know-about-tax-extensions>) by filing IRS Form 4868 and paying any tax due by the original deadline.

“Filing an extension just gives you more time to file; it doesn’t give you any more time to pay,” she said. “Taxpayers will still need to estimate what they owe in taxes and submit payment of any additional tax not paid through withholding or estimated payments along with their Form 4868 to file for an extension. However, if there’s lost or missing documentation or some other issue or complication with your return that may require more time, it might also be worth requesting an extension to make sure your return is accurate.”

She said by requesting an extension in a timely manner and paying at least 90 percent of the taxes owed with the request, it’s likely the taxpayer will not face a failure-to-pay penalty.

“However, you must pay any remaining balance by the extended due date,” she said,

Cavanagh also said taxpayers do not have to pay a late-filing or late-payment penalty if they can show the IRS reasonable cause for not filing or paying on time.

“In instances such as when people are affected by natural or man-made disasters or have had a health crisis or family emergency, the IRS may provide special penalty relief to those who request a time extension to file their federal income tax return,” she said. “Check with the IRS if you feel you may qualify for special penalty relief.”

Cavanagh said there is also no penalty if the taxpayer files an extension and pays an additional tax owed by the April deadline, providing a tax return is filed by Oct. 15. There also is no penalty if the taxpayer is owed a refund, provided a return is filed within three years of the April deadline – Oct. 15 if an extension was filed.

“The penalty for late filing applies if you owe taxes and didn’t file your return or extension by the April deadline,” she said. “It also applies if the taxpayer files an extension and owes taxes, but fails to file a return by Oct. 15.”

Cavanagh noted that since a late-filing penalty can be significantly higher than a late-payment penalty, if taxpayers are unable to pay their tax bill and also didn’t file an extension, they should at least file a tax return as soon as possible.

“That return can be amended at a later time,” she said.

Source: AgriLife Today, April 6, 2017  
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## QUICK DINNER TIPS

Most everyone believes that they could use a little more time in the course of the day. One way to save time during the day is to make quicker dinners. Now, before you think that your family won’t want to eat a rushed, watered down meal you should know that it is possible to make a delicious and nutritious meal without spending a lot of time doing so.

### Strategies

One of the most effective ways to save time in the kitchen is to build your meal from like ingredients. For example, you can cook a large batch of chicken one night and use some of it to make chicken spaghetti with whole wheat pasta. The next night, use the remaining chicken to prepare a tasty chicken salad.

Another time saving strategy is to take a day to make several meals. After completing the task, divide the meals into smaller portions and freeze some so that you have ready-made meals that can be served in a pinch.

Still another strategy is to use frozen vegetables. Frozen vegetables have the same health benefits as fresh, but they are already chopped and can be accessed faster. Frozen vegetables are great for a quick meal like stir-fry vegetables over brown rice.

Finally, you can save a lot of time in the kitchen by being organized. Planning meals for the week (making a list that you can look at) can save a great deal of time during the week. Similarly, keeping an organized kitchen is an important step to saving time. If you know which refrigerator drawer has your vegetables, where your spices are located, and have your noodles and beans in an

accessible area of the cupboard, you will be amazed at the amount of time you will save while cooking.

Adopting these strategies and others can help you to spend less time in the kitchen and more time with your family!

Source: Jon Perrot, Better Living for Texans, February 2018 Newsletter

## UNDERSTANDING WHAT MAY HAVE GLUTEN

Many people think of wheat, when they think of gluten but gluten is in other grains as well. Some grains that contain gluten are: wheat (including varieties such as spelt, kamut, farro, and durum), couscous, barley, rye, and triticale, just to name a few.

But what is extremely important to remember is to read labels. Also understand the difference between allergen and gluten labeling, it can be confusing because wheat is an allergen but it also contains gluten. You may think you know what ingredients are in a food product or what it is made of, but you need to be sure. For example vinegar or malt extract can contain gluten because they may be derived from one of those sources. Furthermore, some plants are processing gluten-free grains and grains that contain gluten and some packages might say “*Processed on Shared Equipment*” but these statements are not required or regulated by the FDA. If you are unsure of what the labeling on the package means, refer to the company’s or manufacturer’s website or call their customer service helpline.

When information is needed it is best to be cautious and find out the facts. No matter if finding out about gluten or allergies, a person’s health or life may depend on it!

For more information go to:

<https://www.fda.gov/food/guidanceregulation/guidancedocumentsregulatoryinformation/allergens/default.htm>

Source: Article by Julie Prouse, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension, *Serving Up Food Safety*, Spring 2018

## E. COLI IN CUT LEAFY GREENS

According to previous CDC estimates, each year roughly 1 in 6 Americans or 48 million people get sick, 128,000 are hospitalized, and 3,000 deaths occur from foodborne illness.

### What is E. Coli?

E. Coli (*Escherichia coli*) is a bacterium that is often found in the intestines of warm blooded animals or people. Some types of E. Coli are harmless while others can make a person very sick. E. Coli can make a toxin called Shiga. This toxin is very harmful often causing abdominal cramps, vomiting, fever, and bloody diarrhea. It is also the leading cause of acute kidney failure in children.

## Why are cut leafy greens often associated with E.Coli outbreaks?

A report done by the CDC estimated that about 1 in 5 illnesses were linked to leafy greens. Leafy greens are grown on the ground, subject to potentially contaminated waters, animal waste, pathogens in the soil etc. Also workers hygiene could play a role in the transmission of harmful pathogens as well as contamination later in the food chain in the kitchen or at a restaurant.

### How to protect yourself.

To help prevent E. Coli or any other foodborne infection, it is recommended to wash your hands thoroughly before and after preparing and eating food. Additionally, clean and sanitize counters, wash cutting boards and utensils after they touch raw meat to avoid contaminating other foods. Finally, avoid preparing food when you are sick, particularly if you are sick with fever, diarrhea, vomiting, or have other symptoms associated with foodborne illness.

If you are concerned that you might have a E. Coli infection or any foodborne illness, please seek medical care.

Source: Article by Rebecca Dittmar, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension, *Serving Up Food Safety*, Spring 2018

<https://www.cdc.gov/foodborneburden/attribution/index.html>

## Recipe Corner



### Quick Skillet Lasagna

Makes: 7 servings

- ½ cup of onion (chopped)
- ½ pound of lean ground beef
- 1 can of tomatoes (14.5 ounces)
- ¾ cup of tomato paste
- 1 tablespoon of parsley
- 1½ cups of water
- 1 teaspoon of garlic powder
- 2 cups of egg noodles (cooked)
- ¾ cup of low-fat cottage cheese
- ¼ cup of parmesan cheese

1. Cook the beef and onion in a frying pan until the beef is brown and the onion tender. Drain excess fat.
2. Add tomatoes, tomato paste, parsley, water and garlic powder to the beef mixture. Bring to a boil and simmer until the sauce is thick (about 25 minutes).
3. Cook the noodles in a saucepan according to package directions and drain.
4. Add the cooked, drained noodles to the beef mixture, stirring to prevent sticking.
5. Mix the cheeses and add them into the pan.
6. Cover and heat over low heat for 5 minutes.

*182 Calories, 5g Fat, 14g Protein, 2g Saturated Fat, 22g Carbohydrates, 3g Dietary Fiber, 236 mg Sodium*

## Veggie Stir-Fry

Makes: 6 servings

- 1 teaspoon of margarine
- ½ onion (chopped)
- 1 tomato (diced)
- 2 ears of corn (cut from the cob)
- 10 stems of okra (sliced)
- 3 yellow squash, medium (sliced)

1. Cook the margarine, onion, corn, squash and okra in a frying pan over medium heat for 5 minutes or until tender.
2. Add the diced tomatoes and continue cooking for 3 minutes.

This dish can be served over brown rice or noodles. Frozen vegetables can be substituted for fresh.

*70 Calories, 2g Fat, 3g Protein, 0g Saturated Fat, 13g Carbohydrates, 3g Dietary Fiber, 20mg Sodium*

Source: Adapted from the USDA Mixing Bowl  
Jon Perrot, Better Living for Texans, February 2018 Newsletter  
*This material was funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program – SNAP. This institution is an equal opportunity provider.*

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "E. Kay Davis".

E. Kay Davis, M.S.  
County Extension Agent -  
Family and Consumer Health  
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