

# Lubbock County Family Network



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February/March 2020

## OFF TO A HEALTHY START

The start of the new year is the perfect time to establish new goals, habits, and a healthy lifestyle. Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service recommends starting this year off on the right foot by getting active and eating right!

Lack of time or a busy life does not have to stand in the way of healthy habits. According to AgriLife Extension's Walk Across Texas program, 30 minutes a day is all it takes to start the journey of improving your health. Physical activities that increase your heart rate and get you moving can range anywhere from moderate to vigorous, depending on the level of intensity you want to achieve. Every-day activities such as cleaning, gardening, taking the stairs, or even raking the leaves counts as exercise! Additional exercises include:

- Walking
- Mowing the lawn
- Water aerobics
- Biking on level ground
- Running or jogging
- Swimming laps

Besides aiding in weight loss, exercising regularly can increase energy levels and strength, and reduce stress, says Erica Reyes, health specialist with AgriLife Extension Service. In addition to helping you feel better overall, exercise has also been proven to reduce the risk of heart attack and stroke, while helping to maintain or reduce high blood pressure, cholesterol, and diabetes.

If you are new to the active lifestyle, remember to start slow and set manageable goals for yourself. Like losing weight, getting in shape does not happen overnight, which is why Reyes recommends those just beginning their fitness journey follow these simple steps:

- Get out of your comfort zone
- Establish specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and timely goals
- Try different workout activities to minimize boredom and increase muscle strength
- Keep your body fueled properly with healthy foods
- Stay hydrated
- Dress for comfort and in layers that can be removed or added.
- Learn proper form
- Get up and stretch at work to prevent being sore or stiff

In order to achieve maximum results and become healthier, supplementing your exercise with healthy and nutritious foods is key. AgriLife Extension Service's *Dinner Tonight* offers a variety of delicious snacks, meals and desserts that are low in calorie and high in nutrition. Sometimes even small changes in your favorite recipes make tremendous differences in terms of calories and fat. Eating healthy does not mean you have to give up flavor, which is why *Dinner Tonight* offers some substitutions for healthier ingredients:

- Replace butter with unsweetened applesauce
- Reduce sugar by 1/3 cup or use a natural alternative to replace the sugar by using honey, agave nectar, or dates
- Use 2% or fat-free Greek yogurt instead of sour cream
- Use whole grain flour instead of all-purpose

To find more recipes and recipe substitutions, visit <https://dinnertontight.tamu.edu/>.

Source: Erica Reyes, Extension Program Specialist I (Jan. 2020) Phone: 956-969-5656 Email: [Erica.Reyes@ag.tamu.edu](mailto:Erica.Reyes@ag.tamu.edu)

TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION DINNER TONIGHT WALK ACROSS TEXAS

# Getting into the Habit of Healthy



All it takes to start the journey of improving your health is 30 minutes of physical activity each day.

Regular exercise aids in weight loss, increased energy levels, strength, and stress reduction while reducing the risk of heart attack and stroke, high blood pressure, cholesterol, and diabetes.



## 8 steps to reaching your fitness goals

- Get out of your comfort zone
- Establish S.M.A.R.T goals
- Try different workout activities
- Keep your body fueled with healthy foods
- Stay hydrated
- Dress for comfort
- Learn proper form
- Get up and stretch

Healthy Recipe Substitutions	
Butter	→ Unsweetened Applesauce
Sugar	→ Honey, Agave Nectar, Dates
Sour Cream	→ 2% or Fat-Free Greek Yogurt
All-Purpose Flour	→ Whole Grain Flour

## A KINDER NEW YEAR'S WEIGHT LOSS RESOLUTION

Weight loss journeys are noble pursuits...and a tremendous way to care for our health and ourselves.

How much do I need to lose?

We know that even as little as 5% of body weight loss is shown to reduce risks of chronic disease like Type II Diabetes and Heart Disease. For someone that is 200 pounds...that is 10 pounds of weight loss. That amount is realistic, it is attainable, and very likely to improve your health. More importantly, you show yourself that you are capable of weight loss, that those changes you made to your lifestyle, like avoiding high calorie beverages and upping your fruits and veggies, can make a difference.

Resolve to be Specific

Everyone is, in fact different, but we know that extra calories will cause anyone to gain weight. Therefore, finding a way to reduce your calorie intake should be specific to your habits and taste preferences. Replacing high calorie drinks with water, cutting restaurant portions in half, and avoiding sides like fries or chips are specific and can help if these are part of your everyday routine, but they might apply to everyone. In that case, take a good and honest look at your food habits and make some substitutions or reductions. If skipping fries is a non-starter then you can

reduce the portion size or plan to balance them out throughout the day.

Be Patient...This is a Long Game

Half a pound of weight loss a week is fantastic progress, but especially appropriate for those that are small in stature or older. Half a pound a week might not seem like a lot, but that amounts to 2 pounds of weight loss each month. In 5 months, that will turn into 10 pounds of body weight loss. Think about that. If you started at the beginning of February you could lose 10 pounds by the beginning of the summer.

“Step Up Scale Down” is a New Year’s Weight Loss Program provided by Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service that covers the basics of a balanced and portioned plan of eating that encourages fruits and vegetables and personal physical activity goals. The program also provides encouragement and accountability in a group setting for the community or work sites. Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service in Lubbock County is partnering with Catholic Charities to offer Step Up to Scale Down in February and March. It is never too late to start your journey to better health. You are worth it.

For more information on Step Up Scale Down contact Lubbock County Extension Office at 806-775-1740.

Source: David Leal, Extension Program Specialist. Phone: 361-621-1552; Email [david.leal@ag.tamu.edu](mailto:david.leal@ag.tamu.edu)

## TEXAS ROADS HAVE NOT HAD A FATALITY FREE DAY SINCE NOVEMBER 7, 2000 What If...We Could End the Streak!

It has been 19 years since Texas could claim a day where there were no fatalities on our roads. The fatalities add up to nearly 70,000 people killed on Texas roadways over the past 19 years. Every day in Texas nearly 10 people are killed in traffic crashes. According to the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) the leading causes of these deadly crashes continue to be failure to stay in one lane, alcohol and speed. TxDOT is promoting the “End the Streak” campaign to help end motor vehicle fatalities in Texas.

What if we all drove like the driver we would want in front of us, beside us and in back of us. Ending this streak of needless tragedy on Texas roadways is a shared responsibility.

What if for one day everyone took responsibility for themselves and their friends and there were no drunk drivers on our roads. And there was not one person driving somewhere to drink without a plan for a sober ride home

— and no underage drunk drivers were to be found anywhere.

What if there were no distracted drivers on the road. No teens were riding with other teens, which is the main source of their distractions and against the law according to the Graduated Driver License Law. What if no youth or adult was driving while using a cell phone and was totally concentrating on their driving.

What if there was no driver speeding down the road and all were driving within the speed limit, including slowing down for construction and emergency vehicles, and driving more slowly and cautiously when weather conditions are bad.

What if we all took time to put on our seatbelts and make sure that all of our passengers were also buckled up. And, that all children were riding in the correct car seat for their age, weight and developmental stage. What if the car seat had been inspected by a certified child passenger safety technician to make sure it was being used correctly and installed correctly.

What if there were no drowsy drivers on the road and every driver, including commercial drivers, made sure they were well rested and prepared for the trip.

What if every driver made sure their vehicle and tires were in good condition and everyone drove defensively and civilly so that every car was treated as if the lives of the people inside were important. What if all drivers were looking out for each other.

What if all of these things could be done on the same day and Texas could once again enjoy a day where there was not one fatality on our roads? Then, we could put an end to this terrible streak of roadway deaths in Texas — and it would bear repeating!

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Community Health Educator Lubbock County reminds us that these do not have to be just rhetorical questions. For information on the End the Streak campaign visit:

<https://www.txdot.gov/inside-txdot/media-center/psas/end-streak.html>

## **HELPING YOUR CHILDREN HANDLE TEASING AND BULLYING**

Do you remember the school bully who went around teasing and threatening you or your classmates? Remember how you felt? Remember how you wished he would just go away? Ever wondered what happened to someone who was teased or bullied or what became of the bully himself?

Teasing and bullying is an ongoing problem for many of our children. Research reports that as many as 24 percent of middle school students reported bullying others at least once in the past year. It is estimated that almost 30 percent of students were involved in some type of moderate or

frequent bullying, either as the target of the bully, as the bully, or both.

Those who are the victims of teasing and bullying can experience long-term consequences. Victims of bullying may suffer from anxiety, fear, and low self-esteem. They may avoid peers, school, and social activities where they may be exposed to teasing or bullying. In some cases, children may drop out of school to avoid being harassed or attacked. “Negative consequences for those who bully have been demonstrated as well,” says Dr. Rick Peterson, Assistant Professor and the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service Parenting Specialist. “Childhood bullies have school attendance and performance problems. Those who bully tend to become aggressive adults and are more likely to become involved in criminal activities.”

Parents and adults should not expect children to deal with bullies on their own. Children need to be taught that bullying is an unacceptable behavior. Children must be taught useful strategies to help them cope with teasing and bullying. Teasing and bullying cannot be totally prevented, but children can be taught to control their own reactions. Parents can teach their children some simple strategies to empower them and help them cope with their feelings and sometimes helplessness. Some strategies parents and caregivers can teach their children include:

- ✓ Self-talk. Give children things they can say to themselves when they are being teased or bullied, which can counteract the negative remarks or behaviors. A child can say to herself, “Even though I don’t like being teased, I can handle it.” Oftentimes, the teasing is not a true reflection of the child, and the child should question himself by asking, “Is the teasing true?” In addition, the child should remind himself that his opinion of himself is more important than the teaser’s opinion.
- ✓ Ignore the teasing. Children should practice ignoring the teaser since reacting with anger or tears may invite more teasing. Parents should monitor the teasing, particularly if it turns into bullying and/or harassment, and be willing to intervene.
- ✓ “I messages” are a way for children to express their feelings and ask to be treated differently. For example, a child could say, “I feel upset when you make fun of my clothes. I would like you to stop.” This strategy may work best in a classroom or daycare setting, where adult supervision is present.
- ✓ Using humor is another way to cope with teasing. By the child laughing at the hurtful comments or put-downs, it shows that the teasing has little effect on them. Another way to show indifference is for the child to respond to the teasing with, “So.” By responding with “so” indicates that the teasing does not matter. Children find this simple reply to be an effective response to teasing.

- ✓ Asking for help at times is necessary if the child is having trouble with the above strategies or if the teasing turns to bullying. Children can handle most types of teasing. However, if the teasing is repeated or occurs for a prolonged period of time, it becomes bullying and may call for an intervention by parents, teachers, and caregivers.

Source: Dr. Rick Peterson, Assistant Professor and Parenting Specialist, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service. August 2005.

## EAT SMART TO LIVE A HEART HEALTHY LIFE

Following a healthy lifestyle by eating balanced nutritious meals, engaging in daily physical activities, and avoiding smoking and excessive alcohol consumption may help reduce the risk factors of heart disease. Heart disease is the leading cause of death among American men and women causing about 647,000 deaths per year (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention). Heart disease can be prevented or delayed by controlling several underlying medical conditions such as diabetes, high blood pressure, elevated blood cholesterol levels, and weight gain.

Several diet-related chronic diseases including heart disease can be prevented or managed by following a healthy eating pattern—one that is nutritionally adequate with appropriate calories (Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2015-2020). Sumathi Venkatesh, a Health Specialist with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service shares a few tips to eat smart for a heart healthy life:

- Fruits and vegetables are essential components of a healthy diet. However, most people do not eat enough fruits and vegetables. A person consuming 2000 calories should include about 2½ cups of vegetables and 2 cups of fruits every day. You may include them in a variety of forms—fresh, canned, dried or frozen.
- Choose low-fat dairy products. They provide the same nutrients as the regular kind but with less fat and calories.
- Avoid trans fats and limit saturated fats to less than 10% of your daily calories. Replace butter with spreads made of monounsaturated fats (canola, olive, peanut, and sunflower) or polyunsaturated fats (corn, sunflower, and soybean). Mono- and polyunsaturated fats are liquid at room temperature and are ideal for daily cooking.
- Limit refined grains by making half of your grains whole grains. Whole grains are good sources of dietary fiber and many nutrients.
- Include at least 8 ounces of seafood per week. Including seafood that are high in omega 3 fatty acids may protect your heart by reducing inflammation.
- Reduce sodium intake to less than 2300 mg per day. However, the ideal limit for most adults and those who are at risk for heart disease is no more than 1500 mg per day. Excess dietary sodium increases blood volume and may increase the risk for high blood pressure.

- Avoid excess calories from sugar sweetened beverages. The calories from added sugars should be less than 10% of your daily calories.
- Lastly, practicing portion control is key. Excess calories may lead to weight gain.

For more information on heart health, contact Lubbock County Extension Office at 806-775-1740.

Source: Sumathi Venkatesh, Extension Program Specialist.  
Email: [Sumathi.venkatesh@ag.tamu.edu](mailto:Sumathi.venkatesh@ag.tamu.edu)



## TAX REFUND TIPS

This time of year, many companies are trying to persuade you to spend your tax return on their product or service. Before rushing to the car dealership, furniture store or shopping center, take a moment to reflect on your financial situation. Consider the following ideas for making the most of your tax return.

- Use your tax return to catch up on bills. If you have outstanding or past-due bills that are accruing interest and late fees, put your return toward these first.
- Assess your overall debt and credit situation. To whom do you owe money? If you have multiple accounts to choose from, choose the one with the highest interest rate to save the most money in the end.
- Save for a “rainy day.” This can help keep you out of debt when an emergency comes. And it is easy to do, since the IRS can deposit your refund directly into an account instead of issuing you a check. Act as if the return never came into your hands by placing it in a saving account that will not be touched until there is an emergency.
- Use the refund to build a revolving savings fund for non-monthly expenses that come throughout the year. Examples include Christmas, car registration, school registration or tuition, back-to school clothes, birthdays, hunting season, summer vacation, etc. Add all costs and divide the total by 12 months. This amount should be placed monthly into a revolving fund to pay for these expenses. Use a portion of the tax return to get this fund going, and imagine how

prepared you will feel when you need the money and it is available.

- Look at retirement funds and pension plans. Meet with a financial planner, if necessary, or use an online calculator to estimate future funds needed for retirement. Place your tax return in a Roth IRA or open a new investment fund. Watch as your money grows, adding a nice cushion to your retirement savings.
- As a family, make or review family financial goals. These could include a family vacation, providing college education funds or buying/paying off a home. What goal could use a boost from the tax return? Making it a family effort teaches family members valuable lessons about money, goals, dedication and achievement.
- Be constantly aware that many companies would love to have your money in their hands. Determine your financial needs and responsibilities with higher priorities before giving in to store temptations.

Source: University of Missouri Extension in Roosevelt County Extension Home Economics Newsletter; Portales, NM, March 2019

### AMERICA SAVES WEEK 2020

America Saves Week is February 24<sup>th</sup> - 29<sup>th</sup>. The National Campaign encourages people to evaluate their saving habits or plan for success in the coming year. Considerations include setting attainable goals; switching to automatic savings deposits so you are not tempted to spend before saving; using financial calculators or other tools to track progress and thereby enable changes to be made as necessary; and protecting accounts. By calculating monthly income and expenses, achievable savings goals can be set along with a time frame to achieve the goals. Some employers offer various savings programs to assist employees.

### FOOD SAFETY TIPS FOR ELECTRIC MULTI-COOKERS

Have you jumped on the electric multi-cooker (such as an Instant Pot®\*) craze? These appliances are used for slow-cooking, searing, sautéing, simmering, steaming, and much more. Probably the most talked-about use for electric multi-cookers, is the pressure cooking feature.

When looking online for electric pressure-cooking information, a variety of cooking times are listed for foods such as meat, poultry, and fish. The cooking time needed varies with the size and model of the multi-cooker, size/cut of meat, amount of liquid, pressure release used, and other factors. However, the most important step is often left out-use of a food thermometer to ensure food has reached a safe minimum internal temperature.

Using a food thermometer is the only reliable way to ensure safety of meat, poultry, and egg products. Place the food thermometer in the thickest part of the food, making sure

not to touch bone, fat or gristle. According to USDA, food should be cooked to the following minimum internal temperatures as shown in the chart below. For personal preference, you may choose to cook food to higher temperatures.

If food has not reached the proper temperature after pressure cooking, it is important to continue the cooking process. Whether it is going back to pressure cooking, using the sauté feature on your multi-cooker or switching to using the stove top or oven, make sure a safe temperature is reached.

Product	Minimum Internal Temperature
<b>Beef, Pork, Veal &amp; Lamb</b> (steaks, chops, roasts)	145°F (62.8°C) and allow to rest for at least 3 minutes
<b>Ground Meats</b> (beef, pork, veal, lamb)	160°F (71.1°C)
<b>Ham</b> , fresh or smoked (uncooked)	145°F (62.8°C) and allow to rest for at least 3 minutes
<b>Fully Cooked Ham</b> (to reheat)	140 °F (60 °C) for ham packaged in USDA plants 165 °F (73.9 °C) for all other hams
<b>All Poultry</b> (whole birds, parts, ground poultry and stuffing)	165 °F (73.9 °C)
<b>Eggs</b>	160°F (71.1°F)
<b>Fish and Shellfish</b>	145°F (62.8°F)
<b>Casseroles</b>	165°F (73.9°F)

Source: Safe Minimum Internal Temperatures, USDA, <https://go.unl.edu/osny>

Source: University of Nebraska Lincoln. Article written by Cami Wells, MS, RD, Extension Educator. Email [camiwells@unl.edu](mailto:camiwells@unl.edu)

**QUALITY DAY OF PLAY**

Partnering with:  
Community Partners & Texas Rising Star Providers

This FREE event will be on  
**Saturday, March 28, 2020**  
**10:00am - 2:00pm**  
**For ages Infant to 13 years**

Workforce Solutions CCS  
2002 W. Loop 289  
Lubbock, Texas 79407

This FREE event will showcase what quality play looks like and what children learn through play. Quality play matters!

**ACTIVITIES**  
Free Books to the first 800 Children  
Free Children's Activities  
Firetruck and Police Car  
Car Seat Checkpoint  
Food Available for Purchase from Food Trucks

**Special appearances by:**  
Texas Tech Athletes/Cheer/Pom Squad, Daniel Tiger  
Parent/Adult must attend event with children. Children cannot be left unattended.

This project is wholly funded with Federal workforce development funds. Workforce Solutions South Plains is an equal opportunity employer/program. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. Relay Texas: TDD (voice) 800-735-2989 (TDD) or Relay Texas Spanish 800-662-4954. A proud partner of the American Job Center network.

## Recipe Corner



### Super Quick Brown Rice Pilaf

- 2 cups uncooked brown rice
- 2½ cups low-sodium chicken broth
- 2 Tablespoons minced onion
- 2 teaspoons dried parsley
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- Salt and pepper to taste

1. Add brown rice, chicken broth and minced onion to multi-cooker. Set device to 22 minutes of pressure cooking time.
2. When time is up, open the multi cooker after a 10-minute natural pressure release. Add spices; salt and pepper to taste. Stir to combine and serve. Makes 8 servings (½ cup each). Each serving contains 123 calories, 0.8 g fat, 174 mg sodium, 24 g carbohydrate and 2 g fiber.

*Cook's Notes: Fresh onions, garlic and parsley would be delicious if available. Dried fruits or nuts could be added after cooking the rice along with a few vegetables such as cooked carrots or peas.*

Source: University of Nebraska Lincoln. Article written by Cami Wells, MS, RD, Extension Educator. Email [cami.wells@unl.edu](mailto:cami.wells@unl.edu)

### Pressure Cooker Honey Sesame Chicken

Prep Time: 5 minutes  
Cook Time: 3 minutes  
Additional Time: 17 minutes  
Total Time: 25 minutes

- 4 large boneless skinless chicken breasts, diced (about 2 lbs)
- Freshly ground pepper and salt
- 1 Tablespoon vegetable oil
- ½ cup diced onion
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- ½ cup reduced sodium soy sauce
- ¼ cup ketchup
- 2 teaspoons sesame oil
- ½ cup honey
- ¼ teaspoon red pepper flakes
- 2 Tablespoons cornstarch
- 3 Tablespoons water
- 2 green onions, chopped
- Sesame seeds, toasted

1. Season chicken with freshly ground pepper. Preheat pressure cooking pot using the sauté setting. Add oil, onion, garlic, and chicken to the pot and sauté stirring occasionally until onion is softened, about 3 minutes.
2. Add soy sauce, ketchup, and red pepper flakes to the pressure-cooking pot and stir to combine. Pressure cook on high for 3 minutes. When timer beeps, turn pressure cooker off and do a quick pressure release.

3. Add sesame oil and honey to the pot and stir to combine. In a small bowl, dissolve cornstarch in water and add to the pot. Select sauté and simmer until sauce thickens. Stir in green onions. Add salt to taste.
4. Serve over rice sprinkled with sesame seeds.

#### Nutrition Information:

Yield: 6      Servings Size: 1 cup  
Amount Per Serving: Calories: 322, Total Fat: 9g, Saturated Fat: 2g, Trans Fat: 0g, Unsaturated Fat: 7g, Cholesterol: 68mg, Sodium: 1418mg, Carbohydrates: 34g, Fiber: 1g, Sugar: 26g, Protein: 28g

### Garlic and Parmesan Pressure Cooker Asparagus

- 1 bunch of asparagus
- 3 cloves of garlic
- 1 cup of water
- 3 Tablespoons butter
- 3 Tablespoons parmesan cheese

1. Place 1 cup of water and trivet in the bottom of your electric pressure cooker.
2. Place asparagus on a large piece of aluminum foil with whole cloves of garlic and butter. Curve the edges of the aluminum foil so no butter leaks out.
3. Place your pot on high pressure for 8 minutes, for soft asparagus. For crispy asparagus high pressure for 4 minutes.
4. Do a quick release, sprinkle with parmesan cheese and serve.

Source: Texas A&M AgriLife Extension and Texas Extension Education Association Pressure Cooking Lesson 2020.

Sincerely,

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

Individuals with disabilities who require an auxiliary aid, service or accommodation in order to participate in Extension sponsored meetings are encouraged to contact the County Extension Office at 775-1740 to determine how reasonable accommodations can be made. The information given herein is for educational purposes only.

\*References to commercial products or trade names is made with understanding that no discrimination is intended and no endorsement by Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service is implied.