

Lubbock County
Family Network



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NATIONAL STROKE AWARENESS MONTH

While National Stroke Awareness Month is celebrated in May, anytime is the time to increase understanding and prevention of strokes. A stroke occurs when a blood vessel leading to or in the brain is blocked or ruptures. These blood vessels provide oxygen and nutrients to the brain. During a stroke, the oxygen and nutrients are unable to reach the brain, therefore the brain cells die. If the brain cells die in a location that regulates a specific body function, there is the possibility that this may hinder that function from working properly.

When it comes to strokes, there are three main types: ischemic stroke, hemorrhagic stroke, and transient ischemic attack. An ischemic stroke is when there is a blockage in the blood vessel and can be caused by blood clots, plaque, or other particles. On the other hand, hemorrhagic strokes happen when the blood vessels burst in the brain therefore preventing the blood flow needed to keep the brain alive. The last type is a transient ischemic attack sometimes called a “mini-stroke.” A transient ischemic attack is different from the other two types because during these “mini-strokes” the blood flow to the brain is only blocked for a short amount of time.

Aside from understanding the differences in the types of stroke, it is important to learn what to look for if you think someone is having a stroke. Knowing these warning signs could help save someone’s life. Here is an acronym to remember some warning signs. Just remember when these happen; you need to act FAST.

F - Face - Ask the person to smile. Does one side of their face droop when asked to smile?

A - Arm - Ask the person to raise their arms. Does one of their arms drift downward when asked to raise?

S - Speech - Is the person's speech slurred or strange when asked to say simple phrases?

T - Time - Time to call 9-1-1 if any of these signs are present.

While it is possible for anyone at any age to have a stroke, there are certain risk factors that can increase your chances; some of these are uncontrollable risk factors while others are controllable. Uncontrollable risk factors include age, gender, race, and family history. Controllable risk factors include previous additional health issues, such as obesity, diabetes, heart disease or high blood pressure, smoking, excessive intake of alcohol, high blood cholesterol, physical inactivity, and an unhealthy diet high in saturated fat, trans fat, cholesterol and/or sodium.

Some ways that we can help prevent or reduce our risk of stroke is by managing pre-existing conditions and making healthier choices every day. If you have preexisting conditions such as diabetes, heart disease, high cholesterol or high blood pressure, work with your health care team to ensure you are on the path to managing those well. Daily lifestyle choices such as limiting alcohol, eliminating smoking, incorporating physical activity, and including a healthy diet high in nutrient dense foods can help to prevent or reduce your overall risk.

Sources: Center for Disease Control
<https://www.cdc.gov/stroke/about.htm>
American Stroke Association
<https://www.stroke.org/en/about-stroke>

FOOD AND WATER SUPPLIES TO HAVE ON HAND DURING AN EMERGENCY: ARE YOU PREPARED?

With hurricane season around the corner, now is the time to make sure that you and your family, including pets, have enough food and water on hand in case a disaster strikes. While the South Plains may not be affected, directly by hurricanes, we can have severe thunderstorms, hail, lightning, tornados and wild fires as well as winter storms.

“A general rule of thumb is to plan for at least 3 days of food and water,” says Jenna Anding, food and nutrition specialist with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service. In areas prone to heavy flooding that time may need to be extended to 7 or 10 days.

For water needs, plan on at least 1 gallon of water per person (fluid needs and personal hygiene) and pet per day, says Anding. If there are pregnant women, family members with illness or during the hot summer months, plan for a minimum of 2 gallons per person and pet.

The easiest and most reliable way to take care of emergency water needs is to buy commercially bottled water. Store the bottles at room temperature (or cooler), out of direct sunlight, off the floor, and away from harmful chemicals. Although some bottles may contain a “best-by” date, the International Bottled Water Association (www.bottledwater.org) notes that you can safely drink the water after that date as long as the water has been stored properly.

Another option is to store water in a food grade water storage container. These types of containers can be purchased at surplus or camping/outdoor stores. Before storing water in the container, wash with dishwashing soap and water and rinse thoroughly. Then sanitize the container by mixing 1 teaspoon of unscented household bleach with 1 quart (4 cups) of water. Pour the sanitizing solution in the container and shake well to make sure that the solution comes into contact with all surfaces inside the container. Depending on the size of the container you use, you may need as much as a gallon of sanitizing solution (4 teaspoons of bleach + 1 gallon of water). After shaking, wait 30 seconds, pour out the solution, rinse with water and let air dry. After filled, store the container at room temperature (or cooler), away from direct sunlight, off the floor, and away from where harmful chemicals are stored. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention advises that water stored in containers be replaced every 6 months.

As far as food supplies go, choose those that do not require refrigeration or cooking, as power loss is common during disasters. “Talk with family members when making your emergency food supply to make sure you are including foods that will be eaten,” says Anding. Smart choices for an emergency food supply include ready-to-eat canned meats (tuna and chicken), canned pasta, protein and energy bars, dried fruit, peanut butter and jelly, crackers, canned juices and milk, nuts and seeds, dry cereal and granola, and crackers. If there are infants in the family don’t forget about their needs which may include formula and baby food. Be sure to have a manual can opener, paper towels and plates, re-sealable bags, scissors and hand sanitizer available. Store emergency food supplies in a covered container and rotate every 4 to 6 months to assure quality.

Being prepared now can help individuals stay resilient if a disaster strikes. For more information on emergency

preparedness, visit the Texas Extension Disaster Education Network at <https://texashelp.tamu.edu/>

THE MISSION FOR A HEALTHY VISION

In the U.S., about 4.2 million adults over the age of 40 are either legally blind or suffer from impaired vision. Age-related eye disorders such as macular degeneration, cataract, diabetic retinopathy, and glaucoma are the leading causes of blindness and poor vision among Americans. An important aspect of disease prevention is being aware of the condition, the risk factors, and understanding the preventive measures, says Dr. Sumathi Venkatesh, a health specialist with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service. Many of these eye diseases can be detected early through annual comprehensive eye examinations allowing appropriate treatment to prevent vision loss and impairment. Being overweight or obese and having medical conditions such as diabetes or high blood pressure may aggravate your risk for eye problems. If you have any of these risk factors, talk to your physician about managing your weight and health. Several eye diseases can be prevented through a healthy lifestyle and by using proper protective eye gear. The National Eye Institute recommends the following preventive measures to protect your eyes:

Routine eye care - Pay attention to changes in your vision. Contact your eye care provider if your vision is blurry or if you have trouble seeing. Schedule comprehensive eye exams on a regular basis. A dilated eye examination will enable early detection and treatment of eye diseases.

Good nutrition - Consume a well-balanced diet loaded with fruits and vegetables, especially dark green leafy vegetables (e.g., spinach and kale), whole grains, low-fat dairy products, and a variety of protein foods. Food containing omega-3 fatty acids such as fish, vegetable oils, nuts, and seeds may help with heart health and regulating blood pressure and blood cholesterol levels thus preventing the development of eye disorders.

Be active - regular physical activity promotes overall health and helps to prevent and manage heart disease, high blood pressure, and diabetes. Adults need about 30 minutes of physical activity on most days. Try incorporating exercise in your daily activities such as gardening, doing household chores, or taking the stairs at work.

Quit smoking - smoking may harm several organs in our body including our eyes. Smoking can damage the optic nerves and may increase the risk for age-related macular degeneration, cataract, glaucoma, diabetic retinopathy, and dry eyes syndrome.

Limit screen time - Prolonged screen time can make your eyes tired and dry. Follow the 20-20-20 rule. Take a break every 20 minutes by looking at something that is 20 feet away for 20 seconds. To reduce eye strain, adjust your

screen lighting, position the screen to reduce glare, and use blue light filters.

Protect your eyes - Avoid looking directly at the sun. Wear sunglasses especially ones that block over 99% of UVA and UVB radiation. Use protective eye gear when using chemicals, playing sports, working on construction projects, and when mowing your lawn. Make sure your hands are clean when you wear and remove your contacts. Disinfect your contacts and replace them when they are due.

For more information and resources on eye health, visit the National Eye Institute at <https://www.nei.nih.gov/> and the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention's Vision Health Initiative at <https://www.cdc.gov/visionhealth/index.htm>. For programs on nutrition, physical activity, heart health, diabetes, and blood pressure management, contact us at 806-775-1740.

Source: Sumathi Venkatesh, Extension Program Specialist
Email: sumathi.venkatesh@ag.tamu.edu

FOCUS ON EYE HEALTH		
Routine Eye Care	Limit Screen Time	
Schedule annual comprehensive eye exams for early detection of eye diseases.	Take breaks from screens every 20 minutes by looking at something that is 20 feet away for 20 seconds.	
Good Nutrition	Be Active	
Eat a nutritious diet consisting of fruits and vegetables, whole grains, low-fat dairy, and various protein foods.	Incorporate at least 30 minutes of physical activity into your daily routine on most days.	
Quit Smoking	Protect Your Eyes	
Smoking can damage several organs in our body including our eyes.	Use sunglasses and avoid looking directly at the sun.	



TIPS TO LESSEN STRESS

Since 1992, Stress Awareness Month has been observed in April but anytime is appropriate to shed light on the increase of chronic stress and to provide resources to lessen the effects of stress on our health. Stress normally occurs in our lives, such as giving a presentation in front of people, planning a wedding, or dealing with the stressors brought on by illness or COVID-19. These stressors have an affect

on us, but we can work through them and learn some resiliency skills. Though, when there is constant stress affecting our lives, this can lead to chronic stress. According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), COVID-19 has impacted both young and old, as many face challenges, losses, illness, and mental health challenges.

So how does stress affect us? First, we must understand what stress is. According to the American Institute of Stress, "Stress is a natural, physical and mental reaction to life experiences... Your body responds to stress by releasing hormones that increase your heart and breathing rates and ready your muscles to respond (to the situation)." The body is affected when there is constant stress (chronic stress), where your body does not bounce back to its natural state and continues to release hormones that increase your heart and breathing rates, which takes its toll on the body. Some common signs of stress include frequent headaches, neck and back pain, insomnia, stomach pain, depression, and many more.

With chronic stress, the heart beats faster increasing blood pressure and blood sugar in our bodies. Under stress, the liver releases more sugar, which over time, increases risk of Type 2 Diabetes, or if already diabetic, causes more harm to the body. Stress also causes blood vessels to constrict, which can lead to high blood pressure or affect those who already suffer from the disease. Other effects are a weakened immune system and inflammation to heart arteries.

What can we do to lessen effects of stress? According to Extension Program Specialist Julie Tijerina, "By learning some simple techniques, we can learn to accept that stressors in our lives will exist, but how we choose to handle them, will help us lessen its effect on our bodies."

Tijerina offers the following simple tips to help cope with stress:

- **Avoid negative people or situations:** If people, news, social media, traffic, or other things cause you stress, try to avoid it. Although simpler said than done, removing something that is in your control to avoid, you can create a more positive environment.
- **To Do List:** There will be times when the To Do list does not have to be completed. The room does not have to be cleaned today. Opt to take a walk outside, take deep breaths, or listen to the birds, even if it is only for a few minutes. Changing your mindset with something positive will help.
- **Learn to listen to your body:** Do you clench your jaw when stressed? Perhaps, your heart beats faster, or your thoughts are not focused. Take time to listen to your body, make a note of the things that affect you.
- **Meditate:** Learning how to quiet the mind and learning breathing exercises are two of the most popular methods to release stress.

- **Exercise:** Dancing, gardening, jogging, walking, or anything that helps you get into a different mindset helps relieve stress. Even 5 minutes of activity can help.
- **Sleep:** Create a sleep routine that allows for some down time before bed; no phones, caffeine, or other stimulants. During sleep, our bodies heal.
- **Nutrition:** Eating a healthy, well-balanced meal helps you think clearly and become alert. During times of stress, to boost mental health, eat plenty of fruits, dark green leafy vegetables, foods high in Omega-3 fatty acids, whole grains, nuts, and legumes. Include, lean proteins and reach for healthy snacks. Avoid processed foods.

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension offers programming to fit your community's needs. For more information, visit your local health department, or ask for more information on stress classes/programming from your local County Extension office or by calling, 806-775-1740.

About Healthy Texas. Healthy Texas combines the expertise of Texas A&M University Health Science Center with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Services one-of-a-kind, statewide reach to provide families with knowledge and resources to take control of their health. Healthy South Texas, the pilot program of Healthy Texas, is a novel effort to reduce the highest impact diseases and their consequences throughout a 27-county region in South Texas. <https://healthytexas.tamu.edu/>

The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service is a unique education agency with a statewide network of professional educators, trained volunteers, and county offices. It reaches into every Texas county to address local priority needs, protecting human health through education about diet, exercise, and disease prevention. There are over 250 counties in Texas with a local Extension office.

Resources:

Lifestyle and Managing Stress -

<https://www.eatright.org/health/wellness/preventing-illness/lifestyle-and-managing-stress>

Healthy ways to handle life's stressors -

<https://www.apa.org/print-this>

Stress Effects -

<https://www.stress.org/stress-effets>

How Stress Affects Your Body -

<https://www.stress.org/how-stress-affects-your-body>

Stress Management -

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/stress-management/in-dept/stress-relief/art-20044476>

COLOR YOUR PLATE WITH FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

Why fruits and vegetables are in different colors?

“The color of fruits and vegetables is an important indicator of their nutrient content and their underlying health benefits” says Dr. Sumathi Venkatesh, a Health Specialist with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service. Each color implies specific phytonutrients present in them. Phytonutrients are natural compounds produced by plants that are present in foods such as fruits, vegetables, beans, and grains. A few notable phytonutrients that we get from these foods are beta-carotene, lycopene, lutein, resveratrol, anthocyanins, and isoflavones. Phytonutrients have antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties. Consuming a diet rich in phytonutrients will improve blood circulation and heart health, promote bone and joint health, and strengthen the immune system to fight against infections and diseases.

There are five main color groups:

1. **Red** e.g., tomatoes, pink grapefruit, red peppers, watermelon, strawberries, cranberries, raspberries, cherries, red cabbage, apples, beets, red grapes, and red onions.
2. **Orange and yellow** e.g., carrots, yellow pears, yellow peppers, corn, winter squash, sweet potatoes, oranges, peaches, cantaloupe, and apricots.
3. **Green** e.g., asparagus, zucchini, artichokes, broccoli, avocado, green peppers, green beans, spinach, kale, kiwi, brussels sprouts, cabbage, green tea, and green herbs.
4. **Blue and purple** e.g., eggplant, purple cabbage, black beans, blueberries, blackberries, purple grapes, plums, prunes, figs, and raisins.
5. **White and brown** e.g., cauliflower, mushrooms, onions, parsnip, radish, garlic, leeks, black-eyed peas, and bananas.

Include a variety of colored fruits and vegetables in your diet!

For a 2000 calorie diet, you should eat at least 2 cups of fruits and 2½ cups of vegetables including dark green, red-orange, beans, peas, and lentils, starchy vegetables, and other vegetables. Simply fill half your plate with colored fruits and vegetables in fresh, frozen, canned, and dried forms to meet your daily recommended amounts. Try not to peel fruits and vegetables that have edible skin because the skin is a good source of dietary fiber, vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants. While preparing your shopping list try to include at least one fruit and one vegetable from each color. Eating home cooked meals as often as possible will allow you to cut your food cost and choose healthy ingredients for your meals. Check out www.dinnertonight.org to learn more on health and



COLOR YOUR PLATE WITH FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

RED

Tomatoes
Red peppers
Watermelon
Strawberries
Cranberries
Raspberries
Cherries
Red cabbage
Apples
Beets
Red onions

ORANGE YELLOW

Carrots
Yellow pears
Yellow peppers
Corn
Winter squash
Sweet potatoes
Oranges
Peaches
Papaya
Cantaloupe
Apricots

GREEN

Asparagus
Zucchini
Artichokes
Broccoli
Avocado
Green peppers
Green beans
Spinach
Kale
Kiwi
Cabbage

BLUE PURPLE

Eggplant
Purple cabbage
Black beans
Blueberries
Blackberries
Purple grapes
Plums
Prunes
Figs
Dates
Raisins

WHITE BROWN

Cauliflower
Mushrooms
Onion
Parsnip
Radish
Jicama
Garlic
Shallots
Leeks
Black-eyed peas
Bananas

nutrition, and for useful tips on healthy recipes, meal planning, freezing leftovers, and food safety. For more information on Texas A&M AgriLife Extension health and nutrition programs, contact your local County Extension Office at 806-775-1740.

Source/Contact: Sumathi Venkatesh, Extension Program Specialist @ sumathi.venkatesh@ag.tamu.edu

Recipe Corner

Refreshing Summertime Recipes



There is still time to enjoy these refreshing recipes with summer's bounty for outdoor grilling and enjoyment with family and friends.

Berry Fruit Toss

Served in a carved watermelon, pineapple boat or your favorite bowl.

2 quarts strawberries, sliced
2 whole pineapples, peeled, cored and chopped
½ cup orange marmalade

¼ cup orange juice
2 tablespoons lemon juice
½ cup blueberries

In a large mixing bowl, combine strawberries and pineapple; set aside. Combine orange marmalade, orange juice and lemon juice, mixing well. Add to strawberries and pineapple, combining thoroughly. Add blueberries before serving.

Balsamic Marinade

½ cup balsamic vinegar
2 green onions, sliced
1 tablespoon fresh sage, chopped
1 tablespoon fresh rosemary, chopped
1 cup olive oil

Combine vinegar, green onions, sage and rosemary in a food processor. Pulse and add oil until fully blended and smooth.

Jamaican Spice Rub

¼ cup cumin seeds
2 tablespoons coriander seeds
2 tablespoons chili powder
1 tablespoon light brown sugar
2 tablespoons kosher salt
1 teaspoon cinnamon
1 teaspoon cayenne pepper
2 tablespoons black pepper

Toast seeds in an ungreased skillet over low heat for 2 minutes. Place in a food processor or blender and add remaining ingredients. Process until mixture becomes a powder. Can be stored at room temperature for 2 months.

Polynesian Sausage Kabobs

Unusual but really good. Prepare by Jalayna Roberts for 4-H Favorite Foods contests.

- ½ cup lemon juice
- ½ cup soy sauce
- ⅓ cup water
- ⅓ cup honey
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 1½ pounds full cooked, smoked, lean turkey sausage, cut into 1-inch slices
- 1 small pineapple, cut into 1-inch cubes
- 1 small cantaloupe, cut into 1-inch cubes
- 2 medium bell peppers, cut into 1-inch pieces

In a large bowl, combine the first five ingredients and mix well. Set aside half of the marinade for basting; cover and refrigerate. Pour remaining marinade into a large re-sealable plastic bag and add sausage. Seal bag and turn to coat. Refrigerate for 3 hours. Drain and discard marinade from sausage. Alternate sausage, pineapple, cantaloupe and bell peppers. Grill uncovered over medium heat for 10 minutes or until sausage is browned, turning and basting with reserved marinade. Makes 5 servings.

Source: Roosevelt Co., NM Extension Home Economics Newsletter

Sincerely,



E. Kay Davis, M.S., L.D.
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.

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Family Network Newsletter Final Issue

This June/July 2021 issue of the Family Network Newsletter for Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service - Lubbock County, Family & Community Health will be the last one you will receive. After much consideration, it is with mixed emotions that I announce that I will be joining my husband in retirement on June 30, 2021.

I started my career almost 42 years ago in 1979 as the Assistant County Extension Agent in Swisher County and transferred to the program leader position in Oldham County in 1981. For 13 years from 1986-1997, I served as Marketing Representative - Home Economics for Southwestern Public Service (now Xcel Energy) in the Hobbs, NM and Lubbock District and then as the Marketing Consultant for Dairy Max in the Texas South Plains and Panhandle, Oklahoma Panhandle and Eastern MN. During that time, I also taught demonstration techniques for 3 semesters at Texas Tech University College of Human Sciences. I re-joined Texas A&M AgriLife Extension almost 22 years ago in Lubbock County as the County Extension Agent-Family and Community Health in 1999. Even with the trials of the COVID-19 Pandemic this past year, I have thoroughly enjoyed working with the Extension Agents in D1 & D2, the Texas Extension Education Association and 4-H club members, school students, Texas Tech Dietetic Interns and other students, Senior Centers, the Building Strong Families Conference, Parenting Coalition, FCH Advisory Board members and the many agencies and clientele involved in Extension related program activities and events. Thank you for these opportunities. I will always treasure the friendships made through all these years.

Best Wishes for future success, health and happiness.

E. Kay Davis, MS, LD