



EXTENSION

JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2023

Strengthening Oklahoma Families

Begin new year with a physical activity plan to improve health

The start of a new year is a time when many people decide to make positive changes in their lives. For those interested in living a healthier lifestyle, they make a goal for themselves to become more physically active.

Jenni Klufa, Oklahoma State University Extension associate state specialist for youth programs, said physical activity is good for all ages.

“Being physically active is one of the best things you can do to improve your overall health both immediately and long-term,” Klufa said. “Some of the immediate benefits of physical activity for adults include improved sleep quality, reduced feelings of anxiety and reduced blood pressure.”

There are numerous long-term benefits of regular physical activity, too, including reducing the risk of dementia, improving bone health, reducing the risk of weight gain and lowering the risk of certain types of cancer. Physical activity can also lower a person’s risk of heart disease, stroke and type 2 diabetes.

Klufa said Oklahoma residents



have high rates of many of these chronic diseases. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Oklahomans lead the nation with heart disease being the number one cause of preventable death.

“Sometimes people think they have to spend hours a day exercising to reap the benefits, but that’s not true. For adults, moderate-intensity exercise as little as 30 minutes five times per week is all it takes,” she said. “You don’t have to join a gym or even have any fancy equipment at home to start down your path to better health.”

Where should you start? Walking for 30 minutes is beneficial. Any activity that increases your heart rate will count toward this goal. Do you like to dance? Put on some music and

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Tips for Staying Healthy This Winter

For many, the winter months can be a challenging time to prioritize and maintain healthy habits. Try these tips to help you stay invested in your winter wellness:

- Designate a member of your support system (family, friend, etc.) who can hold you accountable by joining you for a workout, walk, or by participating in a virtual fitness class with you.
- Soak in the sunlight when possible. Sunlight can help boost your mood, provides an important source of Vitamin D, which helps to support autoimmune health. It can even help alleviate some symptoms of depression and Seasonal Affective Disorder.
- Wash your hands often to help reduce your risk of contracting contagious illnesses (and to avoid spreading them).
- Move more! While the winter months can bring some limitations to outdoor exercise options and limit workout settings, getting at least 30 minutes of physical activity a day can help keep you strong and improve your mood.



Physical Activity continued from page 1

dance around the house.

One obstacle many people say they face is simply being too tired to be physically active. One way to overcome this roadblock is to schedule your exercise around the time of day when you feel energetic. Try getting up 30 minutes earlier to squeeze in a quick walk or workout. If time is limited in the morning, consider a walk during your lunch break at work. If it helps, break the 30 minutes into two or three shorter sessions. Another option to help you stay motivated is to join a class

or find an accountability partner.

“Understandably, parents of young children are busy with their families, but remember, kids benefit from exercise, too. Children who are physically active regularly tend to sleep better, do better in school, get sick less often and have stronger bones and muscles,” Klufa said. “Another positive aspect of physical activity is it can reduce the risk of depression. Getting your kids involved in your physical activity is a great way to spend time together. Plus, being

physically active early in life leads to a greater chance of it becoming a life-long habit, which will be helpful throughout the aging process.”

Children ages 3 through 5 years need to be regularly active throughout the entire day. Children and adolescents ages 6 through 17 need to be active for at least 60 minutes every day of the week.

Staying Positive in Negative Times

Our emotions are heavily influenced by our environment, and it may be difficult to find the positive energy needed to move forward. However, we do have control over our reactions to life's challenges. We cannot control our circumstances, but we can control how we respond to them. Individuals can develop skills to become resilient in the face of adversity, as well as develop nurturing habits to create a positive attitude. While positive thinking works for many people, it is often not that simple. There are important tools that can assist you.

Develop a strong support team. These are people who can provide a caring and positive outlook. Technology has provided great opportunities to connect with positive supporters during this time. Interact with others who are willing to discuss solutions and possibilities for the future. Positive energy flows through people helping others; reach out for support, as needed, and be ready to reciprocate as you are able.

Reevaluate what is important. Resilient people gain strength and vitality by defining their personal values and sticking with them rather than reacting to problems. Make a list of your core values and post them. When faced with adversity revisit the list and determine whether the solution to the problem relates to your core values. If so, proceed with your course of action. If not, step back and re-evaluate the solution in relation to your values.

Create a place to rejuvenate yourself. Having a place to relax and refresh is essential to moving forward. It may be a physical place. Fill it with positive tools such as books, music, photographs or movies. Or take a mental escape by closing your eyes, breathing deeply and picturing yourself in a place that bring you peace and joy. Clutter can be a barrier to creating a place of peace and rather create a sense of stress. Take time to get rid of the physical, as well as the mental, clutter you have gathered.

Focus on your physical well-being. Our physical well-being provides us the strength to enjoy life and endure its unexpected challenges. It also provides an opportunity to be a strong supporter of others. Be sure you are eating nutritious foods, staying hydrated by drinking plenty of water, and finding a way to be physically active. Just a few minutes of daily activity will help rejuvenate you and energize your mind and body.

Be grateful. By identifying and appreciating the positive in our lives our mood lifts instantly. Each day no matter the circumstances, there are things to be grateful for. Become aware of the little things we daily take for granted. Start a gratitude journal. At the end of every day write three things you had to be thankful for that day. At the end of the week and month review all of your blessings and begin to focus on that. Sharing these blessings may lift the spirits of others.

Surround yourself with positive

resources and people. Filling our environment with positive resources and people will reduce stress and provide positive energy. However, negativity will creep back into our daily lives. The best way to combat the negativity is to resist the temptation to be pulled into arguments. Accept that you may not always agree, and you that you may never change the mind of the other person. Remain calm, take a few deep breaths and remember that you are in control of your feelings and reactions.

Enjoy your hobbies. Researchers state that people with hobbies have better physical health as well as a more positive outlook on life. Schedule time to enjoy your hobby. If you don't have a hobby, take this time to learn something new, which may keep your mind sharp and boost your self-confidence.

Life can be challenging and adversity can change our lives forever. Overcoming the tough times will make us stronger and more resilient. Move forward and become an inspiration to your family and friends.



Asparagus and Walnut Salad, ONIE project

- 1/3 cup breadcrumbs
- 1/2 cup grated parmesan cheese
- 1/2 cup chopped toasted walnuts
- 1 lemon, zested & juiced
- 1/4 cup minced fresh parsley
- 1/2 tsp black pepper
- 1 lb asparagus, trimmed & thinly sliced
- 1 (15 oz) can no-salt-added black beans, drained & rinsed
- 2 Tbsp olive oil

In a medium bowl, add breadcrumbs, parmesan, walnuts, lemon zest, parsley & pepper. Mix well.

In a large bowl, add asparagus, beans, lemon juice & oil. Toss to combine.

Just before serving, add breadcrumb mixture to the large bowl & mix well. Add additional oil or lemon juice for flavor as desired.

Tips

Add chopped fresh broccoli for extra crunch!



Nutrition Facts

6 servings per recipe

Serving size (185g)

Amount per serving

Calories **230**

% Daily Value*

Total Fat 13g **17%**

Saturated Fat 2.5g **13%**

Trans Fat 0g

Cholesterol 5mg **2%**

Sodium 140mg **6%**

Total Carbohydrate 20g **7%**

Dietary Fiber 6g **21%**

Total Sugars 3g

Includes 0g Added Sugars **0%**

Protein 9g

Vitamin D 0mcg 0%

Calcium 112mg 8%

Iron 3mg 15%

Potassium 500mg 10%

* The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

Budgeting for Inflation

Inflation affects prices of pretty much everything. From gas and groceries to clothing and heating, higher prices can create financial challenges for families. As you sit down to budget and pay bills, it's a good time to fully review how household dollars are being spent.

Many of the tried-and-true cost savings methods still work. Assess how much you are spending now and on what. This will help you make important choices between your wants and needs. You'll want to take a good, honest look at what you are spending when and where.

Track food and grocery spending. Save your receipts -- from both the grocery store and restaurants where you eat out. You also may be able to find this information on your bank account and credit card records. Some store apps keep itemized records of what you spend. Don't forget to include the extras. Did you stop at the coffee shop or convenience store this week? What about that last minute take-out meal on a busy evening? Most of us spend more than we think we do. When you start to see where you are spending, on what items, and the cost of those items, you may find you can make a few changes quickly. Then really think about your wants and needs. These are different for everyone. Have a conversation with the other decision-makers in your family and see where you might cut back."

Research sales. Many stores rotate the same items on sale every few weeks or in time for certain holidays. If you can, start to track how often something like eggs or butter go on sale,

then you can anticipate when to buy them at lower prices. Many stores offer additional digital savings. Check the app before you go to the store. Sign up for coupons or discounts can add up. Look for traditional coupons in the paper, mail and at the checkout register.

Shop from the outside of the store in. In the grocery store, this is where you'll find fresh food. Get the items you need first, then go through the aisles. Skip the aisles that will tempt you -- those aisles that have items you "want," but don't need. Avoid items at the end of the aisle. These items are designed to stimulate impulse buying and the prices are not always cheaper.

Convenience foods that are packaged and processed for longer shelf life are located in the aisles. These can cost more for less food. Use your calculator and compare pricing. It may be less costly to buy a box of pasta and a can of pasta sauce than individually packaged microwaveable packets."

Consider buying the store brands instead of name brands. Some of these items have the exact are made exactly the same or have the same content/ingredients, and come from the same suppliers, but with different packaging. They often offer substantial savings.

Author: Lauren Weatherford, WVU Extension Family & Community Development Agent, Fayette & Nicholas Counties



OHCE NEWS



2023 Northeast District OHCE Meeting



OHCE: Gets Their Kicks on Route 66
Host Counties: Mayes, Nowata, & Rogers

TUESDAY, MARCH 28, 2023

Tulsa Technology Conference Center - Owasso Campus
10800 N 137th E Ave
Owasso, OK 74055

MEETING REGISTRATION: \$25 DUE BY MARCH 6TH

SEND TO: DAWN KINCAID

TUESDAY ~ MARCH 28TH ~ 9:30 A.M.

HIGHLIGHTS

- ❖ Registration/Refreshments
- ❖ Business Meeting
- ❖ State Conference Update
- ❖ President's Message
- ❖ OHCE State Committee Sessions
- ❖ Lunch
- ❖ Special Guest Speaker: Ken Busby
- ❖ Membership Awards
- ❖ Two Workshop Sessions
- ❖ Door Prize Winners Announced
- Grand Prizes will be given - \$100

SAMPLE OF WORKSHOPS

- History of Aprons
- Santa CD and Gift Bag
- Eating Healthy with Rising Prices
- Stay Strong, Stay Healthy
- Say YES to FCS, Extension, and the Land Grant System
- Bugs are Eating My Garden!
- Wills, Trusts and Estate Planning



Family & Consumer Sciences helps communities, families, youth and individuals address issues of health, wealth and well-being through research-based Extension education and programs that are proven to work.



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