

FAMILY & CONSUMER SCIENCES

January 2012

Cooperative Extension Service
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Campbell County

Family and Consumer Sciences



UPCOMING EVENTS

Homemaker NKY Area Council Mtg. CCES	January 10 1:30 p.m.
Zumba CCES (see flyer)	Jan. 25 - March 7 6:30 p.m.
Campbell Co. Homemaker Council CCES	February 14 10:00 a.m.
What Every Spouse (and Family) Should Know CCES	February 21 6:30 p.m.
The Successful Person's Guide to Time Management CCES	February 28 6:30 p.m.
Money Talk for Women Series CCES	March 5, 12, 19, 26, 27 6:30 - 9:00 p.m.
Personality Perks CCES	March 8 6:30 p.m.

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Winter Blues

Do you ever wonder why your mood changes when the season changes? Or why sometimes you feel so sluggish in the gray Kentucky winters? During season changes or during the cold winter months, it is not uncommon for some people to experience the "winter blues." What many people don't know is that the winter blues is actually a mild depression brought on by a decrease in exposure to sunlight as autumn deepens. The winter blues are primarily caused by unstable melatonin levels, a hormone produced during sleep, and serotonin, a neurotransmitter responsible for mood, hunger and sleep.

Season changes can also cause Seasonal Affective Disorder, a more severe mood disorder and counterpart to winter blues. While the symptoms associated with SAD can be severe, they can be cleared up. Individuals suffering from SAD should seek medical advice.

Although the winter blues are not as severe as long-term depression, they can change the way a person thinks, reacts, and deals with everyday challenges. If you experience two or more of these symptoms each year in the fall and into the spring you may suffer from the winter blues: Increased feelings of lethargy, difficulty waking up in the mornings as the days get shorter, difficulty concentrating and thinking creatively in comparison to the summer months, incorrectly blaming oneself for things that go wrong, difficulty performing tasks that normally seem to be easy or enjoyable, increased craving for carbohydrate-rich food like chocolate and sodas.

While there are no known ways to prevent the development of winter blues, there are steps you can take to manage symptoms and keep them from getting worse over time: Light boxes offer high intensities of light and work to improve mood; exercise decreases feelings of stress, which can exacerbate feelings of depression and improve mood; complex carbohydrates, such as pasta and rice, and simple carbohydrates, such as fruits and juices, are effective in increasing serotonin levels which can decrease feelings of winter blues; try to limit oversleeping, for it is in the winter morning that the sun is shining. A regular bedtime and wake up time can help, for the increased level of melatonin during sleep can contribute to feelings of depression.

Source: Amy F. Hosier, Family Life Specialist, University of Kentucky, College of Agriculture

Time Saving Kitchen Tips for People on the Go

Time is valuable and in short supply no matter where you are. Hectic work schedules, volunteering in the community or taking children to practices can detract from the time needed to prepare family meals. As a result, you may look at family mealtime as extra work added to an already packed schedule.

Preparing dinner does not have to be a dreaded chore. The Mix-It-Up approach provides suggestions to help you prepare meals in a matter of minutes. This approach uses pantry items, flavor, or commercial mixes that can be assembled into an assortment of delicious meals.

Begin by thinking of some sample foods and formulas that are very versatile and can turn a dinner dilemma into a daily delight. How about a “make your own” casserole that can easily be prepared ahead to bake when arriving home or microwaved quickly in about 15 to 30 minutes? What about a quick skillet dinner that can be prepared easily on a stove top? Each can be done using Starch, Protein, and Vegetable (SPV), then mixing in flavor, sauce, and adding topping after heating. Mix-It-Up meals can be as easy as 1-2-3, or SPV.

Mix-It-Up, One-Dish Meal

Begin with the SPV:

1. **Starch** - select one:
 - 2 cups uncooked pasta (macaroni, penne, spiral, or bow tie); COOKED
 - 1 cup uncooked long-grain white or brown rice; COOKED

- 4 cups uncooked noodles; COOKED
2. **Protein** - select one:
 - 2 cups cooked lean ground beef
 - 2 cups cooked and diced chicken, turkey, ham, beef or pork
 - 2 cups chopped hard-cooked egg
 - 2 (6 to 8 ounce) cans fish or seafood; flaked
 - 2 cups cooked or canned pinto, kidney, or Great Northern beans
 3. **Vegetable** - select one:
 - 1 (10-ounce) package thawed and drained frozen spinach, broccoli, green beans, or green peas
 - 1 (16-ounce) can green beans, peas, carrots, or corn; drained
 - 2 cups sliced fresh zucchini

To complete the meal, add the following:

- Sauce** - select one:
- 2 cups white sauce or 1 can condensed soup (cream of mushroom, cream of celery, cheese, tomato), mixed with milk to make 2 cups
 - 1 (16-ounce) can diced tomatoes with juice
 - 1 bottle (12 ounces or 1 1/2 cups) of your favorite prepared sauce
- Flavor** - select one or more:
- 1/2 cup chopped celery, 1/4 cup chopped onion, 1/4 cup sliced black olives

- 1 to 2 teaspoons mixed dried leaf herbs (basil, thyme, marjoram, tarragon)
- Salt and pepper, to taste

Combine ingredients and heat until product reaches 165° F

Finish with topping. Return product, with topping, to oven for heating:

- Topping - select one or more, if desired.
- 2 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese
 - 1/4 cup shredded Swiss, cheddar, or Monterey Jack cheese
 - 1/4 cup buttered bread crumbs
 - 1/4 to 1/2 cup canned fried onion rings
 - 1/4 cup of your favorite nut

Sources:

Janet Johnson, M.A.E., Allen County Extension Agent for Family and Consumer Sciences

Tracy Thornton, B.S., Butler County Extension Agent for Family and Consumer Sciences

Valerie Hudson, B.S., Monroe County Extension Agent for Family and Consumer Sciences

Take Care of Your Vision



From waking in the morning until resting your head on the pillow at night—your eyes are critical to your day-to-day activities. It is very important to take care of your eyes and eyesight. Often, the loss of eyesight contributes to the loss of quality of life. When an individual does not have good vision, there will be a limit in their movement and independence.

An individual should be going to an eye doctor at least once a year for an annual checkup. If it has been a long time since you have been to the eye doctor, talk to family and friends about who they recommend. Someone you know may have a great suggestion.

There are a few health matters you will want to share with your eye doctor. You want to tell your eye doctor if you have any medical conditions such as diabetes, high blood pressure or other serious illnesses. You should also share your health history and if there is any family history of eye problems. If you have had any changes in your vision you should tell your doctor. Some examples are double vision, tired eyes, itchiness or other eye issues. You should share the names of the medications you are currently taking. Some medications can impact the eyes and vision. Be prepared

to talk about what you would like to do if you need glasses or contact lenses.

What Happens at an Eye Exam?

- **Visual Acuity** - A visual acuity test is simply a measure of how well you see. This test is performed by reading letters on a chart that is 20 feet away from you. On this chart there will be letters of all different sizes.
- **Extraocular Movements** - This test will check your field of vision, including your side vision, also known as peripheral vision. For this test, a technician or doctor will stand in front of you and ask you to cover one eye. You will be asked to let the doctor know when you can see her hand or an object she is holding.
- **Cover Test** - This test helps determine how well your eyes work together. The doctor will ask you to focus your eyes on an object. The doctor will then cover one eye for a moment and then uncover it. This test is helping find possi-



ble depth perception problems or other issues.

- **Refraction** - This test happens when a doctor asks you which option is better, A or B, while they are flipping lenses. There are usually several different lenses that you will be looking through. You may go through several sets and you will do this for both eyes. The results of this test are usually used to determine your prescription for glasses or contact lenses.
- **Slit Lamp Exam** - The doctor will use a slit lamp to examine your actual eye

and eye structures including the eyelids and eyelashes. The lamp has a very bright light and magnifies your eyes so that the doctor can see each part of your eye. This test will help determine if there is any disease in the eye.

Healthy eyes and the ability to see clearly is necessary for everyday living.

Source: Adult Health Bulletin, January 2012, University of Kentucky, College of Agriculture

Recipe



Asian Asparagus Salad

- 1 pound fresh asparagus
- 1 1/2 tablespoons low sodium soy sauce
- 2 teaspoons sugar or artificial sweetener
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 2 teaspoons sesame seeds



1. Snap off and discard the root ends of the asparagus.
2. Wash remaining stalks thoroughly.
3. Slice stalks into 1 1/2 inch lengths on the diagonal.

4. Blanch asparagus for 1-3 minutes in boiling water, until bright green in color.
5. Cool immediately under cold water and drain.
6. Combine soy sauce, sugar, olive oil, and sesame seeds in a small glass bowl. Mix dressing until sugar is dissolved.
7. In a gallon zip-seal bag, add asparagus and dressing. Turn bag to coat asparagus with dressing and chill in the refrigerator for 15 minutes. Turn bag again and chill for an additional 15 minutes before serving.

Yield: 4, 1/2 cup servings

Nutrition Analysis: 70 calories, 4.5 g fat, 0 mg cholesterol, 250 mg sodium, 7 g carbohydrate, 2 g fiber, 3 g protein

KIDS AND COLDS

If your child suddenly has a sore throat, starts sneezing and keeps blowing his nose, chances are he has a cold. Colds are common, especially this time of year. An average child may have up to 8 colds in a year.

Signs that you or your child may have a cold include a sore throat, stuffy or runny nose, sneezing or coughing. Kids may also have a mild fever, have a headache, have a loss of appetite or be very tired.

Colds are most likely to be spread during the first 2 to 4 days after the first signs appear. However, colds can be spread up to 3 weeks after the start of the illness. In the home, a sick child can spread the virus through kissing other family members or touching family members if their hands have not been recently washed. Reminding children to wash their hands is one way to prevent the spread of colds. It can also be spread from particles in the air, so remind family members to cough or sneeze into their elbow, not their hands. If they do cough or sneeze into their hands, have them wash their hands immediately. If your child touches an object, such as a doorknob, and then someone else touches the doorknob and then their nose or eyes, they may catch the virus. Remember to wash your own hands often. If you are picking up used tissues you will want to wash your hands immediately. If you have a sick child, you will want to wash their sheets and towels so that others will not use them. You may even need to clean their toys. Cleaning computer keyboards, video game controllers and cell phones is also a good idea.



Unfortunately, there is no medicine you can take to cure a cold. Some medicines are made to reduce the symptoms such as a headache and a fever. Talk to your doctor or healthcare provider before starting your child on any medication.

Some ways that you may be able to help your child get through the cold include:

- Saline drops for the nose - these can help loosen up some of the mucus and make it easier to blow the nose
- Cough drops for the sore throat
- A warm bath or heating pad for sore muscles
- A steamy shower to help your child breathe a little easier

Although most colds last up to a week, if you think your child has more than a cold or is getting worse, go ahead and make an appointment with your healthcare provider.

Source: Parent Health Bulletin, University of Kentucky College of Agriculture, January 2012

Track Your Current Behavior

People often "disconnect" themselves from their personal health habits and financial practices. However, it's hard to change behavior, to improve your health or increase your wealth, when you don't fully acknowledge the problems in your current situation. Trying to make changes without an identified starting point is like making a plane reservation and not indicating the airport that you're leaving from. You have to admit that you have a problem before you can take steps to address it. Denial is common with both health and personal finance issues, even when there's ample visible evidence (e.g., a bulging waistline and increasing credit card balance) to the contrary.

Awareness of one's current behaviors and shortfalls is the first of the 5 A's of successful behavior change. The other four are ability (being able to make a change), ambition (a strong desire to change), attitude (a positive state of mind about changing), and action (taking steps to actually change).

Most people don't have a clue how many calories they consume daily or how many dollars they spend monthly on incidental expenses such as food and entertainment. One of the best ways to increase awareness is to keep a Food and Activity Log to record everything you eat each day and every time you are physically active for 10 minutes or more. A financial counterpart is an Income and Expense Log to write down what you earned and spent daily for a typical month or two. Keeping written records, although tedious, has been shown to be an effective way to track current practices and make behavioral changes in eating, exercise, and spending.

Source: June 2008 HEEL program, University of Kentucky, College of Agriculture

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