

Family and Community Health

“Connections” in

Tom Green County

TEXAS A&M
AGRI LIFE
EXTENSION

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GO FURTHER *with* FOOD



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Whether it's starting the day off right with a healthy breakfast or fueling before a workout, the foods you choose can make a real difference.

March is National Nutrition Month, the time to return to the basics of healthful eating. This year, the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics encourages everyone to “Go Further with Food.”

Planning meals and snacks in advance will add nutrients, save you money and help reduce food waste. Create a meal prep plan that includes a variety of your favorite, healthful foods.

Buy only the amount of food that your family can eat or freeze within a few days and plan ways to use leftovers later in the week. Be mindful of portion sizes – just eat and drink the amount that’s right for you.

To find a personalized plan that works best for you and your family, consult a registered dietitian nutritionist.

Learn how to go further with food and find a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist in your area by visiting eatright.org and following hashtag National Nutrition Month.

Stretch Your Food Dollar

Stay within your grocery budget while feeding your family right with these five tips.

1. Buy in Bulk when items go on sale.
2. Think Canned and Frozen as they can be cheaper than fresh and not as perishable.
3. Use a Slow Cooker to utilize moist heat in tenderizing less expensive but tougher cuts of meat.
4. Cook meals in large batches, then freeze for later.
5. Take advantage of loyalty cards, private labels, coupons and specials.

Source: *Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics—eatright.org*

“A good friend is like a four leaf clover, hard to find and lucky to have.”



To Repair or Replace

As homeowners with bills to pay, our tendency is to buy an appliance and keep it running as long as possible—but this may not be the greatest strategy for energy efficiency. Old, inefficient appliances bloat electric bills because they eat up more energy than they are worth.

To figure out how much energy your appliances use, check for an energy efficiency label. The amount of energy typically used per year is listed in kilowatt-hours. If a label is not available, a home inspector can estimate energy use by determining the age of the appliances in the house and assessing their operation by checking for signs of wear and damage.

To translate this energy use into electric expense, check your utility bill to find out the kilowatt-hour rate, then multiply the rate by the number of kilowatt-hours your appliance uses per year to figure out the annual cost it takes to operate the appliance.

By adding this figure to the initial purchase and repair costs of the appliance, you then have a comparison level to decide whether your appliance would cost you more or less to run than a new one.

If your appliance is nearing the end of its life span, it's time to calculate whether repairing it or replacing it will cost more.

Below are some typical life spans of appliances:

Dishwasher: 13 years
Air conditioner: 15 years
Microwave: 15 years
Refrigerator: 15 years
Washer/dryer: 16 years
Furnace: 17 years
Range: 18 years



Consider improvements to some of the biggest energy-using appliances in the household. A new refrigerator uses about 50 percent less energy than older models and can feature a CFC-free, sealed system, more storage and easier cleaning.

A new washer or dryer unit uses 30 percent less energy than older models and features greater capacity, better cleaning, quieter operation, preprogrammed cycle selections, reduced water usage and dryness sensors.

As a result of technological improvements made by appliance manufacturers, newer machines not only use less electricity, they also have more operational features and are made to last longer than counterparts produced within even the last decade.

Source: Texas Co-op Power, February 2018

Facts About Your NEW Medicare Card

Medicare will be mailing new Medicare cards to all people with Medicare starting in April 2018.

NEW Medicare number: Medicare is removing Social Security Numbers from Medicare cards; you will have a new 11-digit identifier that is a mix of numbers and letters unique to you.

April 2018: Mailing begins April 2018 continuing through April 2019, so your card may arrive at a different time than your friend or neighbor.

Automatic change: You don't have to do anything. **CMS will send your new Medicare card in the mail.** If someone calls needing to "confirm your identity, or your Medicare number," it's a SCAM - **hang up** and call the TX-SMP for help.

Same benefits: Your coverage stays the same and you can start using your new card as soon as you receive it. Start using it immediately.

The card is free: No one should tell you there is a one-time fee or that you will lose benefits if you don't pay a fee or answer their questions.

SCAM ALERT

Scammers posing as Medicare reps will call asking for your current Medicare number & offer to send you a new card. Stay Alert. *Never* give your information to anyone who calls you on the phone or comes to your door!

Contact the Texas Senior Medicare Patrol at 1-888-341-6187
to report Medicare Fraud, Error, or Abuse!

Shamrock Shake Smoothie

INGREDIENTS:

1 frozen large banana, sliced
1 cup fresh spinach
1/2 cup low-fat vanilla yogurt
1/2 cup low-fat milk
1/3 cup packed fresh mint leaves, plus more for garnish
4 ice cubes
Kiwi slices for garnish

PREPARATION:

1. Combine banana, spinach, yogurt, milk, mint and ice in a blender. Blend until smooth.
2. Cut kiwi slices into shamrock shapes and thread onto a skewer. Serve the smoothie garnished with the kiwi and mint, if desired.

Prep Time: 5 Minutes

Ready In : 5 Minutes

Nutrition Facts Per Serving:

Calories: 287
Total Fat: 3 g
Saturated Fat: 2g
Total Fiber: 6g
Protein: 14g
Carbohydrates : 54 g
Cholesterol: 12 mg
Sugars: 37g
Added Sugars: 8g
Sodium: 191 mg
Potassium: 1,012 mg

Vitamin A (105% daily value)
Vitamin C (52% daily value)
Calcium (48% daily value)
Iron (33% daily value)

Exchanges: 2 dairy, 2 fruit,
1 vegetable

Yields: 1 Serving

Serving Size: 2 1/2 Cups



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Family and Community Health "Connections" is provided by the following Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service

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Vacant, Runnels County
Vacant, San Saba County
Jane Rowan, Taylor County
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Mandi Seaton, D7 Regional Program Leader

Tom Green EEA News

- **District 7 Spring TEEA Conference & Retreat meeting:**
March 20-21, 2018
4-H Conference Center in Brownwood, Texas
- **EEA Association and Veribest Cub meeting:**
March 13, 2018 @ 9:30
Veribest Methodist Church
"New Medicare Cards & How to detect SCAMS" by
Courtney Redman, County Extension Agent - FCH