

Family and Community Health “Connections” in Tom Green County

GET A HEALTHY START TO THE NEW YEAR

The start of a new year is the perfect opportunity to begin a resolution to live healthier. It might include quitting smoking, reducing stress, working out more or a creating a weight-loss goal. Remember to speak with your primary health care provider before significantly changing your daily health and fitness routine, especially if you have chronic health issues.

Discover the secret to success.

New Year’s resolutions are easy to make, but not so easy to achieve. The key to success lies in developing a structured health plan. The health plan will outline:

Where you’re headed.

Why you want to get there.

What challenges you may face along the way.

How you plan to work through the challenges.

Create a health vision.

A health vision is critical to clearly visualize your goals. The first step is to create a powerful, broad statement that describes who you want to be once you have met those goals. Think about a healthy future and what that might look like to you. Convert those thoughts into a short, clear statement: your health vision.

While there are many ways to write a health vision, one popular format is: “I want _____, so _____.” Examples include:

“I want to lose weight, so I have more energy to enjoy life.”

“I want to be physically fit, so I am no longer out of breath.”

“I want to have better bal-

ance between my work and personal life, so I have more quality time for myself and for my family.”

Identify your motivators.

After you create a health vision that you feel confident you can attain, determine which motivators will drive your desire to make those changes. Some common motivators are:

Buying clothes in smaller sizes.

Having energy to play with your children.

Watching your grandchildren grow up.

Reducing high blood pressure medication.

Accept challenges, and work on strategies.

Nearly everyone will face challenges during their health journey. Perhaps it’s a busy family life, work, school, medical issues or peer pressure to continue bad habits. It’s important to identify potential challenges and envision strategies to address them as part of an effective health plan.

Set SMART goals

Goals help keep you focused. Achieving identified goals produces a feeling of accomplishment and much-needed motivation to fuel your health journey. SMART goals are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-framed:

Specific: What am I going to do?

Measurable: How will I track my progress?

Achievable: What steps will I take to make this happen?

Relevant: Is this important enough to me to want to do it?

Time-framed: When will I do this?

Your SMART goals should consist of long-term and short-term goals. Establish your long-term goal first. An example of a long-term goal is “I will walk briskly for 30 minutes a day at least five days a week.” However, if you haven’t been exercising on a regular basis, there often is a need for intermediary, short-term goals. For example: “I will walk 15 minutes during my lunch hour at least three days each week for the next month.” After reaching your short-term goal, extend your efforts gradually, until you ultimately accomplish your long-term goal.

Don’t give up

It can be difficult to make changes to your lifestyle, so ensure you have a network of family and friends to encourage and partner with you. Also consider keeping a health journal to record your activities and achievements, adding to your motivation and accountability.

Embracing a healthy lifestyle is an ongoing, dynamic process. Creating a health plan, engaging your support system, and celebrating short-term and long-term successes are positive behaviors that will deliver benefits this year and beyond. Use the new year as an opportunity to begin the journey of living a healthier life.

Get more life coaching support, health tools, weight management advice and wellness videos to live your healthiest.

Source: <https://www.mayoclinichealthsystem.org/hometown-health/speaking-of-health/get-a-healthy-start-to-the-new-year>

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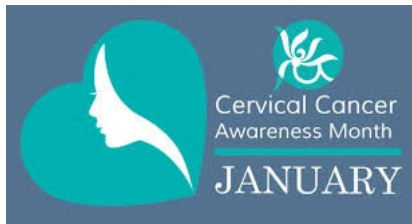
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Cervical Health Awareness Month



The United States Congress designated January as Cervical Health Awareness Month. More than 14,000 women in the United States are diagnosed with invasive cervical cancer each year, but the disease is preventable with vaccination and appropriate screening. During January, NCCC and its many local chapters across the country highlight issues related to cervical cancer, HPV disease and the importance of early detection. While NCCC chapters host events throughout the year, January is a month with a special focus as chapters celebrate Cervical Health Awareness Month and work to spread the word in their communities.

NCCC and the American Sexual Health Association (ASHA) also offer a range of resources (listed below) to educate the public and healthcare providers about cervical health, from fact sheets to episodes of ASHA's Sex+Health podcast.

What Can You Do?

As someone who is interested in educating and advocating for increased knowledge of cervical cancer and HPV disease, you can do a lot. You can contact your local media to encourage coverage of Cervical Health Awareness Month, offering this ASHA/NCCC press release. You can also send this proclamation to your mayor, or local legislative office to publicly recognize Cervical Health Awareness Month.

You can also check out the resources on this page—download, display and distribute our cervical cancer awareness month posters and help NCCC and ASHA

get the word out on social media.

Vaccination

HPV vaccines can help prevent infection from both high risk HPV types that can lead to cervical cancer and low risk types that cause genital warts. The CDC recommends all boys and girls get the HPV vaccine at age 11 or 12 as the vaccine produces a stronger immune response when taken during the preteen years. For this reason, up until age 14, only two doses are the vaccine are required. The vaccine is available for all males and females through age 45 but, for those 15 and older, a full three-dose series is needed.

Testing

A Pap test can find cell changes to the cervix caused by HPV. HPV tests find the virus and help healthcare providers know which women are at highest risk for cervical cancer. Pap and HPV tests (either alone or in combination) are recommended for women over 30: each woman should ask her health care provider how often she should be screened and which tests are right for her.

Take Part in a Clinical Trial
Clinical trials for cervical and other cancers can be of tremendous value but how do you find one that's right for you? Our page on research studies gets you up to speed and links you to opportunities.

<https://www.nccc-online.org/cervical-health-awareness-month/>

Healthy Eating for a Healthy Weight

An eating plan that helps manage your weight includes a variety of healthy foods. Add an array of colors to your plate and think of it as eating the rainbow. Dark, leafy greens, oranges, and tomatoes—even fresh herbs—are loaded with vitamins, fiber, and minerals. Adding frozen peppers, broccoli, or onions to stews and omelets gives them a quick and convenient boost of color and nutrients.

According to the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, a healthy eating plan:

Emphasizes fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and fat-free or low-fat milk and milk products

Includes a variety of protein foods such as seafood, lean meats and poultry, eggs, legumes (beans and peas), soy products, nuts, and seeds.

Is low in saturated fats, trans fats, cholesterol, salt (sodium), and added sugars

Stays within your daily calorie needs

USDA's MyPlate Plan can help you identify what and how much to eat from the different food groups while staying within your recommended calorie allowance. You can also download My Food Diary pdf icon[PDF-106KB] to help track your meals.

Fruit

Fresh, frozen, or canned fruits are great choices. Try fruits beyond apples and bananas such as mango, pineapple or kiwi fruit. When fresh fruit is not in season, try a frozen, canned, or dried variety. Be aware that dried and canned fruit may contain added sugars or syrups. Choose canned

varieties of fruit packed in water or in its own juice.

Vegetables

Add variety to grilled or steamed vegetables with an herb such as rosemary. You can also sauté (panfry) vegetables in a non-stick pan with a small amount of cooking spray. Or try frozen or canned vegetables for a quick side dish—just microwave and serve. Look for canned vegetables without added salt, butter, or cream sauces. For variety, try a new vegetable each week.

Calcium-rich foods

In addition to fat-free and low-fat milk, consider low-fat and fat-free yogurts without added sugars. These come in a variety of flavors and can be a great dessert substitute.

Meats

If your favorite recipe calls for frying fish or breaded chicken, try healthier variations by baking or grilling. Maybe even try dry beans in place of meats. Ask friends and search the internet and magazines for recipes with fewer calories — you might be surprised to find you have a new favorite dish!

Comfort Foods

Healthy eating is all about balance. You can enjoy your favorite foods, even if they are high in calories, fat or added sugars. The key is eating them only once in a while and balancing them with healthier foods and more physical activity.

Some general tips for comfort foods:

Eat them less often. If you normally eat these foods every day, cut back to once a week or once a month.

Eat smaller amounts. If your favorite higher-calorie food is a chocolate bar, have a smaller size or only half a bar.

Try a lower-calorie version. Use lower-calorie ingredients or prepare food differently. For example, if your macaroni and cheese recipe includes whole milk, butter, and full-fat cheese, try remaking it with non-fat milk, less butter, low-fat cheese, fresh spinach and tomatoes. Just remember to not increase your portion size.

Source:

https://www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/healthy_eating/index.html



Spicy Cashew Shrimp



Ingredients

2 c. long-grain white rice
 1/4 c. low-sodium soy sauce
 3 tbsp. chopped fresh ginger (from a 3-inch piece)
 2 tbsp. fresh orange juice
 2 tbsp. rice vinegar
 1 tbsp. light brown sugar
 1/4 tsp. red pepper flakes
 1 tbsp. sesame oil
 2 tbsp. vegetable oil
 1 1/2 lb. large shrimp, peeled and deveined
 1 tsp. kosher salt
 Black pepper, to taste
 2 red bell peppers, cut into chunks
 1 onion, cut into chunks
 1 c. salted roasted cashews
 Thinly sliced scallions, for topping

1. Combine the rice and 3 cups water in a medium saucepan and bring to a boil over medium-high heat. Reduce to a simmer, cover and cook until the water is absorbed, about 15 minutes. Remove from the heat and set aside, covered, for 10 more minutes. Fluff the rice with a fork and set aside.
2. Meanwhile, whisk the soy sauce, ginger, orange juice, vinegar, brown sugar and red pepper flakes in a small bowl; set aside.
3. Heat the sesame oil and 1 tablespoon vegetable oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Season the shrimp with the salt and a few grinds of pepper. Working in two batches, add the shrimp to the pan and cook, flipping halfway through, until they are just opaque and beginning to turn pink, 2 to 3 minutes; remove to a plate.
4. Add the remaining 1 tablespoon vegetable oil to the same skillet and heat over medium-high heat. Add the bell peppers and onion and cook, stirring occasionally, until the vegetables just begin to soften, about 5 minutes. Pour in the soy sauce mixture.
5. Bring the mixture to a boil, then reduce the heat to low and simmer until reduced slightly and starting to thicken, about 3 minutes. Stir in the shrimp and cashews to coat in the sauce. Serve over the rice and top with scallions.

Source:
<https://www.thepioneerwoman.com/food-cooking/recipes/a32627241/spicy-cashew-shrimp-recipe/>

Tom Green EEA News

Veribest Club Meeting:

January 11, 2022
 @ County Extension Office
 9:30 a.m.

Program:
 Shannon Hospital Services
 By: Mrs. Stone

Hostess: Helen Roach

Family & Community Health “*Connections*” is provided by these Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service Family and Community Health Agents:

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