

THIS 'N THAT

Williams County Extension Homemakers and Friends Newsletter

MARCH 2010

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March is here... a time that reminds us that spring is just around the corner and it is National Nutrition Month and Extension Living Well Month. These two programs fit hand in hand, as eating right is an important component of Living Well.

Family and Consumer Sciences' professionals and local staff provide education that is critical to the quality of life of adults, youth and families.

Because the health and well-being of the family is crucial to the functioning of the Nation we provide adults and youth with the necessary skills and knowledge to help them achieve the best quality of life possible. We know that physically, psychologically, socially, and emotionally strong families provide strength for future generations.

Our NDSU Williams County Extension Service offers educational workshops, seminars, publications and web-sites to help families and individuals, farms, businesses and communities. Our programs enable citizens to gain knowledge and skills to lead full and productive lives. *Living Well- Raising kids, Eating right, Spending smart.*

The Williston Go Red Committee has been hard at work for several months now. I hope we will see you at the Kick-off event for Go Red on March 23rd. Dr Beverly Tong will share information on Women's Heart Health that evening and we will take registrations for the entire program. Receive a bag full of heart health information and goodies. Put the schedule up on your bulletin board and plan to join us for grocery store tours and weekly walks.

I will be in Bismarck for spring conference March 30–April 1st so I don't think I will get the April newsletter finished before the Easter holiday. So, I will wish you a Happy Easter early! I'll be busy baking my Easter Bread when I get home... (Easter day is also Warren's birthday this year– a double celebration!) Mary



CALENDAR

- **March 11** Williston State College Health Fair
- **March 16 & 17** Farm & Ranch Show, Raymond Center
- **March 23– 5:30 pm** Go Red Kick-Off Event with Dr. Beverly Tong, WSC "Well"
- **April 8– 7 pm** Go Red Grocery Store Tour at Wal Mart (led by Mary Froelich, Williams County Extension Agent)
- **April 15– 7 pm** Go Red Grocery Store Tour at Economart (led by Sue Grundstad, LRD, Upper Missouri District Health Unit)
- **April 22– 7 pm** Go Red Grocery Store Tour at Albertsons (led by Sandra Horob, LRD, Mercy Medical Center)
- **3/24–4/6** Williston JC Penney Round Up– Round up your purchase to the nearest dollar and the change comes to Wms. Co. 4-H
- **3/26–4/18** Williston TSC Paper Clover Promotion– Buy a Clover for \$1.00 at TSC and the proceeds go to National, State & Local 4-H

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DURING NATIONAL NUTRITION MONTH AND BEYOND, THE KEY TO A HEALTHFUL DIET IS IMPROVING YOUR NUTRITION FROM THE GROUND UP

CHICAGO – It's common knowledge that a healthful diet is an important part of a healthful lifestyle, but most people have trouble figuring out what to do when planning a complete diet overhaul. During National Nutrition Month®, the American Dietetic Association reminds everyone that an easy way to focus on eating better is to start with the basics: build your nutritional health from the ground up.

“By starting slowly and giving yourself a good foundation, you can work towards a healthier life,” says registered dietitian and ADA spokesperson Toby Smithson. “Change doesn't have to be dramatic to make a difference.”

Smithson suggests ways to improve your nutrition from the ground up:

1. **Focus on fruits and veggies:** “Take a good look at your current diet and you'll probably realize you're not eating enough fruits or vegetables,” says Smithson. “Add a serving each day to one meal and increase it every few weeks. Adding more of these foods into your diet is important whether you buy frozen, fresh or organic.”
2. **Look locally:** From farmer's markets to community-supported agriculture, you have many options to find new, fresh foods in your area. “This can be a great way to eat well and support your community at the same time,” Smithson says.
3. **Make calories count:** “Too often, people think of foods as good or bad and that only those on the ‘good foods’ list are okay to eat,” says Smithson. “When you're choosing between options, focus instead on the one with more of the vitamins and nutrients that you need. Sometimes, foods with fewer calories aren't always the healthiest options.” To figure out how many calories you need to achieve a healthy weight, visit www.mypyramid.gov.
4. **Test your taste buds:** A healthy eating plan emphasizes fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low-fat or fat-free dairy and includes lean meats, poultry, fish, beans and nuts. “Those are the basics, but within this wide range there are always opportunities to try new things and find new favorites,” Smithson says. “Expand your horizons. Try a fish you've never eaten before or find a new vegetable recipe. By testing yourself, you might find new healthy favorites to add to your regular grocery list.”
5. **Trick yourself with treats:** “A healthful diet doesn't mean deprivation,” says Smithson. “If you have a sweet tooth, have fruit and yogurt for dessert. If you want a snack in the afternoon, have some trail mix or nuts. There is no reason to go hungry just because you're making healthful changes.”



Strawberry Yogurt Shake

Ingredients:

1/2 cup unsweetened pineapple juice
3/4 cup plain low fat yogurt
1-1/2 cups frozen, unsweetened strawberries

Directions:

Add ingredients, in order listed, to blender container. Puree at medium speed, until thick and smooth.



FRESH, CANNED OR FROZEN? DURING NATIONAL NUTRITION MONTH, AMERICAN DIETETIC ASSOCIATION REMINDS CONSUMERS ALL PRODUCE CAN BE ENJOYED ANYTIME



CHICAGO – When it comes to buying fruits and vegetables, many factors play a role in which types consumers choose, including nutritional value. Are there significant differences among fresh, frozen, canned or dried? The American Dietetic Association says no matter what form they take, fruits and vegetables are good-for-you foods that can be enjoyed at any time.

“While fresh fruits and vegetables are recommended, this does not mean they are the only healthy option,” says registered dietitian and ADA Spokesperson Ximena Jimenez. “Research shows frozen and canned foods can be as nutritious as fresh. In fact, since some nutrients in canned produce are more easily absorbed in the body, these can sometimes be better nutrition choices than fresh.”

March is National Nutrition Month®, when ADA and its members reinforce the importance of a healthy eating plan, which includes a variety of fruits and vegetables. The theme for 2010 is “Nutrition from the Ground Up.”

“This year’s National Nutrition Month theme is a great reminder for eating fruits, vegetables, grains, nuts and beans to create a healthy diet and understanding the role of nutrition in getting and staying healthy,” Jimenez says.

Fresh, canned or frozen, Jimenez offers ideas for getting the most from your fruits and vegetables, no matter what form your produce takes:

For canned fruits and vegetables:

- **Get the juice.** “For canned fruit, look for descriptions on the label like ‘packed in its own juices,’ ‘packed in fruit juice,’ ‘unsweetened’ or ‘in syrup.’ Fruits packed in juices contain less added sugar and fewer calories than fruits packed in syrup,” Jimenez says.
- **Pinch the salt.** If you are cutting back on sodium, look for descriptions such as “no salt added” and “reduced sodium” on the labels of canned vegetables.
- **Savor the flavor.** Use canned fruits and vegetables immediately after opening for maximum flavor and nutritional value. “Handle leftovers as you would any perishable food,” Jimenez says. “Remove them from the can, place in an airtight container and store in the refrigerator or freezer to retain taste and nutritional quality.”

For frozen varieties:

- **Forgo the fat.** When buying frozen vegetables, control fat and calories by choosing plain vegetables or those made with low-fat sauces.
- **Check the label.** “Frozen fruits come in both sweetened and unsweetened varieties, so make sure to check the label and choose unsweetened if you are limiting your sugar intake. Frozen fruit bars also make a nutritious snack, but read the label to learn if they’re made with real fruit juice,” Jimenez says.

Dried fruits:

- **Pick the plain.** “Dried fruit contains lots of fiber, vitamins A and C, potassium and folate, but also more calories per serving than fresh fruit because of natural and sometimes added sugar,” Jimenez says. “Also, some dried fruits are preserved with sulfite, which can trigger allergic reactions. So read the package label to make sure your choice is in line with your healthful and safe eating plan.”
- **Have a handful.** “Dried fruit is a great portable snack. It can also jazz up salads, pancakes, bread recipes or a bowl of cereal,” Jimenez says.

“There are thousands of varieties of canned and frozen fruits and vegetables on grocery store shelves, which makes it easy to find foods that suit your tastes and fit into a healthy eating plan,” Jimenez says. “And it’s always fun to try a new food or find a new way to cook your old favorites.”

STRENGTH TRAINING GOOD ON MANY LEVELS

Strength training has numerous benefits, and research has shown that strength training can help people who are healthy, as well as those who have some health concerns, including heart disease or arthritis. While weight training often is considered a male pursuit, research is showing numerous benefits for everyone regardless of their age or gender.



Of course, consulting with your health-care professional before beginning an exercise program is good advice, especially if you have a heart condition, high blood pressure, arthritis or diabetes.

According to research summaries provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, strength training can help decrease pain associated with osteoarthritis or rheumatoid arthritis. In one study, strength training reduced osteoarthritis pain by 43 percent.

Strength training helps keep your bones strong and can decrease your risk of fractures and falls, which become more common as people age. Having more muscle mass as a result of strength training also boosts your metabolism, thereby helping with weight maintenance or loss. Muscle mass burns more calories than fat.

Strength training has been shown to help people with diabetes improve their blood glucose control. For some people, strength training also helps improve mental health and can improve their sleep quality.

Before beginning a strength training program, be sure to get proper training to maintain the right form and prevent injury. Work at the proper intensity, too. Start with a weight that is comfortable for you. Keep a journal of your activities so you can see your progress through time. Be patient with yourself.

After a workout, you might want to refuel yourself with this recipe that's ready in short order. This recipe makes two servings but is easy to scale up for a family.

Quick Chicken Parmesan

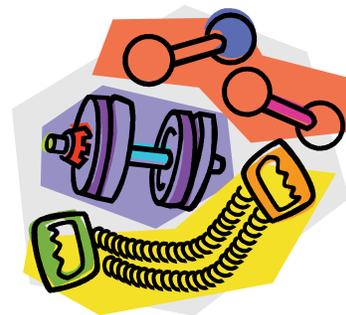
2 small chicken breasts

1 c. dry whole wheat pasta (2 c. cooked)

1 c. prepared spaghetti sauce

1/2 c. shredded cheese (mozzarella recommended)

Parmesan cheese



Cook the chicken in a pan on medium heat (in a small amount of oil or broth, as needed) to an internal temperature of 165 degrees F. Prepare pasta according to package directions. Heat the spaghetti sauce in a microwave while the chicken is cooking. Place the chicken on top of the drained, cooked pasta. Pour the tomato sauce and shredded cheese on top of the chicken. Sprinkle with Parmesan cheese. Serve hot. Makes two servings.

Each serving has 380 calories, 4 grams (g) of fat and 45 g of carbohydrate.

Condensed from Prairie Fare by Julie Garden-Robinson

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