

Living Well

FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES NEWSLETTER FOR NORTHEAST COLORADO



November – December, 2020

Tips for a Healthier Year!

Well, one real life lesson of 2020 is the importance of improving and maintaining our overall health.

Using the program surveys of the Healthier Weigh challenge, as well as current health/nutrition research, there are several things each person/family can do to improve their health by working towards a healthy weight and fitness. In early 2020, 132 participants completed the challenge. Together they lost 1095.5 pounds and 310.9 inches in waistlines.

Behavior Changes:

- Exercising and walking more
- Drinking more water
- More active lifestyle
- Eating healthier – more fruits and vegetables, portion control, less sugars, salt and fat
- Mindfulness (self-care, positive attitude and stress relief)
- Better sleep routine



So, what are the Health Benefits real people have experienced in as little as 12 weeks?

- ✓ Improved overall health – feel better & more energy
- ✓ Better sleep
- ✓ Weight loss
- ✓ Mindful of self-care and health choices
- ✓ Reduced stress levels and negative outcomes
- ✓ Better eating and activity habits – lifestyle patterns
- ✓ Improved blood pressure and blood glucose
- ✓ Less joint and muscle pain and stiffness

Mark your calendars and start recruiting your teams for A Healthier Weigh 2021 – for a 12-week health and fitness challenge for teams and individuals. The new challenge will begin the week of January 4, 2021 – ending the week before Easter.

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GOLDEN PLAINS AREA
COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY
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Colorado State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture and Kit Carson, Phillips, Sedgwick, Washington, and Yuma Counties cooperating.

Extension programs are available to all without discrimination.

S EASONAL A FFECTIVE D ISORDER



Seasonal Affective Disorder or SAD is a type of depression that is linked to the change of seasons. As summer days shorten and the cold temperatures send us into fall and then winter, many people around the globe experience periods of depression. SAD typically starts in late fall and early winter. Once spring and longer days return, depression subsides. It is believed when the daylight hours decrease, the brain creates chemicals differently which can change how you feel.

Signs and Symptoms of SAD

- Having low energy
- Oversleeping
- Overeating and craving carbohydrates (carbs)
- Experiencing weight gain
- Withdrawing from normal social activities (hibernating)

If you experience these symptoms and think you may be suffering from SAD, please contact your doctor or a mental health provider.



Common Treatments for SAD

- Medication - There are several medications your doctor may prescribe you to help treat SAD.
- Light Therapy – A common treatment works by increasing light exposure with artificial light. Sitting in front of a light box 20-60 minutes in the morning can alleviate symptoms. This light box is 20 times brighter than ordinary indoor lighting. You can also spend more time outside during daylight hours.
- Psychotherapy – Talking with a mental health provider can help reduce negative thoughts and replace them with more positive thoughts.
- Vitamin D supplementation – This is not the most effective treatment. It may be used in combination with other treatments; but research has found many people experiencing SAD are low in vitamin D.

If you or someone you know are experiencing thoughts of suicide, contact your doctor or mental health provider immediately. You can also call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255.

If you want to learn more about SAD, check out these websites.

- American Psychiatric Association <https://www.psychiatry.org/patients-families/depression/seasonal-affective-disorder>
- National Institute of Mental Health <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/seasonal-affective-disorder/index.shtml>
- Teens Health <https://kidshealth.org/en/teens/sad.html>

Reducing Food Waste

So many things during this time of year revolve around food – holiday dinners, office parties, get-togethers with family and friends, food item gifts...the list goes on and on. Food is an integral part of celebrations, but it can also get over served, overlooked and forgotten and end up in the dumpster. About 40% of the food supply (1500 calories/person/day) in our country goes uneaten. Discarded food in homes and foodservice makes up about 60% of the total food wasted and is almost completely avoidable. Approximately 22% of solid wastes in the US landfills are food. These foods then decompose to produce methane, a potent greenhouse gas. Preventing food waste not only has environmental benefits from this, but also saves money and resources used to produce it (fertilizer, cropland, fresh water, total energy use). Reduce food waste, not only during the holiday season, but all year round with the following tips:

Shop the refrigerator first. Check what is in the refrigerator before buying more food. Have at least one “leftover” meal each week to use up the food in the refrigerator.

Move older food products to the front of the fridge/cupboard/freezer so they get used before the newly purchased ones.

Keep refrigerator at 40°F or below to lengthen the life of foods. Frozen foods at 0°F or lower will be safe indefinitely; but the quality can deteriorate over time.

Freeze or can extra fresh produce using safe, up-to-date food preservation methods. Refer to CSU Extension (<https://extension.colostate.edu/topic-areas/nutrition-food-safety-health/#pres>) or the National Center for Home Food Preservation (<https://nchfp.uga.edu/>) for current food preservation resources.

Take restaurant leftovers home and refrigerate within two hours of being served. Eat within 3-4 days or freeze. Ask for a take home container and place a portion of your meal in the container, or split a dish with the person dining with you.

Serve yourself reasonable amounts of food at a buffet and go back for seconds if you are still hungry.

Compost food scraps. Visit Colorado State University Extension for information on composting at <https://extension.colostate.edu/topic-areas/yard-garden/composting-yard-waste-7-212/>.

Check product dates on food. “Sell-By” date tells the store how long to display the product for sale. “Best if Used By/Before” date is recommended for best flavor or quality. “Use-by” date is last recommended for the use of the products at peak quality. Do not buy or use baby formula after its “use-by” date.

Search for recipes based on specific ingredient to use up food. USDA’s “What’s Cooking: USDA Mixing Bowl” website (<https://www.choosemyplate.gov/>) offers several tools to find recipes with specific ingredients, nutrition themes and meal course.

Buy misshapen fruits and vegetables. They are just as tasty and nutritious as the “perfect” shaped ones but more likely to get thrown away.

Check for suitable substitutes you may already have on hand rather than buying a food for use in only one recipe.

Check the garbage can. Are the same foods consistently being tossed? Eat them sooner, buy less, incorporate them into more recipes or freeze them.

Donate safe, nutritious food to the food banks, food pantries or neighbors in need.

Source: University of Nebraska Extension, “14 Ways Consumers Can Reduce Food Waste”, 2015

Holidays Don't Have to Be Stressful

The holidays are right around the corner and while some of us have been ready to put our Christmas trees up since August, you may also not feel overly excited for this time of year. Holiday events often bring many joyous feelings, but it can also lead to stress and anxiety. Family, finances, travel, illness and more, are some of the leading causes of stress. Below are a few ways to cope with difficult feelings during this time of year.

1. Recognize how you are feeling. We hear over and over this is the happiest time of the year, but if it doesn't feel like that to you, don't feel obligated to be joyous.
2. Talk to someone. This is easier said than done, but it is helpful to express how you are feeling to others and receive support.
3. Be honest with yourself. The holidays may look different this year. Money may be tight, family life might be struggling, etc. Don't feel discouraged if things are not like they were in previous years.
4. Find a middle ground. When family comes together it can have its trying moments. Not everyone is going to get along all the time. But, if there is a strained relationship, this may be a good time to put those differences aside.
5. Budget. Ah yes, the dreaded "B" word. Budgeting will help reduce feelings of anxiety after the holidays are over. No one wants to look at their bank account in January feeling uneasy about how much they spent. Meaningful gifts don't have to cost a fortune. Be creative and think of alternative gift solutions such as your time or talents, passing on a special family keepsake, a collection of your favorite recipes, etc.
6. Have a game plan. We are often pulled into many different directions during the holidays. Consider what is most important to you and your family. Try to make a schedule before the time comes. Do not be afraid to give yourself boundaries.
7. It's okay to say no. Enough said.
8. Be mindful of healthy eating habits, rest, and exercise. It's so easy to say, "Well, it's the holidays." True, but making smart food choices, incorporating moderate exercise, and getting enough rest help alleviate stress and anxiety, and keep us healthy and feeling good.
9. Don't be afraid to take a breath. Step back and relax.
10. Be gentle with yourself. Some of us have so many family priorities it can be overwhelming. There are those of us who are suffering the loss of a loved one this year. There are those who may not have family or friends to spend the holiday with. No matter what you are going through, allow yourself some grace. Everyone is fighting their own battle.

The holidays do not have to be a stressful time. By allowing yourself some freedom, time to plan, budgeting, and breathing room, you can enjoy your time. Your holiday is exactly that, YOURS. Do what brings you the most joy. If that is piling your family into the car, driving several hours to Grandma's house, and gorging on turkey and stuffing, or if it means pulling out a book, sitting quietly by yourself, and enjoying silence, than do whatever is best and brings you the most happiness. Happy holidays to all!



Creating a hearty soup for snow days

During the colder months, soup becomes a common meal in most homes. It's easy and there are so many flavors to try. You can find soup recipes for cheeseburger, tortilla, enchilada, jambalaya, and lasagna.

Use this easy to follow guide to build a soup for your family this winter. Below is one of my favorite recipes using acorn squash.

Roasted Acorn Squash Soup

- 1 medium acorn squash
- ½ white onion, chopped
- 1 Tbsp. oil
- 4 garlic cloves, minced
- 4 carrots, peeled & chopped
- 3 celery stalks, chopped
- 2 tsp dried sage
- 1 tsp onion powder
- ½ tsp black pepper
- 2 tsp fresh ginger, grated
- 4 cups vegetable broth
- ½ cup fresh parsley, chopped
- 2 cups milk
- Salt to taste

1. Pre-heat oven to 350°F.
2. Slice the acorn squash in strips and lay them on a greased baking sheet. Sprinkle with salt and roast for 20-25 minutes.
3. While the squash roasts. Heat the oil in a large soup pot and sauté the onions for about 5 minutes. Add in the garlic and sauté for an additional minute.
4. Add in the remaining ingredients minus the milk and simmer for 30 minutes. Check to make sure the carrots are tender.
5. Once the squash is done roasting, let it cool enough to touch. Peel off the skin. Throw away the skin.
6. Add the squash and milk to the soup and gently stir. Blend the soup. If you have an immersion blender use that, or pour half the soup into a food processor and blend until creamy.
7. Add additional salt, pepper, or other spices as needed or wanted.
8. Serve with fresh baked bread.

YUM, SOUP!!

Create a hearty health soup to get you through the snow days.

CHOOSE YOUR BASE



Chicken



Cream or Milk



Vegetable



Beef

Pick at least one or two. Try mixing vegetable purée with a stock.

PICK YOUR PROTEIN



Ground beef



Peas, Beans, Legumes



Steak



Seafood



Sausage



Nuts and Seeds



Tofu

You can pick 1-2 options, or maybe skip altogether if you want a vegetable soup. Nuts and seeds work well with cream and squash soup.

VEGETABLES!!!



Puréed or not, pick 2-3 to add some flavor, and color to your soup. You can use fresh, frozen, or canned vegetables.

ADD FLAVOR WITH SPICES



Spices, other than salt and pepper, can add new flavors to your soups. Garlic is a common option. You can also try cardamom, coriander, paprika, curry, nutmeg, basil, oregano, and parsley. Mix it up, and enjoy a hot soup on a cold, snowy day!

Child and Adolescent Mental Health

2020 has been a challenging year and brought the importance of mental health more in focus. Mental health is an important part of overall health for children as well as adults. Symptoms are often recognized and addressed for many adults, but not necessarily for children and adolescents. The earlier treatment is started, the more effective it can be to lessen the severity and lasting problems as a child grows up.

Warning Signs

It can be tough to tell if a child's troubling behavior is just part of growing up or an issue to be discussed with a health professional. If there are behavioral signs and symptoms that last weeks or months, and if these issues interfere with the child's daily life at home, school or with friends, a health professional should be contacted.

Young children may benefit from an evaluation and treatment if they:

- Have frequent tantrums or are intensely irritable much of the time
- Often talk about fears or worries
- Complain about frequent stomachaches or headaches with no known medical cause
- Are in constant motion and cannot sit quietly *except* when watching videos or playing videogames
- Sleep too much or too little, have frequent nightmares, or seem sleepy during the day
- Are not interested in playing with other children or have difficulty making friends
- Struggle academically or have experienced a recent decline in grades
- Repeat actions or check things many times out of fear something bad may happen

Older children and adolescents may benefit from an evaluation if they:

- Have lost interest in things they used to enjoy
- Have low energy
- Sleep too much or too little, or seem sleepy throughout the day
- Fear gaining weight, or diet and exercise excessively
- Engage in self-harm behaviors (i.e. cutting or burning their skin)
- Smoke, drink alcohol or use drugs
- Engage in risky or destructive behavior alone or with friends
- Have thoughts of suicide
- Are spending more and more time alone, and avoid social activities with friends or family
- Have periods of highly elevated energy and activity and require much less sleep than usual
- Say they think someone is trying to control their mind or they hear things other people cannot hear



If you are a parent or caregiver and need help starting a conversation with your child or teen about mental health, visit Mentalhealth.gov at <https://www.mentalhealth.gov/talk/parents-caregivers>. If you are unsure where to go for help, ask your family doctor or visit the National Institute of Mental Health webpage at <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/find-help/index.shtml>.

It may be helpful for children and teens to save the following emergency numbers in their cell phones. The ability to get immediate help for themselves or for a friend can make a difference.

- Phone number for a trusted friend or relative
- Non-emergency number for the local police department
- The Crisis Text Line: 741741
- The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-TALK (8255)

Source: National Institute of Mental Health, <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/child-and-adolescent-mental-health/index.shtml>

Upcoming Events!

- **Diabetes Webinar: Handling the Holidays with Diabetes – November 4th, Noon to 1 p.m.**
Deeona Johnston, RDN and Colorado State University Extension Agent, presenting live webinar on holiday cooking and how to meet dietary requirements without sacrificing flavor. She will add information about other programs and resources available to help with the management of diabetes.
The free webinar may be attended at certain locations in the area or virtually. If you would like to attend in person at the following sites, please call to pre-register: Centennial Area Health Education Center, Greeley (Erika Greenburg) – 330-3608; Phillips County Event Center, Holyoke (Deeona Johnston) – 854-3616; Washington County CSU Extension Office, Akron (Gisele Jefferson) – 345-2287; Wray Community District Hospital, Wray (Karla Saffer) – 332-2352. To attend virtually, register at <https://holidaydiet.eventbrite.com>.
- **Logan County Extension** has a new website! Check it out! <https://logan.extension.colostate.edu/>
- Follow **Logan County Extension on Facebook** <https://www.facebook.com/csuextensionlogancounty> and Instagram @<https://www.instagram.com/logancountyextension/>
- **Logan County Diabetes Program** has officially launched! This CDC-recognized Lifestyle Change Program is available to those at risk for type 2 diabetes. If you reside in Logan County call us for more info! 970-522-3200 Ext: 2
- **"Deck the House"** - Gingerbread village decorating competition November 22nd. Win 2 tickets to the Gaylord of the Rockies "I Love Christmas Movies" theatrical display on December 12th. \$30 for team of 2. Pre-registration required by November 9th. Call 970-854-3616.
- **STRONG** - 30-45 minute High Intensity Interval Training classes set to music. 6 am Monday and Wednesday. In-person classes at the Holyoke Fitness Club and virtually https://strong.zumba.com/en-US/profile/Deeona_Johnston/1891875
- **ZUMBA** - Latin dancing! Participate in physical activity while dancing to upbeat music. 6 am Friday. In-person classes at the Holyoke Fitness Club and virtually https://www.zumba.com/en-US/profile/Deeona_Johnston/1891875
- **High School Sports Nutrition** - Do you have a high school athlete? Are they eating enough? Learn about nutrition practices that can help maximize your teen athlete's performance. December 29th, 4:30-6pm. Register at <https://high-school-sports-nutrition.eventbrite.com>



CSU Extension – NE Colorado FCS – In this time of no/limited personal contact, we're all using social media!

<https://www.facebook.com/CSUExtensionNortheastFCS>

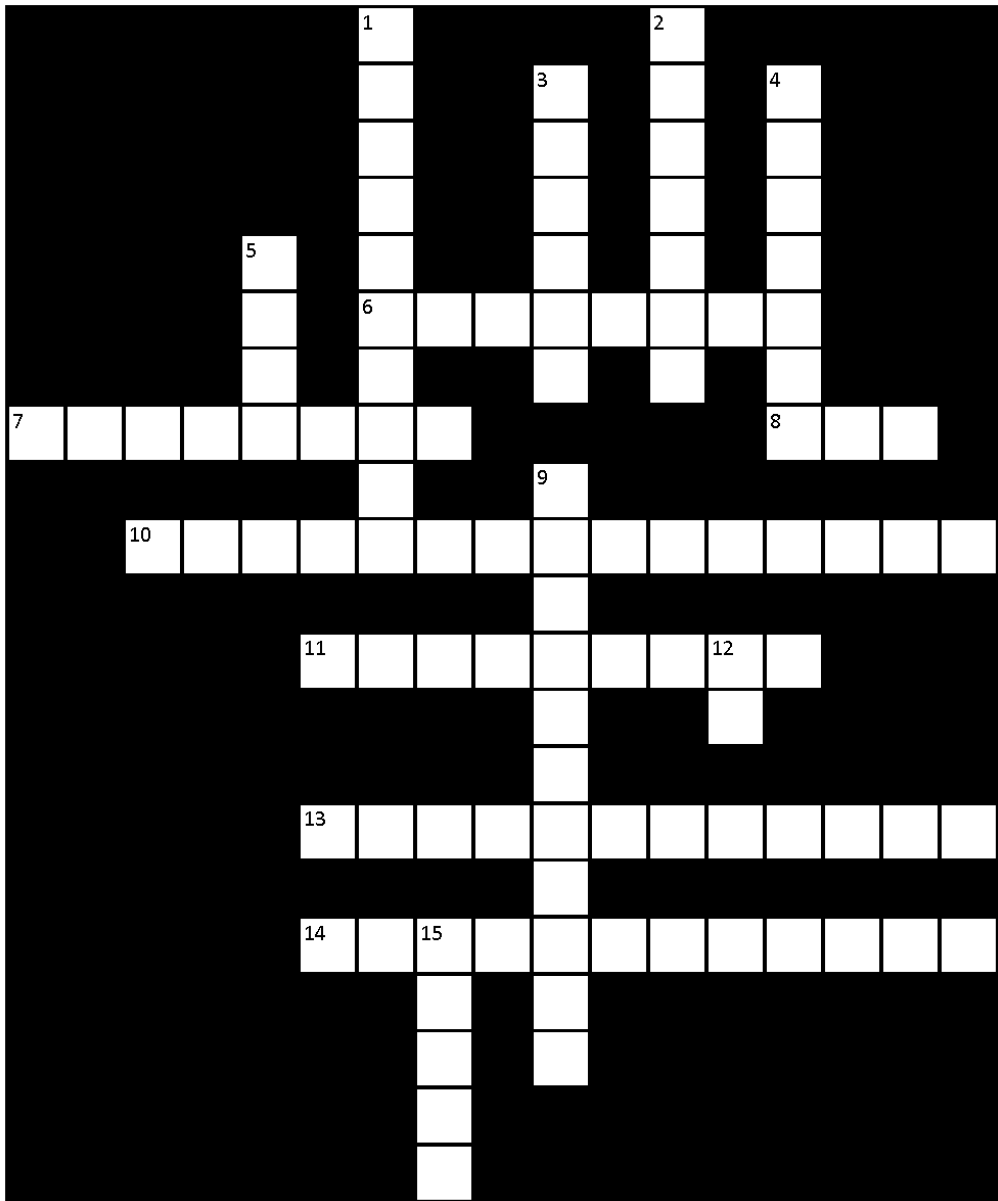
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CSU Extension – Morgan County: <https://www.facebook.com/extensionmorgancounty/>

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**November/December
Crossword**

If you've read the newsletter, this will be a snap – without looking at the answer key!

Be the first to call into your County Extension Office to earn a "highly valuable" prize!!

Down:

- 1. Title of Newsletter (2 words)
- 2. Kit Carson Extension Agent
- 3. What adds flavor to food?
- 4. Still Hungry? Go back for ____.
- 5. First step for creating a soup
- 9. Symptom of SAD
- 12. "It's okay to say ____."
- 15. Percentage of food supply that goes uneaten.

Across:

- 6. Schedule for Holiday (2 words)
- 7. November Webinar Focus
- 8. Type of depression linked to
- 10. Weight-loss challenge (3 words)
- 11. Dredded "B" words
- 13. Mental health symptom with "no known medical cause" in children
- 14. Where to shop first.

