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*Summertime and the living is easy...*our first heat wave is behind us, graduation, anniversary and wedding celebrations are in full swing, corn is peeking through the soil in area fields, gardens have been planted, kids have begun summer vacation and road work is everywhere!

Planning for a visit with grandchildren? Page 6 has great ideas for fun this summer. Of course these activities are for anyone and will keep all entertained and make for many terrific memories.

June is Men's Health Month and page nine outlines the nutritional and physical activity needs of men, as well as what to watch for regarding warning signs.

The food guide pyramid in any form is now history; and in its place is MyPlate. The website; ChooseMyPlate.gov has all the information for this new campaign. Earlier this year the new dietary guidelines came out and you can find this information on page 3.



Osceola County will be receiving **Senior Project FRESH** coupons for the first time ever! We are grateful to the **Osceola County Community Foundation** for awarding us a \$3000.00 grant to provide this service to our area seniors. Eligibility is based on income; watch the newspapers or contact our office for more information on how to apply for these benefits. This program will start in July.

Have you visited our website? msue.msu.edu/osceola Check it out soon!

Wishing all of you a safe and healthy summer.

Preventing Falls in the Elderly

Quick Facts...

The risk of falling increases with age and is greater for women than for men. Two-thirds of those who experience a fall will fall again within six months. A decrease in bone density contributes to falls and resultant injuries. Failure to exercise regularly results in poor muscle tone, decreased strength, and loss of bone mass and flexibility. At least 1/3 of all falls in the elderly involve environmental hazards in the home. It is useful to conduct a walk-through of your home to identify possible problems that may lead to falling.

Outdoors

- Repair cracks & abrupt edges of sidewalks & driveways.
- Install handrails on stairs and steps.
- Remove high doorway thresholds.
- Trim shrubbery along the pathway to the home.
- Keep walk areas clear of clutter, rocks and tools.
- Keep walk areas clear of snow and ice.
- Install adequate lighting by doorways and along walk ways leading to doors.

All Living Spaces

- Use a change in color to denote changes in surface types or levels.
- Secure rugs & carpet edges with nonskid tape.
- Avoid throw rugs.
- Remove oversized furniture and objects.
- Have at least one phone extension in each level of the home and post emergency numbers at each phone.
- Add electrical outlets.
- Reduce clutter.
- Check lighting for illumination & glare control.
- Maintain nightlights or motion-sensitive lighting throughout home.
- Use contrast in paint, furniture and carpet colors.
- Install electronic emergency response system if needed.

Bathrooms

- Install grab bars on walls around the tub & beside the toilet, strong enough to hold your weight.
- Add nonskid mats or appliques to bathtubs.
- Mount liquid soap dispenser on the bathtub-wall.
- Install a portable, hand-held shower head.
- Add a padded bath or shower seat.

- Install a raised toilet seat if needed.
- Use nonskid mats on floor surfaces that may get wet.

Kitchen

- Keep commonly used items within easy reach.
- Use a sturdy step stool when you need something from a high shelf.
- Make sure appliance cords are out of the way.
- Avoid using floor polish or wax in order to reduce slick surfaces.

Living, Dining and Family Rooms

- Keep electrical and telephone cords out of the way.
- Arrange furniture so that you can easily move around it.
- Make sure chairs & couches are easy to get in & out of.
- Remove caster wheels from furniture.
- Use television remote control and cordless phone.

Bedroom

- Put in a bedside light with a switch that is easy to turn on and off (or a touch lamp).
- Have a nightlight.
- Locate telephone within reach of bed.
- Adjust height of bed to make it easy to get in and out of.
- Have a firm chair, with arms, to sit and dress.

Stairways, Hallways and Pathways

- Keep free of clutter
- Make sure carpet is secured and get rid of throw rugs.
- Install tightly fastened hand rails running the entire length and along both sides of stairs.
- Handrails should be 34" high have a diameter of about 1.5".
- Apply brightly colored tape to the face of the steps to make them more visible.
- Optimal stair dimensions are 7.2" riser heights with either an 11 or 12" tread width.
- Have adequate lighting in stairways, hallways and pathways, with light switches placed at each end.

2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans

Every 5 years the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services review, update if necessary and publish dietary guidelines. Because more than 1/3 of children and more than 2/3 of adults in the United States are overweight or obese, the 7th edition of *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* places a stronger emphasis on reducing calorie consumption and increasing physical activity.

Eating and physical activity patterns that are focused on eating fewer calories, making informed food choices, and being physically active can help us all attain and maintain a healthy weight, reduce our risk of chronic disease and promote our overall health. If you would like to read the whole report, it can be accessed through the internet at: www.dietaryguidelines.gov. If you do not have a home computer, your local library has one free of charge to use, or you can call the Osceola office at 231.832.6139 or the Mecosta office at 231.592.0792 and request a copy of the Executive summary for the 2010 Dietary Guidelines.

The new guidelines focus on balancing calories with physical activity, and encourage Americans to consume more healthy foods like vegetables, fruits, whole grains, fat-free and low-fat dairy products, and seafood, and to consume less sodium, saturated and *trans* fats, added sugars, and refined grains. Below is a list of some of the tips to help consumers translate the *Dietary Guidelines* into their everyday lives:

- Enjoy your food, but eat less.
- Avoid oversized portions.
- Make half your plate fruits and vegetables.
- Switch to fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk.
- Compare sodium in foods like soup, bread, & frozen meals & choose the foods with lower numbers.
- Drink water instead of sugary drinks.

The *Guidelines* also form the basis of nutrition education programs, Federal nutrition assistance programs such as MSU Extension's SNAP-Ed. Programs, School Meal Programs and Meals on Wheels programs for seniors.

Take action on the Dietary Guidelines by making changes in these three areas:

Balancing Calories

- Enjoy your food, but eat less.
- Avoid oversized portions.

Foods to Increase

- Make half your plate fruits and vegetables.
- Switch to fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk – you'll get the same nutritional value.

Food to Reduce

- Choose food with lower sodium numbers. Compare sodium in food like soup, bread, and frozen meals.
- Drink water instead of sugary drinks.

Source: USDA – January 2011

Gardening

Why Garden?

It's SPRING. Warm weather makes me start planning for my flower and vegetable garden. Why?

- ❖ **Health** — Growing your own makes it easier to get the fruits and vegetables needed for good health. Kids involved in growing or preparing fruits and vegetables are more likely to eat them.
- ❖ **Exercise** — Gardening provides both cardio and aerobic exercise. Studies show that an hour of moderate gardening can burn up to 300 calories for women, almost 400 calories for men. Mowing the grass equals a vigorous walk, bending and stretching while planting compares to an exercise class, and hauling plants and soil is like weightlifting.
- ❖ **Taste** – Nothing matches the taste of green beans, tomatoes, basil, zucchini, or peppers picked fresh from the garden.
- ❖ **Satisfaction** — A weed less, mulched garden can give me a sense of accomplishment.
- ❖ **Learning** — The more I learn about plants and gardening, the more I want to know. Problems with insects or spots on leaves make me want to find the cause and learn how to keep plants healthy.
- ❖ **Family time** — Time spent planting, weeding, and harvesting with family is filled with talk and laughter.
- ❖ **Friendship** — Gardening expands your social circle. Whether it's someone who lives down the street or halfway around the world on the Internet, gardeners love to talk about plants. Surplus tomatoes, a bouquet, or an extra plant are gifts to share with friends and neighbors.
- ❖ **Creativity** — Gardening provides an outlet for the artist in all of us, whether it's planting a bed

of perennials or arranging flowers in a vase.

- ❖ **Beauty and love of nature** — I love the colors, shapes, textures and smells of flowers. Having flowers in my home gives me joy.
- ❖ **Links to the farm** — Gardening takes time, effort and knowledge. After lots of work, plants can be destroyed by hail, disease, or animals. I have a great deal of respect for those who farm for a living.

Source: Spend Smart Eat Smart Iowa State University Extension

Growing Readers: Gardening with Kids

Research tells us that children lose reading skills over the summer months; we also know that when children are involved with activities around food they are more apt to try new foods. A partnership between Osceola County MSU Extension and the LeRoy Community Library will focus on both those topics through a summer gardening program. Activities will incorporate nutrition, physical activity, art, language arts, math, science and social studies while planting, maintaining and harvesting 5 raised beds of vegetables.

The program is designed for children *currently* in the second, third and fourth grades. Flyers and registration forms will be available at the LeRoy Community Library beginning May 2nd or can be emailed to you. For more information regarding this program and if you would like a flyer and form emailed to you, please contact Shannon at lindqui8@anr.msu.edu or by calling 231.832.6139.



Smart Uses for Salt

In the Kitchen

Test egg freshness.

Put two teaspoons of salt in a cup of water and place an egg in it...a fresh egg will sink, an older egg will float. Because the air cell in an egg increases as it ages, an older egg is more buoyant. This doesn't mean a floating egg is rotten, just more mature.

Prevent cake icing crystals.

A little salt added to cake icings prevents them from sugaring.

Reach high peaks.

Add a tiny pinch of salt when beating egg whites or whipping cream for quicker, higher peaks.

Extend cheese life.

Prevent mold on cheese by wrapping it in a cloth moistened with saltwater before refrigerating.

Personal Care

Clean teeth.

Use one part fine salt to two parts baking soda. Dip your toothbrush in the mix and brush as usual.

Ease mouth problems.

For cankers, abscesses, and other mouth sores, rinse your mouth with a weak solution of warm saltwater several times a day.

Extend toothbrush life.

Soak toothbrushes in salt water before your first use; they'll last longer.

Relieve bee-sting pain.

Ouch? Immediately dampen area and pack on a small pile of salt to reduce pain and swelling.

Ease throat pain.

Mix salt and warm water, gargle to relieve a sore throat.

Around the House

Deter ants.

Sprinkle salt at doorways, window sills, and anywhere else ants sneak into your house. Ants don't like to walk on salt.

Keep cut flowers fresh.

A dash of salt added to the water in a flower vase will keep cut flowers fresh longer.

Deter patio weeds.

If weeds or grass grow between bricks or blocks in your patio, sidewalk, or driveway, carefully spread salt between the cracks, then sprinkle with water.

Cleaning

Clean sink drains.

Pour salt mixed with hot water down the kitchen sink regularly to deodorize and keep grease from building up.

Remove water rings.

Gently rub a thin paste of salt and vegetable oil on the white marks caused by beverages glasses and hot dishes on wooden tables.

Clean refrigerators.

A mix of salt and soda water can be used to wipe out and deodorize the inside of your refrigerator, a nice way to keep chemical cleaners away from your food.

Clean a glass coffee pot.

Every diner waitress' favorite tip: add salt and ice cubes to a coffee pot, swirl around vigorously, and rinse. The salt scours the bottom, and the ice helps to agitate it more for a better scrub.

TIPS TO PROTECT YOUR IDENTITY

- ⇒ Next time you order checks have only your first initial and last name put on them. If someone takes your checkbook they won't know how you sign your name, but your bank will.
- ⇒ Do not sign the back of your credit card, instead write "Photo ID Required".
- ⇒ When writing checks to pay on an account write only the last four numbers of your account number on the "For" line.
- ⇒ Keep a list of all credit cards and the numbers to call in a safe place, so if yours are stolen you know where to report it.
- ⇒ Call these national credit reporting organizations immediately to place a fraud alert if your wallet is stolen: Equifax 1-800-525-6285, Experian 1-888-397-3742, Trans Union 1-800-680-7289 and the Social Security Administration at 1-800-269-0271.

Activities to do with your Grandkids (and Kids too!)

- Go on a nature walk, pointing out bugs, trees, birds, and butterflies. Bring binoculars.
- Build a birdhouse
- Ride bicycles to someplace new.
- Spend an hour in a hammock.
- Borrow mysteries from the library, and take turns reading chapters out loud under the stars.
- Go on a picnic, even if you travel no farther than your backyard. Set out a blanket, and bring portable music and a Frisbee.
- Decorate T-shirts. You'll need two plain white tees, fabric paint, brushes, & shake-on glitter, rhinestones, buttons, or other embellishments.
- Go swimming in a body of water that your child has never experienced.
- Take photos of each other posing at local landmarks and even just places you like.
- Build an outdoor tepee from old sheets & a few poles.
- Spread out an old sheet on the grass and paint your hearts out.
- Put on your bathing suits and run through a sprinkler in the backyard.
- Set up a scavenger hunt in your neighborhood. Give your child a list of clues to items, such as a coin, a rubber band, and a cell phone.
- Plant flowers/vegetables in your garden or window box. Get kid-size tools and let your child get dirty.
- Build sand castles and mud pies at the beach.
- Make your own ice cream with a coffee can & ice cubes.
- Climb a tree. Bring a camera.
- Play "volleyball" with a balloon.
- Repaint a fence. It Tom Sawyer could do it...
- Play miniature golf.
- Blow bubbles. When you run out of liquid, use dishwashing soap and water.
- Go fishing.
- Skim pebbles, or really perfect flat rocks, across a pond or lake.
- Close your eyes, spin a globe, and stick your finger on a spot. When it stops, talk about the destination and what it would be like to live there.
- Go row boating or canoeing.
- Have a board game tournament on the lawn.
- Name the constellations visible in the night sky or look up and view the next lunar eclipse or meteorite shower. Borrow a reference book from your local library to guide you along.
- Get the schedule for local outdoor concerts.
- Go bowling. If you don't have a bowling alley near your home, set one up in your backyard, using household items.
- Collect fireflies in a jar.
- Browse a garage sale, giving your child a few dollars to spend.
- Get yourselves to a county fair and do as much as you can. Enter a pie-eating contest, strong-man challenge, and go on the bumper cars.
- Go to a farmer's market, making a game out of finding one item for each letter of the alphabet.
- Have a porch-side tea party with your good china, aromatic tea, and muffins or scones.
- Make a scrapbook so you'll both remember all the special things you did together.

Let's Get Outside and Let's Get Physical!

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run

PLAY

swim

WALK

Bike

Catch

Hike

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GARDEN

CANOE

.....PUSH

PULL.....

Regular physical activity helps improve your overall health and fitness and reduces your risk for many chronic diseases. Just taking a walk uses 1/3 of all your muscles, specifically those located in your lower body – the legs, hips, buttocks, calves and feet. What about swimming? Almost every muscle in the body is used.....time to get physical!

According to the **Centers for Disease Control**, most of us don't get enough physical activity. How much do each of us need? Children and adolescents (ages 6-17), need 60 or more minutes each day. Adults (ages 18-64), need 30 minutes 5 times a week. Seniors (65 and older), need 30 minutes a day 3-5 days a week. Does this activity need to be done all at one time? No, 10 minutes at a time is OK. How vigorous? Moderate.

What is meant by moderate activity? The talk test is a simple way to measure relative intensity. As a rule of thumb, if you're doing moderate-intensity activity you can talk, but not sing, during the activity. If you're doing vigorous-intensity activity, you will not be able to say more than a few words without pausing for a breath.

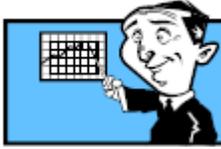
Performing activity that requires moderate effort is safe for most people. But if you have a chronic health condition such as heart disease, arthritis, diabetes or other symptoms be sure to talk with your doctor about the types and amounts of physical activity that are right for you.

For more information on this topic visit the CDC website: www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity. If you don't have Internet connection in your home, your public library has that resource available to all.

To help you get started MSU Extension has FREE to the first 5 people in Osceola County and the first 5 people in Mecosta County who call the office, a copy of the book; **365 Activities for Fitness, Food, and Fun for the Whole Family** by Julia E. Sweet. These books were purchased through grant monies from Yoplait.

June: Men's Health Month

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June is Men's Health Month, and every year Men's Health Week is celebrated in the week leading up to and including Father's Day.

Anchored by a Congressional health education program, Men's Health Month is celebrated with screenings, health fairs, media appearances, and other health education and outreach activities. The purpose of Men's Health Month is to increase awareness of preventable health problems and encourage early detection and treatment of disease among men and boys.

Tips for men on how to take better care of themselves:

Get Regular Check-ups.

- Did you know men are half as likely to visit a doctor for a check-up as women, and over 7 million men have not seen a doctor in over 10 years?
- If you cannot remember the last time you had a complete physical, call your doctor and make an appointment. (You would not let 10 years go between oil changes, would you?)



Be More Physically Active

- June is a great time to start a healthier lifestyle by being more physically active.
- Research shows exercise helps prevent heart disease and obesity, and lowers blood pressure.
- Aim for 30 to 60 minutes on most days. You can even spread it out over the course of your day.

Improve the Nutritional Quality of your Diet.

- Some tips on how to improve the nutritional quality of your diet include eating a varied diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains and low-fat foods.
- Especially limit cholesterol intake and avoid saturated fats.

Pay Attention to Warning Signs.

- When a warning light flashes on the car dashboard, most men take the car to the shop. But when warning lights flash on their body, most men do not (or will not) notice.
- Examples of flashing lights to look for are changes in bowel or bladder habits, persistent backaches, recurrent chest pains, and extreme fatigue.



Men's health issues significantly impact everyone around them, and far too many men never see a doctor unless there is something seriously wrong or a partner or spouse makes the appointment for them. Women and men should educate themselves about potential male health problems. Check out www.menshealthnetwork.org for resources and health facts.

Sources:

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2. Men's Health Month. National Men's Health Week. 2010. Accessed at: <http://www.menshealthmonth.org/week/index.html>
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Non-Profit Organization
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Return Service Requested

Cook together.
Eat together.
Talk together.
Make mealtime a family time.

