

Answers from Amy

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MAKING FRUITS AND VEGETABLES AN EASY CHOICE!

In Texas, three out of four deaths are attributed to a chronic disease. However, studies show an intake of at least two and half cups of vegetables and fruits per day as part of a healthy eating pattern can reduce the risk of certain chronic diseases. March is National Nutrition Month, and an opportunity to discuss the benefits of eating fruits and vegetables. We know a healthy eating pattern including fruits and vegetables can help to lower risks of developing chronic diseases such as obesity, diabetes, heart disease, and some cancers.

Lifestyles are hectic; however, increasing fruit and vegetables can be easy. Here are a few tips for making fruits and vegetables the easy choice!

Choose to make half your plate fruits and vegetables. The rest of your plate should be one-quarter grains and one-quarter protein foods with low-fat dairy on the side. MyPlate is a guide to making a healthy meal yet not every meal will look like MyPlate. For example a sandwich may not fit in each portion of the plate; however, making a sandwich with whole grain bread, lean protein, a slice of low-fat cheese, and adding lots of vegetables with a side of fruit make a healthy plate.

Choose a variety of colors. The colors in fruit and vegetables are not just to make them look pretty. Fruit and vegetable colors are complex and those colors pack a healthy punch in reducing the risk of developing various chronic diseases. Be sure to vary the colors on your plate.

Choose whole fruits and vegetables over juice. Children and adults eat most of their fruits and vegetables in the form of fruit juice, which can contain added sugars and make it higher in calories. Choosing whole fruits and vegetables provides fiber, less added sugar, vitamins,

and minerals. Eating patterns high in these nutrients have shown to reduce the risk of developing certain cancers.

Choose to prep your snacks ahead of time. Busy schedules can sometimes mean reaching for unhealthy snacks. During the weekend, package small snack bags of bell peppers, carrots, strawberries, or your favorite fruit or vegetable for the week. Place them in a spot you can see in the refrigerator. This may help to limit choosing less healthful and tempting snacks! Choose to make fruits and vegetables exciting. Create a fruit and veggie contest. Making fruits and vegetables part of a child's healthy eating pattern establishes positive behaviors early. Children learn from watching you. Try having a fruit and veggie contest once a week. It can be a simple game of name five blue fruits! The prize could be choosing the fruit for dessert tonight.

Choose to flavor your water. Flavored drinks are in every grocery store. However, they can be full of added calories. You can make your own flavored water by freezing diced fruits or vegetables and adding them to your water. When you finish your water have the fruit or vegetable as a snack! It can be as easy as freezing slices of cucumber or whole raspberries and adding them to your water!

Choose fruit and vegetables to start the day. Fruits can be an easy choice at breakfast food. However, mix in some vegetables too. Try adding spinach to your eggs, avocado to your toast, or tomatoes to a breakfast sandwich.

Choosing fruits and vegetables can be an easy task, if you plan and prepare healthy options in advance. Making small creative changes can benefit your overall health. Overtime choosing more fruits and vegetables can help prevent chronic disease.

For more tips on improving your fruit and vegetable consumption, contact your local Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service county office at 983-4912.

Sources:

Texas Department of State Health Services. Texas Chronic Disease Burden Report, 2010.

Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. Position of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics: The Role of Nutrition in Health Promotion and Chronic Disease Prevention, 2013.

Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. Position of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics: Total Diet Approach to Healthy Eating, 2012.

MyPlate, <http://www.choosemyplate.gov>

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PROTECTING YOUR HOME FROM HIGH WINDS

Have you ever wondered if your house was going to blow down like the little pigs' houses? We have seen that happen during the last several weeks and months as a result of tornadoes and hurricanes. We can't prevent some of the destruction, yet we can strengthen our homes to make them more resistant to strong winds.

The Federal Alliance for Safe Homes lists a number of steps homeowners can take to strengthen their homes against high winds.

1. The roof covering, and the deck beneath it, are your home's first line of defense and form a critical shield of protection from high winds and rain. The following techniques should be used during roof installation on both new and existing homes. These techniques are best performed by a licensed, professional roofing contractor.

- Install a roof deck of solid plywood - 5/8" thickness - to maximize wind and windborne debris resistance with 10 penny common or 8 penny ring shank nails spaced at 4" along the panel edges and every 6" in the field of the plywood panel. Make sure that the nails penetrate the decking directly into the roof framing.

- Be sure to look in the attic to confirm that the roof decking is properly nailed to the roof framing. If you can see nails along the sides of rafters or trusses, where the nail penetrates the decking, your roof deck is probably not securely attached.

2. Create a secondary water barrier by installing self-adhering flashing tape or modified polymer bitumen

strips on top of the joints in your roof deck. Then install one layer of #30 felt paper over the roof decking and secondary water barrier.

3. Install a roof covering that has been tested to the latest standards for wind and hail resistance. These standards are ASTM D 3161 enhanced or UL 2390 for wind resistance and UL 2218 for impact resistance.

4. The type and shape of the roof on your home can help determine how well it will perform during a severe windstorm. A hipped roof typically performs better in windstorms than a gabled roof because of its aerodynamic properties and typical construction techniques. If your home is built with a gabled end wall, go to the following website to get additional information about strengthening the wall: <http://www.flash.org/enews/bpfs/special/charley/coverings.cfm?jumpto=deck#deck>.

5. Your home's ability to resist the extreme force of wind is only as strong as its weakest link, so the only sure way to create a wind-resistant home is to secure all connections: roof-to-wall, floor-to-floor, and wall-to-foundation. These straps or clips must be installed according to manufacturer's specifications.

6. You can protect your home's openings, such as windows and doors, from penetration by wind-borne debris by installing impact-resistant windows and doors or installing impact resistant coverings, such as shutters over windows and doors. The strength of the frame and attachment hardware is equally as important as the strength of the glass or shutter.

7. Exterior doors should also be wind and impact resistant or protected with an impact resistant covering. Garage doors are particularly vulnerable to high winds, because of the long span of opening they cover and the relatively lightweight material they are made of. If you live in an area that is subject to severe winds, you might want to replace the garage door and track with a system that is designed to withstand high winds and wind-borne debris.

JULY AND AUGUST DEADLIEST MONTHS FOR TEEN DRIVERS

Although they tend to think of themselves as indestructible, teens have a higher fatality and injury rate in motor vehicle crashes than any other age group. This tendency may be due to their inexperience as drivers and their willingness to take risks behind the wheel such as speeding, driving after drinking, and not wearing their safety belts. According to AAA, July and August are typically two of the deadliest

months for teenage drivers. Roughly 100 16- and 17-year-old drivers are killed in crashes on average in July or August, more than in any other month.

Studies have shown that graduated driver's license laws can be an effective tool to ease teens into the responsibility of driving. But for young drivers, safety belt use is the single most effective way to decrease injuries and deaths in car crashes. Unfortunately, teens are less likely to wear their safety belts than any other age group. This fact is particularly true for male teens who are even less likely to be using safety belts than their female counterparts. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) reports that 63 percent of fatally injured 16-20 year-old passenger vehicle occupants were unrestrained, compared to 55 percent for adults 21 or older.

Safety belts save lives and dollars. According to NHTSA, in 2003 it is estimated that safety belts saved society an estimated \$63 billion in medical care, lost productivity, and other injury-related costs. During 2005, vehicle drivers and passengers in Texas increased their use of safety belts to a total of 89.9 percent in passenger vehicles and 85.5 percent in pickup trucks. Because of this increase, NHTSA estimates that a possible 185 lives, 3,000 serious injuries, and \$600 million will be saved.

Increasing safety belt use, especially among teens, can help prevent tragedies and break the cycle of July and August being the deadliest months of the year for young drivers and their passengers. Amy Kress, County Extension Agent, Floyd County reminds teens to stay safe. Don't speed or drive impaired, and always buckle up on every trip!

A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE BOOSTS YOUR BONE

Bone loss results in weak bones that are at increased risk of fracture. Bone loss can occur as part of the normal aging process or as a complication of cancer or cancer treatment. Bone loss cause osteoporosis which is a disease in which bones become weak and fragile. Osteoporosis is a serious disease that affects millions of people worldwide. Without prevention or treatment, osteoporosis can progress without pain or symptoms until a bone breaks. Therefore, prevention of osteoporosis is very important.

For strong bones, people need enough of both calcium and vitamin D. Calcium builds strong bones; vitamin D aids the body absorb calcium. Therefore, a combination of calcium and vitamin D can reduce the risk of osteoporosis. The recommendations for calcium and vitamin D are as follows: adults under age 50 should have 1,000 mg of calcium and 400 - 800 IU of vitamin

D daily; adults age 50 and older should have 1,200 mg of calcium and 800 - 1,000 IU of vitamin D daily. Great calcium sources include milk, yogurt, and cheese. Other sources of calcium include some green vegetables such as broccoli and kale. Good dietary sources of vitamin D include fortified milk, egg yolks, liver, saltwater fish, and fish oils.

Exercise can help to rebuild bone and slow the progression of osteoporosis. Regular and life-long exercise reduces the risk for osteoporosis and fracture. Walking, jogging, bicycling and light aerobics improve muscle mass and strengthens bones. The exercise recommendation for bone health is 30 minutes of weight-bearing exercise five days a week. Old people, however, need to check with doctors before starting physical activities.

Smoking increases the risk of osteoporosis. Many evidences indicate that smoking increases bone loss and decreases intestinal calcium absorption. Excessive alcohol intake leads to about 2% bone loss. This is related to both poor nutrition and increased risk of falling. Smoking also causes 2% bone loss. If people are having both excessive alcohol and nicotine, the combined bone loss will be even more, approximately equal to 8%.

Healthy lifestyle habits, including adequate intake of calcium and vitamin D, exercise, quit smoking and limited alcohol intake, are important for preventing bone loss and osteoporosis.

Resources:

Osteoporosis-Overview. Health Guide. 2013.
<http://health.nytimes.com/health/guides/disease/osteoporosis/lifestyle-changes.html>

Osteoporosis Lifestyle and Prevention. Hormone Health. 2009.
<http://www.hormone.org/Osteoporosis/lifestyle.cfm>

Osteoporosis-prevention and treatment. Better Health.
http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/bhcv2/bhcarticle.s.nsf/pages/Osteoporosis_prevention_and_treatment

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FAVORITE RECIPES

MAGICAL FRUIT SALAD

- 1 20 ounce can pineapple tidbits in natural juice
- ½ pound seedless grapes (try red grapes for color)
- 2 bananas
- 1¾ cup low-fat milk
- 1 box (3½ oz.) instant sugar-free vanilla pudding mix

Wash your hands and clean your cooking area. Clean the tops of canned food items before opening them. Drain the pineapple in a colander and put in a bowl. Rinse the grapes with water and pat them dry with a paper towel. Pull grapes off the stem and add to the bowl with the pineapple. Wash, peel and slice the bananas into bite-sized pieces. Add to the bowl with other fruit. Sprinkle the pudding mix over the fruit. Pour the milk over the fruit and pudding mix. Slowly stir the fruit mixture until blended and then wait about 5 minutes for the mixture to set. The salad is best when eaten as soon as it is ready.

SNACK TIME MIX

- 2 cups air-popped popcorn
- ¼ cup dry roasted peanuts
- 2 cups corn chex cereal
- ½ cup pretzels
- 1 teaspoon (Cajun, Taco, or Ranch) seasoning
- 1 teaspoon onion powder
- non-stick cooking spray

Wash your hands and clean your cooking area. Mix popcorn, nuts, cereal and pretzels in a large bowl. Spray lightly with non-stick cooking spray and sprinkle with seasoning and onion powder. Stir to coat evenly. Serve immediately.

Optional: For a sweeter version, omit seasonings and add raisins. Sprinkle mix with cinnamon.

COLESLAW

- 3½ cups shredded cabbage*
- ¼ cup shredded carrots*
- ¼ cup chopped celery*
- ¼ cup chopped green bell pepper*
- ¼ cup light mayonnaise
- 1 tablespoon vinegar
- 3 packets artificial sweetener
- ¼ teaspoon salt & pepper

Wash your hands and clean your cooking area. Wash and chop all vegetables, then combine in a large mixing bowl. In a small bowl, mix the mayonnaise, vinegar, sweetener, salt, and pepper for the dressing. Pour the dressing over the vegetables and mix well. Chill for 30 minutes to an hour before serving.

TUNA MELT BURGERS

- 1 6-ounce can tuna-light packed in water
- 2 medium stalks celery, chopped
- ½ cup diced, reduced fat processed American cheese
- ¼ light mayonnaise
- 1 tablespoon instant minced onion
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon pepper
- 12 slices of 100% whole wheat bread

Wash hands and cooking area. Preheat oven to 350°F. Drain tuna and break the meat apart with a fork. Wash and chop the celery and dice the cheese.

Mix tuna, celery, cheese, light mayonnaise, dried onion, salt, and pepper into a medium mixing bowl with a wooden spoon. Spread tuna mixture on six of the pieces of whole wheat bread and place a single slice of bread on top of each (you will make a total of 6 sandwiches). Put each sandwich on a square of aluminum foil, and then wrap the foil around sandwiches, folding edges securely. Bake about 20 minutes or until hot in the middle. Cool slightly before serving.

Answers From Amy is a publication of the Floyd County Extension Service.

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