

# FACES NEWSLETTER

Family and Consumer Science



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"HAPPY HOLIDAYS"

## CLEAN EATING ON A BUDGET

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First, what is clean eating? On it's most basic level, clean eating is avoiding all processed food, relying on mostly fresh fruits, vegetables and whole grains rather than prepackaged or fast food.

One of the biggest fears that families have when they are deciding to change over to a clean eating, unprocessed diet is "how are we going to afford it"? In fact, I had this very conversation with the cashier at the grocery store the other day, and she shared with me that she would like to eat healthier, but she "just can't afford all this healthy food". Eating clean is certainly going to take some planning and commitment, and perhaps some cutting back in other areas of your budget, but it CAN be done.

The most recent Food Plans Average Cost report from the USDA (September 2012) shows that a "low-cost" budget for a nutritious diet for a family of four is between \$160 - \$189 per week. That is right in line with what our family of four pays, this includes only food items, and not personal care, cleaning, or other household items. For that budget we prepare breakfast everyday, lunch for Mark and I most days, and about 4-5 dinner meals per week (with leftovers on the other days), and I am able to purchase local eggs, some local meat and poultry, some organic produce and bread from our local bakery. Here are some of the strategies that our family follows to make eating clean work within our budget:

- **Have a plan and stick to it.** Take 30 minutes sometime during the week to come up with your menu for the following week and your grocery list. Don't wait until dinnertime to figure out "what's for dinner" tonight.

• **Prepare food yourself** instead of choosing prepackaged items. Take oatmeal for an example - it is far less expensive per serving to purchase a large container of plain, quick cook oats than it is to purchase a box of six or eight single serving size packages.

• **Invest in a large slow cooker** and prepare at least 1-2 dinners in it each week. Freeze the leftovers for the following week or two.

• **Sign up for a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) share.** This is a great way to get lots of farm fresh produce at a good price while supporting a local farmer as well. For information on local CSA's contact your local extension office.

• **Shop at the farmers market first.** Buy what is local and in season. Plan your weekly recipes around that.

• **Switch to beans and lentils** instead of meats for a few meals a week. Packed with protein and vitamins and much easier on the budget! To save even more, buy dried beans in bulk, soak them overnight, toss them in the crock-pot in the morning with some water, and by dinner time you'll have fresh, warm beans to add to any meal.

• **Grow a garden.** With a small investment of time and money, you can get a return of at least 500% - 800+%! We planted our garden last spring and had a plenty of vegetables throughout the growing season for us and to share with neighbors and even some to "put up" for the fall and winter. We still have herbs and greens in our little plot.

• **Stock up on what you can at your "big box stores"** to save money. While you're probably not going to find everything on your clean eating grocery list here, there are some items you can get for a good price

(canned and frozen fruits and vegetables, etc.). Buy these shelf-stable items in bulk.

• **Buy your meat and poultry right from the source.** Check with your local extension office for information on finding farmers who will sell directly to you.

• **Invest in a stand-alone freezer.** You will need it to freeze leftovers, overflow from your CSA share, buying a local meat share, and the surplus from your summer garden.

• **Pack your own food when you travel.** If you travel for work or go on a family vacation, bring along things like fresh fruit and veggies, homemade granola, trail mix, and nuts. You'll be eating healthier and saving money, too.

• **Maximize your savings where you can.** Unfortunately most food coupons these days are for highly processed food items. Focus on smart coupon savings with other household items, bath products, cleaning products, toiletries and paper products.

• **Cut your budget in other areas.** Our family made a commitment to eating the healthiest diet we can, and we have made sacrifices in other areas to do so. We now have a pretty tight monthly budget for splurges like dinners out, morning coffee runs, or clothing. Our most important budget item is healthy food, and that's where we decide to spend our money.

Source: USDA Cost of Food at Home:  
<http://www.cnpp.usda.gov/USDAFoodCost-Home.htm>

*If you are interested in getting a sample menu and shopping list to help you get started, please email me at [robin-seitz@rocketmail.com](mailto:robin-seitz@rocketmail.com).*

## **Sleep – More Than a Luxury, Important for Health**

*by Carolyn Dunn*

Your favorite TV show, the email you forgot to send before you left work, washing clothes, balancing your checkbook, helping the kids with their homework – these all get done, put on the front burner, not negotiable for completion. What is, far too often, up for negotiation, is sleep. We put many things in our life before sleep. Sleep is thought to be something that can be put off – just one more hour.

The price for our continued negotiation with sleep is high, maybe higher than we thought. No doubt lack of sleep leaves us less able to perform at our job, tired, cranky, and lowers our cognitive function. It also may contribute to our weight.

How can getting too little sleep contribute to weight? Researchers continue to grapple with the exact cause. Whether it is hormonal imbalance related to appetite control, fatigue that leads to sedentary behavior, or altered glucose metabolism that leads to increased fat storage, the fact remains that sleeping less than 6 hours per night increases the chance of overweight and obesity.

Make getting at least 6-7 hours of sleep per night a priority. Not only will you feel better, perform better at work, and maybe even be nicer to your loved ones, you may also help you achieve and maintain a healthy weight.

### **Eat Smart, Move More, Weigh Less begins January 3rd**

"Eat Smart, Move More, Weigh Less" is a 15-week weight management program that is proven to work. The next sessions begin

Thursday, January 3, at 11:00 a.m. in The Auditorium at the Onslow County Health Department at 612 College Street, Jacksonville, NC. The cost of the program is \$30 for the series and must be paid at the first class.

"Eat Smart, Move More, Weigh Less" focuses on lifestyle habits that help you achieve a healthy weight. Losing weight is only a small part of your journey—feeling better, having more energy, and becoming more mindful are all positive changes you can expect. The class is built on strategies proven to work, including mindful eating and physical activity.

#### ***Weekly lessons that motivate and inspire***

The goal of Eat Smart, Move More, Weigh Less is to inform, empower, and motivate you to live mindfully as you make choices about eating and physical activity. An experienced instructor trained in weight management leads each weekly one-hour lesson.

#### **Each lesson includes:**

Information about why the behavior is important for weight loss/maintenance

Practical strategies for adopting the behavior

5-10 minute physical activity break

Ways concepts can be adopted by the whole family

Opportunity for sharing and celebrating

Suggestions for living mindfully

Guided discussion of strategy for the week

#### **Each participant receives:**

Blood cholesterol screening and blood pressure checks in the first and last sessions.

Eat Smart, Move More, Weigh Less Magazine—a full-color magazine with recipes and more.

Eat Smart, Move More, Weigh Less Journal—a small booklet that helps participants keep track of their weight, food eaten and physical activity.

Weekly incentives including prizes and healthy food tastings.

Graduation celebration on April 11<sup>th</sup> with lunch and graduation gifts.

*To register for the class, contact Robin Seitz at 910-455-5873 or [robin\\_seitz@ncsu.edu](mailto:robin_seitz@ncsu.edu) and for questions about the class content, go to <https://esmmweighless.com/>*

## **“Emergency Savings”**

Savings are a key component to a successful financial wellness plan. As you approach the new year start to consider ways to save for emergencies.

An “emergency” savings fund acts like an insurance policy to meet unplanned expenses. We know that things are bound to break, we just don’t always know when. An emergency savings account can help keep credit card debt under control by providing the means to, for example, replace a flat tire, buy a new washing machine, or to repair the furnace. An emergency savings fund should be quickly and easily accessible, without fee or early withdrawal penalty and is a vital component to a smart savings strategy. Without an emergency fund unexpected expenses can wreak havoc on a budget. Taking money from retirement account is typically not best approach since that jeopardizes your future financial security

and costs you money in penalty charges. Be prepared . . . Save Now.

## **Visiting the Doctor...Yes, that Doctor!**

Did you know that 44% of women have not visited a gynecologist in the past year. Of those who had seen a gynecologist, 24% said that was the only doctor they saw. Most women site lack of time and money as the reason for this, but a surprising number said they felt that if their childbearing years were behind them that it was unnecessary. Routine visits to a gynecologist are an important part of preventive medicine. If you are one of the 44% I urge you to call today and schedule an appointment. Being prepared will help you make the most of your visit. To prepare follow these tips from Northwestern University.

### **Before the Visit**

- Keep a "Health Diary" - Keeping a health diary between appointments can help you get the most out of your doctor visit. Documenting any illnesses, bodily changes, persistent/unusual symptoms and feminine health concerns all enable you to better manage the visit by remembering to discuss these issues with your doctor. Armed with this knowledge, your doctor will be able to conduct the exam more effectively and efficiently. This written record also will assist you in recognizing symptom recurrences.
- Document Difficult Questions Some women are uncomfortable discussing family or sexual matters with a physician. Writing down "difficult" questions sometimes makes it easier to address them in person, so you might want to list your concerns or any problems in advance of the visit.
- Remember Your Medical Records - If you're seeing a physician for the first time, be sure to obtain your medical records from your previous doctor. Your medical history, combined with your

personal health diary, will supply your new doctor with a complete snapshot of your situation.

## **During the Visit**

- **Be Efficient** - Managing your doctor visit is similar to approaching a business meeting. Since time is valuable to both you and your physician, come prepared and keep your conversation focused, using your health diary as an agenda. Aside from specific physical concerns, don't hesitate to discuss financial matters (e.g., exam fees) upfront, so there are no "surprises" later.

- This is also a good time to bring up new topics on your list. Do you need a recommendation for a weight loss program? Do you want to quit smoking, but don't know how to start? Is a family member suffering from alcoholism? Your doctor is a knowledgeable referral source for these and many other issues.

- **Expect the "Expected,"** Be sure to request these routine tests:
  - Blood pressure
  - Weight
  - Pulse
  - External exam (breasts and abdomen)
  - Pap smear (cervix)
  - Internal pelvic exam (vagina, reproductive organs)
  - Colo-rectal exam (recommended for women 40+)

- If you're among the 24 percent of women surveyed who see no other doctor besides a gynecologist, it's important to tell your gynecologist if she/he is your only physician- otherwise you could be missing additional tests routine in a general physical, such as a urine analysis, cholesterol test or blood sugar exam. Unless requested, your gynecologist may assume that you've already received these tests elsewhere.

## **Between Visits**

- **Know Thyself** - What should you do between appointments? The best advice is to pay attention to the signals from your body, using your health diary as a guide.

- Today, the role of self-care has been made easier by the introduction of effective over-the-counter (OTC) methods and medicines that can help you detect early signs of pregnancy, treat the symptoms of vaginal yeast infections and monitor ovulation in the comfort and privacy of your home. If this is the first time you've ever experienced a condition, it's smart to consult your physician to confirm the diagnosis before using an OTC treatment.

- **Phone First** - Many doctors don't mind if you call for advice. Phoning your physician first has become a cost- and time- saving method and may spare you an unnecessary office visit if an OTC (over the counter) treatment can be recommended instead. Don't hesitate, however, to schedule an appointment if symptoms persist or become serious.

- **Practice Preventive Maintenance** - Remember, you and your doctor are a team, jointly responsible for the maintenance of your health. Contrary to the "if it ain't broke, don't fix it" philosophy, be sure to schedule a regular check-up (physical and gynecological) at least once a year, and confer with your physician as often as necessary between visits to discuss issues concerning you. Preventive maintenance goes a long way in keeping your bill of health clean for years to come.

Make the call today!

## Spotlight for December

### Holiday Safety Tips

The holidays are an exciting time of year for everyone. Here are some tips to help ensure a safe holiday season.

#### Trees

- When purchasing an artificial tree, look for the label "Fire Resistant."
- When purchasing a live tree always check for freshness. A fresh tree is less of a fire hazard. Fresh trees are green, with needles that are hard to pull from branches and do not break easily. The trunk should be sticky with resin.
- When setting up a tree at home, cut a few inches off the trunk of your tree to expose fresh wood. This allows for better water absorption. Be sure to keep the stand filled with water, heated rooms can dry live trees out rapidly.
- Place trees away from fireplaces, radiators or portable heaters, out of walkways, and don't allow it to block doorways.

#### Lights

- Make sure all lights you use outdoors have been certified for outdoor use. Plug all outdoor electric decorations into circuits with ground fault circuit interrupters.
- Check all tree lights-even if they are new to make sure all the bulbs are working and that there are no frayed wires or loose connections.
- Turn off all lights when you go to bed or leave the house.

#### Decorations

- Use only non-combustible or flame-resistant materials to trim a tree. Choose

tinsel or artificial icicles of plastic or nonleaded metals.

- Never use lighted candles on a tree or near other evergreens. Use non-flammable holders, and place candles where they won't fall down.
- In homes with small children, take care to avoid decorations that are sharp or breakable, keep trimmings with small removable parts out of the reach of children. Avoid trimmings that resemble candy or food that may tempt a child to eat them.
- Remove wrapping paper, bags, ribbons and bows from tree and fireplace areas after gifts are opened. These items can pose suffocation and choking hazards to a small child, or can cause a fire if near flame.

#### Toy Safety

- Select toys to suit the age, abilities, skills and interest level of the receiver. Toys that are too advanced may pose safety hazards.
- To prevent burns and electrical shocks don't give children, under age ten, a toy that must be plugged into an electrical outlet.
- Strings and ribbons that are more than 12 inches in length could be a strangulation hazard. Remove them from toys before giving them to young children.

#### Visiting

- When traveling in the car make sure everyone is buckled up and stays that way.
- Remember that homes you visit may not be childproofed. Watch for danger spots.
- Traveling, visiting, getting presents, shopping, etc., can all increase a child's stress levels. Stick to children's usual eating and sleeping schedules as much as possible

to help you and them enjoy the holidays and reduce stress.

### **Fireplaces**

- Before lighting any fire, remove all greens, boughs, papers, and other decorations from fireplace area. Make sure the flue is open.

- Do not burn wrapping papers in the fireplace they ignite suddenly and burn intensely.

### **Pets**

- People food is not good for pets it can cause gastrointestinal upset. Do not give poultry bones to your pets, they can splinter and cause severe injury. Onions can be toxic to both dogs and cats. Chocolate can cause a fatal heart attack if ingested in large doses.

- During the holidays, pets may not understand why their usually quiet home is full of people and noise. Provide pets with a quiet place to retreat to help them be more at ease. Also, keep an eye on pets when doors are opening and closing frequently, upset pets may slip out in the commotion.

- Decorations usually mean extra cords and plugs -- tempting "chew toys" for pets. Take an extra minute or two during decorating to tape down or cover cords.

- Anchoring the top of the tree to the ceiling with a strong cord will help keep it in place around frolicking pets. Some pets are inclined to eat tinsel hanging from trees -- this can cause an intestinal obstruction -- avoid tinsel or keep tinsel decorations high on the tree.

- Mistletoe and holly berries, as well as poinsettia plants can be poisonous to pets. Pine needles can puncture holes in a pet's intestine causing an emergency visit to the vet. Use repellent sprays to keep pets away from areas and objects that may cause them harm.

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