

FACES NEWSLETTER

Family and Consumer Science



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Fall into Fitness

Fall is a great time to start a fitness program because you'll going to create good habits for the holiday season and the upcoming winter months. With the change of seasons comes a renewed time to rethink and restart working toward your health goals.

Here are 10 ways to start making the most of the season. Follow these tips and you'll be in great shape when that New Year's Eve party rolls around.

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1. Take advantage of the weather. Fall can be a treat for the senses: the crisp air, pumpkin carving, a gorgeous canopy of fall foliage, and the crunch of leaves underfoot. These months are a great time to exercise outdoors and enjoy cooler temperatures. Walking, hiking and cycling are all great activities for fall. Discover park trails and take in some new scenery, whether you're running, biking, or walking. Other ideas include getting out and playing volleyball, throwing the Frisbee around, or playing a vigorous game of fetch with your dog. It's also a great time to do beach activities because it's so much less crowded. If you're near a river or lake, try kayaking or canoeing, it's an excellent whole-body workout and a great change of pace. And remember, it doesn't have to seem like exercise to be a great workout. Raking leaves or doing some fall outdoor yard work is a great way to get the heart pumping, and it's great calorie-burning.

2. Think outside the box. Always wanted to learn to tap dance? Attempt kickboxing? Master the jump rope? Fall is a great time to learn something new. Many classes at gyms, recreation and fitness centers get started in the fall, so look around and see if something intrigues you. Fall is the perfect time to gain new physical skills, because you burn fewer calories when you begin a new activity (thanks to the learning curve). If you learn something new now, by next summer, you'll have mastered the skill -- and you'll burn more calories doing it, just in time for swimsuit season.

3. Be an active TV watcher. Many people get geared up for fall premieres of their favorite television shows. If you're going to sit down and watch hours of TV, get moving. Make a date with exercise and TV. While you watch, you can walk or run in place, do standing lunges, do tricep dips off the couch, or lift weights. During commercials, do push-ups or sit-ups. In a one-hour show, you probably have close to 20 minutes worth of commercial interruption.

4. Integrate exercise into your life. You already know the obvious suggestions: park farther away from your destination; take stairs instead of elevators; take a walk during your lunch break. Here are a couple that are less obvious:

-If you're spending the afternoon taking kids to soccer practice, instead of reading a book or visiting with another parent, why not walk around the outside of the field while they practice, or (if

you feel comfortable) warm up and cool down with the kids."

-You can even get moving while you get motivated -- for fitness or other life goals. Get some inspirational music or find a motivational talk and download it to your iPod. Walk while you listen for 30 minutes.

5. Rejuvenate yourself. Fall is the time to rejuvenate body, mind and spirit. Get a massage after your run. Learn to meditate. Take an art class. Treat yourself not just with exercise but other activities that promote wellness, so you can feel good physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually.

6. Remember the 30-day rule. It takes about four weeks for the body to adapt to lifestyle change. That's why people who give up on their fitness programs tend to do so within the first 30 days. So, when the alarm goes off in the morning and it's darker and colder, don't roll over and hit the snooze button. Try to stick with a program for a month. After a month, behavior patterns will have adapted and it will be much easier to stick with it after that.

7. Strive for the 3 Cs. Commitment, convenience, and consistency are "the three Cs" that will lead to a successful fitness program. First, exercise takes commitment. We're all busy; that's just part of our lives. You have to start planning exercise, just like you do everything else, like meetings, dinners, and other commitments. Resist the urge to say "I'll do it later". Put in on the calendar now, because later often turns into never. *Convenience* means choosing

a gym that's close by, or an activity you can do at home, or a time when you're not likely to be interrupted. Finally, there's *consistency*. That means it's better to work out for just 10 minutes every day rather than working out for a whole one hour just a few times a month.

8. Deal with darkness. The best way to enjoy fall is to exercise outdoors. But it is getting darker earlier, and staying dark later in the morning, so be smart and safe. Just because it's 6 p.m. (or a.m.) and dark doesn't mean you can't work out. If you are walking or running outdoors wear a reflective vest and carry a flashlight. When cycling, affix a light to your helmet or bike. If possible, use trails or a local school track to avoid vehicle traffic. Try to work out at the same time every day, so drivers get used to seeing you.

9. Dress in layers. When exercising outside, layer your clothing. Before your body warms up, you may feel chilled, but once the blood gets pumping, you'll feel overdressed. These days, there's no lack of great weather gear. Look for clothing with wicking, often called DriFit. This fabric wicks moisture away from your skin so you're not exercising with wet fabric hanging on you. Experts suggest three layers: The inner layer should be a moisture-wicking fabric, so it wicks away sweat and you're not chilled. The second layer should be a warmth layer, and the third layer should be a protective layer (like a windbreaker or rain slicker, depending on the weather). And don't forget the

sunglasses. UV protection is important year round. Fall sun can be blinding at certain times of the day.



10. Find your motivation. People are motivated by different things. It's important to first discover what your individual goals are, whether it's losing weight, strengthening and toning, or preparing for a race or event. But goals aren't enough to get you there; you have to be motivated by the day-to-day workouts. So choose something you'll enjoy doing and will be likely to keep up, whether it's walking or hiking with a friend, working with a trainer, or taking part in a "boot camp" class. Creating a challenge for yourself will motivate you, as will encouragement and accountability. You want to know when you're doing a good job, and when you're not. Remember too, that anything worth having takes work.

Toy Shopping Tips for the Holiday Season

Coming up on the holiday shopping season many of us often wonder, which toy will be the HOT item this year? What will the kids or grandkids be asking for? Will I be the one they're talking about on news reports, standing in store lines for hours or fighting other parents to make sure my child will have one of these toys on Christmas morning. Sad to say, even after all this effort, many parents find their child plays with that popular toy for a few minutes, and then puts it aside to play with something else.

There are lots of toys on store shelves to choose from and the cost can really add up. Children often want every toy they see in the store and on TV. It's up to adults to choose the best toys for the money they have to spend. How do you choose good toys that children will really like to play with? Follow these tips and you can't go wrong:

Before you buy a new toy, ask yourself the following questions about safety:

- Is the toy made of sturdy material that will hold up with lots of playing?
- Does the toy shoot or throw things that may hurt a child's eyes?
- Does the toy make loud noises that may harm a child's hearing?
- Does the label on a painted toy state "nontoxic"?
- Is the toy easy to wash and keep clean?
- Does the toy work well?

Next, look at the toy and think about how children would use it:

- Can children use this toy in more than one way?
- Can children decide how to play with this toy, or does it play for them?
- Is the toy right for the age of the child?
- Will children of other ages be able to use this toy?
- Can the toy be used with other toys for playing?
- Is there anything about this toy that could raise tension or cause stress for the children or parent?

There are certain toys that are always a good choice, no matter what child you're shopping for. Typically these are toys in the groups listed below.

Dramatic play — toys that help children work out their ideas about the world. These include blocks, toy cars, trucks, planes, boats, dress-up clothes, ocean, farm, and rainforest animals, insects, dolls, stuffed animals, tool sets, medical kits, doll houses, puppets, props to make a restaurant, store, post office, etc.

Small object play — toys for children (three years of age and older) to use the small muscles in their hands and fingers. Playing with small objects helps children's learning about math and science. These include construction sets, blocks, plastic blocks that fit together, puzzles.

CAUTION: Children under three years of age should not play with small objects, which they may put in their mouths, causing them to choke. Any toy that is small enough to drop through a toilet paper tube should not be given to children under three years of age.

Art play — materials for children to use in ways they choose. These include paints, paper of all sizes and colors, crayons, markers, children's safety scissors, glue, clay.

Physical play — helps children use their arm and leg muscles. These toys include bikes and other riding toys, balls, bats, jump ropes, swing sets, things to climb on, or tunnels to crawl through.

Game playing — teaches children about taking turns, following rules, solving problems. These toys include board games, card games, and games you or the children make up.

Keep in mind that while kids may want certain toys they are not always the best choice for their development. It is important to avoid having a lot of toys that play for the child, rather than encouraging the child to choose how to play. These include toys that talk or move when a button is pushed, or toys that only function in only one way, rather than allowing the child to use their imagination.

You may also want to think seriously about avoiding certain toys, such as toys that teach violence, such as toy guns, swords, action figures of professional wrestlers, or toys with horror theme.

Always check the packaging for age suggestions and avoid toys that are inappropriate for the child's age. This is important for the child's safety. Also take into account the maturity level of the child and the toy. Some toys that may be "maturity" inappropriate include dolls based on teenage stars and pop music, "pretend" body piercings and tattoos; action figures, dolls, and other toys linked to PG-13 or R-rated movies.

Also avoid toys and games that encourage unhealthy eating habits, such as toys with the name or logo of a fast food restaurant on them, books or games based on name brand or junk foods.

Recipe Corner

Fall brings the appearance of some of the most nutritionally packed vegetables. Two of my favorites are showcased in this recipe. Make this salad a meal by adding black beans or chickpeas.

Butternut Squash and Kale Salad

Ingredients:

- 2 bunches kale, tough stems and ribs stripped out, leaves sliced
- 1 cup low-sodium vegetable broth, divided
- 1 butternut squash (about 2 pounds), peeled, seeded and cut into 1/2-inch cubes
- 1 red onion, sliced
- 4 pitted dates, very finely chopped
- 2 tablespoons sherry vinegar

Method:

Put kale and 1/2 cup vegetable broth in a large pot and place over medium heat. Cook, covered, stirring frequently, until kale is wilted, about 3 minutes. Add

squash and continue cooking, stirring occasionally, until kale and squash are tender but not mushy, 10 to 12 minutes. Cool to room temperature.

Meanwhile, combine the remaining 1/2 cup broth, onion, dates and vinegar in a small saucepan. Bring to a boil, lower heat, and simmer, uncovered, until onion is very tender and liquid is reduced by half, about 6 minutes. Cool, toss with kale and butternut and serve room temperature or chilled.

Cool Weather - Hot Pest Topics

Kudzu Bugs and Paper Wasps

From: Mike Waldvogel and Patty Alder, Extension Entomology

We first reported kudzu bugs showing up around houses a few weeks ago. However, the decreasing day lengths and temperatures have triggered a noticeable increase in the movement of kudzu bugs out of soybean and kudzu fields. In some cases, the bugs are finding overwintering spots in bark crevices, mulch, and leaf litter, but several counties and pest control companies have reported a spike in frantic calls from residents about kudzu bugs covering their house siding, cars, themselves, etc.

Here are the two most frequently asked questions:

How long will this invasion continue?

That's hard to estimate but hopefully it will stop before you're carving the Thanksgiving turkey. Cool morning temperatures will slow their activity but warm mid-day temperatures will have the bugs on the move.

What can I spray to stop them?

Nothing... Chemical control is still only

partially effective and relies primarily on targeting the insects that are currently gathering on surfaces. Preventive sprays are not recommended - because a) you really don't know whether the bugs will gather (more likely they'll be spread out over broad areas, too), b) trying to treat the entire exterior of your house isn't economically, logistically or environmentally prudent. The sprays simply won't be durable enough to last the weeks during which these insects will be actively seeking overwintering sites. If you simply **MUST** spray, concentrate on targeting treatment on critical areas: windows and door frames, some soffits. There are a number of products people can use, most of these products contain "pyrethroids", the pesticides with common names (not brand names) usually ending in "thrin" (permethrin, bifenthrin, lambda-cyhalothrin, etc.). It is important to exercise extreme caution when spraying the exterior of homes because no matter how careful you are, chemical will splash back and drift onto you, as well as nearby objects (barbecue grills, furniture, children's toys, pet water bowls, bird baths, etc.) These objects need to be moved or at least covered while applying the chemical. It is also important to treat exterior surfaces **ONLY**. We do not recommend interior treatments of homes (or businesses) because these are potentially harmful to occupants if pesticides are applied improperly. You can't predict where the insects will show up indoors and so it doesn't help to spray baseboards or around window interiors or setting off insecticidal foggers. If they get inside, use a vacuum cleaner with a hose to simply suck them up. Make sure to discard the bag (or clean the vacuum if it's a bagless unit)

because the bugs do emit an odor. For more information on kudzu bug control visit:

<http://insects.ncsu.edu/Urban/kudzubug.htm>

The Buzz About Paper Wasps

The cooler weather is also bringing and end to activity for "Polistes" or paper wasp colonies. The workers (who will die soon) along with next year's crop of queens are starting to bail out of their nests. The surviving queens will seek out some place to pass the winter (and likely find a few areas already occupied by kudzu bugs!) and all too often our houses become the location of choice. There are several species of paper wasps, but the common ones brown in color with yellow stripes on their abdomens.

You will likely see the wasps outdoors hovering about the eaves, soffits, and even porches on warm afternoons. For whatever reason, the wasps seem to orient to vertical objects so chimneys become an object of their attention.. At some point, the wasps make their way indoors and things can get more exciting. The wasps are often seen moving about slowly and bouncing off windows, ceilings, light fixtures, etc. Trips to the attic can be adventures as you may spot multitudes of the wasps buzzing about. Cold weather seems to stop the activity, but quite likely on subsequent warm days you will find wasps flying about indoors or again spot them outside around the roof area. In many cases, the wasps appear to be gaining access through (i.e., around) the A/C ducts in floors or ceilings particularly where the vent is passing through either the crawlspace or attic. There are a few pieces of advice that may provide little comfort to frantic

homeowner who spot the wasps.

First - seeing the wasps does not mean that there is a nest in a wall, but quite likely there is a nest (or several nests) outdoors on a roof overhang, under a porch, in/on a tree or some other protected area.

Second - since these are queens looking for overwintering sites and not workers defending a nest, they are not aggressive and so stinging incidents are rare unless you have a "close encounter of the Polistes kind".

Third - spraying indoors is an exercise in futility because there simply isn't a specific target area you can treat. Spraying the exterior of the house also has limited value because there are so many gaps accessible to the wasps. Although the gable vents are often a point of vulnerability, soffit vents, some ridge vents and the gap between siding and the chimney are all well-traveled access points.

Best advice:

First - Keep a rolled-up newspaper handy. Yes, you can unload an entire can of "Raid" on the beast but then what do you do about its 'sisters' that are likely to show up? Plus, it's not smart to be chasing a wasp around and spraying into the air (air which you and others then inhale) in a often futile attempt to kill it. Be patient, let it land then smack it. Even the method of choice for many homeowners - setting off foggers in every room - won't accomplish much either because any wasps that are not yet out in the open will not be affected by the chemical mist. However, if there are a significant number of wasps overwintering in the attic, and you feel that you **MUST**, you can set off **ONE**

fogger in the attic, which will kill some up there but have little impact on all of the ones showing up in the living areas.

Also, if you leave items like shoes on the floor or clothing hanging on a door, shake them before putting them on so you can see if a wasp flies out.

For further information about paper wasps, check out:
<http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/ent/notes/Other/note144/note144.html>
<http://insects.ncsu.edu/Urban/paperwasp.htm>

CHRISTMAS CHEER TIME IS HERE AGAIN

Onslow County 4-H County Council is again participating in the Elder Cheer Program. Since 1996 the Onslow County Adult and Family Services unit at the Department of Social Services has coordinated the Elder cheer program. This program places an emphasis on elderly and disabled population who are in resident care facilities, while giving our community the opportunity to share their holiday spirit.

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On December 3rd, join us at 6:30 pm for the social gathering and assembling of items. Please plan on attending and completing a wonderful community service project.

In the meantime, please tell everyone you know that we are collecting the following items. All of these can be dropped off at the Cooperative Extension, 4024 Richlands Hwy. Please remind our staff that they are for the Elder Cheer Holiday Program. Items requested by Onslow County Elder Cheer are: lotion, candy (diabetic), aftershave, fruit baskets, socks, puzzle books, key chains, watches, blankets, deodorant, electric blankets, combs, perfume, slippers, hair brushes, night gowns, batteries, gospel cd's, holiday novelties, toothbrushes, writing paper, stationery, support hose, powder, pajamas, disposable razors, personal care items (soap, shampoo, etc.), small flashlights, fashion jewelry, live plants, pens, window mounted bird feeders.

4-H is also in need of baskets, tins and gift bags to help wrap these items. **All of these items are due in the 4-H office by November 27th.** For more information, contact Wanda Mills or Kelly Abma at 910.455.5873.