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Kansas Currents

K-State Research and Extension News

*Knowledge
for Life*

**Central Kansas
Extension District**

District Extension Agents:

Lisa Newman
Family and Child Development

Debra Wood
Family Resource Management

Leah Robinson
Nutrition, Food Safety & Health



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JULY 2014

Ottawa County Fair - Minneapolis "American Flare at the County Fair"



Dates: July 15-19, 2014

Fair paper will be in the local newspaper late June and also available at the extension office in Minneapolis. Special baking contest this year is: Bar Cookie. Participants must be residents of Ottawa County.

Tri-Rivers Fair - Salina "Boots, Chaps, & Cowboy Hats"



Dates: August 6-10, 2014

For more information about the fair, visit www.tririversfair.org

Child Car Seat and Bicycle Safety Event

Motor vehicle injuries are a leading cause of death among children in the United States. But many of these deaths can be prevented. Make plans to stop by the Salina Wal-Mart on Saturday, July 19 from 1-4 p.m. Trained staff will be on hand to ensure your child car seats are installed correctly. Children are also invited to participate in the bicycle rodeo event that is scheduled to be held.



Freezing Food for the Fair

To help save time and stress at county fairs, prepare food entries early and freeze them. Most baked goods freeze well and can still be top ribbon quality.

Here are some tips:

- Bake and cool completely! This helps prevent condensation inside the wrapping and development of ice crystals.
- Use moisture-vapor resistant packaging such as freezer-safe plastic containers or bags and rigid containers.
- Separate layers of cookies with wax paper or parchment paper.
- Freeze cakes or breads unfrosted and frost after thawed.
- Make pie crusts ahead of time and freeze.



Freezing Foods at Home

Freezing food is easy and convenient. Using proper preparation of the food can result in high quality, nutritious foods.

Vegetables must be water or steam blanched to stop enzymes in the food from changing texture, flavor, color and nutrition. Blanching also helps kill bacteria.

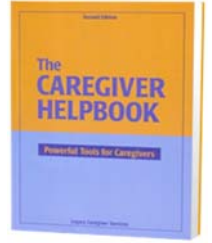
Fruits also contain enzymes that cause browning and vitamin C loss. Ascorbic acid is an effective treatment to stop enzymes changes in fruit.

Because fruits and vegetables are over 90 percent water, freezing will cause cell walls holding the water to break. This results in softer produce when thawed. Serving frozen produce partially thawed can reduce this liquid loss.

Freeze foods quickly for better quality. Set freezer temperature to the lowest setting. Use a freezer thermometer to monitor the temperature. Freeze foods in small batches for faster freezing.

Powerful Tools for Caregivers Workshop

Deb, Leah, and Lisa will be offering a self-care education program for family caregivers this fall through the Salina Public Library's CLASS program. The Powerful Tools for Caregivers program will provide you with tools and strategies to better handle the unique caregiver challenges you face.



The program will run six weeks and has been shown to improve:

- Self-care behaviors: (increased exercise, relaxation, and medical check-ups)
- Management of emotions: (reduced guilt, anger, and depression)
- Self-efficacy: (increased confidence in coping with caregiving demands)
- Use of community resources: (increased utilization of local services)

Space is limited. If you are interested, pick up a catalog at the Salina Public Library after July 21. A registration kickoff event will be held at the Salina Central Mall on Saturday, August 9 from 11 a.m-1 p.m. Registration will continue after this date at the library's Community Learning Center and online.

Reading Aloud to Your Children

Read to your child every day-even if only for a few minutes. It is your time together.

- Reading should be fun. You don't have to finish a story if your child loses interest.
- Let your child choose the book even if it means reading the same book over and over.
- Invite your child to "read" to you from a familiar book that he has memorized from having heard it so often read to him.
- Stop and ask about the illustrations or what your child thinks will happen next. The answers may amaze you.
- Join your local library!

Memory Loss

For many people, memory loss can be very frustrating. While there is no guaranteed way to prevent memory loss, the Mayo Clinic offers some simple tips on sharpening your memory:

- Engage in mentally stimulating activities, like crossword puzzles. Mentally stimulating activities can help keep your brain in shape in the same way that physical exercise keeps your body in shape.
- Sleep well. Sleep plays an important role in helping you retain and consolidate your memories. Most adults need about seven to eight hours of sleep each day.
- Eat a healthy diet. A healthy diet can be as good for your brain, as it is for the rest of your body.
- Socialize with friends and/or loved ones. Social interaction can help ward off depression and stress, both of which can contribute to memory loss.

Benefits of Block Play for Children

Blocks are a classic and favorite toy for children. There are so many different ways children can play with them. Together with your child, you can sort blocks by color, shape, or size. You can build tunnels with blocks. And perhaps the all-time favorite block activity: creating the tallest tower you can and then knocking it down.



Here are some benefits of block play for children:

- Provides open-ended play
- Use of fine and large motor skills
- Develops hand-eye coordination
- Possibilities for collaboration and teamwork (social skills)
- Allows negotiation and resolution of conflicts
- Stimulates imagination and creativity
- Increases language and vocabulary
- Improves math and science skills

Tips to Help Prepare Your Child for School

Back to school sales will be filling local stores and families will begin the process of school enrollment soon. As the beginning of school gets closer, there are several things you can do with your young child to help prepare them for a new school year:

- Big calendar: Mark down the days until school begins.
- Paper strips: Remember the chains you made when you were a kid? Have your child cut a bunch of paper strips and help them make a chain with the same number of links as the number of days until school starts.
- Pebbles/marbles in a jar: Put a number of small pebbles/marbles equal to the number of days until school starts into a jar and take one out every morning.



Children of all ages thrive on routine. An organized and predictable home environment help children feel safe and secure and can be a way of teaching younger children healthy habits.

Books are also a great way to prepare your child for going back to school. Check your local library for some good books about going back to school such as *David Goes to School* by David Shannon or *Amelia Bedelia's First Day of School* by Herman Parish.

Health Care Special Enrollment Periods

Just like with employer plans, a qualifying life event will allow consumers to make changes to their health insurance between open enrollment periods in the Marketplace. Examples of qualifying events include, but are not limited to, getting married or divorced, having or adopting a child, a death in the family, or losing health coverage. Consumers have a 60 day special enrollment period to enroll in a health plan in the Marketplace after the qualifying event. See if you qualify for a special enrollment period at www.healthcare.gov.

Disaster Preparedness Challenge

The tornadoes that hit Greensburg and Chapman, Kansas have been significant news stories in the last few years. Would you have been prepared to take action if you were in one of these situations?

Many people have installed smoke detectors, fire alarms, and dead bolt locks in their homes and stocked extra food in the pantry. To be financially prepared ahead of a disaster, create a household inventory, check your insurance coverage, and prepare a grab-and-go box.

With National Preparedness Month approaching in September, K-State Research & Extension invites you to participate in our Prepare Kansas Challenge. Throughout the month of September, complete activities to prepare your home or workplace ahead of a disaster.

Challenge activities will be announced each week via email and an Extension blog. You will record your efforts online. To sign up, visit this website: <http://bit.ly/PrepareKS>.

Check Pressure Canner for Accuracy

As the popularity of home canning and food preservation continues to grow, it's important for consumers to use accurate information and make sure their equipment is in good shape for the canning season.



For those who use a pressure canner, it is important to have the dial gauge checked for accuracy every year. Why is this important? Over time as the canner lid is handled, bumped, or just used, the calibration of a dial gauge can notice the inaccuracy. It's very important for the pressure to be at correct processing temperature to adequately kill the bacteria and spores that may be present in your food. Spores that survive can produce harmful toxins that can cause illness or death. Although a jar may seal if processed at a lower temperature, it does not mean that the food inside the jar is safe.

Processing foods at too low a pressure is a significant safety issue.

On the other hand, if a dial gauge is inaccurate and the processing temperature is higher than the recipe recommends, the food inside the jar may be overcooked and softer in texture than desired. This is not a safety issue but is a quality issue.

The Central Kansas Extension District offices in Minneapolis and Salina can test your dial gauge for accuracy, free of charge. The test only takes a few minutes. The dial will be tested and the entire canner will receive an inspection. If you have a weighted gauge canner you do not need to have it tested for accuracy because it cannot go out of calibration.

If the dial gauge tests off by less than 2 pounds, you will need to adjust the pounds pressure you use when processing foods. If a gauge tests off by more than two pounds, the dial gauge should be replaced. Also, a gauge should be replaced if it is cracked or the glass covering is missing.

Feel free to contact Leah Robinson at the CKD Minneapolis office, 785-392-2147 for any canning question or concerns.

Why are Foam Cakes Baked in Tube Pans?

Tube pans are traditionally used to bake foam cakes such as angel food cakes, sponge cakes, and chiffon cakes. But it's not just for looks. There is a functional reason.

Foam cakes have very little flour and therefore, very little gluten to give the cake strength. The egg white foam is very delicate and needs help to retain volume. The tube pan is the answer!

As the egg foam bakes, the batter rises and clings to the sides and center tube. After baking, the pan and cake must be cooled upside down to maintain the cake structure. A traditional cake or jelly roll pan will cause the cake to fall in the middle.

Concerns about Raw Milk

Since the 1920s, milk has been pasteurized to kill disease-causing bacteria. But many consumers choose to consume raw milk.

Illness from raw milk are 2.2 times higher in states that legally sell raw milk. In Kansas, it is legal to sell raw milk directly from the farm. From 2007 to 2012, outbreaks have increased nationwide.

- 81 outbreaks resulted in 979 illnesses, 73 hospitalizations, no deaths.
- Most infections were from cattle that appeared healthy.
- 81 percent of outbreaks were in states that legally sell raw milk.
- 59 percent of illnesses from raw milk were in children under 5 years old.
- For every outbreak reported, many go unreported.

Preventive Health Care

Most health plans must cover a set of preventive services like shots and screening tests at no cost to you. This includes Marketplace private insurance plans. Preventive care can help catch health problems early, when treatment can be most effective.

All Marketplace plans and many others (with the exception of a few grandfathered plans) must cover preventive services without charging you a copayment or coinsurance. This is true even if you have not met your yearly deductible. This applies only when these services are delivered by a network provider, and if additional services are provided there may be a charge for those (for example if they take a biopsy and send in the tissue sample).

Preventive services include many immunizations, cholesterol screenings for adults at higher risk, type 2 diabetes screening for adults with high blood pressure, colorectal cancer screenings for those over 50, mammograms every 1 to 2 years for women over 40, cervical cancer screenings, and breast cancer genetic test counseling (BRCA) for women at higher risk of breast cancer.

Flossing How-Tos

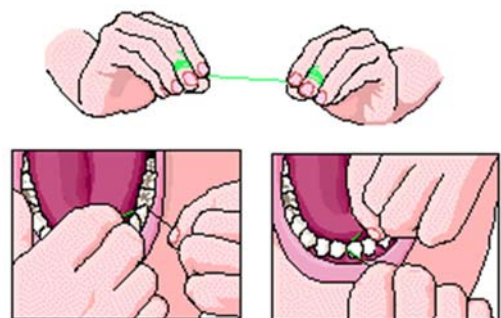
Are you flossing enough? And when you do floss, are you covering all the bases?

Flossing helps remove debris and plaque that collects between teeth. By cleaning these hard-to-reach surfaces, you'll reduce the likelihood of both gum disease and tooth decay.

Regular flossing is important – the American Dental Association recommends doing so at least once a day. The time of day doesn't matter, nor does it if you brush or floss first. What does matter is doing a thorough job. Here's a look at the proper technique:

- Use about 18 inches of floss. Wind each end around your middle fingers.
- Hold the floss tightly between your thumbs and index fingers and insert it between your teeth using a gentle rubbing motion.
- When the floss reaches the gumline, curve it into a C shape against the side of one tooth. Slide it into the space between the gum and the tooth.
- Holding the floss tightly against the tooth, gently rub the side of the tooth, moving the floss away from the gum with up and down motions. Then reverse the curve and switch your attention to the tooth surface on the other side.
- Floss between all teeth, including behind your back teeth.

If you have difficulty with regular floss, ask your dentist or dental hygienist for recommendations on the proper use of another kind of interdental cleaner, such as a dental pick or pre-threaded flosser.



The Dirt Behind Detoxing

With juice cleanses, lavender and Epsom salt baths, detox teas, plus a wide assortment of other products, it appears many people have a desire to detox their bodies.

The concept of detoxing is defined as removing a poisonous or harmful substance from the body, and was historically used to describe the rehabilitation process for drug and alcohol users. Detoxing has more recently expanded into usage for other toxins we are exposed to daily. We eat, breathe, clean the house, drive, take medications, and use beauty products, all which may expose us to toxins. There are potential toxins in, food, drugs, body lotion, fuel, water, kitchen sink cleaner, everything!

There are thousands of detox products on the market, ranging from teas and supplement capsules to pads that attach to the feet to “pull” toxins out. Hundreds of books are published to teach how to complete a detox, including recipes and daily menus to follow when detoxing. Although detox methods have been around for many years, a relatively new concept that has earned publicity is juice cleansing, by using a juicing machine to extract juice from fruits, vegetables, and herbs. By consuming only juiced produce, juice cleansing aims to rest the digestive system and stream energy into removing toxins from the body. The abundant nutrients found in fruit and vegetable juices are said to flood the body, forcing toxins out.

Juice cleanses, however, result in a void of valuable nutrition. When drinking only fresh juice, calorie intake is very low. There is minimal fiber and little to no fat or protein. Quite often juice cleansers experience flu-like symptoms or achy muscles. Detox creators say this is the result of toxins leaving the body, but registered dietitians (RDs) explain it as a simple lack of energy and nutrients. Not only are long-term juice cleanses dangerous for your body, but for your wallet as well. The cost of produce needed to complete a juice cleanse adds up quickly, not to mention the significant cost of the juicer you would need to purchase.

Keep in mind that the lack of calories going in will cause a sense of hunger, which may lead to junk food cravings like pizza or ice cream. (Those aren't detox foods, right??) Although juice cleanses provide the body with a surplus of important nutrients, you can soak up the same benefits without juicing. Try blending fruits and vegetables in a blender so you not only drink the juice, but also get the fiber that is normally removed in juicing. Consuming the blended whole food helps you feel full longer and allow you to incorporate protein and fat into the smoothie to balance your diet. Remember though, that blending should be done as an addition to a balanced diet, not a replacement for extended amounts of time.

The body is a natural detoxing machine! It uses your kidneys, liver, intestines, lungs, skin, lymph, and blood to do the detox work for you. All of these organs help the body to sort good nutrients from harmful chemicals to absorb only what is best for the body.

So what can you do? Keep the body healthy. Provide it with great nutrition and drink plenty of water. Get sufficient sleep and exercise, and reduce stress. Keeping your detox organs healthy is the best form of detox you can possibly do!



Lower the Cost of Long-Term Care Insurance

According to the Department of Health and Human Services, seventy percent of people who turn 65 will need some form of long-term care during their lives. This care can come in a number of forms, ranging from homemaker services and home health aides to help you stay in your home, to assisted living facilities or nursing home care.

Genworth Financial, Inc. publishes a cost of care report which compares daily, monthly and annual costs across locations for home care providers, adult day health care facilities, assisted living facilities and nursing homes. According to the 2013 data, the median monthly rate for assisted living facilities in Kansas is \$3,244. Daily rates for nursing home care average \$148 for a semi-private room and \$158 for a private room.

One product that can help pay for this expense is long-term care insurance. The amount you'll pay depends on the coverage you select, your age when you buy a policy, and your health. The cost may make the policies too expensive for people with a net worth (not including their home) of less than \$250,000, while households with more than \$1 million in assets may find it more cost effective to pay for their care out-of pocket using current income and savings.

If you decide you want to buy a policy, here are some ways you may be able to lower the cost of the premium. In most cases, lower premiums mean reduced benefits. Depending on what you choose, the insurance may cover only a portion of the expenses when you need care.

- **Shorten the benefit period.** The benefit period is the length of time that benefits will be paid. This typically ranges from two to ten years, but can be unlimited. The longer the period, the higher the premium. Historically, people who use the policies spend just under three years on average needing long-term care.
- **Lengthen the elimination period.** The elimination period is the time between when you first need care and when your policy begins paying (think of it like meeting a deductible). Increasing this time will help to lower the premiums. Lengthening this time from 30 to 90 calendar days will lower premiums approximately 15 to 20 percent.
- **Consider buying at a younger age.** It is usually advisable to purchase a plan before age 60. Typically the younger you are when you purchase your policy, the lower the premium.
- **Buy lower inflation protection.** Nursing home costs have been increasing at an average of 4-6% per year in this area and are even higher for other parts of the state and country. An inflation-coverage rider can help to protect you from increasing costs by increasing the amount of daily benefit the plan will pay. A 5 percent rider might seem ideal, but you may be able to cut your premium cost by lowering this percent, or by putting a cap on the increase.
- **Reduce your daily benefit.** Instead of covering the entire daily cost of assisted living or nursing home care, plan to cover a portion of this cost, using other income to cover the balance.
- **Sign up as a pair.** If you are married, you may be able to lower costs by both signing up for a policy at the same time. Some companies offer household discounts that will reduce premiums.



CALENDAR

JULY

- 15-19 Ottawa County Fair, Minneapolis
- 19 Child Car Seat & Bicycle Safety, 1-4 p.m., Salina Wal-Mart

AUGUST

- 6-10 Tri Rivers Fair, Salina