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Smart Choices for **SENIORS**

May

A Newsletter from the EFNEP/SCNEP Programs of Virginia Cooperative Extension



Health Benefits of Physical Activity

There are several health benefits of getting regular physical activity. Even mild or moderate exercise can reduce the risk of heart disease, type 2 diabetes, and high blood pressure. Being physically active increases energy, reduces stress, and helps you to sleep better. It can also add muscle strength, help your heart and lungs work more efficiently, and let you enjoy life more fully.

You can include physical activity by walking, gardening, doing housework, and swimming. Choose activities that you like to do so you will be more likely to stay with it. You can keep record of your activity, and check it regularly to see the progress you made.

Being physically active increases your capacity to do everyday activities. Be sure to ask your doctor before you start (or greatly increase) your activity plan.

Virginia Cooperative Extension

Knowledge for the Commonwealth



VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE
AND STATE UNIVERSITY



VIRGINIA STATE UNIVERSITY



MyPyramid.gov
STEPS TO A HEALTHIER YOU

Keeping Food Safe – What You Can Do

When buying food:

- Look at the freshness date. Buy only the amount you can use, freeze for later, or use in a short time.
- Don't buy dented or rusted cans.
- Immediately refrigerate perishable foods or wrap and freeze to use later.

When preparing food:

- Wear glasses if you have them and turn up the lights.
- Clean everything that comes in contact with food in warm, soapy water: your hands, utensils and dishes, cutting boards, and work surface.
- Thaw food in the refrigerator or by microwaving it on the defrost setting for a few minutes.
- Keep raw meat, poultry, fish and their juices away from other foods.
- Keep hot foods hot; cold foods cold.

When handling leftovers at home:

- Refrigerate everything within two hours of serving.
- Divide large quantities into small containers and put in the refrigerator or freezer.

When handling leftovers from eating out:

- Take leftovers only if you're going straight home.
- Put leftovers in the refrigerator as soon as you get home.
- Don't keep restaurant leftovers that have been left at room temperature for more than two hours.

When in doubt throw it out! – Keeping food safe is important for older adults because:

- You might have a harder time fighting off the effects of food-borne illness.
- You may have poor vision and might not notice kitchen spills or spots, places where bacteria thrive.
- You may not want to throw out questionable food because it may seem wasteful.

Source – University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension NutriNews



The Benefits of Breakfast

How many days per week do you eat breakfast? If you answered fewer than 7, you might be missing out on an easy and delicious way to be healthier. You have probably heard that breakfast is the most important meal of the day. Here are some reasons why.

- People who eat breakfast tend to stay at a healthier weight.
- People who eat breakfast tend to get more of the nutrients we need each day.
- Breakfast is a great time to get part of the 2 cups of fruit we need each day.
- Breakfast is a great time to get part of the 3 servings of dairy we need each day.
- Breakfast is a great time to get part of the 3 servings of whole grains we need each day.
- Eating breakfast helps you have energy to do the things you enjoy.

There are so many easy, tasty, and inexpensive choices for breakfast!

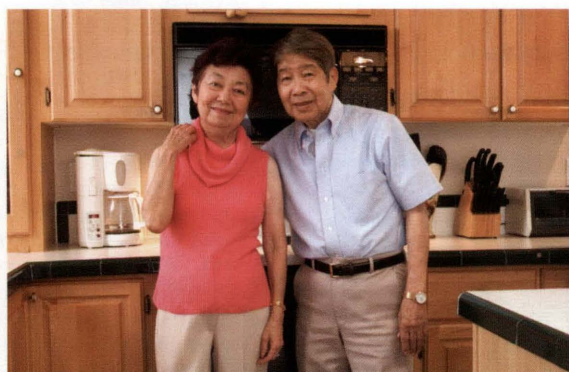
Think about it: a breakfast of whole-grain cereal, skim milk, and a piece of fruit gets us almost 1/3 of the way to getting the whole grain, dairy, and fruit we need. Of course, you can mix it up and have fruit with frozen whole-grain pancakes or waffles, oatmeal, a whole-grain bagel, or an English muffin for variety. Milk or yogurt would go great with these options. Soy milk is another good alternative, as long as the label says that it has added calcium.

Many people say they are not hungry when they first wake up. If you are one of these people, try getting ready for the day first and then eating breakfast. Just try to eat something healthy before you begin your activities for the day. Why miss out on such delicious choices that can help you feel better, be healthier, and prevent unwanted weight gain?

May Word Puzzle

1. When buying food look at the _____ date.
2. Thaw food in the _____ or by microwaving.
3. Put _____ in the refrigerator as soon as you get home.
4. _____ is the most important meal of the day.
5. People who eat breakfast tend to get more of the _____ we need each day.
6. Being physically active increases _____ and reduces stress.
7. You can include physical activity by _____.
8. _____ are a high-protein, low-cost legume.

R E Y J K V L W A S H N
 Z O C G A V A A R S F U
 I D T O R L L E F E N T
 G J K A K E V T I N Z R
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Lentil Soup

This soup is power-packed with nutrition and low cost! (Makes 12 1-cup servings.)

Preparation time: 15 minutes

Cook time: 45 minutes

Ingredients:

- 1-pound bag of lentils
- 6 cups of water
- 2 cups of chicken broth
- 2 carrots, diced
- 1 10-oz. package frozen spinach
- 1 bay leaf, optional
- 2 Tbsp. tomato paste
- Salt (optional)

Directions:

1. Wash lentils and check for small stones. Put in stockpot with water and broth, heat on medium high.
2. Microwave spinach to defrost.
3. Peel and dice carrots. Add to soup.
4. Break up spinach and add to pot along with bay leaf. Dissolve tomato paste into mixture.
5. When soup comes to a boil, lower heat and simmer for about 45 minutes.

Tips/Notes:

- Lentils are a high-protein, low-cost legume that do not require soaking prior to cooking. Lentils can be found in most supermarkets, often in the international foods section or with the beans.
- Put the leftover paste into a plastic baggie and freeze it for later use.
- Time saver: Use red lentils which require 15 minutes to cook instead of brown lentils which need 30 minutes.
- Menu ideas: Serve with crusty bread or a roll, a green salad, and a fruit parfait for a balanced meal.
- Freezes well.

Nutrition information per serving:

Calories: 150	Carbohydrates: 24 grams
Protein: 12 grams	Fat: 1 gram
Sodium: 210 milligrams	Fiber: 13 grams

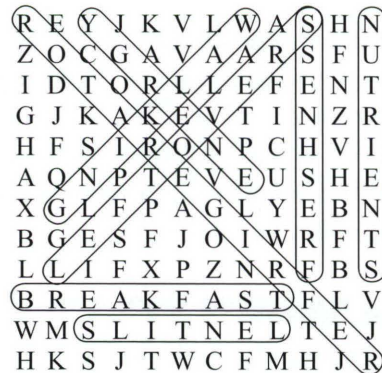
Source – University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension NutriNews

OFFICIAL BUSINESS

Answers:

1. freshness
2. refrigerator
3. leftovers
4. breakfast
5. nutrients
6. energy
7. walking
8. lentils

Solution:



**For more information on food, nutrition,
 and achieving a healthy weight, contact:**

Or call this toll-free number: 1-888-814-7627

If you have access to the Internet, go to these sites:

Healthy Futures Series:

<http://www.ext.vt.edu/healthyfutures>

MyPyramid Food Guide:

<http://www.mypyramid.gov/pyramid/index.html>

Food Stamps in Virginia:

<http://www.dss.virginia.gov/benefit/foodstamp.html>

www.ext.vt.edu

2007

Publication 348-575

Produced by Communications and Marketing, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Virginia Tech

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VT/638/0607/5M/271927/348575

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**This newsletter was funded by
 USDA's Food Stamp Program.**

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