Colorado State University Cooperative Extension

Putting Knowledge to Work

FAMILY AND CONSUMER NEWSLETTER El Paso County January 2006 Issue 4

Happy New Year!

Like many people, I find that the beginning of a new year encourages me to think about areas in my life that have a need for positive change. Then, I find myself listing those resolutions and hoping that at least one of them will last until the end of the day! A recent poll indicated that spending more time with family and friends, exercising regularly and losing weight were the top 3 resolutions made by Americans for 2006. So, I have included a few articles and resources that may be helpful as we work towards these goals. This is good timing because the next few months also focus on diet and exercise. February is American Heart Month and March is National Nutrition Month so look for ways to help your heart by eating nutritious food!

New Food Label for the New Year

Sheila Barry, FCS Agent

As of January 1, 2006, food manufacturers must now also list trans fat on the nutrition label. Here is an example of a new label with information to help you understand how to clearly get the nutrition facts you need to make a decision before eating the product.

Sample Label for Macaroni and Cheese

Start Here

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1 cup (228g)
Servings Per Container 2

Amount Per Serving

Calories 250	Calories from Fat 110
	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 12g	18%
Saturated Fat 3g	15%
Trans Fat 1.5g	
Cholesterol 30mg	10%
Sodium 470mg	20%
Total Carbohydrate 31g	10%
Dietary Fiber 0g	0%
Sugars 5g	
Protein 5g	
Vitamin A	4%
Vitamin C	2%
Calcium	20%
Iron	4%

Limit these Nutrients

Get Enough of these Nutrients

Quick Guide to % DV

5% or less is low

20% or more is high

* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your Daily Values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:

	Calories:	2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less than	65g	80g
Sat Fat	Less than	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate		300g	375g
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g

Footnote

Graphic from the CFSAN Office of Nutritional Products, Labeling and Dietary Supplements. For more information on Food Labeling, see http://www.cfsan.fda.gov/label.html

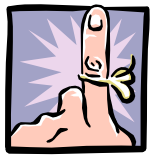
Are you wondering what a "trans fat" is and why it now has a special place on the food label?

Trans fat (also known as *trans* fatty acids) is formed when liquid vegetable oils are made into solid fats like shortening and hard margarine. This process is called hydrogenation and it increases the shelf life and flavor stability of foods. A small amount of *trans* fat is also found naturally in some animal-based foods.

Trans fat behaves like saturated fat by raising low-density lipoprotein (LDL or "bad") cholesterol that increases your risk of coronary heart disease (CHD). It is recommended to limit saturated and trans fat intake to 10% or less of your total caloric intake each day.

Where are *trans* fats usually found?

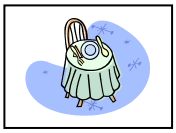
Trans fat can be found in some of the same foods as saturated fat, such as vegetable shortenings, some margarines, crackers, candies, cookies, snack foods, fried foods, baked goods, and other processed foods made with partially hydrogenated vegetable oils.



Reminder: It is recommended that once a year, you have your cholesterol and triglyceride levels checked. The recommended target for LDL cholesterol is less than 100 mg/dL. For HDL cholesterol, the recommended goals are above 40 mg/dL for men and above 50 mg/dL for women. Blood triglycerides should not exceed 150 mg/dL.

For more information see our Cholesterol and Fats Fact Sheet

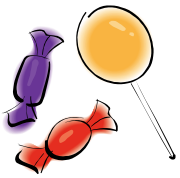
UP COMING CLASSES



Preparing Nutritious Food for One Class Offered

Preparing food for one person on a regular basis can sometimes be a challenge. Whether you are a college student or an elderly person living along, eating tasty, nutritious food is still important. Join us on **Wednesday, January 18th at 1:30 p.m. at the Extension Office** to learn a few nutrition basics and food safety guidelines that will help you prepare safe and wholesome food. A few recipes will be provided along with demonstrations and samples of items that are quick and easy to make. Call 636-8920 for more information and to register. Cost is $10.00 and includes handouts.

High Altitude Candy Making Class Offered



If you are thinking about giving your sweetheart a sweet treat this Valentine's Day, you may be interested in coming to this class first. Making candy at this altitude can be somewhat of a challenge. There are some guidelines however, that can help with adjusting temperatures and times to ensure that your candy turns out to be delectable.

The class, to be held on **Tuesday, February 7th from 6 to 8 p.m. at the Extension Office,** will discuss guidelines, include demonstrations and sampling. Handouts will be provided along with a few altitude adjusted candy recipes. Call the office at 636-8920 to register. Cost is $10.00.

Master Food Preserver/Food Safety Advisor Training Dates Scheduled

This program provides 30+ hours of training in food safety and preservation with hands-on opportunities to prepare food safely and practice the latest food preservation methods. A volunteer commitment is required upon certification.

Training dates have again been set for Fridays in May and June including:
May 5,12 and 19th beginning at 9 a.m. and then June 2, 9 and 23rd also at 9 a.m.

Look for more information in the next newsletter. You may call the office at 636-8920 for more information as the dates draw closer.

Master Food Preserver/Food Safety Advisor Update on January 19th

All Master Food Preservers are encouraged to attend the next update from 6 to 8 p.m. on Thursday, January 19th at the Extension Office.

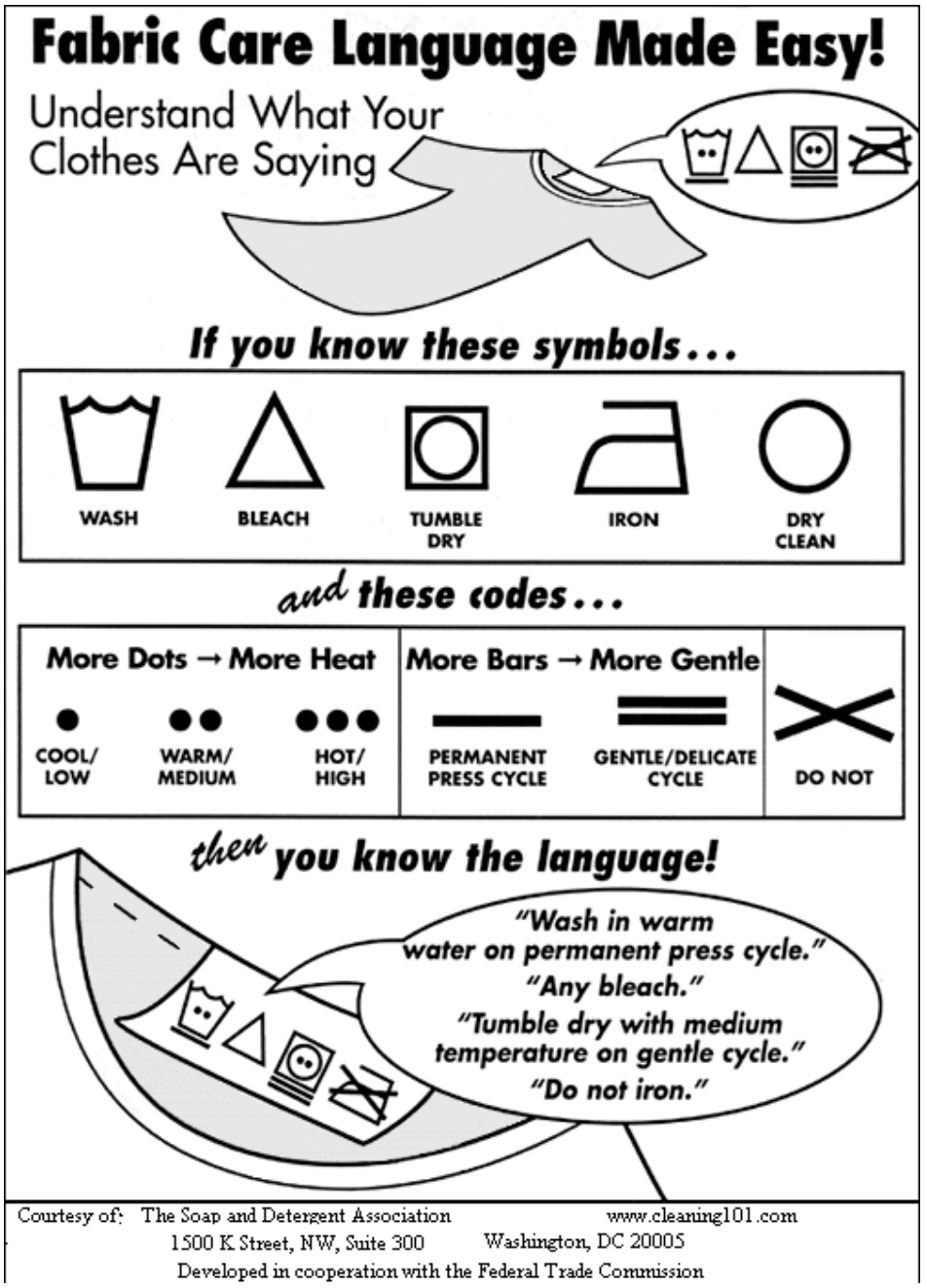
MFP Volunteer Laura Gross will be providing instruction on how to select, care for and properly use knives for food preparation.

Participants should bring along a raw chicken, a few raw vegetables, a variety of knives including a boning knife, chef knife, slicer and paring knife, a cutting board and a sharpening stone or steel if available.

Please RSVP to the office at 636-8920.

Your Guide to the New Garment Care Symbols

When was the last time you checked the care label in a garment before laundering? Well, according to a recent study, four out of five consumers do read care labels before they buy clothing and follow label instructions when washing garments. This is good news because proper care will help your clothes to look better and last longer! Take a look at the symbols and their meanings on the chart and use the proper methods for all your garments.



A Few Laundry Tips

- For the best washing action, mix large items like sheets with a few smaller items, like blouses or hand towels, in the same color range.

- For the best cleaning action, clothes need room to move freely. Plus, there must be enough free water to carry away the soil easily. Fill the tub loosely, not completely.

- The recommended amount of detergent on the label is based on average conditions: 5 to 7 pounds of clothes which are moderately soiled and are washed in an average amount of moderately hard water. Change any of these conditions and you should change the amount of detergent. More detergent may be needed for: larger loads, heavily soiled clothes, a larger-capacity washer, hard water conditions. Slightly less detergent may be used if the water is soft, the clothes are only lightly soiled or the wash load is small.

- Detergents work best in warm-to-hot wash water. Consider using cold water only for washing clothes whose colors might fade or clothes that are only lightly soiled.

- Follow the manufacturer's labels and add products accordingly. Some products like oxygen bleaches are added to the wash water before the clothes are added. Liquid fabric softeners go into the rinse water.

- Cold rinse water saves energy, makes ironing easier and helps prevent permanent press fabrics from wrinkling.

- Don't overload the dryer. Clothes need room to tumble freely in order to dry fast and wrinkle-free.

- Use the specially designed permanent press wash and dry cycles for permanent press fabrics, To minimize wrinkling, the wash cycle has a special cool-down rinse; the drying cycle, a cooling-down period.

- To save energy, always wash a full load or match the water level setting to the amount of clothes being washed. When washing small loads, use a lower water setting.

Information from The Soap and Detergent

Set the Stage for Good Behavior Between Siblings

Family Matters Newsletter
October 2005

Sometimes just the way you set up your home environment can encourage siblings to get along with one another. Ask yourself, "What about our home might make it hard for our children to get along?"
Are there things we can do to our home that will help prevent fights and squabbles?
Are there places that encourage togetherness and cooperation?
Are there places that allow for private time alone?
What can we do to help children understand that some places and things in our home are OK for sharing and some are not?

When children have their own room:
Help each child make a "Please knock" sign that can be posted on the door.
Help children personalize their room with pictures and drawings.
Hang a small bell outside the door that younger children can ring when they want to talk to an older brother or sister.

When children share a room:
Make sure that each child has a shelf or small chest to store personal belongings.
Use masking tape for identifying personal spaces on floors, walls, and shelves.
Try to find some comfortable, private place in your home that children can use when they need time alone.

In the bathroom:
Give each child a colorful, plastic container in which he or she can store personal items.
Buy each child his or her own tube of toothpaste, or their own color of wash cloth and towel.
Use a timer to limit bathroom dawdlers.

In the kitchen:
Post a list of chores on the refrigerator. For young children, use pictures or photos instead of words.
Create a communication center in which the family can leave notes and instructions.
Use clear acrylic photo magnets on the refrigerator of your children playing and working together.

In play areas:
Select toys and activities that children of different ages can enjoy together. Some good choices include blocks, dress-up clothes, play dough, puppets and art supplies such as paper, paint, glue and stickers.
Color code toys to help young children understand what is personal and what is to be shared. Permanent felt tip markers or colored electrical tape are ideal for this.
Color code shelves so that older children understand that small, breakable items that are dangerous for younger siblings need to be stored up high, out of reach.
A small rug or blanket can be used by each child to create a special place to play on his or her own. When play is over, the rug can be rolled up or slipped under a sofa for easy storage.
In the living room:
Display pictures of individual children and of brothers and sisters playing, and working together cooperatively.
Keep a sturdy family photo album in an easy-to-get-to place. Family pictures give children an important sense of belonging and strong sense of history.

Tips from experienced parents

Start young. From the very beginning let children know that they are expected to treat each other fairly. Let your kids know that hurting each other is not okay.

Take 30 seconds to stop, look and listen. This definitely helps you get a better idea of what kids are fighting over. Take the next 30 seconds to think about how you should respond to the situation. Thirty seconds doesn't seem like very long, but you will be amazed at how it helps you to keep your cool and take charge in an effective way.

It is OK to treat children differently. The important thing is not to devalue one child over the other. Focus on the positives of each child's personality and interests.

Think cooperation instead of competition. For example, rather than having children race each other to pick up toys, set a timer and have them race together to beat the clock. Try to find at least one thing every day that kids can work together to accomplish.

Look for opportunities for children to help each other. Even very young children can bring diapers, help feed the baby, cuddle a younger one who is upset or help push the stroller. Make at least one weekly chore a team effort. Setting the table, feeding the birds, emptying the dishwasher, and raking leaves are good jobs for learning how to work together.

Help children to problem solve. Take the time to help them discuss the problem, brainstorm solutions and try to work things out. The time you invest early on will save a great deal of time years later because they will become so good at it, they will be able to solve most problems themselves.

Remember that you are on stage, a real life stage. Your kids watch what you do very closely. Show your children how to be patient with each other by talking in a calm voice, giving clear directions and avoiding angry comments.

Teach your children what to do when they are angry such as walk away from the situation, count to ten, go hug a stuffed animal or ask an adult for help.

Remember to thank your children for getting along. Tell them, "It's great to see you two working together to rake leaves," or "Thanks for helping your sister pick up her toys." Remember also to remind your children to thank each other.

Have regular rules and routines so children know what to expect. Children should know that they are always expected to clean up their toys before bedtime or feed the pet right before dinner. If parents are consistent, kids have a better idea about what is needed from them in everyday family life.

Consult with children. When older children continue to fight, sit down with them and ask their advice. Sometimes kids can come up with very good suggestions for resolving a persistent problem.

Developing a Hobby with Your Child can be a Rewarding Experience

Encouraging children to spend time enjoying a hobby can help develop lifelong skills, help to reduce stress and is a great way for parents and children to spend time together. Exploring possible hobbies can be fun; whether it's a *making hobby* like a craft, or a *doing hobby* such as a sport or music, or even a *collecting hobby*. Brainstorm with your child what sort of interests he/she might have, what resources are available, and also how much money and space your family can afford to devote to the hobby. Then make a plan to include one new activity during the month of January.

LIFTING WOMEN TO BETTER HEALTH

StrongWomen™ Program Offered

At about 35 years of age, we can lose up to 1 percent of our bone mass each year. If bone loss continues, osteoporosis can develop. In fact, women have a one-in-three odds of developing osteoporosis during their lifetime which can lead to fractures and subsequent hospitalization and loss of quality of life. The most common breaks in weak bones are in the wrist, spine and hip. The economic cost of these fractures is $18 billion each year in the United States.

The good news is that osteoporosis can be prevented. The National Osteoporosis Foundation (NOF) recommends FIVE simple steps to bone health and osteoporosis prevention. The first step is to get your daily recommended amounts of calcium and vitamin D. Step 2 is to engage in regular weight-bearing exercise. The third step encourages us to avoid smoking and using excessive alcohol. Fourth, talk to your doctor about bone health and fifth, have a bone density test and take medication when appropriate.

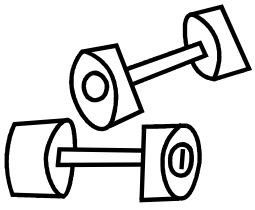
The StrongWomen™ Program was developed through years of research at Tufts University. In fact, some of you may be familiar with the author, Dr. Miriam Nelson, and have already read her book *Strong Women, Strong Bones*.

This program is designed to provide participants with an opportunity to learn and do strengthening exercises that help build muscle and bone tissue. In addition, nutrition information is added to maximize wellness. All weights are provided for the classes for use during the class time on-site. All you need to do is come, exercise and improve your health!

Currently, three classes will be offered beginning in January. They are designed for participants to meet twice a week for 12 weeks with the instructor. The new schedule is as follows:

January 17th through April 13th
Tuesdays & Thursdays from 8:30 to 9:30 a.m.
First Presbyterian Church
219 E. Bijou Street 719-884-6206

January 17th through April 13th
Tuesdays & Thursdays from 12:00 to 12:45 p.m.
First Presbyterian Church
219 E. Bijou Street 719-884-6206



January 18th through April 12th
Mondays and Wednesdays from 8:30 to 9:30 a.m.
The Colorado Springs Senior Center
1514 North Hancock Avenue 719-385-5933

You may call the above locations to register or if you have questions, please call me at 636-8920.

Is Chocolate a Healthy Indulgence?

Like many of you, I have always had a fondness for chocolate. Therefore, when I read an article on the possible benefits of dark chocolate in the latest edition of *Healthy Heartbeats*, a bi-monthly newsletter from CSU that provides information focusing on heart disease and stroke, I knew I needed to pass along the information to fellow chocolate lovers. There is even a chocolate recipe that you might want to try just in time for Valentine's Day! *The following is a portion of the article, for the entire article, go to www.ext.colostate.edu and click on nutrition resources.*

What's behind the goodness in chocolate-the dark, bittersweet kind-are flavonols. Studies of large populations suggest these plant chemicals protect against heart disease, stroke and cancer though no randomized controlled trials have confirmed these suspicions.

One study monitored ten untreated participants with high blood pressure who consumed 3.5 ounces of dark chocolate daily for 15 days. Ten untreated, hypertensive control subjects received white chocolate. After a week of abstinence from chocolate, the two groups switched. ***The conclusion was that there was no benefit from eating white chocolate, but dark chocolate was linked with a drop in systolic and diastolic pressure.*** Though not statistically significant the drop is comparative to the kind of reduction seen with other healthful dietary changes. ***Additionally, subjects who ate dark chocolate daily showed a drop in their LDL ("bad") cholesterol, and their sensitivity to insulin increased indicating a protective effect against diabetes.*** As part of a healthy diet, flavonols in dark chocolate may confer some cardiovascular benefit for patients with essential hypertension. *[Source: Journal of Hypertension, 2005; 23(8):1453-1459 (August).]*

You might wonder how the researchers knew it was the flavonols in dark chocolate that were responsible for the results of this study. Some have proposed that the theobromine, a part of caffeine, or something else, may have been responsible. That question remains unanswered.

But before you start gobbling dark chocolate, you need to remember that in spite of some health benefits, chocolate is also high in calories, fat and sugar. A typical one-ounce bar of dark chocolate can be 170 calories and 11 grams of fat. And if you add chocolate syrup to ice cream, the potential health benefits of chocolate don't cancel out the calories in the ice cream.

The study cited above indicated that white chocolate doesn't confer health benefits, but neither does milk chocolate or cocoa powder. White chocolate actually contains no cocoa at all because it is made only from cocoa butter, which is the fat in the cocoa beans. Those healthy flavonols typically make chocolate taste bitter. While cocoa has a darker color, the Dutch processing or alkalizing destroys most of the flavonols. The cocoa beans are treated with an alkaline solution to make them dark in color and to reduce the natural bitterness from the plant. But, it also reduces almost 90% of the healthful flavonols.

So what are you to do? It's simple. Cut back on other calories to make room for delectable chocolate to avoid increasing your waistline. Make a simple change by substituting dark chocolate chunks for some or all of the milk chocolate or white chocolate chips called for in a favorite recipe.

Sweet Trivia:

*More than 36 million heart-shaped boxes of chocolate will be sold for Valentine's Day.

*Older children are significantly more likely to prefer chocolate than younger children (59 percent of 9-11year-olds prefer chocolate vs. 46 percent of 6-8 year-olds), according to an NCA *(National Confectioners Association)* survey.

*According to the Guinness Book of World Records: The largest box of chocolates ever made was a Frango mint chocolates box weighing 3,226 lbs. created by Marshall Field's, Chicago, Illinois, USA on November 14, 2002. The box contained 90,090 individual chocolates.

Cocoa-Almond Meringue Kisses

Vegetable oil spray
Whites of 3 large eggs
¾ cup sugar
¼ cup sliced almonds
1/3 tsp. cream of tartar
½ tsp. vanilla extract
3 Tbsp. unsweetened cocoa powder

Preheat oven to 325°F. Lightly spray two large baking sheets with vegetable oil spray. In a large bowl, beat the egg whites and cream of tartar until stiff peaks form. Add the sugar, 2 tablespoons at a time, beating well after each addition. Add the cocoa and vanilla; beat well to blend. Fold in the almonds. Drop the mixture by tablespoonfuls onto prepared baking sheets. Bake for 25 minutes, or until the meringues are crisp on the outside. Remove from the baking sheets immediately and let cool on a wire rack. Store in an airtight container. Serves: 14.

Nutrient Analysis: Calories 60 cal, Total Fat 1.0 g, Cholesterol 0 mg, Fiber 1 g

From Low-Fat, Low-Cholesterol Cookbook, 3rd edition, American Heart Association, 2004.

If you have a concern or a question you can access the Colorado State University Cooperative Extension Answerlink 24 hours a day at the following website:

www.answerlink.info

Answer Link
...information for the speed of life

You can also find information at our website www.ext.colostate.edu

Please be sure to read the ***Growing Up Great*** newsletter insert. It has valuable information not only for parents and childcare providers but for everyone!

Colorado State University Cooperative Extension
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Colorado Springs, CO 80910-3123

Oatmeal...Eat it for More than Breakfast!

The MyPyramid and the 2005 Dietary Guidelines encourage us to consume more whole grains. In fact, it is recommended that we eat 3 oz. of whole grains daily or that at least half of our total grain intake come from whole grain sources. Whole grains are made from the entire grain seed or kernel which consists of the bran, germ and endosperm. Oatmeal is an example of a whole grain food and January just happens to be *National Oatmeal Month*-yes, it has its own month. Whole grains, like oatmeal, contain dietary fiber beneficial for decreasing cholesterol, our risk of coronary heart disease, and colon cancer. Having a bowl of oatmeal in the morning for breakfast could supply you with 4 grams of soluble fiber and the amount of fiber is increased if it is topped with fresh or dried fruit. Although, hot oatmeal is a wonderful breakfast on a cold winter morning, oatmeal doesn't have to be just for breakfast. In fact, there are well over 300 recipes for food items that contain oatmeal. In addition, you can always add the benefit of oats to your favorite recipes by replacing 2 to 4 Tbsp. of flour with oat bran.

Here is my favorite recipe for Oatmeal Cookies. If you attended the *Safe and Scrumptious Holiday Gift Giving Class*, you already have this one. It is adjusted for this altitude and delicious. You can even layer the items in a mason jar and attach a gift tag and share some oatmeal with a friend! Or you could also just mix the ingredients together in a bowl and bake.

Oatmeal Cookies

1 cup flour mixed with ½ tsp. baking powder, ½ tsp. baking soda and ¼ tsp. salt
½ cup brown sugar
½ cup granulated sugar
1 cup quick cooking oats
½ cup white chocolate chips
½ cup chocolate chips
½ cup coconut

You can layer the ingredients in a mason quart jar in order listed or place ingredients in a mixing bowl and add the following:

½ cup softened butter or margarine
1 egg
½ tsp. vanilla

Mix well and drop rounded teaspoonfuls onto ungreased cookie sheet. Bake at 375 F for 10 to 11 minutes.
Yield: 4 dozen

There are more great recipes in the *Safe and Scrumptious Holiday Gift Giving Guide* and copies are still available. Hurry, and get yours on sale now in the Extension Office.

White Whole-Grain Bread No Longer an Oxymoran

Can white bread, be whole-grain? Until recently, that question would have been answered "no". But after years of research and millions of dollars, ConAgra Foods has created a *whole-grain white bread*. Currently, Sara Lee has launched a white bread that is labeled whole grain and Wonder bread plans to follow with their version. Check the nutrition label closely though as some of the white whole-grains do not equal the whole grain breads in fiber amounts. However, if you or your family prefer white bread, this might be a way to boost the whole grain content of the diet without too much compromising.

(Based on information from Tufts University Heath & Nutrition Letter; October 2005)

Suffering stress through staying connected

By Nancy Banman,
Colorado State University
Cooperative Extension, Larimer County
January 18, 2005

Whether a person is young or old, research shows having positive connections to others benefits us at home, work and in the community. Friends, acquaintances, families and colleagues help us cope with new or challenging situations.

The types of support we need, and that others provide, varies. The stress of day-to-day living can be decreased by having a network of people who provide aid and support in concrete ways, such as sharing carpooling responsibilities for children, exchanging child care or even watering plants while we're away from home. There are times when we need trusted friends or professionals to provide emotional support, and other times when those in our network will be the source of advise and new information to help with difficult decisions.

Such a variety of social needs demand a support network that is diverse. A healthy support network can be thought of as a continuum, with a few strong and enduring relationships at one end, and numerous acquaintances of a more surface nature at the other. The strong ties within our network provide many types of support, often over a period of many years, including emotional support and the understanding that comes from a shared history. The surface ties in our network give us access to new information and perspectives, which we might not otherwise learn about. Today, the Internet can be viewed as a source of surface support providing many with access to all types of information. Professionals or colleagues in clubs or organizations or exercise buddies are another example of surface support.

One way to think about the benefits of social support is a buffer between you and stress. As we know, too much stress can lead to health concerns such as cardiovascular problems, weakened immune systems, digestive problems, anxiety and depression. Stress at work can take the form of burnout. Youth who lack a sense of being connected to others at home and school are at higher risk for emotional distress, violent behavior, suicidal thoughts and actions and substance abuse. In all of these situations, the positive support of friends, family members and others help us to feel cared for and valued, which aids us in mobilizing our own resources to cope well with stress. The effect is to decrease the risk of long-term negative consequences from the stressful events or chronic stress situations in our lives. This, along with other stress management tools, can serve to increase health and potentially extend our life span.

Keeping our social support network healthy can be a challenge in a culture where we move frequently and often don't know our neighbors, where we are usually separated from extended family and time is often at a premium. Yet we also live in a time where technology allows us many ways to stay connected through phone conversations, e-mail and even on-line support groups. Preliminary research shows on-line support groups and sources of information can be positive supports for people who are isolated or, for example, share a common interest or medical concern. Today, many military families can stay connected with loved ones deployed overseas through secure e-mail systems. For all of us, four steps will help to build and maintain a healthy social support network:

1. Take time to nurture those strong or deep relationships through regular contact including phone or face-to-face conversations.

2. Make sure the relationship is balanced in the giving and receiving of support.

3. Beware of unhealthy supports that are oppressive, rigid or demanding. These can create more stress rather than providing a buffer for stress.

4. Develop a broad network of acquaintances with whom you can exchange information and ideas.