

March – April, 2016



Spring into Gardening

Knowing when to plant seeds and how to get your garden started indoors is an important step to having a successful and producing garden. Starting seeds indoors can give you a jump start on the growing season, and can also provide a fun activity for the entire family. Raising a garden not only can provide your family with a nice array of fresh fruits and vegetables, it can also help improve your health and wellness. Fruits and vegetables are a great source of vitamins and minerals including fiber, folate, potassium, vitamin A, and vitamin C.

Begin planting your seedlings indoors in transferable containers in February or early March, starting with your cool weather crops. Cool weather crops include celery, broccoli, cabbage, kale, and cauliflower. These plants can be transferred to the outdoor garden once the danger of frost has passed. Other warm season plants, such as melons, squash, tomatoes, and peppers can be planted indoors beginning in mid-April.

No yard? No problem. Most vegetables and some fruits can be grown in containers. Container gardening is also a wonderful option for beginner gardeners. Containers can be placed anywhere outdoors once the frost season has passed. If you plan to use containers, ensure the containers have never been exposed to chemicals and enable water to drain. Depending on your plant selection, container sizes will vary; but, should be at least 6-12 inches deep.

Gardening is a wonderful option to cut costs and introduce new vegetables and fruits to your family's palate. Remember to always practice food safety and wash all vegetables and fruits from your garden prior to consumption.

Check out the host of gardening resources from Colorado State University Extension at <http://extension.colostate.edu/topic-areas/yard-garden/>.

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Water Well Maintenance

It's spring cleaning time. After cleaning the garage, curtains and walls, don't forget your water well. Over 15 million U.S. households, including many in northeast Colorado, rely on private, household wells for drinking water.. EPA regulations don't apply to private water wells. It is up to the well owner to maintain the well and keep the drinking water safe.



At a minimum, wells should be checked and tested every spring to make sure there are not any mechanical issues, cleanliness issues, and presence of contaminants. Check to ensure the well cover or cap is intact and at least one foot above the ground. Check for a cracked, corroded or damaged well casing and settling and cracking of surface seals. Make sure the area around the well is sloped to drain surface runoff away from the well. (This would also be a good time to pump and inspect septic systems as recommended by your local health department.)

Testing your well water once a year should be sufficient unless you notice recurrent incidents of gastrointestinal illness among household members or visitors. Also test if you notice a change in water quality such as taste, odor, or appearance of the well water. Have your well tested if you replace or repair any part of your well system, if you have had issues with previous tests on your well, or if there have been any disturbances near your well such as flooding. Test your well more often if you have any feed yards located nearby or if your septic system has malfunctioned.

Supplies to test your well can be picked up at your local CSU Extension office or local Health Department. There are a variety of bacteria, parasites and viruses that cause health problems when people ingest them. Generally, due to practicality and expense, water labs test for coliform levels. Coliforms are a broad class of bacteria that live in human and animal digestive tracts. Most bacteria are harmless but some can cause sickness, disease and other problems.

Usually labs test for total coliforms, fecal coliforms (E.coli), and pH. Total coliforms typically do not make you sick. If the count is high, it is possible viruses, bacteria, and parasites might also be in your water. A presence of fecal coliform bacteria could mean feces or other harmful germs are in your water supply. These harmful germs can cause diarrhea, dysentery, and hepatitis.

The pH level tells if the water is acidic or basic. The pH level of the water can change how your water looks and tastes. If the pH of your water is too low or too high, it could damage your pipes, cause heavy metals like lead to leak out of the pipes into the water, and eventually make you sick. If any of these conditions are present in your water supply, the well should be disinfected and retested in one or two weeks. A water well systems contractor can help you best determine treatment options.

It's important to remember water well maintenance during your spring cleaning. But, don't neglect well maintenance the rest of the year. Be sure to keep all hazardous materials, such as fertilizer, paint and motor oil far away from your well. It is up to you as a well owner to be diligent in well maintenance and safety to keep your family and friends safe and healthy.

Sources:

(2013, October). Retrieved 2/19/16, from <http://extension.colostate.edu/docs/pubs/natres/06703.pdf> Colorado State University Extension

(2010, May 3). Retrieved 2/19/16, from <http://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/drinking/private/wells/testing.html> Center for Disease Control

Preparing to Pass Down or Pare Down



For many Boomers, it's time to do some serious spring cleaning in basements, attics and garages filled to the brim with family mementos and "treasures". However, many of the next generation don't want all of the place settings for 12, family photo albums and scrapbooks. They don't want the hordes of miscellaneous items that have been lovingly saved by the Greatest Generation, passed down to the Boomers and stored for years to be passed on to the Millennials.

Millennials are living more transient lifestyles free from possessions. Millennials even store their photographs and memories digitally. Their mantra may be "less is better". Perhaps one or two items may be special to them, but not a houseful. While it is great fun sifting through the piles of your children's artwork, school papers, and old photographs – these preserved memories are headed for the trash bin sooner or later.

If Millennials are indicating they would rather collect a lifetime of experiences – not stuff – then it's time to get rid of the stuff. Fortunately, the season of garage sales is drawing nearer and the throngs of treasure seekers will soon be sifting through your "treasures" and cart away some of your knick-knacks. Selling the extra furniture on Craigslist is also a way of cleaning out those no longer needed or wanted items. Plan C of course is the dumpster.

Whether or not you are in the process of downsizing, have recently become an empty nester or no longer wish to be the warehouse for things you thought might be useful to or wanted by your kids – it's time to put on your "purge, not profit" mindset and get to work. Save only what is truly special.

6 Tips to Sorting:

1. Ask each family member for a "top 10" list of your personal property they really want. This can be done in person or with the benefit of technology. If you don't currently need those items, distribute them now!
2. Enlist the help of a family member or friend to physically (and emotionally) tackle one room at a time. Start with the attic, basement and garage – then move on to closets, desk drawers, junk drawers, file cabinets and bookcases.
3. For each room, make three separate piles: "Keepers - Special Items"; "Not Sure?"; and "Donate" .
4. Next, immediately distribute the third pile. Then tackle the second pile while asking yourself – do I need this or want this? Try to make clear decisions – keeping the goal of "purging."
5. Tell your adult children it's time to get all of their things from your home. Do they plan to pick up their stuff or want it shipped? Give them a firm deadline. If they want it, they will come get it. If not, out it goes.
6. If you have a hard time letting go of your children's artwork or other paper items, create a digital memory by photographing the piece to diminish the anguish of parting with it.

If Boomers don't embrace or attend to the clean out, pare down, donate or toss into the dumpster phase of life, the task of dealing with these mountains of collections will ultimately be left to the Millennials in the end. Do you really want to do that to those you care about?

Adapted from Maria Shriver's blog: <http://mariashriver.com/blog/2015/04/6-ways-boomers-can-get-rid-of-the-things-they-dont-need-barbara-sedoric/>

Fitness Trends for 2016

The American College of Sports Medicine has released the list for the biggest trends for 2016.

Top 10 Fitness Trends: Wearable Technology; Body Weight Training; High Intensity Interval Training; Strength Training; Educated, Certified, and Experienced Fitness Professionals; Personal Training; Functional Fitness; Fitness Programs for Older Adults; Exercise and Weight Loss; and Yoga.

The first four trends can have the most direct effect for improving your fitness level.

1. Wearable Technology



The use of pedometers, Fitbits, and other wearable technology provides immediate feedback on progress and more awareness of activity levels, which can be a great motivating factor in achieving fitness goals. The industry of fitness trackers, smart watches, heart rate monitors and GPS tracking devices are offered from brands like, Jawbone, Fitbit, Apple Watch, and Garmin. Get ready to wear socks, jog bras, tank tops, shirts, insoles and compression gear with fitness technology incorporated into the clothing. This high-tech clothing can monitor things like heart rate, breathing rate, calories burned and more. Some wearable technology even gives information on muscle activity and form to help with real-time adjustments in workout technique. The jog bras and shirts are able to give more accurate heart rates as opposed to the wrist watches. The immediate feedback is a training advantage as well. However, the high price of \$150 to \$400 per item, the difficulty washing the item, and clunkiness of the garment makes this level of wearable technology not very sensible for the “Average Joe.” This type of workout gear is probably better suited for the semi-professional or professional athlete.

2. Body Weight Training

The use of minimal equipment makes body weight training convenient, affordable and a do-anywhere workout. These exercises or combination of exercises use the classic squat, push-up and pullup in a circuit format, doing as many reps as possible in 30 seconds. There should be very little rest in between and the exercises should be completed in a series at least two or three times. This training is good for improving cardiovascular endurance and increasing overall body strength. It also gives a boost to your regularly scheduled strength program two times a week.

3. High Intensity Interval Training (HIIT)

HIIT training can be done in a relatively short amount of time and give you intense affects you desire, whether you want to slim down or increase your endurance. It is designed to take only 10 minutes.. Research shows short bouts of high intensity work can be just as or more beneficial than more moderate and long workouts. Another benefit is there is no need for equipment, so it is a do-anywhere activity.

4. Strength Training

Strength training is recommended at least two days a week, incorporating all of the major muscle groups using free-weights or weight machines. Now experts are saying there are big reasons for not just lifting weights, but lifting heavier weights. Here are eight reasons to lift heavier weight- if you are lifting at all!!

- **It Burns Body Fat-** If you have more muscle mass, the body will continue to burn fat throughout the day, not just as you are running on the treadmill. In addition, studies show heavy lifting can reduce body fat by 3% without cutting calories.
- **You Will Look More Defined-** Women have low testosterone levels, so it is harder for women to get bigger muscles. Lifting heavier weights will give women potential to look more defined. More muscle mass and less fat translates to smaller clothing sizes.

- **Helps Fight Osteoporosis-** Lifting heavy weights over time can not only maintain bone mass, it actually can build new bone, especially in post-menopausal women. The key to this positive effect is to be consistent with your routine.
- **Burns More Calories-** Yes, you would burn more calories during a 1-hour cardio workout than a 1-hour lifting workout, but studies show it is what happens after the weight training that is encouraging. Women who did weight training burned an average of 100 more calories during the 24 hours AFTER their training session.
- **Builds Strength Faster-** Lifting lighter weights with more reps will build muscle endurance. To increase strength, increasing the workload is important. Lifting heavier weights and adding in compound exercises like squats, deadlifts and rows can help build strength fast.
- **You will Lose Belly Fat-** A study at the University of Alabama showed women who did strength training lost more intra-abdominal fat than those who just did cardio. The decreased waist line is also related to a decrease in the risk for diabetes, metabolic syndrome, and some cancers.
- **You'll Feel Empowered-** When you are a strong, lean muscle machine, it is hard to not have a big self-esteem boost. Your transformed body will give you a new ATTITUDE!
- **You'll Prevent Injury-** Strong muscles will help to support joint integrity and help maintain good form, which can prevent injury.



Full Report- Visit www.acsm-healthfitness.org for the full report on Fitness Trends for 2016 from the ACSM's Health & Fitness Journal.

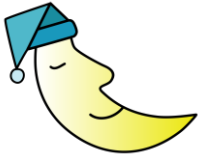
Mindful Eating – a Key to Good Health



Mindful Eating refers to being aware while you are eating. Eating mindfully involves paying attention to hunger cues, tastes, textures, and colors, and generally being in tune to what you are eating. It's important to avoid distractions (such as the TV and computer) during meal-time and to eat slowly to be able to truly listen to what your body is feeling. Of course, if we are eating out of stress, this is all difficult to do.

Often we eat so fast that we overeat before we realize we are full. It takes 20 minutes for our brain to “catch up” with our stomachs. That means if we eat more slowly, we have a better chance of eating to satisfaction rather than to the point of being overly full. We can also increase our satisfaction with foods if we eat them slowly and mindfully. The “sealed with a kiss” activity below will demonstrate this.

Hunger Scale is a great tool for everyone to use. It is 1-10 scale that describes your hunger level. 1 represents the point of hunger where you are starving and want to eat everything in sight. 10 represents that feeling when you are uncomfortably full, like on Thanksgiving. The goal with the hunger scale is to try to learn to recognize when you are at a 3 or 4 (slightly hungry rather than ravenous) and begin eating then. When you are eating, try to eat until you are at a 7 or 8 (satisfied and content). When you are stressed and tempted to eat to numb or distract yourself, instead pull out your hunger scale to determine if that's really the best coping mechanism right now. You will begin to relearn the hunger cues that are often lost throughout life.



Tips for Better Sleep

One of the first things to go when we feel pressed for time is sleep. Many think the benefits of substituting other “to dos” outweigh the cost of missing some sleep. Unfortunately, that practice can have some very negative consequences.

Insufficient sleep has been linked to medical conditions such as obesity, diabetes, heart disease, depression, and other health problems. Most adults need 7 to 8 hours of sleep daily, yet more than one-third of Americans report not getting the recommended amount. Scientists are just beginning to identify the connections between insufficient sleep and disease, but most experts agree getting enough high quality sleep may be just as important to our overall health as nutrition and exercise.

Sleep problems do not have to be a part of your nightly routine. Prevent sleepless nights with these ten tips:

1. **Keep a consistent sleep schedule.**

Going to bed and getting up every day at the same time helps your body get into the rhythm it needs to fall asleep at night with ease. Even on weekends, try to sleep no more than one hour later than you do on weekdays.

2. **Avoid too much coffee or alcohol late in the day.**

Coffee, as a stimulant, drunk later in the day can keep your mind spinning way past bedtime. Also, studies have shown once alcohol’s sedative qualities wear off, sleep quality is affected by increased and sporadic wake periods during the night.

3. **Use your bed only for sleep.**

Although it is tempting to read, watch TV, or work on your computer while in your bed, this may not be best for your sleep hygiene. Train your body to associate being in bed with sleeping.

4. **Decrease mental stimulation before bed.**

With frequently hectic lifestyles, many US adults often work up to the very last minute of each day without setting any time aside for relaxation. If you sense muscle tension is to blame, try practicing yoga, engaging in meditation, or using breathing exercises to loosen up your tension before going to bed.

5. **Get regular physical activity.**

In addition to its important role in weight management and prevention of many chronic illnesses, adding physical activity to your daily routine can help facilitate sleep when you need it most. However, try not to exercise too close to your normal bedtime as this may lead to difficulty in falling asleep.

6. **Skip big meals before heading to bed.**

Eating large amounts of food close to bedtime can lead to discomfort such as heartburn, acid reflux, and other gastrointestinal issues. If you are hungry close to your bedtime, try eating a light snack or drinking a non-caffeinated beverage to ease your hunger symptoms and prepare yourself for a restful night sleep.

7. **Refrain from long naps.**

Long naps can contribute to late night alertness and throw off your night time sleep routine. If you feel you need a nap, limit it to 10-15 minutes. This can provide a quick recharge from fatigue without sacrificing your sleep quality at night.

8. **Manage your nicotine use.**

As a stimulant, nicotine can leave users lying wide awake at night or waking up throughout the night with cravings. It is best to avoid nicotine, yet if you are a nicotine user, try to avoid use 4-6 hours before bedtime.

9. **Consider the “20-minute rule.”**

If after 20 minutes of lying in bed you find yourself still awake, move to another quiet space and engage in relaxing activities such as reading or listening to calming music. Once you begin to feel drowsy, try to go back to bed..

10. **Make a to-do list.**

Work, financial issues, and many other life worries are enough to keep our minds spinning late into the night. Instead of focusing on these sources of anxiety, try writing a “to-do” list before bedtime to remind yourself where to pick up the next day.

These strategies are inexpensive fixes to sleep issues that can offer many additional health benefits. If falling asleep continues to be difficult, consider talking with your physician about other possible options to help you get a good night’s sleep.

Source: “Live, Eat, Play”, <http://www.liveeatplay.colostate.edu/live/refresh/better-sleep.php>

What's Been Happening

Strong People Stay Healthy: Beginning in February, the CSU Extension office for Morgan County continues hosting an ongoing Strong People strength training class. Nine participants, both men and women are gaining strength and confidence. Strong People class is available for a wide range of age groups, for men and for women. Isolation strength exercises using free-weights to target the major muscle groups of the body help in preventing chronic disease like diabetes, heart disease, osteoporosis, and arthritis. The program is 12 weeks, with classes meeting on Tuesdays and Thursdays through the end of April. Participants will continue forward in various communities, Brush, Fort Morgan, and Wiggins. Another Strong People class will be offered in the spring.

Morgan County Health Fair: CSU Extension in Morgan County offered their expertise in the area of Food Safety to over 500 health fair participants on Saturday, February 16th. Participants were given information regarding proper handwashing, internal cooking temperatures for various foods, information on organizing your refrigerator, details on food borne illnesses and avoiding cross contamination, as well as receiving free vegetables scrubbers, internal cooking temperature magnets, and pamphlets on high altitude preparation.

2016 A Healthier Weigh – This 12-week health & fitness challenge began in early January with 40 men and 143 women participating as teams and a few individuals. They have been reporting their “step count” weekly and doing online lessons relating to nutrition and fitness every other week to educate and help motivate participants. The challenge is to stay the course and complete the 12-weeks in early April. We are hoping for a near 100% completion with everyone meeting their personal health and fitness goals!

Upcoming Events!

March 8th - **ServSafe Food Handler's Training**, Gary DeSoto Building, Sterling; 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

March 9th - **Small Steps to Health and Wealth Program** Introduction/Overview Presentation, Brush, 9 a.m.-12 p.m.

April 12th - Medication Management and Diabetes Webinar, County Extension Offices & other locations, noon- 1 p.m.

April 16th - **4-H Judges Training**, Yuma County Fairgrounds, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

April 23rd- 30th - **Money Smart Week**; Piggy Bank Contests, Financial Literacy for Kids and Adults program, contact Morgan Extension Office

A Healthier Weigh Fitness Challenge- Weigh-Outs the week of April 4th – 9th. 12-week program ends and participants and program results will be announced soon after. Call you County Extension office to get program information.

Matter of Balance – fall prevention classes are scheduled for Mondays from 1:30 p.m. till 3:30 p.m. at the Morgan County Extension Office, Fort Morgan. These will begin on April 4th and run till May 23rd. Classes are also being planned for the Bee Hive in Fort Morgan.

Matter of Balance – fall prevention classes are set for Mondays and Wednesdays, 9:30 to 11:30 p.m., at the Logan County Extension Office meeting room, Sterling, beginning March 7 – 30. Contact Tara Friend at 970-522-3200, Ext. 2.

