It's Hot Outside! Stay Hydrated!

Is it hot outside? Mixed with humidity, the Florida heat can be oppressive. It may even cause you to dehydrate before you even think to get a drink. You might feel tired, dizzy, or have dry mouth. So, in the summer you need to drink more fluids. Drinks like water, low-fat or fat-free milk, and 100% fruit juices are good choices. These drinks do not have added sugars. Regular soda and other drinks such as energy drinks, sport drinks, and fruit drinks have added sugars.

A 12-ounce can has up to 10 teaspoons of sugar and more than 150 calories. Today, many drinks come in very large bottles so there are even more calories. Water has no calories so make water your first choice. Your body will thank you for it!

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What You Think You Know in Cancer Research (But Probably Don’t)

It’s National Cancer Research Month. For cancer prevention, a lot of that research is relatively recent. Here are a few ideas about cancer prevention you may have heard were true, but have changed. Click Here to Read More

Is the fish on your plate really the fish you ordered?

Using Florida Sea Grant funds, scientists at the University of South Florida have developed a handheld sensor that will help ensure consumers are getting what they pay for. Click Here to Read More

The paper describing the new technology and its application appears in a newly published issue of Food Control.

Focus on the Road

Distracted driving includes any activity that could divert a person’s attention away from the primary task of driving, such as texting or talking on a cell phone, eating and drinking, grooming, or even adjusting the radio. Use these resources to talk with teens to prevent distracted driving:

Make a Family Pledge that puts rules and expectations about driving into writing. Work with teens to outline hazards and set consequences for breaking rules.

“Fingers out of The Dip!” Potluck Manners for Kids

By Carol Church | Writer, Family Album | May 20, 2015
Reviewed by Amarat Simonne, PhD, UF/IFAS Department of Family, Youth, and Community Sciences

Parents, we know you love, adore, and dote on your children. At the same time—admit it—they also probably have a few bad habits or problem behaviors that drive you crazy. One of my children (details withheld to protect the guilty) is a sweet, charming, intelligent child who also happens to have pretty bad table manners. Though we’re constantly working on it and issuing reminders, dinner isn’t always a pretty sight.

Kids and Food: Sometimes It’s a Mess!

Though I often find these habits embarrassing, I’ve also seen many other children engage in similar “gross” table manners or bad food hygiene. While this is one thing when it just affects the child, it becomes another matter when kids are in an environment where food is being shared, such as a buffet restaurant or a large potluck meal. Although children’s compliance and behavior are always a work in progress, it’s a good idea to pay a bit more attention on these occasions and remind kids of expectations. This way, we can hope that no illnesses will be spread.

So, what’s the first thing to do before your child approaches the buffet or potluck? You surely already know, but just in case…wash his or her hands! (And your own!) Here’s some great child-friendly info on how to wash hands properly. (Did you know that kids who wash their hands more often miss fewer days of school?)

Now, as your child gets ready to enjoy the meal, help him or her remember these key hygiene rules:

• Always use a clean serving utensil, never your own fork or spoon, to serve yourself. (Young children should be served by a parent.) And if a utensil falls in the food, don’t fish it out with your fingers! Get an adult to help.
• If you don’t see a utensil, use a napkin when taking an item (for instance, bread or fruit). If you come back to get more food, get a clean plate.
• If you come back to get more food, get a clean plate.
Love to “dip”? Put some dippers and a scoop of dip on your plate instead of standing by the bowl and digging in. If you want more, come back later with a clean plate.

Got a cold or allergies? Don’t share! Step well away from the food if you feel a cough or sneeze coming on. Then wash your hands!

Was it so good that you forgot your manners and licked your fingers? Do you have chocolate or ketchup all over your hands? Go wash up again.

Don’t let that plate sit out for a long time and come back to it! If cooked food, beverages, or cut fruits and veggies have been sitting out at room temperature for more than two hours, it’s time for them to go! Old, warm food can make you sick.

While your child probably won’t be able to remember all these rules at first, you can help him or her become a better party and potluck guest by continuing to offer gentle reminders at each event. And don’t forget to be a good role model! Research shows that the example our parents set affects specific food safety decisions we make when we grow up.

With a little guidance, your child can be the life of the party. For more on kids and food safety, visit the resources in Further Reading.

Further Reading

- Fight BAC! For kids—Fun activities for kids on safe food handling
- The Scrub Club—More fun web-based games teaching kids the importance of hand-washing and food safety
- Food Safety After School—from the USDA
- Food Safety and Home, School, and When Eating Out—a coloring book for kids showing food safety principles

References:


Fishing For Success (FFS) is a multifaceted program that uses fishing and other related activities as the “hook” to introduce children of all ages to various aspects of fisheries and aquatic environmental sciences. The current program began in 1998, and has constantly evolved to meet the needs of 4-H extension faculty, teachers, youth group leaders and the community at large. The initial focus of the program was to provide mentoring and career counseling to a small group of underprivileged youth.

Fishing for Success is part of the UF/IFAS Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences program in the School of Forest Resources and Conservation and Florida LAKEWATCH with help from the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWCC), the Gainesville Police Department, and the Alachua County Sheriff’s Office.

Moms/Dads who Offer their Kids a Sip...Send Wrong Message, Study Finds

Researchers found that kids who had tastes of an alcoholic beverage before they started 6th grade were five times more likely to have a full drink by 9th grade, compared with their classmates who had not tasted alcohol, a new study suggested.

Drunken YouTube Videos Send Wrong Message to Youth, Study Finds

An analysis led by the University of Pittsburgh’s Center for Research on Media, Technology, and Health found that 70 of the most popular YouTube videos depicting drunkenness also portrayed binge drinking in a positive light.
Understanding the Nutrition Label

By kathymfoster | April 3, 2015

When you’re on the hunt for healthy foods, do you read the nutrition label? If so, how much of it do you actually take note of?

While the label may seem confusing—with its long list of ingredients and breakdown of different fats—learning about the nutrients can help you make healthier food choices.

Join in on National Nutrition Month by using the following tips to become more familiar with food nutritional labels.

• Look at the serving size and amount per serving, which are located at the top of the label. Be sure to adjust your calorie count for how many servings you consume.
• Meeting—or sometimes not meeting—the daily value percentages on certain foods is important. For example, if your morning oatmeal contains 3% of your daily potassium, then that’s considered low. (When eating foods, 5% or less of your daily value is low, and 20% or more is high.)
• Calories play a huge role in weight gain and loss. Check out the label to see the calories per serving in certain items—keep in mind, a single serving with 400 calories or more is considered high.
• Avoid eating more than 100% of the Daily Value for certain nutrients, such as saturated and trans fats, cholesterol, and sodium.
• Eat more than enough of the good vitamins! Munch on fruits, vegetables, and whole grains to get at least 100% of the Daily Value of fiber, vitamins A and C, calcium, and iron.
• Even though trans fat doesn’t have a daily recommendation, consume foods with a very low amount of trans fat, which increases chances of heart disease.
• Note that many daily recommendations are based on a 2,000 calorie diet, so you may have to adjust accordingly.

Whether you’re trying to stay in shape or eat certain foods to manage a health condition, understanding the food label can help you reach your goal.

If you’d like to learn more about breaking down the food label, then contact a UF/IFAS Extension Family and Consumer Sciences Educator at your local UF/IFAS Extension County office.

Adapted and excerpted from:
• “Eating Healthier and Feeling Better Using the Nutrition Facts Label,” U.S. Food and Drug Administration (rev. 02/2015)
• Karla P. Shelnutt, “Healthy Eating: Understanding the Nutrition Facts Label” (FCS883), UF/IFAS Department of Family, Youth and Community (rev. 07/2012)
• Source for article: http://fosterfollynews.com/2015/04/03/understanding-the-nutrition-label/
The Most Critical Six Months in a College Grad’s Life

By Mary Hunt | May, 25 2015

Graduating from college is one of life’s most thrilling events. Finishing my degree, walking the aisle and receiving a fancy document in a leather-bound case remains one of the high points of my life.

Leaving college life behind, I was ready to live life to the fullest, whatever that meant. I was so over living under campus rules, grueling classwork, never-ending papers, mid-terms and finals. I was ready begin life in the real world.

Unfortunately, I still had a lot to learn about managing finances. I knew nothing and worse, wasn’t aware that I knew nothing. What was there to know, anyway?

Sadly, I am not alone. Today’s graduates are smart but generally financially ignorant. For college graduates gearing up to enter the real world, I offer the following for starting off on the right financial foot.

The decisions and choices you make in the first six months after graduation have the power to set the course of your life, for good or bad.

Of course, you’ve been a poor starving student long enough. You deserve a new car. And certainly you need a better apartment. And some decent clothes. Oh, and who could possibly deny you a European vacation to celebrate this amazing achievement? Followed by a couple of weeks’ vacation to rest and relax. You’ve been through so much.

You reason: Things are looking good in the employment department, you’re only young once, it makes sense to do this now before you’re tied down with a job, a home and kids. I could go on, but I’ll stop. And you should too. Stop thinking like that!

Taking on a car loan, the obligation of a lease on an apartment or condo, climbing credit-card balances—all of that may seem innocuous, given the great job you plan to land somewhere, somehow. And that will backfire on you. Instead of launching you into the real world, it will send you into a downward spiral that collides with unpaid student debt, negatively impacting your life for many years to come.

Stop, drop and roll.

You learned it in elementary school for fire drills. Now apply it to your financial life. If anyone offers you a contract to sign—for a car, an apartment, a credit card or other legal obligation—Stop! Drop the pen and then roll out of there fast. Keep driving your clunker. Yes, it’s embarrassing. That car you had to drive while in college is a pile of junk. It’s just not you! And those are exactly the kind of thoughts you need to get rid of. First, you are not what you drive. Your car is simply a means to get from here to there. Keep it. Love it. Be grateful.

Move home. Whatever it takes, do not create any new debt during these critical six months, and possibly much longer. If that means moving back with home for a while, do it.

Take a job, any job. You need cash flow, so take the first job you can get. Then keep looking. Perhaps you’ve heard the term “stepping-stone?” There is nothing wrong with this. Keep your eye on the goal and get to work reaching it. Stop whining and feeling sorry for yourself.

Make payments. You need to immediately begin paying back your student loans, whether a little or a lot. Do not luxuriate in the six-month grace period. That is not some kind of gift. Interest is accruing every day (unless you have subsidized loans, which almost
no one has these days). That means every day your debt is growing because the interest you owe—but are not paying—is being added to your principal balance. Next month you will pay interest on that interest, too. Ever heard the word “compounding”? Bingo. My best advice is to create a payment plan to do it in five years or less. Then just do it. Get it done!

**Auto save.** Even though in debt, you need to save money. You cannot continue to live on credit. I a big fan of any kind of auto pay or auto save. When you set this up, you eliminate the need to make a decision every payday. “Should I save money this week or go to a movie?” “Should I save this week or get those really cute shoes that are finally on sale?!” If you have to make that same decision over and over, pretty soon you won’t. You’ll get lazy, you’ll stop saving and just keep spending.

But if you are auto-saving even $25 a week, you’ve eliminated that irritating decision. You’re on autopilot and that’s a nice way to roll.

Soon, you won’t miss the money. It will be out of sight, out of mind. I cannot stress just how important this is. If you master this concept and turn it into a lifelong habit, you will be thousands of miles (and dollars) ahead of your peers.

Finally, please accept my heartfelt congratulations on a job well done. You made it—not to the finish line but to the starting gate! [Click Here to Read More]

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**Study finds isolation, hidden health issues in senior housing**

*Reuters Health*

In senior housing facilities where residents are required to relocate as health issues worsen, seniors tend to isolate themselves and may hide health conditions out of fear of relocation, according to a new study.

Transitioning from independent living to assisted living to skilled nursing in one place can be disruptive and stressful, as researchers have known for 30 years, the authors write in The Gerontologist.

The researchers considered two National Institute on Aging-funded studies of various housing options, including continuing care retirement communities and dementia care units where multiple levels of care are available within a campus or building.

In total, they used 470 interviews with 367 residents, family, staff and administrators at seven facilities.

Interviewers asked open-ended questions about what life is like at the facilities, including transitions between levels of housing.
In every facility, the unit with the highest level of care was stigmatized, with residents referring to it with names like “The Twilight Zone,” “The Dark Side,” “Death Valley,” “Sleepy Hollow,” or “God’s waiting room.”

One administrator noted that few residents in lower levels of care like independent or assisted living seem comfortable going to the higher level units to visit friends. Many interviewees commented that residents didn’t like to mingle with others in different levels of care.

In one case, residents refused to ride on a bus marked to indicate that the people inside might be memory impaired.

“Many people shopping for a senior housing setting are not wanting to face the possibility of these next moves—and so staff have said that some people will decline the part of the tour that includes the nursing care center,” Roth said. “This points to a deeper socio-cultural fear of death and decline that is so pervasive and is a contributing factor to the problems we layout in the article.”

Some residents fear that facility staff are closely watching them, looking for signs of deterioration that would necessitate a move to a higher level of care. One resident spoke of keeping her progressive blindness from staff so they would not move her to assisted living.

The power differential can lead to an adversarial relationship between resident and staff, the researchers write.

“Most people aren’t aware of these social dynamics until after they’re settled and may not have the energy or power to make a change or advocate for a different model,” Roth said. “Instead, most seniors choose to adapt or focus on the positives.”

The Metlife Mature Market 2012 Survey of long term care costs lists some useful questions to ask when looking for a nursing home or assisted living, said Debra Dobbs of the School of Aging Studies at the University of South Florida in Tampa, a co-investigator on the study.

The federal government’s Nursing Home Compare tool has useful quality indicators, survey deficiencies and payment types for every nursing home available for public view, Dobbs told Reuters Health by email.

According to a new analysis by the Kaiser Family Foundation, more than a third of the 15,500 nursing homes in the U.S. received low ratings of 1 or 2 out of five stars in the Nursing Home Compare quality rating system.

• Source: bit.ly/1Polm6t The Gerontologist, online May 4, 2015

Sun rhythms and our well-being

Basking in the sun brings out a sunny disposition, and it’s not a marketing gimmick. There is a biochemical basis for this that promotes our overall health and goes beyond producing more vitamin D. It is true that higher vitamin D levels keep our bones strong and reduce our risk of getting certain cancers, but turns out sunlight is beneficial for our mental and metabolic health as well.

You might experience the following symptoms if you don’t get adequate sunlight:
• Grumpiness or depression
• Poor sleep quality
• Feeling hungry and weight gain
• Difficulty concentrating
• Back pain and bone fracture

The amount of sun exposure you should get depends on your genes and skin type. It is prudent to wear sunscreen and avoid excessive sunlight to minimize risks of sunburn and skin cancers.

Circadian rhythms and our health. Our bodies have built-in mechanisms that sense light and dark cycles, called the circadian rhythm. It is estimated that 10-25% of our genes reflect circadian rhythmicity and influence our physiology and mental health. Understanding these rhythms can help us live healthier.

Research studies consistently find that people who are “night owls” are at increased risk of developing metabolic complications like obesity, metabolic syndrome and type 2 diabetes. At nighttime, our bodies are programmed to be resistant to the hormone insulin. Similarly, people who sleep less are more likely to weigh more and have more difficulty losing weight.
Seasonal rhythms, circadian control and our health.

As seasons change, so do living organisms. This can be observed in the changing color of leaves or the hibernation of some animals during winter. At the cellular level, organisms keep track of light and dark times that affect biological adaptation in a process termed photoperiodism. Humans show seasonal fluctuations in some genes that are intimately involved in diseases that also show seasonal fluctuations in their prevalence, like certain cardiovascular diseases, autoimmune diseases and psychiatric disorders that peak during winter months.

Disruption of normal circadian function is associated with cognitive decline, neurodegeneration and certain psychiatric conditions such as seasonal affective disorder, depression, bipolar disorder and schizophrenia. Genetic variants in genes that orchestrate circadian rhythm, such as CLOCK, BMAL1, PER, TIMELESS and NPAS2 and CRY, contribute to these associations.

Take Action! Knowledge is power. Understanding how important sleep is to our well-being is key towards enacting lifestyle changes that promote better health. It is recommended that middle-aged adults get 7-9 hours of sleep per night; teenagers should get slightly more. Sign up for the HealthWatch 360 web tool or download the mobile app to learn more how your genetics can inform your health and what actions you can take to improve it.

Calendar of Events

Financial Management Webinars
Free, live, interactive online seminars

These webinars are brought to you by University of Florida/IFAS Extension in partnership with Hillsborough, Lake and Hernando County Extension offices.

1, 2, 3’s of Smart Money Moves
Thursday, July 23, 12:00 to 1:00 p.m. EDT
Personal money management does not have to be overwhelming. Learn strategies to protect your assets, grow your money, and avoid money wasters. Click Here to Register

Maximizing Social Security Benefits
Wednesday, August 12, 12:00 to 1:00 p.m. EDT
Learn about Social Security retirement benefit eligibility and benefit claiming options and consequences. Click Here to Register

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