

Family & Consumer Sciences Newsletter



A Word from the Agent...

I cannot believe another year has gone by. As we look back and reflect on another year completed, I hope you took some time to care for yourselves and make memories with those you love.

Wishing you all a very merry holiday season!



Shonda Johnston

SHONDA JOHNSTON
Clark County Extension Agent
Family & Consumer Sciences
shonda.johnston@uky.edu



Merry Christmas



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HEALTHY CHOICES FOR HEALTHY FAMILIES

 Cooperative
Extension Service



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Savor the flavor

The holidays are a time to enjoy meals and events with family and friends. It's easy to rush from meal to meal without taking time to enjoy the food with all your senses. Eating mindfully means that you use all your physical and emotional senses to experience and enjoy the food choices you make.

To start, plan on sitting down for your meal without distractions.

- Turn off the TV, and remove any phones or gadgets from the table.
- Set the table.
- Make a MyPlate meal. Fill half of the plate with vegetables and fruits. Choose foods that are appealing to your eyes, as well as your mouth. Add a portion of lean protein, low-fat dairy, and whole grains. Include fruit in the meal or as a dessert.
- Take small bites and feel and smell the texture, flavor, and scent of your food. Chew your food slowly.
- Put your silverware down between bites and take time to enjoy the taste of the food and those around the table.

Adapted from Making Healthy Lifestyle Choices: Mindful Eating — Enjoy Your Food with All Your Senses-FCS3-561FG



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PARENT CORNER

Make food to make memories

The holidays are filled with food and memories. We often think of a specific dish we ate as a child when we think of certain holidays. We can bring our family closer together by cooking together. Kids can learn a lot in the kitchen, and the holidays are a great time to include them. Not only will kids learn about cooking, they might even learn about family traditions!

Even though the holidays are a busy time of year, take time to include kids in the kitchen. Use the tips below to include kids of all ages:

Ages 2-3:

- Let them observe and explain what you are doing in the kitchen to help them learn terms like whisk, stir, coat, etc.
- Let them imitate what you are doing without ingredients. For example, if you are stirring ingredients together, let them make the same motion with a wooden spoon and empty bowl.

If your child is capable of tasks like stirring, allow them to help you stir the ingredients. Have kids hand you the ingredients you need.

Ages 4-6:

- Read recipes to kids.
- Allow kids to help you gather ingredients for a recipe.
- Include them in measuring ingredients. Let them pour measured ingredients into a bowl.
- Allow them to stir foods that are not on the stovetop.
- Let kids press “start” on a timer.
- Let kids help you dry dishes.

Ages 7 and up:

- Let kids help with cutting foods. For younger kids, use a butter knife to cut soft foods like a banana. For older kids, let them chop zucchini or cucumbers. Watch videos on PlanEatMove.com for guides on how to chop certain foods.
- Let kids read recipes out loud to you.
- Let kids measure ingredients.
- Teach them how to use a can opener and allow them to try it if they are capable.
- Let them help you with food prepared on a stovetop if they are old enough.

Source: Jeannie Najor, MS, RD

FOOD FACTS

Let's talk turkey safety

Turkey takes center stage at many of our holiday meals. Cook and prepare it the right way. You don't want any of your guests to get sick from a food-borne illness.

Both fresh and frozen turkey are tasty. But if you plan to buy a pre-stuffed turkey, make sure it is frozen. Check for the seal that states it was checked by either USDA or a state department of agriculture.

You can safely thaw turkey in the refrigerator or cold water. Thaw in the microwave only if you cook the turkey right away after thawing. You can safely cook a frozen turkey, but it will need to cook at least 50% longer than a thawed one.

Once you are ready to cook your turkey, set the oven temperature no lower than 325 degrees F and place it on a rack in a shallow roasting pan. You can add one-half cup of water to the bottom of the pan to keep the turkey moist. Cook the turkey to 165 degrees F. In another dish, cook the stuffing. You want to make sure both the turkey and the dressing reach 165 degrees F.

Measure the temperature of the turkey with a food thermometer, even if the turkey has a pop-up thermometer. Check the temperature in the thickest part of the breast, the deepest part of the thigh, and the deepest part of the wing. Make sure it reads 165 degrees F at each place.

Store leftovers within two hours after the meal and eat within three to four days. Frozen leftovers will keep for two to six months. When reheating leftovers, make sure the internal temperature of the food is at least 165 degrees F.

More food safety tips and information on preparing turkey, visit PlanEatMove.com or reach out to your local Extension office.

Source: Annhall Norris, UK Extension specialist



Nutty Sweet Potato Biscuits

1 cup all-purpose flour	¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon	potatoes
½ cup whole wheat flour	¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg	6 tablespoons sugar
1½ teaspoons baking powder	⅓ cup chopped walnuts	¼ cup butter, melted
½ teaspoon salt	1 cup mashed sweet potatoes	½ teaspoon vanilla
		1 tablespoon milk

- In a large mixing bowl, **combine** flours, baking powder, salt, cinnamon, nutmeg and walnuts. **Set** aside.
- Combine** sweet potatoes, sugar, butter, vanilla and milk; **add** to flour mixture and mix well.
- Turn out** onto a floured surface; gently **knead** 3 or 4 times. **Roll** dough into ½ inch thickness. **Cut** with a 2 inch biscuit cutter and **place** on a lightly greased baking sheet.
- Bake** at 450°F for 12 minutes or until golden brown.

Yield: 18 biscuits

Nutritional Analysis: 4 g fat, 2 g saturated fat, 5 mg cholesterol, 210 mg sodium, 14 g carbohydrate, 1 g fiber, 4 g sugar, 2 g protein.



Buying Kentucky Proud is easy. Look for the label at your grocery store, farmers' market, or roadside stand.

Kentucky Sweet Potato

SEASON: All year—peak season is October through March.

NUTRITION FACTS: Sweet Potatoes are a good source of fiber, complex carbohydrates and vitamins A and C.

SELECTION: Two varieties of sweet potatoes are grown in Kentucky. The pale sweet potato has a light yellow skin and pale yellow flesh that is dry and crumbly. The darker variety has a dark skin and orange sweet flesh that cooks up moist. Choose small to medium-sized ones with smooth, unbruised skin.

STORAGE: Store unwrapped in a cool (50 degree) dry, dark place with good ventilation for up to 2 months or at room temperature for 2 weeks.

PREPARATION: Scrub well. Leave whole or peel, then slice, dice or shred.

Baking: Pierce skin in several places and rub with

Source: www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov

margarine if desired. Arrange in a single layer and bake uncovered in a 375° F oven until soft when squeezed (45-60 minutes.)

Boiling: In a 3-quart pan, boil 4 whole medium-size potatoes, covered in 2 inches water until tender when pierced. Drain.

Microwaving: Pierce skin, place on a paper towel in microwave. If cooking more than 2 at a time, arrange like spokes. Microwave on high, turning halfway through cooking time. Allow 4-5 minutes for one potato.

SWEET POTATOES

Kentucky Proud Project

County Extension Agents for Family and Consumer Sciences
University of Kentucky, Nutrition
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Self-Care through the Holidays

The holiday season is often thought of as a time of celebration and rest, but for many people the holidays cause a lot of stress. The stress can come from worry about money, travel, work, child care, or dealing with the absence of someone you love. The results of holiday stress can negatively affect relationships at work and in our family.

To deal with the stress of the holiday season, we should find ways to better care for ourselves by engaging in self-care.

Self-care is a broad term involving attitudes, knowledge, and activities to improve or maintain our well-being. Self-care generally applies to reducing stress, but it is important to supporting our physical well-being as well as our relationships. On the other hand, well-being involves living out our mental and physical health to achieve our dreams, passions, goals, and keep or form new relationships. Focusing on self-care involves use of coping skills, which are a set of activities or skills to reduce our stress. Coping skills and activities can vary, but often include drawing, painting, sewing, hunting or fishing, taking walks, or using boxed breathing.

When thinking about stress and self-care, we should consider events or situations that create stress and those coping activities that reduce our stress. A simple way to evaluate your stress is to make a list and rank those things that cause stress from least to greatest. That way, you can find your most problematic stressors. Once you've made that list, do the same for your coping skills. Rank them from least to greatest in terms of what gives you the most relief from stress.



If your symptoms of stress, anxiety, depression, or other mental health challenges are worsening, then it's important to seek support and professional help. If your symptoms or experiences are worsening within the last couple of weeks or more and include the following, seek support and professional help:

- Problems sleeping or falling asleep
- Increased sadness or thoughts of suicide
- Difficulty getting out of bed
- Prolonging or procrastinating certain tasks
- Trouble focusing or making decisions
- Loss of interest in normally enjoyable activities
- Problems completing daily activities

Some examples of seeking professional help can include contacting your primary care provider, your counselor, or therapist, especially before you begin feeling overwhelmed. If you feel like you are in a crisis, then you can seek help immediately by texting, chatting, or calling **988** or <https://988lifeline.org/>, which is the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline.

Reference: National Institute of Mental Health (2021). "Caring for Your Mental Health." 2022, from <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/caring-for-your-mental-health>.

Source: Paul Norrod, DrPH RN, Extension specialist for rural health and farm safety