

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For more information,
contact: Tyler Johnson

Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program Agent, Wildcat Extension District
tajohnson120@ksu.edu, 620-232-1930

Nutrition and Health

Now more than usual, people are looking for ways to stay healthy. In addition to good hygiene, good nutrition and hydration are essential. Eating a well-balanced diet and drinking enough water increases your immune system and lowers your risk of most chronic and infectious diseases. Although grocery stores have a better selection than they did a few months ago, you still want to consider making simple swaps for items available with similar health quality.



While we are in the season a lot of local produce is available, it is important to eat a variety. Regardless of the time of year, there will be vegetables and fruits that are not in season. Remember, frozen or canned foods usually are as nutritious as fresh. As long as you pay attention to the ingredient label and make sure the first ingredient is the food you are buying, canned or frozen foods are a good simple swap. Also, canned and frozen foods will store longer. This helps you get the nutrition your body needs, especially when purchasing vegetables and fruits. When it comes to legumes, like lentils and beans, the fresh, frozen, or canned method works too. To keep costs down, limit the purchase of pre-made foods, like frozen dinners, and foods high in empty calories like chips.

As the weather gets hotter, staying well hydrated is very important too. Drink plenty of water every day. General guidance is to drink 8-10 cups of water each day. Drinking coffee and tea is alright, but watch the amount of caffeine you are drinking. Drinking juices and soda should be limited because of the amount of sugar contained in them.

Eating out is fun, but should be done in moderation. We want to support our local small businesses, but we need to remember to stay healthy. Many of us have recently made life changes toward health. To keep the momentum going, look for the health option on the menu when you do go out. Most restaurants have at least one healthier option.

Another aspect of health connected with nutrition is the social aspect of meal time. Remember the old fashion big family meals? Try to structure your meal time so that everyone in your household is involved. This could mean having your kids or significant other help you cook. It

also helps to sets a schedule for meals. This is good for a couple of reasons. First, it helps you plan out what food you will use when and help you organize a shopping list for when you go to the store. Also, it will cut down on the mindless snacking and save money. Having a structured meal time also encourages socialization. Socialization is a big piece of health many might have missed over the last few months. If you do socialize outside of your smaller family unit, make sure to follow social distancing guidelines set out by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment or the Centers for Disease Control.

Please contact me to schedule an appointment or for more information, contact Tyler Johnson, tajohnson120@ksu.edu, or by calling 620-232-1930.

###

K - State Research and Extension is an equal opportunity provider and employer