



Kay County Health News

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Did you know one of the potential benefits of a Certified Healthy Business is increased productivity?

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New Year Resolutions

For many of us, January signals a new beginning and provides a time to review habits that might need attention. New Year Resolutions soon follow this soul-searching. Does this sound familiar to you?

Health related goals usually include challenging ourselves to a healthy diet and more exercise resulting in weight loss.

Another common goal is building stronger relationships with loved ones. Research shows that strong partnerships can help us avoid illness, adopt healthier habits, and even live longer. Troubled relationships tend to breed stress and weaken immunity.

Couples in the Kitchen

A U.S. Dept. of Agriculture survey found that couples who cook together often may be more satisfied with their relationships than couples who never cook together. The survey of married and engaged couples identified the following benefits of cooking together:

- “We talk more” (30%)
- “We laugh more” (19%)
- “We work more as a team” (18%)
- “We are more relaxed” (13%)

Many people don't cook because they're too busy with other activities. Make time to cook by making cooking "the activity." Preparing healthy meals together could nurture your physical health and your relationship with that significant person in our life - **just in time for Valentines Day!** January is National Soup Month, National Wheat Bread Month and National Meat Month. January 6th is Bean Day. Plenty of ways to warm up your relationship!

Benefits of Physical Activity

The health benefits of regular physical activity are hard to ignore. And the benefits of exercise are yours for the taking, regardless of your age, sex or physical ability. Check out these seven ways exercise can improve your life.

No. 1: Exercise controls weight

When you engage in physical activity, you burn calories. The more intense the activity, the more calories you burn. You don't need to set aside large chunks of time for exercise to reap weight-loss benefits. If you can't do an actual workout, get more active throughout the day in simple ways — by taking the stairs instead of the elevator or revving up your household chores.



No. 2: Exercise combats health conditions and diseases

No matter what your current weight, being active boosts high-density lipoprotein (HDL), or "good," cholesterol and decreases unhealthy triglycerides. This keeps your blood flowing smoothly, which decreases your risk of cardiovascular diseases. In fact, regular physical activity can help you prevent or manage stroke risks, metabolic syndrome, type 2 diabetes, depression, certain types of cancer, arthritis and falls. (Continued on page 3)

What to Eat Now

Christmas and New Years is behind us but cranberries and black-eyes are still valuable in our diet.

Black-eyed Peas: 1 cup provides 130 calories, trace amounts of fat and sodium, no cholesterol and 17% of potassium, 28% of fiber, 8% protein, 23% Vit A, 18% Calcium and magnesium, 6% Vit C, 8% Iron, 52% folate needed daily. They help prevent Type 2 Diabetes by keeping sugar balanced after meals. Their soluble fiber binds to cholesterol, carrying it out of the body. The folate prevents birth defects of the spinal cord and brain.

Black-eyed Pea Salad



Serve with pita chips or bread for a quick and simple lunch, or serve over a bed of sautéed leafy greens (such as kale or Swiss chard) for a light dinner.

- 1/2 C chopped yellow sweet pepper
- 1/4 C chopped green sweet pepper
- 1/4 C chopped red sweet pepper
- 1/4 C chopped red onion
- 1 serrano pepper, stemmed, seeded, and thinly sliced*
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 11 oz package steamed ready-to-eat black-eyed peas, rinsed and drained, or one 15-ounce can black-eyed peas, rinsed and drained
- 2/3 C chopped Roma tomatoes (2 medium)
- 1/4 C seasoned rice vinegar
- Sea salt
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 1 Roma tomato, sliced (optional)

In a large bowl stir together sweet peppers, red onion, chile pepper, and garlic. Stir in black-eyed peas, chopped tomatoes, and vinegar. Season to taste with sea salt and black pepper. Chill for 1 hour before serving. If desired, top with sliced tomato

* Chile peppers contain oils that can burn your skin and eyes. When working with chile peppers, wear plastic gloves and wash your hands well afterwards.

Nutrition Facts : cal. (kcal) 190, Fat, total (g) 1, carb. (g) 34, fiber (g) 7, sugar (g) 7, pro. (g) 12, vit. A (IU) 1069, vit. C (mg) 124, Niacin (mg) 1, Folate (µg) 32,, sodium (mg) 244, Potassium (mg) 315, calcium (mg) 71, iron (mg) 4, Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet

Cranberries: 1 cup contains 46 calories, no fat, cholesterol or sodium and 18% of the fiber and 22% of the Vitamin C needed daily. They are full of antioxidants which protects cells from the damage of free radicals. Research has found cranberry juice can block urinary infections by binding to bacteria so they can't adhere to cell walls although doesn't cure an infection. A compound in cranberries can prevent plaque formation on teeth. In some people, regular juice consumption can kill H. pylori bacteria which may cause stomach cancer and ulcers. Juice might also increase levels of HDL and reduce levels of LDL.

Cranberry Granola

- 2 C rolled oats
 - 1/2 C almonds, chopped
 - 1/3 C maple syrup
 - 1 TBSP oil
 - 1 tsp cinnamon
 - 1/2 C dried cranberries
- Toss oats, almonds, syrup, oil and cinnamon together. Spread on parchment-lined baking sheet and bake at 325 degrees until golden, 30 to 35 minutes. Let cool; stir in cranberries. Add to cooked oatmeal, cereal, vanilla yogurt, etc.



Winter Wonderland Safety

No. 3: Exercise improves mood

A workout at the gym or a brisk 30-minute walk can help blow off steam and give an emotional lift. Physical activity stimulates various brain chemicals that may leave you feeling happier and more relaxed. You may also feel better about your appearance and yourself when you exercise regularly, which can boost your confidence and improve your self-esteem.

No. 4: Exercise boosts energy

Regular activity can improve your strength and boost your endurance. Exercise delivers oxygen and nutrients to your tissues and helps your cardiovascular system work more efficiently. When your heart and lungs work more efficiently, you have more energy for your daily chores.

No. 5: Exercise promotes better sleep

Regular physical activity can help you fall asleep faster and deepen your sleep. Just don't exercise too close to bedtime, or you may be too energized to fall asleep.

No. 6: Exercise puts the spark back into your sex life

Regular physical activity can leave you feeling energized and looking better, which may have a positive effect on your sex life. Regular physical activity can also lead to enhanced arousal for women. And men who exercise regularly are less likely to have problems with erectile dysfunction than are men who don't exercise.

No. 7: Exercise can be fun

Exercise gives you a chance to unwind, enjoy the outdoors or simply engage in activities that make you happy. Physical activity can also help you connect with family or friends in a fun social setting. So, take a dance class, hit the hiking trails or join a soccer team. Find a physical activity you enjoy. If you get bored, try something new.



The bottom line on exercise

Aim for at least 30 minutes of physical activity every day. If you want to lose weight or meet specific fitness goals, you may need to exercise more. Remember to check with your doctor before starting a new exercise program, especially if you have any health concerns.

While the danger from winter weather varies across the country, Oklahomans are likely to face some type of severe winter weather. Winter storms can range from a moderate snow to a blizzard with blinding, wind-driven snow that lasts several days. Many winter storms are accompanied by dangerously low temperatures and strong wind, ice, sleet and freezing wind.

One primary concern is the winter weather's ability to knock out heat, power and communication service to your home or office, for days at a time. Heavy snowfall and extreme cold can immobilize an entire region.

The National Weather Service calls winter storms "Deceptive Killers" because most deaths are indirectly related to the storm. People die in traffic accidents on icy roads and of hypothermia from prolonged exposure to cold. Winter weather often catches people unprepared. The National Weather Service reported that most injuries happen to males over 40 years old, 70% of the ice and snow related fatalities occur in cars, and about 25% of all winter related fatalities are people who are caught off guard in the storm.



What winter weather preparations have you made and what additional steps are needed to ensure your winter weather safety? It is important to be prepared for winter weather BEFORE it strikes. We have already icy storms this season and more are likely. If you aren't ready, it is time to take those steps NOW.

Your emergency kit should include:

- rock salt or more environmentally safe products to melt ice.
- sand to improve traction
- snow shovels and other snow removal equipment.
- sufficient heating fuel for power outages
- supply of dry, seasoned wood for the fireplace
- adequate clothing and blankets
- family communications plan in the event your family members are separated when the weather hits
- access to winter weather radios or news channels
- keep a disaster supply kit in your vehicle if you must travel
- bring pets inside during wintry weather. If they must be outside during the day, they need shelter protected from wind, moisture and cold temperatures. They also need a supply of unfrozen water.

HOPPIN' JOHN

Tradition tells us to eat black-eyed peas on New Years Day for good luck. Whether or not you follow this tradition, black-eyed peas are a good source nutrients and can healthfully be enjoyed any day of the year. Hoppin' John includes other healthy vegetables, boosting the benefits of the black-eyes.

- 1/4 lb. bacon, sausage, or ham (cut in small pieces)
- 1 red pepper, chopped
- 1 green pepper, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 lg. onion, chopped
- 2 stalks of celery, cleaned and chopped
- 2 cans black-eyed peas
- 2 (13 3/4 oz.) cans chicken or vegetable broth
- 1 can rotel, optional
- 1 bay leaf
- 1/2 tsp savory, crushed
- 1/2 tsp thyme, crushed
- 1/4 tsp red pepper flakes
- 1 C uncooked rice
- 10 oz. pkg. frozen chopped collard or turnip greens

Brown meat in non-stick soup pan. Pour off accumulating fat. Sauté red and green peppers, onions, celery and garlic in the pan with meat until vegetables are translucent and browned. Add 2 cans of black-eyed peas (one drained and rinsed), broth, rotel, seasonings, rice, and the greens. Bring to a boil and simmer, covered, for 20 minutes or until rice is cooked. Remove bay leaf and any bones you may have included. Serves 8. Enjoy!

**Wishing You A Happy and Healthy
New Year!**