

Living Well in Baker County

Dear Extension Friend:

November 2007

It's that time of year again! The holiday season is fast approaching. Someone please tell me my calendar is wrong and the year is not almost over. This year has gone by way too fast.

I want to take the time to wish you all a very Happy Thanksgiving and I hope you enjoy the time with your loved ones. In *Food Safety* I have some very important tips on how to make that Thanksgiving meal safe and enjoyable for all the right reasons. In *Children* I have discussed the increased prevalence of childhood overweight and obesity and what

you as a parent can do to take control of the issue. With the stress of the holiday season beginning I have included a piece in *Healthy Lifestyles* on high blood pressure and who is at risk. *House & Home* discusses the presence of dust mites in the home and ways you can control these nasty little critters. Finally, in *Money Matters* I have included an article on the importance of record safekeeping with tips on what you can do to make sure everything is where you need it when you need it. I hope you enjoy the Newsletter for this month. If you have any questions or ideas for upcoming

Newsletters please feel free to contact me at the Extension office.

Sincerely,

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Inside this issue:

Children: Youth Risks for Overweight and Obesity

Since 1980 the prevalence of overweight or obese children has nearly tripled. According to a 2006 study completed by the National Health Statistics over 17% of adolescents (ages 12-19) and over 18% of children (ages 6-11) are considered overweight. The U.S. Institute of Medicine has called the prevention of childhood obesity a national priority. Children being overweight or obese can cause very serious health problems. Children with weight issues have a much higher risk of developing heart disease, high blood pressure, hypertension, diabetes and other medical problems. According to the Department of Health and Human Services, overweight adolescents have a 70% chance of becoming

overweight or obese adults. If at least one parent is overweight or obese then the child's chances of becoming overweight or obese increases to 80%. It is not uncommon for obesity to run in families. Genetics may play a part in a child's risk for obesity, but more importantly, it's about the example parents set. Research has shown that eating together as a family actually promotes healthful eating habits among children and adolescents. This practice increases children's consumption of whole grains, fruits, and vegetables and decreases their consumption of soft drinks and fats. Parents play such a HUGE and important role in providing a healthy home. As time has changed, so has

the family structure. Since 1980 the number of dual-earner families has increased. Overall, parents are spending less time being active with their children and cooking less nutritious foods and meals. Keep in mind that everything you do as a parent is teaching your child something, good or bad. We've all heard the saying "Do as I say, Not as I do", but let's get real. If it was that easy, we'd all have perfect children. Children are like tape recorders. Everything you say is at one time or another repeated. Just remember, your actions are repeated just as easily. Changing your child's eating habits may mean you need to change your own.

Source: Eisenberg, Radunovich and Brennan, University of Florida



| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| <i>Children</i> | 1 |
| <i>Food Safety</i> | 2 |
| <i>House & Home</i> | 2 |
| <i>Healthy Lifestyles</i> | 3 |
| <i>Special Events</i> | 3 |
| <i>Money Matters</i> | 4 |



Food Safety: Turkey Safety

Can you believe it's that time of year again? The holidays are fast approaching and many of you may be the lucky member of the family responsible for hosting the Thanksgiving feast. The Thanksgiving meal can be the most stressful event at the holiday. The challenge of thawing the turkey, cooking the turkey, preparing numerous side dishes and being a gracious host can be very overwhelming. With all the activity going on at once it's easy to forget about food safety. We all want to get the food ready quick and on the table so all can enjoy. Remember, if food safety techniques are missed the meal could become very memorable for all the wrong reasons. I don't think any host wants their Thanksgiving meal to be remember due to everyone getting sick.

You may be asking yourself, How big of a turkey should I buy? Should I buy a fresh or frozen turkey? How do I store my turkey? A few simple steps recommended by the USDA can help you answer these questions.

When purchasing your turkey make sure you buy one large enough to feed your crowd. If purchasing a whole turkey allow 1lb per person, if purchasing a boneless breast of turkey allow 1/2lb per person.

If you choose to purchase a frozen bird, make sure you purchase it in plenty of

time. If you are thawing your turkey in the refrigerator allow 24hrs for every 4-5lbs. Once the turkey is thawed it can be kept in the refrigerator for 1-2 days. If you are purchasing a fresh turkey make sure it is not stored any longer than 2 days before it is cooked or frozen. If you forget to get your turkey in the fridge in plenty of time for thawing it's OK. You can thaw the turkey in cold water being sure to replace the water every 30 minutes. Allow approximately 30 minutes per pound of bird. Make sure you cook the bird immediately after using this method of thawing. Another way to thaw your bird is by defrosting in the microwave IF your bird is not too big. Check your microwaves instruction booklet to determine how large of a bird it will hold, the minutes per pound, and the power level to use for thawing.

NEVER THAW THE TURKEY ON THE COUNTERTOP AT ROOM TEMPERATURE! Make sure you clean and sanitize wherever raw turkey juice may have been.

Prior to the big event, make sure you are well prepared with all of your ingredients and equipment. Be sure to have a roasting pan large enough for your bird as well as a food thermometer. Keep in mind that doneness is never guaranteed by time and looks. A good working thermometer is the **ONLY** way

to be sure your turkey is cooked to a safe temperature of 165 °F. A good way to estimate how long it will take your bird to cook is to use the chart below. The times are for a fresh or frozen turkey in an oven at 325 °F. Once the estimated time is up for your bird, check the temperature. If the temperature is not at least 165 °F, leave the bird in the oven a bit longer until the recommended temperature has been reached.

| Size of Turkey | Hours to Prepare |
|----------------|----------------------|
| 8-12 pounds | 2 3/4 to 3 hours |
| 12-14 pounds | 3 to 3 3/4 hours |
| 14-18 pounds | 3 3/4 to 4 1/4 hours |
| 18-20 pounds | 4 1/4 to 4 1/2 hours |
| 20-24 pounds | 4 1/2 to 5 hours |

If your asking about the stuffing, currently experts recommend cooking the stuffing separate from the turkey and should also be cooked to 165 °F. If you have any leftover turkey, be sure and cut it into small pieces, let it cool and refridgerate within 2 hours.

We all want our Thanksgiving to be memorable and fun. Keep all these tips in mind and rest assured you'll have a safe great meal.

House & Home: House Dust/Dust Mites

House dust is a mixture of potentially allergenic materials: fibers, feathers, bacteria, mold spores, human dander, parts of plants and insects, pet hair and danders. The most allergenic component of house dust is often dust mites -- microscopic, spider-like insects. The house dust mites (floor mites) are increasing in medical significance to humans. The importance of house dust mites is that pieces of the mites in house dust may produce allergic reactions and asthma when inhaled. The allergen may be either the hard outer shell of the mite or a substance the creature excretes or secretes. There are 10 different species of dust mites known at this time.

Health Effects

- Similar to mildew/mold allergy: sneezing, runny/stuffy nose, watery/itchy eyes.
- Dust mites are the main contributor of half of the asthma cases.
- Under severe exposure asthmatic attacks with wheezing, coughing and shortness of breath may be triggered.

Sources

- Dust mites thrive in carpets, bedding (especially pillows), upholstered furniture, stuffed toys, etc.



Detection

- Allergic reaction, sneezing, etc.

Control

Dust mites depend on humidity. They grow fastest at about 80 percent humidity but must be below 50 percent to stop mite growth. Temperatures in a home are just right for dust mites.

- Wash and clean thoroughly.
- Provide special protection in bedrooms.
- Avoid the use of materials that collect and hold dust.
- Use simple metal or wood furniture, washable cotton or synthetic shades, cotton or fiberglass curtains.
- Scatter rugs should be washed weekly.
- Impervious plastic coverings should be used on mattress, box springs and pillows.
- Dacron and synthetic pillows are better than feathers. Put pillows through dry cycle to remove dust particles and allergens.
- Air conditioning will help remove allergens but an electronic or HEPA (high efficiency particulate aerating) filter removes particulates from the air and holds them.
- Remove carpeting where possible. If carpeting can not be removed vacuum as frequently as possible with a vacuum equipped with HEPA filters.

Source: Peart, University of Florida

Healthy Lifestyles: Are You At Risk For High Blood Pressure?

Nearly 1 in 3 American adults has high blood pressure. High blood pressure is often called the silent killer because many times it has no signs or symptoms. Many people often have no idea they have high blood pressure until after they have had some type of problem with their heart, brain, or kidneys.



What is Blood Pressure?

Blood is pumped from your heart to all parts of your body through vessels called arteries. Your blood pressure is the force of the blood pushing against the walls of the arteries. Each time your heart beats (typically 60-70 times per minute) it pumps out blood into the arteries. Your blood pressure is the highest when your heart beats, pumping the blood. When

your heart is at rest, between pumps, your pressure is at it's lowest. When your heart pumps, the pressure is known as systolic. When your heart is at rest the pressure is known as diastolic. The systolic number is the number on the top and the diastolic number is the one on the bottom. The standard normal blood pressure is 120/80 mmHg (you say it as "120 over 80"). Blood pressure of 140/90 mmHg is considered high blood pressure. High blood pressure or hypertension can cause some very serious health problems. High blood pressure means your heart is pumping harder to pump the blood through your body and is damaging the vessels due to the force. According to the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute African Americans have higher rates of high blood pressure than Caucasians. African Americans:

1. Tend to get high blood pressure early in life.
2. Usually have more severe high blood pressure.
3. Have a higher death rate of stroke, heart disease and kidney failure.

Many people believe that high blood pressure comes with the territory of getting older. This is NOT true. High blood pressure is NOT a part of the aging process. Eating healthy, maintaining a healthy weight and getting plenty of exercise will help maintain a normal blood pressure level. Other factors that may put you at risk for developing high blood pressure are:

1. Are Overweight.
2. Are a man over the age of 45.
3. Are a woman over the age of 55.
4. Have a family history of high blood pressure.
5. Have hypertension (blood pressure in the 120-139/80-89 mmHg range)

You can decrease your risk of developing high blood pressure by following these simple rules:

1. Maintain a healthy weight.
2. Get plenty of physical activity.
3. Watch your salt and sodium intake.
4. Eat plenty of fruits and veggies daily.

If you believe you may be suffering from high blood pressure talk with you physician to discuss treatment. For more information contact the local extension office.

Events for November:



Nearly 21 million children and adults in the United States are living with diabetes, and another 54 million people are at-risk. But those are not the only ones suffering from the disease. If you are a parent or loved one caring for someone with diabetes, then you too are experiencing the side-effects. In December 2006, the General Assembly of the United Nations (UN) passed a landmark Resolution recognizing diabetes as a chronic, debilitating and costly disease. The Resolution designates World Diabetes Day as a United Nations Day to be observed every year on November 14 starting in 2007.

Did you know that Pancreatic Cancer is the 4th leading cause of cancer deaths in the United States. Unfortunately many people are unaware of this alarming statistic. Pancreatic Cancer receives the least amount of research funding and does not get the public recognition it warrants. We've all seen the pink ribbon recognizing Breast Cancer Awareness, but did you know that the purple ribbon is for Pancreatic Cancer Awareness. This month make it a point to tell at least one friend about Pancreatic Cancer and help get the word out. You can learn more about Pancreatic Cancer by visiting www.pancan.org.

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Money Matters: Keeping Track of Valuable Papers

Proper care and safekeeping of your financial records and business papers can be of utmost importance to your family. You can prevent confusion and save time by systematically listing, filing, and storing your family papers. You need records so that expenses may be planned and controlled, to determine your net worth and for tax returns. Other good reasons to keep important paperwork together is to protect yourself against another person's mistakes or false claims and in case of emergencies such as disasters or death. In some cases the need to save a record may only be temporary. For example, once a deposit appears on the bank statement correctly, the deposit receipt can be destroyed. Other records need to be permanent such as ownership papers. Both spouses should be familiar with the family's financial matters. Older children should know where the records are kept and the person to contact in an emergency.

Where Do You Keep Records?

The average family can get along nicely with a safe deposit box and/or a fire safe strong box (rated to withstand 1,700 degrees F for one hour), an alphabetized cardboard letter file and drawer space for some envelopes and a notebook.

Safe Deposit Box or Firesafe Storage

- Birth certificates, marriage records, divorce papers, and death certificates.
- Social Security cards.
- Wills.
- Military records.
- Automobile titles.



- Household inventory.
- Passports.
- Insurance policies and annuities.
- Investments (stock, bond, mutual fund certificates).
- Property records.
- Debt record.

Cardboard Letter File Records

Information which should be organized and kept, but not necessarily in a safe deposit box or strong box includes:

- Insurance Policy Records.
- Bank Accounts.
- Investments.

Keep one copy in your home file and one with the certificates in a safe deposit box.

- Real Estate.
- Debts.

Documentation Pays

Get into the habit of keeping track of your income, expenses, and possessions. If you spend time updating your records monthly, it will be much easier to evaluate and, if necessary, modify your budget so that you can manage your financial affairs wisely. Keeping your records organized monthly will also help you find documents necessary to make tax preparation easier.

Source: Turner, Torres and Mitchell: University of Florida