



In Touch, In Tune

www.extension.purdue.edu/dearborn



February 2024

Dear Friends,

Have you been caring for your heart this month? This month is all about giving love to your heart. Do you know numbers about your heart? I was reading an article that people remember their old addresses and landline phone numbers, but they do not know the numbers around their heart health. I encourage you to learn and know your blood pressure numbers and cholesterol numbers. Antonine Keller, MD, a cardiothoracic surgeon and co-founder of Heart Sense says, "If you don't take care of your wellness, you'll have to take care of your illness." Make choices that are for your wellness!

I have included tips and recipes to support multiple dimensions of your wellness: Physical – Join Get WalkIN' or find an accountability partner for physical activity. Financial – Prepare your taxes early and reward yourself. Intellectual – Learn about elements of wellness or history. I learned that quilts contained messages for individuals on the Underground Railroad. What fascinates you? Go to the library or the internet and learn about it. Social – Do a random act of kindness. February 17th is the official day, but you have many days ahead in 2024. Environmental – Enjoy the emerging of spring creation. I have been enjoying singing birds. Spiritual – Be grateful for your life. Occupational – Recognize the good work you do in the roles that you fulfill in our community. Emotional – Make a new friend. February 11th was Make a Friend Day. I suggest reconnecting with an old friend for this can be a great experience for you and your friend. Enjoy February, especially February 29th, this Leap Year! My friend, who is 56th, is celebrating her 14th birthday!

Happy February!

Warm Regards,
Marcia Parcell
Extension Educator, Health and Human Sciences

DATES TO REMEMBER

- February 27—A Matter of Balance continues at North Dearborn Public Library
- March 5, 12, 19 & 26—A Matter of Balance
- March 14 Book Party for World Math Day at Aurora Public Library
- March 18 - Madison District Spring Meeting presented by the Bartholomew County Extension Homemakers
Location: Community Building at the Bartholomew County Fairgrounds, 750 W 200 S, Columbus, IN 47201.
9 AM Registration includes a continental breakfast. Meeting begins at 10 AM.



Ewe are Lucky to be a Homemaker! Reservations due: March 4, 2024 \$15 per person.

All reservations should be sent to: Bartholomew County Extension Homemakers, c/o Amy Kilby, 3024 Fox Pointe Drive, Columbus, IN 47203. Make checks payable to Bartholomew County Extension Homemakers. A Box Lunch will be provided by The Rolling Pin

(Sandwich, side, chips & 2 cookies) Please contact the Purdue Extension – Bartholomew County office at 812-379-1665 for more information.

- March 27 – Teen Edible Art program at Lawrenceburg Public Library
- April 1 – Gluten Free and Lactose Intolerant Cooking at North Dearborn Public Library 6-7 PM
- April 10-11 Health and Human Sciences Update
- April 4, 11, 18, 25 Student Empowerment at Manchester Elementary
- May 2 & 9 Student Empowerment at Manchester Elementary

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MAKING AFFORDABLE PLANT-BASED MEALS

Including more plants in your diet is easy and cost friendly. Including a few plant-based meals a week can reduce your grocery bill and motivate you to eat different foods.

- Focus on a variety of whole foods. Vegetables, fruits, whole grains, and legumes are all great ingredients to

create nutritious and colorful meals. Canned, pre-cooked, or frozen provide the same vitamins and minerals as fresh foods.

- Make sure you include all the food groups:. Foods such as lentils, peas, beans, nuts, and seeds are a way to get more plant-based protein in your meals. Although the protein content of plant source foods might be lower than animal-based sources, these alternatives can help you get an important variety that supplies nutrients.
- Get creative! Try making your own soups with a variety of different vegetables, grains, and legumes. Switch up simple dishes like pasta and lasagna with different vegetables and tofu as a protein source.
- Buying with the season. When shopping for fresh fruits and vegetables, try looking for produce in season. Most of the time the seasonal produce will be on sale and can be more affordable.
- Stock up on pantry staples. Long-lasting pantry staples such as beans, chickpeas, canned tomato products, whole grain pasta, and frozen whole foods are an affordable way to have ingredients on hand. When you see a bulk item that you and your family like that is on sale, stock up! Store these staples in air-tight containers and they can last up for up to a year.

Source: *Indiana's Emergency Food Resource Network*

FOOD & NUTRITION

- The American Heart Association, Dietary Guidelines for Americans, and the World Health Organization recommend eating seafood at least twice per week to support heart health.
- Examples of seafood high in omega-3 fatty acids include anchovies, barramundi, herring, lake whitefish, mackerel, pompano, rainbow trout, salmon, sardines, shad, tuna, and walleye.

These recipes were the favorite dishes from my February fish presentation at North Dearborn Public Library.

TUNA MELT

Servings: 4

2 (5oz) cans tuna in water, drained

¼ cup light mayonnaise

1 stalk celery, scrub with clean vegetable brush under running water, thinly sliced

2 tablespoons onion, scrub with clean vegetable brush under running water, chopped

2 tablespoons dill pickle relish

1 tablespoon fresh parsley, gently rub under cold running water or 1 teaspoon dried parsley (optional)

½ teaspoon red pepper flakes (optional)

Black pepper, to taste

Salt, to taste

2 tablespoons margarine

8 slices whole wheat bread

4 slices tomato (optional)

4 slices low-fat cheddar cheese

Wash hands with soap and water. In a medium bowl, combine drained tuna, mayonnaise, celery, onion and relish. Add parsley, red pepper flakes, if desired, black pepper and salt. Mix with a fork. Spread margarine on one side of each bread slice. Place margarine side of bread on the skillet. Top plain side of bread with ½ cup of tuna salad. Top tuna salad with one slice of tomato, if desired and one slice of cheese. Top with a second slice of bread, margarine side facing up. Repeat with remaining sandwiches. Heat skillet over medium heat*. Cook sandwiches until brown. Flip and repeat on the other side. Store leftovers in a sealed container in the refrigerator for up to four days.

NOTES: *If your skillet is too hot, the bread will burn before the sandwich is heated through and the cheese is melted.

Lower the temperature, if needed.

Source: <https://food.unl.edu/newsletter/healthy-bites/nutritious-and-delicious-sandwiches>

BAKED FLOUNDER

4 (5oz) Flounder

1 tablespoon unsalted butter, melted

1 tablespoon olive oil

1 tablespoon lemon juice

1 teaspoon smoked paprika

1 teaspoon garlic powder

1 teaspoon sea salt

½ teaspoon black pepper

Preheat oven to 400 degrees F. Pat fish fillet dry with a paper towel. Place on a rimmed baking sheet. Whisk together melted butter, olive oil, and lemon juice. Brush on both sides of the fillets. Mix spices in another container. Apply spices to both sides of the fillets. Bake flounder in the oven 12-15 minutes, until the fish flakes easily with a fork or reaches an internal temperature of 140 degrees F. Times vary depending on thickness of fillets.

IN THE NEWS: ENJOY CITRUS THIS FEBRUARY!

If you are missing summer in these dreary winter months, eating citrus food might help brighten your day! Winter is when citrus fruits such as lemons and oranges are in season. When a food is in season, it means that the food is at peak levels of tastiness. Foods that are in season might also be more affordable and more likely to be on sale.

Winter may also be a time when sickness is more common. Citrus fruits contain vitamin C that is important for healthy skin and tissues and a strong immune system.

During February specifically, lemons, limes, and oranges are at their peak in the citrus season. These three are great examples of citrus fruits that are available at most supermarkets. Here in Indiana there are not a lot of large farms that produce citrus fruits but you might be able to find good deals on imported citrus from states like California, Florida, Texas, and Arizona.

Source: Written by Madison Wathen, Purdue University Nutrition and Dietetics '25

NOURISH YOUR IMMUNE SYSTEM

Coughing, sneezing, sore throat, headache and fatigue may be part of feeling ill with seasonal colds and flu. Our immune system functions throughout our body to protect us from illnesses ranging from the common cold to serious health conditions.

Some immune cells (white blood cells) circulate through the body (bone marrow, thymus), and others reside in specific tissues (spleen, tonsils). The skin is our body's first line of defense against germs. Our skin cells produce proteins that can fight off germs. Immune cells also recognize other substances that enter our bodies and attempt to remove them if the substance appears to be harmful to us.

Keep your immune system health with these four tips:

1. Eat a healthful diet.
 - Consume plenty of fruits, vegetables, lean protein, healthful fats, low-fat dairy (or other calcium source) and whole grains. Aim for foods rich in vitamin A, C, E, D and the mineral selenium.
 - Be aware that as we age, we may become more susceptible to foodborne illness. Prepare and handle food safely.
2. Get plenty of sleep.
 - Keep a regular sleep schedule and aim for at least seven hours of sleep daily. Keep your bedroom at an appropriate temperature. Sign off from your technology at least an hour from bedtime. Avoid heavy meals and too many beverages before bedtime.
3. Wash your hands often. Scrub for at least 20 seconds with soap.
 - Cold viruses can survive on indoor surfaces for up to seven days, with their ability to cause infection decreasing after 24 hours. Infectious flu viruses can survive on the hands for 15 minutes and on hard surfaces for 24 hours. Flu viruses can survive as air droplets for several hours.
4. Exercise regularly. Aim for about 30 minutes of moderate activity on five or more days of the week.

Source: Julie Garden-Robison, Ph.D., R.D., L.R.D., Food and Nutrition Specialist, NDSU Extension

Financial Tips: File your taxes early. Three benefits: (1) Receive your return faster, (2) Allow more time to make your refund work for you, and (3) Minimize the risk of identity theft. If you owe money in taxes, you'll have more time to plan and prepare your payment.

Create a vacation savings account. Rename a savings account the location of your next vacation destination. Set up a recurring deposit (start with \$5) into that account either from your paycheck or checking account. Take advantage of a retirement contribution match. Don't leave free money on the table. Some employers will deposit additional money into your 401(k)-retirement account based on the amount YOU put in yourself. This is a great way to increase your retirement savings. Find out your employer's match this week and start maximizing your earnings. If you are self-employed and need to find your own retirement plan, reach out to your financial institution and ask about their individual retirement account (IRA) options.

Take \$5 to treat yourself when your taxes are filed. Remember one aspect of positive money management is to bring joy and celebrate. Reward yourself for financial discipline!

Source: Utah State University <https://extension.usu.edu/finance/>

SIGN UP FOR PURDUE EXTENSION *GET WALKIN'* PROGRAM

Want to improve your health...but short on time...and lack motivation? This FREE, email-based walking program has you covered! Sign up, walk, and get email support.

Walk to: reduce risk of obesity, heart disease, and diabetes, feel energized, add daily physical activity and get social.

Starting date is April 1, 2024. You will receive a total of 16 emails—2 per week for the first month, and 1 per week for the next 8 weeks. Register by March 28, 2024. For more information or to join us, contact Marcia Parcell at mparcell@purdue.edu.



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DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION AND BELONGING

Month-long observances:

- American Heart Month
- Black History Month

Important February DE&I calendar dates:

- February 1 – National Freedom Day
- February 2 – Groundhog Day
- February 4 – Rosa Parks Day
- February 6 – Safer Internet Day
- February 10 – Lunar New Year (Year of the Dragon)
- February 11 – International Day of Women & Girls in Science
- February 12 – International Epilepsy Day
- February 13 – Mardi Gras
- February 14 – Ash Wednesday
- February 14 – Valentine's Day
- February 15 – Nirvana Day (Buddhist)
- February 15 – International Childhood Cancer Day
- February 17 – Random Acts of Kindness Day
- February 19 – Family Day (Canada)
- February 19 – Presidents Day (USA)
- February 20 – World Day of Social Justice

Show Your Computer Some Love: National Clean Out Your Computer Day

In recognition of National Clean Out Your Computer Day (February 12th, 2024, the second Monday of the month), show some love to your computers and digital devices. Set aside some time to delete unnecessary programs, clear out that recycle bin, and perform a full system scan. Regular maintenance of your computer and other devices helps keep you organized, your computer running smoothly, and your data better protected against cyber-attacks.

Perform these top tasks for a cleaner, faster, and better-protected computer:

1. Run the disk cleanup tool (for Windows) or disk utility tool (for MACs) to identify any unused or unwanted programs or files. Uninstall any applications that you no longer need or use. Clear out your downloads and recycle bin folders.
2. Organize your Desktop and Documents folders. An organized desktop and documents folder can help you locate important files faster. Don't store files and folders on your desktop. Files and folders should only be kept in the documents folder. You can create desktop shortcuts to the files and folders that you use every day.
3. Update your antivirus program and run a full system scan and boot scan. A full system scan and boot scan should be run regularly to catch anything that may slip through. Remember, an antivirus program can only protect your computer if you keep it up to date.

If you are still looking for a gift to show you care, consider helping someone clean out their computer. Maybe even finish it off with a keyboard cleaning and monitor wipe down!

Learn more about [National Clean Out Your Computer Day](#).

SOURCE: ADAPTED FROM NC UNIVERSITY RETRIEVED FEBRUARY 22, 2024.

