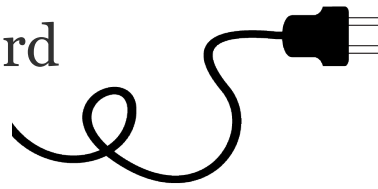


# The Extension Cord



Health and Human Sciences

May & June 2021

Hello,

Recent days have been filled with visits to elementary schools delivering “Captain Cash”, receiving program updates through virtual HHS conference and other conferences held for extension employees, and sifting through survey responses to see what needs community members identified within the areas of family, food, money, and health.

“Captain Cash” is a program designed for and presented to third grade students. It’s a four session program in which we visit the islands of; earning, saving, spending, and borrowing. Each lesson contains interactive activities, a read-aloud story to support learned concepts, and take home summaries for students to share with those at home.

I show up each lesson in a new beach themed shirt, the captain’s hat, and dollar sign necklace. We start by finding a message in a bottle that goes with the lesson’s theme. Messages like- “The more you learn, the more you earn.” “Every Payday, save some cash away.” “There is an end to what you can spend.” & “For a safer tomorrow, be careful when you borrow.”

This has been such a fun program that students seem to love. “Captain Cash” was delivered in-person to Akron Elementary students in April and will delivered at Caston Elementary in May.

## Arthritis



May is National Arthritis Awareness Month. Arthritis affects about one in four adults, including over 54 million men and women in the United States. It is most common among women and occurs more frequently as people get older. This widespread health condition is the leading cause of disability in America. Arthritis is an informal way of referring to joint pain or joint disease. There are more than 100 types of arthritis, including some that begin at an early age. Juvenile arthritis affects nearly 300,000 kids and teens in the U.S.

Common symptoms include swelling, stiffness, decreased range of motion, and pain in joints. Arthritic symptoms can come and go, be mild, moderate, or severe, and may stay consistent for years and then worsen over time. Severe symptoms can result in chronic pain with very little relief making activities of daily life extremely difficult. Walking through the house, fixing a meal, and even bathing become intense chores for those with severe arthritis pain. Arthritis can even cause permanent joint changes. Sometimes changes are visible in knobby finger joints or stiff hands, but often changes can only be seen on an X-ray. In addition to a person’s joints, some types of arthritis can affect major organs like heart, lungs, kidneys, and skin.

Degenerative arthritis, also known as Osteoarthritis, is the most common type and occurs when the cushioning surface at the ends of bones wears away. Bone on bone results in pain, swelling, and

stiffness at the effected joints. Inflammatory arthritis occurs when the immune system doesn't work properly. In this autoimmune action, the body's immune system mistakenly attacks joints with uncontrolled inflammation. Rheumatoid arthritis and psoriatic arthritis are two examples of this autoimmune disorder. This attack on healthy cells and tissue also occurs in children. Most Juvenile arthritis diseases causes joint inflammation, swelling, pain, and tenderness but some cases only affect skin and internal organs. The exact causes of autoimmune diseases are unknown but researchers believe certain genes carrying autoimmune characteristics may be activated by a virus, bacteria, or other external factor. The gene is all of a sudden 'turned on' after an extenuating circumstance.

Autoimmune and inflammatory types of arthritis frequently need aggressive treatments with the goal of minimizing joint damage and even send the disease into remission. This is not always possible for people and treatment becomes more about pain management and maintaining bodily functions. Bacteria and viruses can also trigger inflammation at joints causing a 'temporary arthritis'. With treatment of antibiotics the infection is often cleared and arthritis does not become chronic.

### Exercise and Arthritis

There was a time when people with arthritis were warned that exercise would damage their joints. Now we know that physical activity is one of the best nondrug therapies for arthritis pain.

In fact, exercising even a little bit every day delivers many benefits, including:

- Keeping joints flexible and easing stiffness.
- Strengthening the muscles around joints to keep them stable.
- Slowing deterioration of bone and cartilage.
- Improving bone strength.
- Maintaining the ability to do daily activities.

Being physically active can also help improve your mood, increase energy, promote good sleep, aid weight loss and strengthen your heart.

### Types of Exercise

- Range of motion or flexibility exercise
- Aerobic/endurance exercises
- Strengthening exercises

### Before you Start

- Check with your rheumatologist and/or general practitioner who may provide guidance on activities to avoid
- Start small- break 30 minute workouts into 3 separate bouts of 10 minutes
- Experiment with exercising at different times throughout the day, are the times you are experiencing less pain or stiffness?
- Range of motion exercises may be helpful before bed to help reduce stiffness in the morning
- Don't forget to warm-up and cool-down! Warm-ups can be slower versions of your planned activity while cool-downs include gentle stretches that are held for 5 seconds at a time.

Information sourced from arthritis.org. Visit for more information or talk with your healthcare provider with questions regarding arthritis and/or if you're concerned about any symptoms mentioned above.

## Wallet Wellness Wednesdays

The Family Resource Management team within HHS is providing #WalletWellnessWednesdays every Wednesday at 12:00pm.

The team invites you to join one or more of these lunch-n-learn programs to learn steps to take control of your money and make wise choices.

Register for 1 or all 4 sessions at:

[http://bit.ly/PurExt\\_WWW\\_May2021](http://bit.ly/PurExt_WWW_May2021)

*Adulthood 101*

- Session 1: Power Payments**  
Wednesday, May 5, 2021, 12pm-1pm EST.
- Session 2: Food Dollars**  
Wednesday, May 12, 2021, 12pm-1pm EST.
- Session 3: Understanding Investing**  
Wednesday, May 19, 2021, 12pm-1pm EST.
- Session 4: Credit Reports & Scores**  
Wednesday, May 26 2021, 12pm-1pm EST.

Purdue University is an equal opportunity/equal access/affirmative action institution.

## At Home Heroes- is back!

I along with other Area 8 educators will be sharing "At Home Heroes" virtually through the month of May.

Each Tuesday evening will be devoted to a single topic listed in the image to the right.

You or your young ones can register to attend 1 or all 4 sessions.

To register visit:

[HTTPS://TINYURL.COM/VIRTUALATHOMEHEROES](https://tinyurl.com/virtualathomeheroes)

PURDUE EXTENSION AREA 8 HHS PRESENTS...

# AT HOME HEROES

As children begin to spend more time at home alone, this series will offer knowledge and tools to help address some of the needs many families have under the current situation.

**6:30-7:30 PM EDT**  
**May 4: SAFETY**  
**May 11: COOKING**  
**May 18: TIME MANAGEMENT**  
**May 25: CONFLICT RESOLUTION**

## Where Does Your Money Go?

This is a program offered in two sessions. Participants engage in hands-on activities and complete money-management worksheets. The goals of the program include:

- Understand how current money-management practices affect financial stability
- Increase knowledge of money-management practices that lead to financial control
- Establish financial management practices that promote financial stability, such as
  - Tracking expenses
  - Identifying spending habits
  - Identifying needs vs. wants
  - Establishing written financial goals
  - Developing a spending-saving plan
- Identify adopted financial management practices and recognize the economic impact of new practices

There is no charge for the program.

Please plan to attend both sessions.

To register: call the Extension Office at 574-223-3397

Program Dates:

- May 14 at 1:00 pm - Session 1
- May 28 at 1:00 pm - Session 2

# Asparagus

Asparagus is a hardy, perennial that is one of the first vegetables ready for harvest in the spring. Well-planned asparagus beds can be productive for 15+ years. Asparagus is low in calories and provides substantial amounts of vitamin A and C. It's also a good source of folate and fiber. Asparagus can be enjoyed raw, steamed, boiled, grilled, roasted, or incorporated into casseroles and salads.

## Harvesting and Preserving:

It takes 3 years for an asparagus bed to thrive and flourish for regular, multi-week harvesting. In a bed's early years, the root systems are still expanding and multiple harvests may weaken the plants. In the bed's fourth year, asparagus harvest can last from early spring through May or June. You can harvest asparagus spears by cutting or snapping them when they reach 5-8 inches. Asparagus tastes best when prepared and eaten immediately after harvest. The best home preservation method to use for asparagus is freezing.



Visit <https://ag.purdue.edu/foodsci/Pages/Food-Preservation.aspx> for preservation information and safe practices.

## Selection, Storing, & Handling

Asparagus is best fresh, and prepared as close to harvest date as possible. Fresh asparagus stalks are a rich, deep green color that get lighter toward the base of the stalk. Stalks should be firm to the touch. Avoid stalks that are limp, dry, or have cracked spears. Wash asparagus stalks by rinsing under cold water and checking for grit or dirt in the tips of the spears. Remove the tough end from the stalk by either cutting or snapping it off prior to cooking. If using a knife, cut 1/2 inch to 1 inch off the bottom, depending on where the green fades to a lighter color or white. If snapping the tough end off, bend the thicker end of the stalk to see where it snaps naturally. Tenderness of asparagus is related to maturity and freshness.

Cooking times of asparagus varies by the size of stalks. Asparagus is done when it becomes vibrant green (or other color if using other varieties), has a tender exterior, with a slight crunch left when sliced or bit into. Fresh asparagus should be stored in the refrigerator. Use a rubber band to bundle stalks after trimming the ends. Place bundle in a glass or bowl so that the stalks stand in an inch or two of water. Cover with plastic and store for one week.

## Asparagus with Lime and Mint

### Ingredients:

- 1 lb. of asparagus, trimmed
- 1 ½ Tbsp. of extra virgin olive oil
- Salt and Pepper to taste
- 1-2 fresh limes (yielding a total of 1 1/2 Tbsp. of juice)
- 1 tsp. of fresh mint, chopped



### Directions:

Heat oil in a large frying pan over medium-high heat. Add asparagus to hot oil and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Cook about 5-6 minutes until just cooked through. There should be some firmness left when biting or slicing into stalks. Add lime juice and mint to asparagus and stir to evenly coat. Serve!