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## Daily, healthy lifestyle tips to prevent high blood pressure

Does high blood pressure run in your family? Has your doctor recommended that you should watch your blood pressure?

You can help prevent high blood pressure, also called hypertension, by making healthy choices daily.

Try taking these steps each day to keep your blood pressure in a healthy range:

- Choose to eat a variety of healthy foods, including lots of vegetables and fruit. Additionally, choosing foods rich in potassium, fiber and protein and lower in salt and saturated fat are good for heart health. Making these healthy changes can help keep blood pressure low and protect against heart disease and stroke.
- Be physically active. The Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans recommends that adults get at least two and a half hours of moderate intensity exercise every week which can include brisk walking, bicycling or other forms of cardiovascular exercise. This is equal to about 30 minutes of activity per day, five days a week. Children and adolescents should get one hour of physical activity every day.
- Limit or quit certain habits, such as smoking and drinking excessively. If you do smoke, quitting will lower your risk for all forms of heart disease. Your doctor can suggest ways to help you quit. Limiting your alcohol intake can also help your blood pressure. For heart health, men should have no more than two alcoholic drinks per day. Women should have no more than one alcoholic drink per day.
- Get adequate sleep. Habitually getting at least seven to nine hours of sleep per night is another way to manage blood pressure and increase your overall health.

If these lifestyle choices seem overwhelming, choose one area to begin.

Your local Edmonson County Extension office has many resources to help you make healthy choices one small step at a time!

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# Edmonson County Homemakers

## Reminders

- ◆ We still have pecan pieces at the office to sell/purchase, \$10 per bag!
- ◆ Keep your volunteer and reading logs up to date!
- ◆ Save the Date: KEHA May 6-8, Lexington, KY
- ◆ Download the “Remind” app and stay in the know with Homemaker activities/news.
- ◆ Send a text to: 81010    Send this message:@echomem
- ◆ The EC Extension Office will be closed for Martin Luther King, Jr. Day on Jan 20th.

## Happy Birthday!

Terri Webb	Dec 2
Sheila Durbin	Dec 10
Pat Hawks	Dec 14
Nellie Houchins	Jan 1
Jennifer VanMeter	Jan 3
Ann Houk	Jan 16
Arlene Skaggs	Jan 22
Sue Sanders	Jan 23
Mary Houchens	Feb 3
Keela Skaggs	Feb 27



## Monthly Club Meetings

### Brownsville

11am  
2nd Monday  
Edmonson County Kentucky  
Farm Bureau Office

### Capitol Hill

1 pm  
3rd Thursday  
Edmonson County Extension Office

### Chalybeate

6 pm  
2nd Tuesday  
Location Rotates



## Mark Your Calendar

- **Jan 9-** MCA Council Meeting-9:30- Warren County
- **Jan 16-** Homemaker Council Meeting
- **Feb 4th-** Leader Training/Valentine’s Activity- 10am-Ext Office
- **Feb 27-** International night-ECPL

*Follow EC Extension Office on Facebook and our webpage at <https://edmonson.ca.uky.edu/>*



# Homemakers Highlight



*Follow the Edmonson County Homemakers on Facebook*

**Above:** A few pictures from EC Homemakers activities in the past few months.

**If your club has participated in an outing, event, or activity and you would like to highlight in our newsletter, please let me know!**

## HOMEMAKER NEWS

Lesson ballots for the new year lessons will be going out this month and will need to be returned to Laura-Grace in February, the exact due date will be forthcoming.

Included in this newsletter are some handouts on "Self-Defense Strategies". These are your January Homemaker lesson materials.

Be on the lookout for some new Homemaker clubs starting soon!



# 4-H Update

- ◆ EC 4-H clubs and activities continue to grow; we are always appreciative of assistance from anyone who is willing to volunteer, thank you for investing in our youth!
- ◆ 4-H Camp is just around the corner, save the date: June 10-13th
- ◆ We have some exciting clubs and workshops to offer our youth including: Horticulture, Homeschool, Cooking, Sewing, Art and many more!





## MAMMOTH CAVE AREA: FAMILY & CONSUMER SCIENCES

### Keeping your Houseplants Happy during Wintertime

Even though your houseplants do not have to deal with the cold like your garden does, you should still change how you care for them this season, ensuring they stay healthy and continue to grow well. Following these tips, your leafy friends will bring lushness and natural beauty into your home, even in winter.



#### Decrease watering

- In general, less light means less water. Plants need less water in the winter because they don't get as much sunlight, compared to spring and summer. To test soil moisture, push your finger into the potting soil at least one inch deep. If the soil is dry, water thoroughly. It is better to water plants well less often than water just a little bit every day. In the winter, it is possible that you will only need to water once every two to three weeks.

#### Pay attention to the Sun

- If possible, move your plants closer to the windows. If they're on the ground, put them on a plant stand. Every week or two, rotate the pots to ensure all sides of the plants get some sunlight.

#### It's okay if a few leaves fall off

- Plants outside over the summer will probably lose some leaves when they come back inside. This is normal because they are getting used to the lower light levels inside. It's normal for plants that stay inside all year to lose a few leaves as winter approaches. This is just their way of getting ready for less light.

#### Avoid temperature extremes

- Keep plants away from cold drafts, radiators and hot air vents. Sudden hot or cold drafts can kill plants, stress them out, or dry them out.

## Put the fertilizer on hold

- Winter is a time for most houseplants to rest. They don't need fertilizer because they usually aren't actively growing. In the fall, stop fertilizing and start back up again in the spring when plants get more sunlight and start growing again.



## Scan for pests

- If you are bringing plants inside for the winter, be sure to check the leaves, stems and soil surface for pests. Wipe leaves down with a wet cloth or remove pests by hand before bringing the plants inside. Small bugs that feed on sap, like aphids and scales, tend to show up more in the winter. Another common winter pest is the spider mite which likes warm, dry places to live. When watering, flip the leaves over and look at the undersides and along the stems. If you find bugs, use your fingers or damp cloth to remove them. Neem oil and insecticidal soap may be options for managing houseplant pests. With any product, be sure to read the entire label for application instructions and precautions.

## Increase the humidity

- In the winter, the air inside our heated homes is often drier. Most houseplants, especially those from tropical areas, do best when the humidity is between 40 and 50%. However, in the winter, most homes have humidity levels between 10 and 20%. Putting plants close together is an easy way to make the air around them more humid. Plants can also be put on trays with pebbles and water to make the air more humid. To keep the roots from rotting, pot bottoms should be above the water. As the water evaporates, it makes the air around your houseplants more humid. Keep plants away from vents with blowing air.

Source: Rachel Rudolph, Horticulture Assistant Professor, University of Kentucky

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JANUARY / FEBRUARY 2025

# HEALTHY CHOICES FOR HEALTHY FAMILIES

 Cooperative  
Extension Service



This material was partially funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program — SNAP. This institution is an equal opportunity provider.



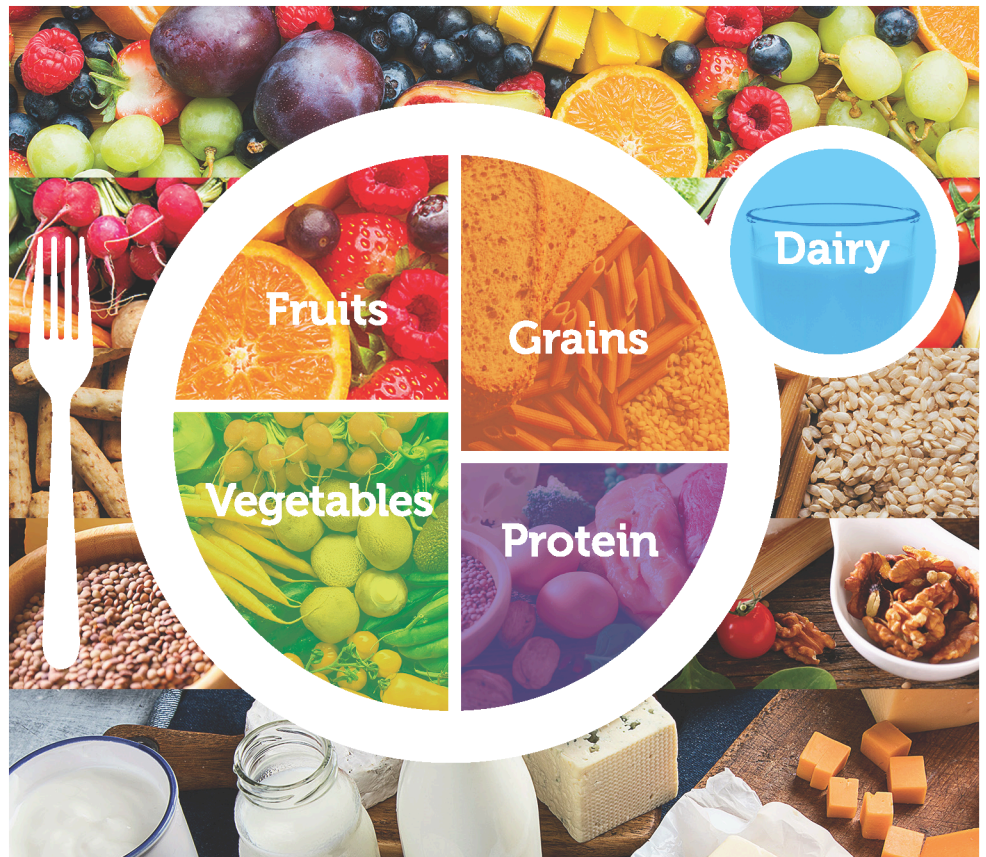
This work is supported by the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program from the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture.

## Start off the new year with MyPlate

**K**ick the new year off by making it a point to include MyPlate meals in your day. MyPlate helps you to choose many foods throughout the day and throughout the week. It shows what and how much to eat from each of the food groups over the course of the day, whether you eat on a plate, from a bowl, or another way. Start with the tips below.

- **Focus on whole fruits.** Fresh, frozen, canned, or dried fruits are in this group. At least half that you eat should come from whole fruit, instead of 100% fruit juice.
- **Vary your veggies.** Veggies can be raw or cooked and can be fresh, frozen, canned, or dried.
- **Vary your protein routine.** Protein foods include all foods made from seafood; meat, poultry, and eggs; beans, peas, and lentils; and nuts,

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## BASIC BUDGET BITES

# Canned and frozen fruits and veggies

**D**uring the winter months, fresh fruits and veggies are often harder to find, pricier, and not as flavorful. Frozen and canned choices are often cheaper and more flavorful since they are picked at peak ripeness. Research has found that canned fruits and vegetables are just as healthy as fresh options.

One study found that canned fruits and vegetables can stretch food budgets. Canned foods cost up to 50% less than frozen and 20% less than fresh. Canned foods are also less likely to be wasted. Whether it's fresh, canned, or frozen, be sure to have fruits and veggies in most of your meals.

Source: Adapted from <https://winnebago.extension.wisc.edu/2018/12/26/canned-fruits-and-vegetables-are-a-good-choice>

## CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

seeds, and soy products. Try to eat many kinds of lean proteins.

- **Make half your grains whole grains.** Foods made from wheat, rice, oats, cornmeal, barley, or other cereal grains is a grain product. Bread, pasta, breakfast cereals, grits, tortillas, and popcorn are all in this group.
- **Move to low-fat or fat-free dairy** milk, yogurt, and cheese (or lactose-free dairy or fortified soy versions).
- **Drink and eat less sodium, saturated fat, and added sugars.** Cook at home more often to limit added sugars, saturated fat, and sodium. Read the ingredients lists and use Nutrition Facts labels to compare foods.

Source: Adapted from MyPlate.gov

For more information, visit [MyPlate.gov](https://www.MyPlate.gov)



## PARENT CORNER

# Be a role model

**D**id you know that children are more likely to try new foods and eat healthy foods if they see their caregivers doing the same? Next time you want your child to try a new vegetable, do it with them or offer something they often see you eating.

## FOOD FACTS

# Black-eyed peas

**B**lack-eyed peas are often eaten on New Year's Day to bring good luck with the new year. They also happen to be packed with fiber, which helps lower cholesterol and keeps you regular.

Choose dried beans or beans canned with low or no sodium. Select dried beans that are dry, firm, clean, uniform in color, and not shriveled.

Source: <https://fruitsandveggies.org/fruits-and-veggies/black-eyed-peas-nutrition-selection-storage>



**COOKING WITH KIDS**

# Black Bean Quesadillas

- 1 15-ounce can low-sodium black beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 cup frozen, fresh, or canned corn
- 1/2 small red onion, diced
- 1 medium green bell pepper, diced
- 1 1/2 cups shredded cheddar cheese
- 1 teaspoon chili powder
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 10 whole-wheat tortillas

1. Wash hands with warm water and soap, scrubbing for at least 20 seconds.
2. Gently clean all produce under cool running water before chopping.

3. Add the black beans, corn, onion, pepper, cheese, chili powder, and garlic powder to a medium bowl. Gently fold until everything is evenly combined.
4. Place a 1/2 cup of the filling on one side of each tortilla and fold over.
5. Heat a large nonstick skillet over medium heat. Place two quesadillas in the skillet at a time. Cook until each side is slightly browned and the cheese is melted, about 2 to 3 minutes per side.
6. Slice into triangles and enjoy! This pairs well with salsa.
7. Store leftovers in the refrigerator within 2 hours.

**Recipe makes 10 servings**  
**Serving size: 1 quesadilla**

Nutrition Facts per serving: 250 calories; 8g total fat; 4.5g saturated fat; 0g trans fat; 15mg cholesterol; 310mg sodium; 35g total carbohydrate; 4g dietary fiber; 4g total sugars; 0g added sugars; 11g protein; 0% Daily Value of vitamin D; 15% Daily Value of calcium; 10% Daily Value of iron; 4% Daily Value of potassium.

Source: Jean Noble, Program Coordinator II, University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service, Nutrition Education Program, Chop Chop Summer 2022



**RECIPE**

# Smoky Slow-Cooker Black-Eyed Peas

- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1/2 medium bell pepper, chopped
- 2 cloves minced garlic, or 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- 2 small or 1 large jalapeno pepper, ribs and seeds removed and finely chopped (optional)
- 1 pound dried black-eyed peas, sorted and rinsed
- 1 (12 ounces) package smoked turkey sausage, cubed
- 1/2 teaspoon Cajun seasoning
- 1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper, or to taste
- 2 small bay leaves
- 7 cups water

1. Wash hands with warm water and soap, scrubbing for at least 20 seconds.
2. Rinse produce under cool running water and gently scrub using a clean vegetable brush before chopping.
3. Add all ingredients to a 6-quart or larger slow cooker.
4. Cook on high for 5 hours or until peas are tender, adding more water if needed.
5. Remove bay leaves.
6. Serve over hot, cooked brown rice, if desired.
7. Refrigerate leftovers within 2 hours.

**Stovetop Option:** Sauté chopped vegetables in 1 tablespoon vegetable oil in a large pot over medium heat. Cook for 5 minutes or until tender. Add all remaining ingredients, increasing water to 8 cups. Bring mixture to a full boil. Reduce heat to low, cover, and cook for 1 hour or until peas are tender.

**Recipe makes 12 servings**  
**Serving size: 1 cup**

Nutrition Facts per serving: 180 calories; 3g total fat; 1g saturated fat; 0g trans fat; 20mg cholesterol; 240mg sodium; 26g total carbohydrate; 4g dietary fiber; 4g total sugars; 0g added sugars; 13g protein; 0% Daily Value of vitamin D; 4% Daily Value of calcium; 20% Daily Value of iron; 10% Daily Value of potassium

Source: Anita Boyd, Mason County SNAP-Ed Program Assistant Senior