



NUTRITION bites

Brought to you by the UMass Extension Nutrition Education Program

ISSUE 10

Nutrition Bites is a weekly newsletter that highlights helpful information on staying safe, an easy and healthy recipe to try with your family, physical activity ideas, and food resources in your area. We know you are taking extra steps to keep you and your family safe during this pandemic. Our goal is to work together to provide information to help our community maintain the safety of us all.

STAYING SAFE



Handle fresh fruits and vegetables safely.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, there is no evidence that COVID-19 can be transmitted through food or food packaging. To prevent foodborne illness, always use proper hygiene and food safety practices when you purchase and prepare your fresh produce. Follow these tips to keep you and your family safe.

At the store, choose produce that is free of bruises, damage, or mold. Separate it from raw meat, poultry, and seafood products in your shopping cart and in your grocery bags.

At home, wash your hands, kitchen utensils, and food preparation surfaces before and after preparing fruits and vegetables. It is not recommended to use soap or other disinfectant cleaning solutions on fruits and vegetables.

- Rinse under cold running water (even if you plan to peel) to remove bacteria or dirt. Bacteria on the outer skin can get inside the fruit or vegetable when you cut into it.
- A damaged or bruised area should be cut out before eating or preparing the rest of the fruit or vegetable.
- Refrigerate within 2 hours after you cut, peel, or cook. Chill at 40° F (4° C) or colder in a clean container.

RECIPES AND NUTRITION TIPS



Try this [Cherry Tomato Salsa](#) recipe for a tasty starter or colorful accent to your main meal.

Tomatoes are a locally grown summer vegetable and are full of the nutrient lycopene. Lycopene decreases the risk of heart disease and certain cancers. Cherry tomatoes are the main ingredient in this salsa, which tastes great with baked tortilla chips or whole-wheat crackers. Try adding a jalapeño pepper for a little more spice. Top chicken and fish dishes with the salsa for added vegetables!

Watch this [video](#) and see how easy this dish is to make. Then, check out this [video](#) to learn about a similar summer salsa dish and get some tips on how to improve your knife skills.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY TIPS



Are you tired of feeling tired? How much sleep are you getting?

Our bodies need sleep to restore and rejuvenate, grow muscle, repair tissue, and make hormones. Experts recommend that adults get between 7 and 9 hours of sleep each night. Try these tips for a good night of sleep:

- Keep electronics out of the bedroom. The blue light given off from devices, like cell phones and tablets, increases alertness and makes it difficult to fall asleep.
- Set an alarm for a reminder to stop using technology or download an app to “lock” your phone and limit use at night.
- Stay consistent with the time you go to sleep and when you wake up.
- Destress before bed. Try mindfulness, meditation, and deep breathing.

Want more ideas? Check out this healthy living [resource](#) on lifestyle and sleep.



Use your eggshells to start seedlings indoors.

1. When you are cooking with eggs, save the bottom half of the eggshell.
2. Rinse the shells, and then make a small drainage hole in the bottom of each shell with a pin.
3. Carefully dry the shells and place them back into the egg carton. Then fill the shells two-thirds of the way full with potting soil.
4. Follow the instructions on seed packets and place your seeds in the soil.
5. Gently water the seeds and place the carton in a sunny location. When the seedling is ready for transplanting, gently crack the eggshell all over and place it in the ground. The plant roots will push through the cracks, and the nutrients in the shell will fertilize the plant.

FOOD ACCESS RESOURCES IN MASSACHUSETTS



Food pantries are a wonderful source of additional foods for you and your family.

Food pantries receive food from the local food banks. They offer a variety of foods designed to provide balanced meals.

Find food pantries in your area at

<https://www.mahealthyfoodsinasnap.org/healthy-foods/food-pantries>

For information about new online purchasing available using SNAP benefits in Massachusetts, visit

<https://www.mass.gov/lists/snap-online-purchasing-program-outreach-flyers>