



NUTRITION bites

Brought to you by the UMass Extension Nutrition Education Program

ISSUE 7

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



Did you know that illness-causing bacteria will grow within 2 hours in perishable foods unless refrigerated? Remember these storage tips.

- Keep the refrigerator temperature at 40° F (4° C) or below and the freezer temperature at 0° F (-18° C).
- Refrigerate or freeze perishable foods as soon as you get home from the store.
- Look for storage directions on food packaging labels. Many foods in addition to meats, vegetables, and dairy products need to be kept cold. If they are refrigerated in the store, they need to be refrigerated at home.
- Leftovers should be stored covered in a clear container and labeled with the date the food was cooked. Large quantities of leftovers should be split into smaller containers and cooled in the refrigerator within 2 hours.
- Harmful bacteria cannot be identified by looking at or smelling the food. Leftovers should be consumed within a few days or put into the freezer. Be sure to check your refrigerator on a regular basis and throw out unsafe food.
- Always thaw or marinate foods in the refrigerator, never at room temperature where harmful bacteria can grow.

RECIPE AND NUTRITION TIPS



Are you looking for a healthier option for Taco Tuesday?

Put a new spin on the taco dinner with our [Fiesta Taco Salad](#) recipe and set up a make-your-own-taco filling station. Customize your taco creation by adding extra vegetables. Jalapeños will bring on the heat, and avocados add potassium and healthy fat.

If taco night was a hit in your home, try another family cooking activity. Watch this [video](#) on how to make Eagle Pizza, a Mexican pizza. It uses some of the same ingredients as the taco salad and is a great way to use up extra ingredients.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY TIPS



Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, most of us recognized that too much screen time was not a good thing.

Currently, families face the stressful challenge of being quarantined, balancing their work tasks from home, and their children's remote online-learning assignments with regular household chores. To stay healthy, it is important to strike a balance between all these demands by taking time away from the screen and enjoying a family physical activity break.

Be a role model and find physical activities your family can enjoy together each day. Give these ideas a try.



- Create a "no touch" scavenger hunt. Look for different colors, shapes, animals (dog, cat, squirrel, birds, etc.) or other items (statue, numbers, bicycles, trees). Draw what you find.
- Help young athletes stay sharp and improve their skills. Practice drills outside for any sport, but avoid games that break the 6-foot closeness rule.
- Explore the trails at a local park. Nature can help relieve stress and strengthen the immune system. Visit www.mass.gov to find out which state parks in Massachusetts are open and follow the guidelines for social distancing.
- If it's rainy outside, go on a color hunt indoors! Hide colorful objects around the house and have kids bring back the color you name.

Interested in some more resources?

ChooseMyPlate.gov has resources on being more physically active.

www.verywellfamily.com has information on how to limit your children's screen time.

www.heart.org has resources on how to get your family active.

FOOD ACCESS RESOURCES IN MASSACHUSETTS



For more information on how food assistance programs may be impacted by COVID-19, visit the Feeding America website for information about food assistance programs.

Do you need help buying healthy food?

You may be eligible for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and can apply [here](#).