



## BETTER LIVING FOR TEXANS TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION SERVICE

### Take Time for a Stretch Break!

Stretching can help muscles and joints be flexible, strong, and able to perform a proper range of motion which can help prevent injuries, protect our mobility, and maintain independence. Without flexibility, muscles become shorter and tighter, leading to the potential for pain and injury. For example, sitting for prolonged periods can cause stiff leg muscles which makes movements like walking or standing up difficult or painful. We can help our body by taking small breaks to stretch. Here are some helpful tips to consider when beginning a new stretching routine.

- **Warm up first!** Stretching cold muscles can increase the risk of injury. A light 5–10-minute walk can help warm up your muscles.
- **Equality is key!** Focus on both sides of each muscle group. Having one side of your body more flexible than the other may lead to balance issues and/or injury.
- **Pain is not the goal!** Too much strain will cause your muscles to feel pain and discomfort. The goal should be to feel



comfortable tension. Hold the stretch for 30 to 60 seconds when you reach this point.

- **Remember to breathe!** Control your breathing when you are adding tension to your muscles. Inhale when adding tension and exhale when releasing tension.
- **Focus on major muscle groups.** Focus on hips, lower back, shoulders, neck, calves, and thighs as part of your stretching routine along with other muscles and joints you use daily.
- **Slowly incorporate movement.** Yoga, Tai Chi, and Pilates uses slow movements that help increase flexibility and prevent falls in older adults.

A regular stretching routine includes stretching for at least 5-10 minutes at a time at least 3 times a week. If you skip or miss stretching throughout the week, that is okay! You may lose some flexibility, but you can always start again and gain it back! If you have a chronic condition or injury, speak with your doctor or physical therapist before you begin a new stretching routine.

Written by: Natalie Ramos, Bexar County Extension Agent – Better Living for Texans  
Content Source: *Harvard Health, The Importance of Stretching, 2022*  
Photo From: Better Living for Texans



## BETTER LIVING FOR TEXANS TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION SERVICE

### Benefits Of Fat Soluble Vitamins

Last month I discussed the importance of our water-soluble vitamins. Now, it's time to finish up our discussion with our fat-soluble vitamins: A, D, E, and K. (I found a great article from Colorado State University Extension on vitamins, and I will

pull a lot of my information from it. If you'd like to read the whole article, here is the link:

<https://extension.colostate.edu/docs/pubs/foodnut/09315.pdf> )

Fat-soluble vitamins are stored in the liver and fatty tissues of our body. They are not eliminated as quickly as water-soluble vitamins. A, D, E, and K are our fat-soluble vitamins. Since they are stored in our body longer, there is higher risk for toxicity than our water-soluble vitamins. Typically, if you eat a well-balanced diet, you will not experience vitamin toxicity. However, if you're taking a supplement with mega doses, there is a much higher risk. It's best to keep your doctor informed if you're taking these types of supplements so they can monitor you.

In the United States, we typically do not see diseases that are associated with lack of fat-soluble vitamins, but some diseases may affect the absorption of A, D, E, and K. Some of these include inflammatory bowel disease (IBD), chronic pancreatitis, and cystic fibrosis.





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#### **Vitamin A: Retinol**

Most people know that Vitamin A is important for healthy eyes. But it does so much more than that! It helps in bone growth, tooth development, gene expression, regulates the immune system, helps with cell division as well as keeping the mucus membranes moist in our mouth, nose, throat, and lungs. Vitamin A also contributes an important antioxidant which may help prevent certain cancers.

Vitamin A can be found in animal products such as dairy, fish, or liver. Plants contain the antioxidant beta-carotene which the body converts into Vitamin A. Beta-carotene is found in fruits and vegetables especially those with orange or dark colors such as pumpkins, carrots, dark green leafy vegetables, and apricots.

The Recommended Dietary Allowance (RDA) for Vitamin A is 900 mcg/day for adult males and 700 mcg/day for adult females. Not getting enough Vitamin A could lead to a disease called xerophthalmia, which can lead to blindness if left untreated. It could take up to two years for a person to notice the deficiency due to Vitamin A being stored in the liver. Retinol is the form of Vitamin A that is the greatest concern for toxicity. Dry, itchy skin, headache, nausea, and loss of appetite are all signs of Vitamin A toxicity. A severe toxicity may cause birth defects as well as the risk for bone loss and hip fractures.



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#### **Vitamin D**

Vitamin D is extremely important in our bone health. It works by increasing the calcium that is absorbed in our small intestines. Then it helps it to form and maintain bones. It may play a role in preventing osteoporosis, high blood pressure, cancer, and other diseases.

Milk and other dairy products provide us with Vitamin D. It is also found in fish oil. We also obtain Vitamin D through our skin which produces it in response to sunlight. I guess our moms were right, we need to get outside and play in the sun! 10 – 15 minutes in the sun without sunscreen on the face, arms, and hands, twice a week is enough Vitamin D. In the absence of enough sun exposure, at least 800 to 1,000 IU of Vitamin D3 may be needed to maximize Vitamin D’s benefits. As always, check with your doctor before taking any supplements.

From 12 months to age fifty, the RDA is set at 15 mcg. 20 mcg is the recommendation for maintenance of healthy bone for adults over fifty.

Rickets can form due to Vitamin D deficiency. Rickets cause the long bones to soften and bow and flattening of the back of the skull in children. In adults, osteomalacia and osteoporosis may occur. Too much Vitamin D can be toxic. Symptoms include excess calcium in the blood, slowed mental, and physical growth, decreased appetite, nausea, and vomiting.



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#### **Vitamin E: Tocopherol**

Very little time is spent on Vitamin E, but it's still an important fat-soluble vitamin. Vitamin E helps protect other Vitamins like A and C as well as red blood cells and essentially fatty acids. It also helps with important things like vision and skin health. It's an antioxidant and research suggest it helps with preventing heart disease and cancer. But taking a supplement doesn't help. It appears to get the benefit; the Vitamin E needs to come from a diet rich in nutrient dense foods. 60% of our Vitamin E in our diet comes in the from vegetable oils. That includes cottonseed, canola, olive, safflower, soybean, and corn oils. We also get Vitamin E in fruits and vegetables, meat, grains, nuts, seeds, and fortified cereal.

The RDA for Vitamin E for males and females over the age of 14 should receive 15 mcg per day. A deficiency is rare but can be found in premature infants and those who have an issue with absorbing fats. Those that have it can suffer from nerve pain. Research shows it's difficult to have too much Vitamin E when it comes from our foods. But, taking megadose of a supplement may be harmful, especially those who take blood-thinning medications (warfarin or coumadin for example) and statin drugs.

#### **Vitamin K**

Did you know that Vitamin K is naturally produced by the bacteria in our gut? And there are two forms: phyloquinone and menaquinones. Menaquinones are the ones produced in our body but can also be found in fermented foods and some meats. Phyloquinone is found in our green leafy vegetables (kale, spinach, collard





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greens, broccoli, etc). Vitamin K is all about helping our body. It is essential for blood clotting, helping promote bone health, and helps produce proteins for our blood, bones, and kidneys.

There is not a current RDA for Vitamin K, but deficiencies can occur typically in newborns or those that have malabsorption conditions. Also, researchers are finding antibiotic medicines may destroy some of the gut bacteria that help produce Vitamin K. Excessive amounts of Vitamin K can cause a breakdown of red blood cells and potential liver damage. Large doses of Vitamin K are not advised.

Since these all are important fat-soluble vitamins, follow the recommendation from the Harvard School of Public Health to help improve fat soluble vitamin adsorption “Drizzle some olive oil or add diced avocado to your favorite leafy green salad!”

Resources: <https://www.mayoclinic.org/drugs-supplements-vitamin-e/art-20364144>

<https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/vitamin-k/>

<https://extension.colostate.edu/docs/pubs/foodnut/09315.pdf>

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## BETTER LIVING FOR TEXANS TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION SERVICE

### Vegetable Highlight: Citrus-Lemon, Limes, Oranges, Oh My!



Figure 1 Picture taken by Kaden G., Intermediate, Keller 4-H

Citrus fruits are a great source of Vitamin C which is an antioxidant, helps to maintain healthy skin, teeth, and bones. It helps the immune system and helps the body absorb iron from plant sources. They also give you fiber which helps us feel full and keeps our digestion healthy.

When choosing citrus, select them by choosing firm, thin and smooth skin, and that look heavy for size. Most traditional citrus is available year-round. Most citrus fruits typically don't go bad quickly. You can store them at room temp for 5-7 days or in the refrigerator for up to 3 weeks. Why don't you try a new citrus in your diet! There are many to choose from: Orange, Tangerine, Tangelo, Lemon, Fresh Squeezed Lemon Juice, Lime, Lime Juice, Grapefruit, Pomelo (Pummelo), Loquat, Blood Orange, Cara Cara Navel Orange, Key Lime, Mandarin Orange, Kaffir Lime, Clementine, Kumquat, and Ugli Fruit, just to name a few! (Fun fact – The State Fruit of Texas is The Red Grapefruit)

How can you add more citrus to your diet? You can add it to your water or in your drink. You can use the zest to intensify the flavor in a dish. You can use it as a garnish. You can use its juice in dressing and marinades. You can eat it for a treat! The options are endless.

For more information on Lemons, check out this great article from Texas A&M Health, <https://vitalrecord.tamhsc.edu/health-benefits-of-lemon/>.





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### **TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION SERVICE**

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### **Local Events**

**Adult Gardening Series - Growing and Nourishing Healthy Community Gardens.** Learn how to: Choose A Garden Location, Soil and Compost, Raised Bed and Container, Maintaining Your Garden, Diseases and Insects, and Harvesting Your Garden

North Richland Hills Centre, 6000 Hawk Ave, North Richland Hills, Tx 76180, 2:00 pm – 3:30 pm.

Wednesday, Sept 6, 2023

Wednesday, Sept 13, 2023

Wednesday, Sept 20, 2023

Wednesday, Sept 27, 2023

Wednesday, Oct 4, 2023

Wednesday, October 11, 2023

Sign up online at [www.nrhcentre.com](http://www.nrhcentre.com), Class #18765

Watauga Public Library, 7109n Whitley Road, Watauga, Tx 76148, 4:30 pm – 5:30 pm

Monday, September 11, 2023

Monday, September 18, 2023

Monday, September 25, 2023

Monday, October 2, 2023

Monday, October 9, 2023

Monday, October 16, 2023

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## **BETTER LIVING FOR TEXANS** **TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION SERVICE**

Sign up at the Watauga Public Library at 817-514-5865.

**Adult Nutrition Series – Get The Facts** - During this 4-part adult nutrition series, learn to be more confident at the grocery store, learn how nutrients affect your health, and how to read and understand the Nutrition Facts Label.

Fort Worth Public Library, 1001 Library Lane, Fort Worth, Tx 76109, 3:00 pm – 4:00 pm

Tuesday, September 26, 2023

Tuesday, October 3, 2023

Tuesday, October 10, 2023

Tuesday,, October 17, 2023

Sign up at the front desk.

**Adult Nutrition – Healthy Carbohydrates** – This 4 -part series dives into how carbohydrates work in the body, incorporating them into a simple plate, and finding the right amount to eat.

Hurst Senior Activities Center, 700 Heritage Circle, Hurst, Tx 76053, 1 pm – 2 pm.

Wednesday, August 2, 2023

Wednesday, August 9, 2023

Wednesday, August 16, 2023

Wednesday, August 23, 2023

Wednesday, August 30, 2023



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Sign up at the Hurst Senior Activities Center at 817-788-7710

Watauga Public Library, 7109 Whitley Road, Watauga, Tx 76148, 4:30 – 4:30 pm.

Wednesday, August 2, 2023

Wednesday, August 9, 2023

Wednesday, August 16, 2023

Wednesday, August 23, 2023

Wednesday, August 30, 2023

Sign up at the Watauga Public Library at 817-514-5865

Saginaw Senior Center, 633 W. McLeroy Blvd, Saginaw, Tx 76179, 10:30 am - 11:30 am

Thursday, September 21, 2023

Thursday, September 28, 2023

Thursday, October 5, 2023

Thursday, October 12, 2023

Sign up at the Saginaw Senior Center, 817-230-0459.





# HEALTHY HACKS FOR 2023

## June

## BETTER LIVING FOR TEXANS

### TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION SERVICE



### Can You Fix This Plate?

**Date:** Tuesday, June 20, 2023

**Time:** 6:00 pm to 7:00 pm \*\*\* time change

**Location:** Virtual (link provided after registration)



**Program:** Using the plate method as a fun and easy way to balance meals, limit total carbohydrate intake, and gain nutritional information. Examine the meal menu and make healthy changes to increase nutritional value.

**Presenter:** Ana Neblett, MS, RD, LD, CDCES

## RSVP

**Eventbrite:** [Can You Fix My Plate? Presentation Link](#)

**Email:** [Tcdccemail@yahoo.com](mailto:Tcdccemail@yahoo.com)

**Phone:** 817-413-6309

**Visit our website for more information:**

[www.tcdc-diabetes.weebly.com](http://www.tcdc-diabetes.weebly.com)



CLASSES  
EVERY  
3RD  
TUESDAY  
OF THE  
MONTH



# HEALTHY HACKS FOR 2023

## June

## BETTER LIVING FOR TEXANS

### TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION SERVICE



### TEACHER JMG & CITIZEN SCIENCE TRAINING

**JULY 12, 2023 9AM-4PM**

Learn about two great curricula we offer and how to set up your school to succeed with these programs. A complete lesson plan put together by teachers for teachers!



#### WHAT TO EXPECT

- Overview of both Curricula
- Hands-on examples
- Lunch provided!
- Texas A&M Agrilife certification with 8TEA CPE hours & TEEAC creditCEUs!

#### LOCATION:

Texas A&M Agrilife Extension Office  
200 Taylor St. Fort Worth, Tx 76196  
Lonestar A&B Conference Center

If you need any special accommodations, please contact the office at 817.884.1945 by July 7, 2023 so we may consider your request.

**Register Here!**

**Cost \$25**

**Contact Person:**

Brittney Meyer  
817.884.1945



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TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION

### LGE TEACHER TRAINING

Learn, Grow, Eat, and Go Curriculum Training

**JULY 20, 2023**  
**9AM - 4PM**

TARRANT COUNTY AGRILIFE OFFICES - DOWNTOWN

**REGISTRATION COST: \$50**  
**SCAN QR CODE TO REGISTER!**  
**LUNCH INCLUDED**



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# HEALTHY HACKS FOR 2023

## June

## BETTER LIVING FOR TEXANS

### TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION SERVICE

### Recipe of the Month

*Recipe from Barbara Brown, West Region Project Specialist – Better Living for Texans*

#### Zucchini Fritters

*Vegetable fritters can be a great anytime snack. You can make them in batches, freeze the extras, and warm them before eating.*

#### Ingredients

- 2 small to medium zucchinis
- 1/3 cup whole wheat flour
- 1 egg, lightly beaten
- 2 thinly sliced green onions
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon pepper
- 1 tablespoon oil



#### Directions

1. Wash zucchini and cut off ends. Grate the zucchini using a box grater. Let the zucchini sit for about 10 minutes to start releasing liquid. Place the zucchini on a clean kitchen towel. Wrap the zucchini in the towel and squeeze out as much liquid as possible. **Do not skip this step.**
2. Transfer the zucchini to a large bowl. Add the flour, green onions, salt, and black pepper to the bowl and stir. Stir in the egg until the mixture is combined.
3. Heat oil in a skillet on medium heat. Scoop 1/4 cup of the zucchini mixture into the skillet, pressing lightly into a round with a spatula. Cook fritters on each side for 2 to 3 minutes until golden brown and thoroughly cooked. Transfer zucchini fritters to the paper towel-lined plate. Repeat with remaining zucchini mixture.

**Nutrients Per Serving:** 90 calories, 5 g total fat, 1 g saturated fat, 40 mg cholesterol, 170 mg sodium, 10 g carbohydrates, 2 g fiber, 2 g total sugar, 0 g added sugar, and 4 g protein.

**Total Cost:** \$\$\$\$

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