

Moving in the Mountains

Make it Stick

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Have you ever decided that starting a new year with more exercise in your life is a good idea? For most of us, creating a habit can be a challenge. How can we make positive health habits stick?

Make sure it is safe for you to begin an exercise routine. Before you start any exercise program, be sure to check with your physician first. Be sure to share with your physician if you have ever had a heart condition, if you feel pain in your chest when you do physical activity, if you lose your balance because of dizziness or if you have other reasons why you shouldn't do physical activity.

You are more likely to stick to an exercise routine if you choose activities that you enjoy and that you can gradually build your skills to do the activity with confidence. Having a social network that provides support will add to your success and accountability. Also, make sure the physical activity will easily fit into your schedule.

The ultimate reward for following a physical fitness plan is a sense of accomplishment, feeling better and being able to deal with stress.

Lights Out!

We all benefit from a good night's sleep. Good quality sleep not only helps you feel rested, refreshed and ready to face the day, it also helps heal and repair muscles and tissues and provides energy to your vital organs, including the brain.

Sleep deprivation has been proven to impair your performance, concentration and memory. It can make you feel irritable and can lead you to overeat.

Did you know that setting a consistent bedtime can help you sleep better? Try to establish a routine of going to bed at the same time each night, give or take 30 minutes.

Here are a few more tips on how to improve sleep and sleep quality:

- Limit caffeine and alcohol intake, and avoid caffeine after noon,
- Avoid nicotine which is also a stimulant.
- Avoid large meals less than four hours before bed.
- Check medications for sleep side effects.
- Exercise 30-60 minutes most days.
- Keep your bedroom dark, cool and quiet.
- Avoid watching TV or reading on a computer or tablet 1 hour before bed.

The bottom line is there is no substitute for sleep.

Safety First - Cleaning Supplies

Most household cleaning products that you use in your home are safe, as long as you follow the instructions for use and storage. Be sure to follow the instructions on the label, and if you have any questions, call the toll-free number provided by the manufacturer.



Make sure to carefully read and follow label directions for proper use, storage and disposal. Store cleaning products in an area which is away from food and not accessible to young children or pets. Also, store products in their original containers and keep the original label intact.

Product use and storage, disposal instructions, precautions and first aid instructions vary according to their ingredients. It can be dangerous to use a product incorrectly or to follow the wrong emergency procedures.

Put cleaning products away immediately after removing the amount needed for the job. This will limit accessibility to young children and help prevent accidental spills. Keep buckets containing cleaning solutions out of the reach of young children.

Do not mix cleaning products. Products which are safe when used alone can sometimes cause dangerous fumes if mixed with other products. Never reuse an empty household cleaning product container for any other purpose. The label instructions and precautions for the original product may be inaccurate or dangerous if used for a different product.

Flu Prevention

According to the CDC, flu activity is widespread in most of the United States (flu season in the US usually starts around October and can last through May).

Good hand-washing behavior is key to protecting you and your family from the spread of cold or flu germs, but what other step can you take to prevent the flu? Disinfecting frequently touched surfaces is also an important step.

Know the difference between disinfecting and sanitizing:

- Disinfecting, which is also referred to as antimicrobial or antibacterial, is destroying or killing most germs on any surface – i.e. making sterile. This is appropriate for non-porous surfaces such as diaper change tables, counter tops, handles, toilets, and sinks.
- Sanitizing is reducing germs to a level considered safe by public health codes or regulation. This is appropriate for food contact surfaces, toys and pacifiers.
- To tell the difference, look for the words "disinfect", "disinfectant", "antibacterial" or "sanitize" on the label, as well as an EPA registration number, as this ensures that the product has met EPA requirements for killing germs.
- For food handling: Sanitize countertop surfaces after they have been washed, especially when potential contaminants have been used (such as raw meat)– this is most likely once a day or more.

Homemade Laundry Detergent (Powdered)

Are homemade laundry detergents safe for the HE washing machines? HE stands for "high efficiency washer". They are front loading washers that use much less water than conventional machines. This means the laundry detergents used must be low sudsing and able to disperse quickly. Homemade laundry detergents are naturally low in suds, which meets the HE washing machine detergent requirement.

2 cups of Bar Soap grated (Ivory, ZOTE, Fels Naptha)
1 cup of Borax
1 cup of Washing Soda

Thoroughly stir together. Use 2 tablespoons of detergent per load.



Just Breathe!

Most people don't breathe properly. Natural breathing involves your diaphragm, so when you breathe your belly should expand. When you exhale, your belly should fall. Instead we tend to use our chest and shoulders when we breathe. This promotes short and shallow breathing.

Deep breathing is essential in helping relieve symptoms of stress, can aid in getting better sleep, help control pain and even aid in digestion. Here's a simple breathing exercise to that you can practice:

- Sit comfortably in a chair with a tall posture.
- Place one hand on your upper chest and the other hand on your abdomen.
- Inhale through your nose for 4 to 6 seconds; the hand on the abdomen should begin to rise or push outward, while the other hand on the upper chest should move very little.
- Pause for 1 to 3 seconds, holding the air in your lungs.
- Exhale air as slowly as possible, for 6 to 9 seconds, by pressing lips together tightly and engaging the abdominal muscles to exhale through your mouth, forcing the air between pursed lips. The hand on the abdomen should move inward on the exhale.
- Repeat two more times.

Cabbage



Cabbage is the most easily grown vegetable of the Mustard family and is a cool season crop that matures prior to extreme heat. Cabbage can be eaten raw or cooked. It is high in vitamins C and K. Here are a few more interesting facts about cabbage.

- Many vegetables evolved from the original wild cabbage including broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cauliflower, collard greens, kale and kohlrabi.
- Primary uses of cabbages include cole slaw (40-45%), fresh head (35%), sauerkraut (12%) various fresh-cut products (5-10%).
- Nearly 3,000 years ago, wild cabbage indigenous to Asia and the Mediterranean slowly spread into Northern Europe by the Celts and later the Romans.
- Able to store for long periods, cabbage was a staple item of Europeans through the Middle Ages. Its juice was commonly used to heal wounds and as a cough remedy.
- Since cabbage contains lots of Vitamin C, explorers, including Captain Cook, traveled with it to help prevent scurvy.
- Cabbage is also a key ingredient in the St. Patrick's Day menu of corned beef and cabbage.

Best Exercises for Osteoarthritis

If you are concerned or worried that exercising with osteoarthritis could harm your joints or cause you more pain, research shows that people can and should exercise when they have

Multiple studies show that mild to moderate exercise is beneficial to people with arthritis. However, everyone's circumstances are different, so be sure to have discussion with your doctor before starting an exercise routine.

Each of the following type of exercises plays an important role in maintaining and improving the ability to move and function:

Range of motion or flexibility exercises. These exercises include gentle stretching and movements that take joints through their full span or range of motion. Doing these exercises regularly can help maintain and improve flexibility in the joints.

Aerobic /endurance exercises. These exercises strengthen the heart and make the lungs more efficient. This conditioning also reduces fatigue and helps to build stamina. Aerobic exercises help control weight by increasing the amount of calories the body uses.

Strengthening Exercises. These exercises help maintain and improve muscle strength. Strong muscles can support and protect joints that are affected by arthritis.

Walking and water exercises are particularly helpful for people just beginning to exercise. Walking is usually free and it is easy on the joints. One major benefit from walking is it helps to improve circulation. Most water exercises do not involve swimming, but instead they are performed while standing in shoulder-height water.



Choptastic!

If you want to be a star in the kitchen, then this fun and educational food challenge is for you. Team up with your friends to compete in a cooking contest and put your creativity to work making delicious dishes using mystery ingredients.

Each team consists of 3-5 people.
Ages groups: 9-13 or 14-18 or 18+

Each team selects a team captain and team name
(for example: Slice it Like it's Hot or Chefanatics).

Each team has 40 minutes to prepare a recipe using items from the mystery ingredients. Each team member must participate in part of the 5 minute verbal presentation.

Call the Swain County Cooperative Extension for more information and to sign-up at (828) 488-3848. Dates to be determined based on interest.

Weekly Classes

Clogging Classes - beginning February 4th:

Tuesdays at the SCC - Swain Center Gym
4:15 p.m. - Youth Competition Team Practice (by invitation)
5:00 - 6:00 p.m. - Youth & Adult Beginner
5:00 - 6:00 p.m. - Adult Competition Team Practice
Classes are free
Kerry Cannon, Instructor

Line Dancing

Thursdays at 6:30 p.m.
All ages welcome, classes are free.
Cheryl and Bob Thomas, Instructors

Cardio Dance Boxing

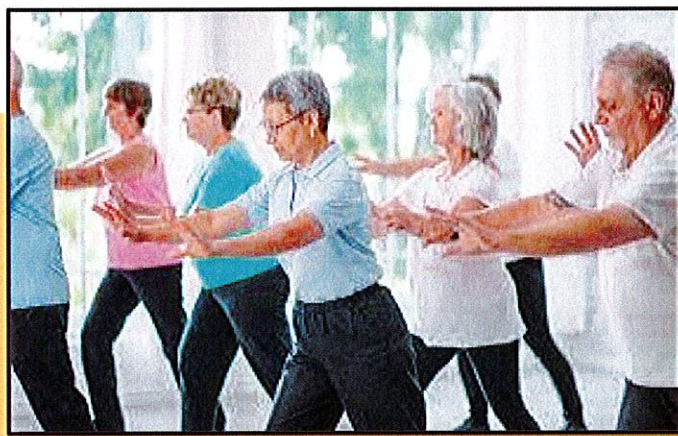
Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays
SCC - Swain Center Gym
4:00 - 5:00 p.m.
Cost: \$5 per class or \$40 monthly unlimited
Shaylina Cochran, Instructor

Tai Chi

Thursdays, March 5 - April 30
9:30 a.m.
Swain County Senior Center
Dee Decker, Instructor
Classes are free

Success Story

"The Swain Cooperative Extension offers a diverse range of educational programming for all ages. I am a volunteer for the FCS programming and serve on the Advisory Leadership Council and I see first hand the importance of the Swain Cooperative Extension"
S. Cochran



Upcoming: Tai Chi

Tai Chi offers gentle, fluid movements through a calming, low-impact workout that can help reduce the pain and physical impairment caused by arthritis

Tai chi also offers plenty of other benefits. Recent studies have found that the slow, graceful exercise, which originated centuries ago as a martial art, can improve balance, reduce stress and improve flexibility.

Most people can learn the basic Tai Chi for Arthritis movements by attending 8 to 12 sessions and with regular practice can reap the many health benefits from participating in the program.