

SWAIN COUNTY EXTENSION

# HEALTHY AT HOME

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## Attitude of Gratitude

How to avoid post holiday blues

The good news is that post holiday blues are seasonal, so they are temporary. To overcome feeling blue, it often helps to shift your thinking to being grateful.

Expressing gratitude can improve your physical and mental health. By recognizing good things in your life, it allows you to momentarily step away from problems. You can better serve your families and improve your health if you change your mindset to be more positive or constructive.

Focusing on what you do have increases your self-esteem and brings more satisfaction and joy to your life. By feeling gratitude, your thoughts are free of negative emotions such as envy, frustration, resentment and regret.

Staying positive doesn't mean you ignore challenges or tough times, you just see the bright side as much as possible. What can you do to start living a more grateful life?

Write down your dreams and goals. Say thank you to all the people who helped you through the week. Take the time to slow down - slowing down allows you to think clearly about what is really important. Keep a gratitude list and set aside time each day to write down at least three things for which you're grateful.

Don't stagnate in worry - move forward in gratitude!

# Staying Active All Winter

## Indoor Physical Activities for Adults

During the winter months, when there are few day light hours, keeping active while being indoors can be a challenge. Here are few ideas to keep you moving that keep you close to home.

**Stretching.** It is important to take breaks and move our bodies, especially if we are at a computer or in the same place all day long. Standing and reaching hands above your head can offer relief. Slow, deep breaths while stretching help to rejuvenate the body with oxygen. If you have access to the internet, check out free yoga videos and learn to stretch properly.

**Stairs.** If you have access to them, stairs can be a great resource for physical activity. Start slow with one trip up or down. Over time and depending on your comfort level, you can build up to several passes to keep yourself challenged.

**Laps around the house.** This can be done inside or outside depending on the weather and the amount of time you have. If you have pets, they might enjoy a quick trip outside for a walk.

**Lift weights.** If you don't have access to weights, you can use canned foods as weights. If you're new to weight lifting, start with 5-10 repetitions. As you feel more comfortable, you can add multiple rounds of repetitions.

**HIIT workouts.** High intensity interval training workouts are popular. Don't be intimidated by the name. You can start with doing only 5 minutes of HIIT. HIIT consists of alternating timed high intensity activities and low intensity activities. For example, do 40 seconds of jumping jacks (high intensity) and 20 seconds of walking in place (low intensity) for a total of five minutes to start with.

Always work at a pace that is a comfortable challenge and safe for your body.



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*Stretch and move throughout the day as often as possible. Do exercises daily. Being active is important during the winter.*

## *Planning Ahead for Power Outages*

Predicting power outages is almost impossible. Being prepared for power outages that often accompany snow, wind and ice storms can ease a little bit of the stress. Power outages can affect the safety of foods you have stored in your refrigerator and freezer. Bacteria can rapidly grow between 40 and 140 degrees. Knowing how to prepare for possible power outages can minimize food safety risks.

### **Steps to Prepare for Power Outages to Prevent Food Spoilage:**

- Keep an appliance thermometer in the refrigerator and freezer. In case of an outage, it can help determine the safety of your food.
- Make sure your freezer is at 0 degrees or below and the refrigerator is at 40 degrees or below.
- Freeze containers of water ahead of time for ice to help keep food cold in the refrigerator, freezer or coolers after the power is out.
- Freeze refrigerated items such as leftovers, milk and fresh meat that you might need immediately; this keeps them at a safe temperature longer.
- Have coolers on hand to keep refrigerated food cold if the power will be out for more than four hours.
- Group food together in the freezer to help the food stay cold longer.



*Pets can  
help ease  
stress.*

## ***What Can You Control?***

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought lots of questions and uncertainty and also created additional stress and anxiety for many of us. Follow these recommendations to help ease some of your anxiety related to COVID-19.

- Maintaining or creating a routine can ease the anxiety and help to navigate your day.
- Focus on what you can control.
- Rely on the things in your life that you can count on to be stable. Dwelling on what you think should happen might cause you to become frustrated.
- Manage stress by being physically active, eating healthy, and getting enough sleep.
- Take breaks from watching, reading, or listening to news stories, including those on social media. Hearing about the pandemic repeatedly can be upsetting.
- Avoid excessive alcohol and drug use. Make time to unwind. Try to do some other activities you enjoy.
- Connect with others. Talk with people you trust about your concerns and how you are feeling. Connect with your community or faith-based organizations. While social distancing measures are in place, consider connecting online, through social media, or by phone or mail.

## Retro Baking from 1955

Let's take a trip back in time and look at what was being whipped up in the kitchen and learn a few interesting facts about sponge cakes.

- Eggs are the main ingredient in sponge cake. Use good quality, medium sized eggs. If the recipe calls for eggs by measure you will find that about 8 egg whites make 1 cup or about 5 whole eggs make 1 cup.
- Cake flour (such as Swans Down) or all purpose flour can be used in sponge cake. Most cakes will be more tender if made with cake flour which is a soft wheat flour.
- Lemon juice adds flavor to the cake. Because it is an acid, it also helps keep the cake from shrinking. Some cake recipes call for cream of tartar, also an acid. When making an angel food cake the acid keeps the cake from shrinking and makes it look whiter.
- Beat the eggs for sponge cake with an electric mixer, a rotary beater, or a wire whip. It is generally believed that a rotary beater or electric mixer produces a finer cake, whereas beating the whites with a wire whip makes a higher cake.
- Beat the egg whites until they are fine, glossy, and just stiff enough to hold a peak. Beat the egg yolks until they are thick and lemon colored. Fold the ingredients together with care.
- Be sure to measure all ingredients accurately. Be sure to sift the flour before measuring.
- Bake a sponge cake in an un-greased pan. Cool in the pan upside down. A sponge cake taken from a pan while hot may settle.



### Sponge Cake (from 1955)

#### Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon lemon rind
- 2 tablespoons water
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup sugar
- 6 eggs, separated
- 1 cup flour

#### Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees
2. Add lemon juice, lemon rind, water and salt to 1/2 cup sugar. Blend well.
3. Add upbeaten egg yolks and beat until very thick, at least 5 minutes.
4. Sift 1/4 of the flour over this mixture, fold with a spatula using 8 to 10 strokes (all of flour does not need to disappear each time.) Repeat until all the flour is added and the mixture completely blended.
5. Beat the egg whites until foamy. Add the remaining half of the sugar by tablespoons, beating after each addition. Continue to beat until stiff peaks are formed.
6. Spread the egg yolk-flour mixture over the egg whites and gently fold together until well blended. *Remember that folding gently is a secret of success.*
7. Pour batter into a 10-inch tube pan. Cut gently through batter to remove large air bubbles.
8. Bake at 350 degrees for about 45 minutes. For oblong cake bake in 13"x9" for 30 minutes. The cake is done when it shrinks slightly and springs back when touched.
9. Cool cake in the pan, upside down, for 1 to 2 hours. Then loosen side and center tube with knife and gently pull out cake.



# L.I.F.T. Strong and Move More

Are you wanting to learn and practice exercises that are designed and evidence-based to help improve strength, flexibility and balance? Would you like to make new friends and build community connections?

L.I.F.T. is the Lifelong Improvements through Fitness Together program designed by Virginia Tech. This program promotes team building and healthy lifestyle behaviors for adults of all ages and fitness levels. We will meet twice each week for 8 weeks. The exercises are easily modified to be easier or more difficult depending on your physical ability.

To join this exercise group is easy! Just complete the necessary paperwork that includes Informed Consent and an individual Function Fitness Test. Call the Swain Extension (828) 488-3848 to set up a time to complete the forms.

To maintain physical distancing guidelines, the class will be limited to 8 participants. We want to gather in a safe environment. We ask that if you are feeling sick or have a temperature to please stay home.

Harden SM, Wilson ML, Estabrooks PA, and Members of the Physical Activity Leadership Team of Virginia Cooperative Extension. (2018). Lifelong Improvements through Fitness Together Program Manual. Blacksburg, VA: Virginia Tech.



## L.I.F.T. STRONG & MOVE MORE

Tuesdays and Thursdays  
10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

*\*we will begin meeting when we can do so safely. We will continue to monitor the County Alert System for a change in metrics from red tier to yellow tier for Swain County.*

If you're interested in being notified,  
please call (828) 488-3848.  
Classes will be held at the Swain Extension office  
60 Almond School Rd.  
*Registration required  
Limited to 8 participants*

## A Few Tips for L.I.F.T. Strong and Move More

No need to wear special clothes — just comfortable, loose-fitting pants and shirt, along with sturdy, closed-toe walking shoes.

Always start low, slow and small. You can expect some soreness, but we want to avoid any new pain. Always respect your own range of motion.

Know and respect your limitations. If it hurts, don't do it. Exercises will be demonstrated for various physical fitness levels.

# Stay Connected

**The Swain Extension is here for you.**

Check out our website at [swain.ces.ncsu.edu/](http://swain.ces.ncsu.edu/)



Like us on facebook to view upcoming events and important news.

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## Trivia Questions to Exercise Your Brain

1. What year did World War 1 begin?
  - a. 1902
  - b. 1914
  - c. 1940
  - d. 1921
2. What year did the Titanic sink?
  - a. 1912
  - b. 1922
  - c. 1906
  - d. 1921
3. What is the world's longest river?
  - a. Mississippi
  - b. Nile
  - c. Amazon
  - d. Danube
4. What is the capital city of Spain?
  - a. Barcelona
  - b. Paris
  - c. Belgrade
  - d. Madrid



Trivia Answers:

1. b 2. a 3. b 4. d

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*Let it Snow!  
Let it Snow!  
Let it Snow!*

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EXTENSION**



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