

WTNS Radio OSU Extension Update for December 13, 2021
Healthy People. Healthy Finances. Healthy Relationships.

On today's OSU Extension update for Healthy People, Healthy Finances, & Healthy Relationships we'll talk about focusing on more rather than less, and as always, look at some upcoming programs from OSU Extension.

There are so many special foods I like to eat this time of year. The challenge is that most of them are high in calories and low in nutrients. And come to think of it, none of them involve vegetables. Instead of denying myself these foods I look forward to, I want to focus on adding more of the good. I am keeping a handful of things in mind during the month of December.

1. Add one more glass of water. Water is not my automatic pick for a beverage. It is not because I don't like water. It is because I've formed habits over my adult life especially, that have me reaching for something else. Coffee in the morning. My prized single can of sugary, caffeinated bliss during the 2:00 afternoon slump.

Hydration is critical for many functions in our bodies. I have two goals for this month. I will keep water near me, preferably in a refillable container or glass. When I am presented with a choice of what to drink, I will choose water if it is an option.

2. Add a weekly menu plan. It takes time to plan, but it saves time during the week. More importantly it gives a greater chance for success in having balanced meals that include a good source of protein- like meat, poultry, eggs, or beans – as well as healthy sides. It also helps us to be better disciplined at the grocery store to have our pantry and refrigerator stocked with the things we need. Iowa State University Extension has a great meal planning template with a helpful check list for getting in all the food groups.

3. Add one more vegetable during lunch and one more during dinner. I once had a colleague tell me that in a salad, lettuce was simply the carrier for dressing. It is true that many people smother their vegetables in high calorie sauces or dressing. Try to let the vegetable be the star attraction in any sides you create. Herbs and low-salt seasonings can also highlight the natural flavors of grilled, broiled, or roasted veggies.

The USDA recommends that we get between 2-4 cups of vegetables each day, depending on our age. You can learn about how many vegetables and other food groups are recommended for you at myplate.gov .

4. Add a few more steps. “Move More” is the slogan for the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute. Paying attention to activity is equally as important as our diet. As little as 60 minutes a week of moderate-intensity aerobic activity such as walking briskly helps your heart. Small increments of activity really do make a difference. Even 10 minutes of movement, twice each day, can help your heart and boost your mood. Consider walking briskly for 5 minutes, then turn around and walk back. Or you could dance (standing or seated) to three songs. You’ll know you’re moving enough to help your heart if your heart beats faster, you’re breathing harder, and if you break a sweat.

5. Enjoy the foods you like in moderation. Do not feel guilty for eating a piece of pie or a piece of homemade candy or cookie or any other delicacy that we look forward to this time of year. Savor it! Take small bites slowly and let the taste and texture and aroma fill your senses. If you truly enjoy the food you eat, then you will be satisfied more fully with less.

Many 2022 OSU Extension programming dates have been set for several nutrition, food safety, and food preservation programs. And remember that free individual financial coaching is available. As part of the “Play Your Way Through the Holidays Challenge,” the Live Healthy Live Well team is offering a free Lunch & Learn webinar this Friday at noon about “Why Traditions are Important Today.” You can find more details about all these programs on our website coshocton.osu.edu.

In closing, at OSU Extension, we are proud to work for Coshocton County to help educate and improve our families, farms, and businesses. Please feel free to contact OSU Extension for more information at 740-622-2265 or visit our website at coshocton.osu.edu. Make it a healthy day!