

WTNS Radio OSU Extension Update for June 12, 2022
Healthy People. Healthy Finances. Healthy Relationships.

On today's OSU Extension update for Healthy People, Healthy Finances, & Healthy Relationships we'll talk about making small changes, and as always look at some upcoming programs from OSU Extension.

Last week I participated in our employee health screening. This is the day you are measured and weighed, blood pressure is checked, and fingers are pricked to determine cholesterol and A1C levels. Maybe your place of employment offers something similar or for you this may be part of your annual well check-up with your primary care provider.

After all the numbers are tabulated, the health professionals share which values are in the "ideal" range. Do you have a number that you wish was different? I think one of the best ways to make a change that will stick is to be specific and keep it simple. Here are a few tips to consider. I encourage you to pick just one to commit to and strive to make a long-term change.

1. Quit smoking: According to the National Institute of Health, cholesterol is a concern when excess levels in our blood stick to the walls of our arteries and either narrow or completely block them. Cholesterol is transported throughout our body on lipoproteins. Low-density lipoproteins (LDL) can build up when there are too many of them and form plaque. High-density lipoproteins (HDL) are considered good because they collect cholesterol so it can be removed from the body. Smoking lowers your HDL (good) cholesterol and raises your LDL (bad) cholesterol.

I don't even want to begin to suggest that this is a quick and easy change. But there are definite advantages to your health when you do not smoke. If you are ready to quit, call the Ohio Tobacco Quit Line at 1-800-QUIT NOW (1-800-784-8669).

2. Switch from full-fat dairy products to low-fat: Eating foods high in saturated fat also contributes to high cholesterol. A goal could be to reduce the amount of saturated fat you eat. This does not mean you need to completely cut dairy from your diet. When drinking milk, choose low fat, ideally 1 percent or skim milk rather than "whole" or 3.25 percent milk. Drinking an 8-ounce glass of whole milk contains about 5 grams of saturated fat- as much as consuming 5 strips of bacon. Also shop for low-fat cheese, yogurt, and cottage cheese. Save butter and ice cream for special occasions.

3. Reduce portion size of red meat: Maybe full fat dairy products are not a big part of your diet. How much processed or high fat red meat do you consume? Watching portion sizes can make a big difference. A serving of meat is the size of your palm and should be a lean, whole cut of meat more often than ground beef, brats, or sausage. Try eating a smaller serving of meat and filling that empty space on your plate with a favorite non-starchy veggie like green beans, asparagus, carrots, squash, peppers, or greens.

4. Walk at least 3 days a week: Physical activity is a great way to lower both cholesterol and A1C. I have seen this myself. When I started running or going to fitness classes at the gym, my HDL levels went up significantly. If physical activity is non-existent in your daily life, make this week different. Walking is a great way to start. Every minute and every step make a difference and add up. The walking paths at Lake Park are beautiful this time of year. If you'd rather walk on a track inside, Kids America offers Coffee Walk and Talk on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays between 8-10 AM. Cost is just \$1 for seniors over 60 and \$2 for other guests.

And now let's look at some upcoming programs from OSU Extension. Together with Coshocton Regional Medical Center and the Coshocton County Health Department, OSU Extension will be offering Dining with Diabetes, a cooking school and nutrition education program designed for people with diabetes and their family members or caregivers. The 4-class series includes sampling healthy foods and discussion with a dietitian about skills to manage diabetes.

Dining with Diabetes will be held on Tuesday evenings August 2, 9, 16, and 23 from 5:30-7:30 pm. The cost of the program is \$20 per person and includes all four classes, educational handouts, and small sized meals that feature a variety of recipes. You are encouraged to also register a support person to attend with you for an additional \$10. Paid registration is required by July 25. Registration is limited to 20 participants.

You can find details about future programs related to financial wellness, food preservation, and more at 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!