We often experience long cold winters in upstate NY, so summer brings a welcome opportunity to get outdoors and enjoy the beauty of our region. Here are some thoughts to consider:

- “We do not inherit the land from our ancestors, we borrow it from our children.” Native American Proverb
- “Let nature be your teacher.” William Wadsworth
- “Each moment of the year has its own beauty...a picture which was never before and shall never be seen again.” Ralph Waldo Emerson
- “Those who contemplate the beauty of the earth find reserves of strength that will endure as long as life lasts.” Rachel Carson

So take time to “smell the roses” as you get outdoors to enjoy what we too often take for granted in Herkimer County.
Answer Corner USDA REVISED RECOMMENDED COOKING TEMPERATURES FOR MEAT

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) recently updated its recommendation for safely cooking pork, steaks, roasts, and chops. USDA recommends cooking all whole cuts of meat to 145 °F as measured with a food thermometer placed in the thickest part of the meat, then allowing the meat to rest for three minutes before carving or consuming.

This change does not apply to ground meats, including ground beef, veal, lamb, and pork, which should be cooked to 160 °F and do not require a rest time. The safe cooking temperature for all poultry products, including ground chicken and turkey, remains at 165 °F.

With a single temperature for all whole cuts of meat and uniform 3 minute stand time, it will be much easier for consumers to remember and result in safer food preparation. Now there will only be 3 numbers to remember: 145 for whole meats, 160 for ground meats and 165 for all poultry.

USDA is lowering the recommended safe cooking temperature for whole cuts of pork from 160 °F to 145 °F and adding a three-minute rest time. The safe temperature for cuts of beef, veal, and lamb remains unchanged at 145 °F, but the department is adding a three-minute rest time as part of its cooking recommendations. Cooking raw pork, steaks, roasts, and chops to 145 °F with the addition of a three-minute rest time will result in a product that is both microbiologically safe and at its best quality.

Why the Rest Time is Important

A "rest time" is the amount of time the product remains at the final temperature, after it has been removed from a grill, oven, or other heat source. During the three minutes after meat is removed from the heat source, its temperature remains constant or continues to rise, which destroys pathogens. USDA’s Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) has determined that it is just as safe to cook cuts of pork to 145 °F with a three minute rest time as it is to cook them to 160 °F, the previously recommended temperature, with no rest time. The new cooking suggestions reflect the same standards that the agency uses for cooked meat products produced in federally inspected meat establishments, which rely on the rest time of three minutes to achieve safe pathogen reduction.

Appearance of Cooked Pork

The new cooking recommendations clarify long-held perceptions about cooking pork. Historically, consumers have viewed the color pink in pork to be a sign of undercooked meat. If raw pork is cooked to 145 °F and allowed to rest for three minutes, it may still be pink but is safe to eat. The pink color can be due to the cooking method, added ingredients, or other factors. As always, cured pork (e.g., cured ham and cured pork chops) will remain pink after cooking.

Appearance in meat is not a reliable indicator of safety or risk. Only by using a food thermometer can consumers determine if meat has reached a sufficient temperature to destroy pathogens of public health concern. Any cooked, uncured red meats – including pork – can be pink, even when the meat has reached a safe internal temperature.

Source: USDA Food & Inspection Service
May 24, 2011 press release
"FOOD PRESERVATION 101"

These workshops will include basic home canning and freezing tips.

**When/Where:**
- Wednesday, July 27, 2011
  - 5:30 - 7:00 p.m.
  - St. Joseph’s Church
  - 31 N Helmer Ave, Dolgeville

  or

- Wednesday, August 3, 2011
  - 6:30 - 8:00 p.m.
  - Cornell Cooperative Extension of Herkimer County
  - 5657 State Route 5, Herkimer

**Instructors:**
- Linda Robbins and Mary Ann Walrath
- Cornell Cooperative Extension of Herkimer County

**Fee:**
- No charge, but please call to register*

**To Register:**
- Call Cornell Cooperative Extension at (315) 866-7920
  (after hours, press 0 to leave message on general delivery voice-mail box)

*Note that class size will be limited, so be sure to call early if you are interested.

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**MARK YOUR CALENDAR!**

- **Herkimer County Fair**
  - August 16-21 at the fairgrounds in Frankfort

- **Garlic & Herb Festival**
  - September 10 at Canal Place in Little Falls

- **Central New York State Farm Progress Show**
  - September 14 & 15 at Len-Lo Farms in Mohawk
HOME FOOD PRESERVATION RESOURCES

A pressure canner is needed to ensure safe low-acid canned foods. There are no safe boiling water canning options for vegetables, meats and seafood, soups and some other mixtures of foods.

It is tempting to want to preserve your canned specialties in fancy jars and bottles. But the two-piece lid system and canning jars that take them are what is recommended for the home. When applied correctly, they are a good system for venting trapped air out of your jars during the canning process and can visually show that you have a vacuum seal when the jar cools.

For more information on basics of canning and freezing this season’s produce, plan to attend “Food Preservation 101” (see page 3 for more information).

“Food Preservation Resources” lists all food preservation publications available from Cornell Cooperative Extension of Herkimer County including some commercial sources and web sites. Topics include home canning, freezing, pickling, dehydrating, and making jams and jellies. Note that several resources were updated this year.

For a free copy, stop at our office at 5657 State Route 5 in East Herkimer, or download a copy at our website: www.cce.cornell.edu/herkimer/2009/04/02/food-preservation-resources/

(Note that many resources listed can also be downloaded from our website.)

HERKIMER COUNTY LOCAL FOODS MAP

The all-new “Herkimer County Local Foods Map” is intended to serve as a guide for those who want to enjoy fresh local foods. It is available at the Cornell Cooperative Extension office in East Herkimer. You can also view a pdf of this map at our website www.cce.cornell.edu/herkimer. Just click on the link for the map at either our home page or on the Farmers’ Market page. For an interactive map, click on the Community Walk link.

Funding for this map was provided by the NY State Department of Health Creating Healthy Places to Live, Work, and Play initiative (CHP) through Herkimer County HealthNet.
“Eat³” - EAT WELL, EAT LOCAL, EAT TOGETHER

“Eat³” is a campaign to encourage families to Eat Well, Eat Local, and Eat Together. This project is designed to help you choose, prepare, and enjoy healthy family meals using locally-grown produce.

Starting this month, one meal will be featured July through November to give you ideas to help you “Eat³”. Be sure to check out the campaign website at www.eat3.org to find recipes, tips, games, and a chance to share your comments and questions about the recipes and eating together.

AS PART OF “EAT LOCAL”, CHECK OUT FARMERS’ MARKETS IN HERKIMER COUNTY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Market</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Time</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dolgeville</td>
<td>Municipal lot, between Kinney Drugs and M&amp;T Bank</td>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>8:00 am - 12 noon</td>
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<tr>
<td>Herkimer</td>
<td>Across from Herb Philipson’s</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>10:00 am - 2:00 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Early Bird</td>
<td>Aubuchon Hardware lot</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>9:00 am - 1:00 pm</td>
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<td></td>
<td>105 Caroline St</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ilion</td>
<td>Parker’s Clapsaddle Farm</td>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>12 noon - 6:00 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>437 Otsego St (Route 51)</td>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>10:00 am - 5:00 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Little Falls</td>
<td>M&amp;T Bank lot, Albany St</td>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>8:00 am - 12 noon</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mohawk</td>
<td>Weller Park, West Main St</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>2:00 pm - 5:00 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Old Forge</td>
<td>Park Ave, Between Crosby and Lamberton Streets</td>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>2:00 pm - 6:00 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richfield Springs</td>
<td>Spring Park, Main St</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>2:00 pm - 6:00 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>8:00 am - 1:00 pm</td>
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LUNCH ON-THE-GO

Want a lunch that packs a nutrient punch? A balanced middle-of-the-day meal starts with smart choices from all five food groups: lean proteins, whole grains, colorful fruits, vibrant vegetables, and low-fat dairy foods. This could be a tuna sandwich (light mayo) on whole wheat with sliced tomato, plus a sliced pear and fat-free milk. Try a cup of black bean soup and a whole-wheat quesadilla (using part-skim mozzarella cheese and fresh salsa), with a side of sweet strawberries.

**Plan**

The benefits of a balanced lunch are worth the time and effort for adults and children alike. According to research, how you eat may be just as important as what you eat. Eating slowly and listening to your internal signals of fullness may help prevent afternoon tummy aches - and help you maintain a healthy weight at the same time!

**Lunch at work:** In a time-crunchy, budget-conscious world, brown bagging it may be best. Take a break from work while you eat - and go for a walk afterward.

**Lunch at fast food:** Although it’s possible to overdo calories, fat, and sugar, smart choices are now available in most chains. Choose milk and fruit in kid-size meals.

**Lunch at a restaurant:** More and more restaurants will also feature nutrition info on menus. Most chains already provide nutrition analyses on their websites.

**Eat**

**Always start small:** Most serving sizes in the U.S. are two to three times what most adults need. By choosing a cup of soup or half a sandwich, you’ll usually get plenty of food and you may save money too. Kid-size burgers are actually great for adults too.

**Share, share, share:** This is another easy way to control your food budget and avoid wasting food at the same time. For a satisfying and cost-conscious lunch, share a sandwich or an entrée salad with a couple of sides.

**Rethink your drink:** A large soft drink or fancy coffee concoction can quickly add several hundred extra calories to your day. Smart choices for refreshing mealtime beverages include fat-free milk, unsweetened tea, and ice water.

**Enjoy**

Take time to sit and enjoy your lunch. Put down your work and enjoy a calming conversation with a friend or coworker. When you savor your lunch and listen to your stomach, it is easier to stop when you are satisfied.

*Source: Eat Right Montana, May 2011*
The federal government’s new food icon, MyPlate, released last month is intended to help consumers make healthier food choices. MyPlate is a new generation icon to prompt consumers to think about building a healthy plate at meal times and to seek more information to help them do that by going to www.ChooseMyPlate.gov. The new MyPlate icon emphasizes the fruit, vegetable, grains, protein and dairy food groups.

Originally identified in the Child Obesity Task Force report which noted that simple, actionable advice for consumers is needed, MyPlate will replace the MyPyramid image as the government’s primary food group symbol as an easy-to-understand visual cue to help consumers adopt healthy eating habits consistent with the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans. MyPyramid will remain available to interested health professionals and nutrition educators in a special section of the new website.

ChooseMyPlate.gov provides practical information to individuals, health professionals, nutrition educators, and the food industry to help consumers build healthier diets with resources and tools for dietary assessment, nutrition education, and other user-friendly nutrition information. As Americans are experiencing epidemic rates of overweight and obesity, the online resources and tools can empower people to make healthier food choices for themselves, their families, and their children. Later this year, USDA will unveil an exciting “go-to” online tool that consumers can use to personalize and manage their dietary and physical activity choices.

The 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans, launched in January of this year, form the basis of the federal government’s nutrition education programs, federal nutrition assistance programs, and dietary advice provided by health and nutrition professionals.

The Guidelines messages include:

Balance Calories
- Enjoy your food, but eat less.
- Avoid oversized portions.

Foods to Increase
- Make half your plate fruits and vegetables.
- Switch to fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk.
- Make at least half your grains whole grains.

Foods to Reduce
- Compare sodium (salt) in foods like soup, bread, and frozen meals, and choose foods with lower numbers.
- Drink water instead of sugary drinks.

Consumers have been bombarded by so many nutrition messages that it has been difficult to focus on changes that are necessary to improve their diet. This new campaign calendar will help unify the public and private sectors to coordinate efforts and highlight one desired change for consumers at a time. A multi-year campaign calendar will focus on one action-prompting message at a time starting with “Make Half Your Plate Fruits and Vegetables.”


See next page for ways to use MyPlate at picnics.
**ChooseMyPlate...at Picnics**

The new USDA healthy eating graphic, ChooseMyPlate.gov, is a simple guide to smart meals anywhere. You can use MyPlate to quickly and easily plan healthful meals at home and on the go. MyPlate is perfect for picnics, since many picnic plates are already divided into sections!

**Plan**

The KISS Principle (Keep It Super Simple) is a delicious way to make picnics popular with people of all ages. Choose a limited number of foods (no more than 4 to 5 items) that can all be served at the same time. Make the meal fun with a simple theme - like red, white, and blue foods for the 4th of July or an all-kebob meal on small skewers.

**Plan picnics for the yard, park, or lake:** A picnic can make any meal special. Use beach towels for lunch in the backyard or pack a weeknight dinner to the park.

**Plan to keep picnic food safe:** Always keep cold foods cold and hot foods hot. Frozen water bottles and juice boxes can do double duty as drinks and as chill packs.

**Plan active fun with your picnic:** Plan to play before and/or after you eat. Bring along a Frisbee® or two. Pack some balls (or water balloons when it is really hot).

**Eat**

**Go fresh with fruits and veggies:** Summertime is a very tasty time to follow the MyPlate tip to fill half your plate with fruits and vegetables. Farmer’s markets and supermarkets have local produce at great prices. It’s easy to prepare simple tossed or fruit salads at home. Or take a bag of baby carrots and slice a melon once you arrive.

**Go hearty with whole grains:** Sandwiches, wraps, and pita pockets are perfect for picnics. MyPlate says to make half your grains whole, like whole wheat bread for sandwiches. Whole grains (cracked wheat, barley, brown rice, and the exotic quinoa) also make delicious cold salads, with chopped veggies and light dressings.

**Go smart with protein and dairy:** MyPlate suggests protein and dairy foods at every meal. Protein can be tuna in a sandwich or a cold salad with black beans or chickpeas. Serve well-chilled plain or flavored milk (fat-free or 1%) or refreshing drinkable yogurts. String cheese is always popular with kids and easy to carry along.

**Enjoy**

Treat your family to regular picnic times this summer. Everyone can enjoy time to eat in a relaxed and casual setting. Just remember to keep fun on the menu!!

*Source: Eat Right Montana, May 2011*
**CHOOSE SUMMER’S FROZEN TREATS WISELY**

The United States Department of Agriculture statistics say the average American eats about 35 pints of ice cream a year (not counting other frozen desserts). With so many choices and brands available, make sure you read the Nutrition Facts label to know what you are getting.

**Ice Cream:** With 10-18 percent milk fat, this summer favorite is loaded with calories and fat that can weigh you down in the heat. Averaging about 150 calories per half-cup serving, brands labeled "rich" and "premium" can have almost twice as many calories and nearly 18 grams of fat per serving - one-fifth of the recommended daily limit for an average adult.

**Gelato:** This frozen Italian favorite actually has a lower milk fat content than ice cream because it is made with more milk and less cream. However, because it is more dense (less air-whipped), it packs a caloric wallop on par with ice cream.

**Frozen Custard and Soft Serve:** Frozen custard contains at least 10 percent milk fat and adds extra eggs for a richer flavor. With less air beaten into it, it's like gelato. A lot of soft serve is actually frozen custard, but some soft serve shops serve lighter options.

"Light" and Low-Fat Ice Cream: 
"Light" ice cream and low-fat ice cream are not the same. "Light" means that it is at least 50 percent lower in fat or one third lower in calories than regular ice cream. But a "light" version of very high-fat premium ice cream can have as many or more calories than a regular version of standard ice cream.

Some "light" ice cream meets the standard of a low-fat ice cream: it has no more than 3 grams of fat per one half cup. But if it has a high sugar content (for example, from extra sources of sugar like chocolate chunks and swirls), its calories may be higher than other light ice creams or low-fat ice cream. In other words, among light ice creams, some are lighter than others.

"Double, Triple, Slow and Smooth Churned": 
"Churning" is actually a process that allows smaller amounts of fat to be dispersed in such a way that a creamier product is created with less fat. Often lower calorie than premium ice cream, these can still undo calorie-curbing efforts if not enjoyed in moderation.

**Snow Cones:** These balls of crushed ice, topped with sweet syrup are a staple at amusement parks, baseball games and beaches. But buyer beware: a whole cone-full can contain up to 500 calories depending on how much syrup they pile on.

**Sherbet:** This hybrid of sorbet and ice milk contains an additional 1-2 percent milk fat and is usually sweeter, with 4-9 teaspoons of sugar per half cup, including the natural sugar in the fruit and added sugar or high fructose corn sweetener.

**Frozen Yogurt:** This low-fat or fat-free alternative is made with yogurt instead of cream. Remember, although it's yogurt, calories can still add up quickly, so keep portions moderate.

**Sorbet:** This fruit puree contains no dairy products or fat, but can be quite high in sugar. Most brands have 110 calories per half-cup. Sorbet made from whole fruit can contain nutrients, but enjoy it in moderation to control calories (or find a sugar-free version).

**Italian Ice:** Similar to sorbet, Italian ices may have lots of sugar although no fat. Choosing a sugar-free version can cut the calories in half.

**Frozen Whole-Fruit Bars:** A great alternative to creamy treats, some bars made from nothing but fruit contain as little as 28 calories and nutrients from the real fruit.

*Source: American Institute for Cancer Research newsletter, Summer 2011*
Cool, refreshing and quick, smoothies and shakes can be a healthy snack, light meal, or a great dessert.

Nutrition Facts

Smoothies and shakes can be a great source of calcium with milk and yogurt as main ingredients. Be sure to use low or non-fat choices to keep calories and fat lower.

* Sugar can appear to be high when looking at the nutritional content of smoothies, but it’s important to remember where the sugar is coming from.....fruit, milk, and yogurt...all ingredients that add important nutrients. Compared to soda and flavored waters, smoothies are a great nutritional bargain.

However it is still important to remember portion control. Even large portions of a good thing can add extra calories that you may not need. So measure and enjoy your favorite smoothie. Also remember that a smoothie can be that “breakfast -on-the-run” or after-school snack or even split and served as a dessert. Just keep the serving size reasonable.....1 cup works and is still filling and nutritious.

Tips for Smoothies

😊 Using frozen fruit helps thicken beverages without diluting the flavor. To freeze fruit, such as fresh berries, wash the fruit thoroughly under running tap water, pat dry with clean paper towels and freeze in a single layer on a rimmed cookie sheet. Transfer to a freezer bag when frozen. Pour out as needed. NOTE: Be sure to use smaller pieces of fruit, such as berries or sliced pieces of larger fruits or your blender may be unable to process them.

😊 When using fresh fruit, use fruit at its peak of ripeness to capture the most natural sweetness for smoothies and shakes. Add up to one teaspoon of sweetener (sugar or honey) or the equivalent in sweetening power of a non-calorie sweetener, if fruit is at less than peak ripeness for recipes.

😊 Most smoothies and shakes should be consumed immediately. They may change color or separate if they are allowed to stand for very long.

😊 If you have a larger blender jar that is fairly wide at the bottom, you may find it harder to blend single-serving smoothies. A blender jar forces food up against the blender walls where it is then redirected back on the blades and blended until the desired consistency. A blender that is wider at the bottom will send smaller volumes of food out toward the sides rather than up and then down toward the center and the blades. The new "smoothie" blenders on the market are narrow on the bottom.

😊 As a variation, make smaller smoothies and serve them as a dessert "drink."

See delicious smoothie recipes on next page.
Super Smoothies & Shakes...continued from page 10

Breakfast Smoothie

8 oz (1 cup) nonfat plain yogurt
1 cup fat free milk
1-3/4 cup whole fresh or frozen strawberries, hulled
1 fresh peach, peeled and sliced, or 3/4 cup frozen peach slices
2 teaspoons vanilla extract

Place all ingredients in a blender. Purée mixture for 15 to 20 seconds. Pour into glasses and garnish with a fresh strawberry if desired.

If you prefer a thicker smoothie, replace the peach with 1 small sliced banana.

Yield: 4 servings; serving size 1 cup (90 calories, 0 grams fat, 2 grams fiber, 12 grams sugar*, 65 mg sodium)

Peanut Butter Banana Shake

2 cups fat free milk
1 cup frozen banana slices
2 tablespoons peanut butter
1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Combine all ingredients in a blender and blend until smooth and creamy. Serve.

Yield: 3 servings; serving size 1 cup (170 calories, 6 grams fat, 2 grams fiber, 15 grams sugar*, 130 mg sodium)

Notes: Freeze banana slices by slicing banana(s) and placing the slices in a single layer on a shallow metal pan (such as a cake pan) in the freezer. Freeze overnight for a smoothie in the morning or once frozen put in freezer bags to use later.

One large banana yields about 1 cup of banana slices and a smaller banana about 1/2 cup of slices; don't worry about being exact -- a little extra banana simply makes a thicker smoothie.

Just Peachy Smoothie

frozen peach cubes (recipe below)
non-fat or fat-free yogurt: vanilla or any flavor you would enjoy with peaches

To make frozen peach cubes
1 can (15 ounce) of peaches in a light syrup or juice (do not drain)
dash of nutmeg or cinnamon (optional)

Puree the peaches in blender until smooth. Add a dash of cinnamon or nutmeg if desired.

Freeze the peach sauce in ice cube trays for about 2 hours or until frozen. Remove from tray and transfer cubes to a plastic freezer bag. Squeeze as much air out of the bag as possible. The quality of food declines faster when excess air is left in the package. Label the bag with the type of food and date frozen. Plan to use within 8 months.

To make smoothie
Place 16 ounces of low fat vanilla or peach yogurt in your blender. Add 6 or more frozen peach cubes, depending on size of cubes and how thick you want your smoothie. Blend until smooth.

Yield: 3 servings; serving size 1 cup (160 calories, 1.5 grams fat, 1 gram fiber, 25 grams sugar*, 95 mg sodium)

*See note on sugar on page 10.

For more information on how much you need to eat for good health, go to www.ChooseMyPlate.gov
**DON’T LET GOOD HANDWASHING TAKE A SUMMER VACATION**

Flu season may be over, but that doesn’t mean you should be any less vigilant about washing your hands. Just think of all the summer foods, like barbeque hamburgers, corn on the cob and watermelon that we eat with our hands.

Summer colds and foodborne illnesses are spread by unclean hands. In addition, good hand hygiene will also reduce the risk of spreading germs that have become resistant to antibiotics, such as methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus, or MSRA.

Here’s how to properly wash your hands when soap and water are available:

- Wet hands with warm, running water.
- Apply soap and rub hands together vigorously to make a lather, and scrub all surfaces.
- Continue scrubbing for 20 seconds, or about as long as it takes to sing one verse of “Old MacDonald Had a Farm.”
- Rinse well under warm, running water. Dry hands thoroughly.

When soap and water are not readily available, be prepared! Keep hand-sanitizer and/or handwipes in your car, purse, briefcase, backpack, picnic basket, etc., so you never have to sacrifice good hand-hygiene habits for good food.

The American Cleaning Institute®, in conjunction with the American Society for Microbiology, has developed a Get a Grip on Handwashing brochure with additional information. To download a copy, visit [http://www.cleaninginstitute.org/assets/1/AssetManager/GetAGrip.pdf](http://www.cleaninginstitute.org/assets/1/AssetManager/GetAGrip.pdf).

*Source: Cleaning Matters, American Cleaning Institute for Better Living newsletter May/June 2011*

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**GUIDELINES FOR STORING WINTER CLOTHES**

Here are some tips to remember when putting those heavy winter clothes away to avoid unpleasant surprises when the cold weather returns:

- **Thoroughly clean all items before storing.** Certain soils can attract insects. You wouldn’t want your favorite sweater to become their feasting ground! In addition, stains that the eye can barely see may turn yellow or darken over time.

- **Make repairs.** Check for sagging hemlines, missing buttons, split seams, etc. Repair them now so your clothes will be wear-ready when that first cold day strikes.

- **Don’t starch or iron garments before storing.** Starch just provides more nourishment for insects. Ironing may heat set stains that have not been completely removed. If they reappear after a long summer siesta, they may be impossible to remove.

- **Store garments in a cool, dark, dry, well-ventilated area.** Good choices include a cool closet, an airtight chest, or an under-the-bed cardboard box. Avoid plastic bags or bins. They can trap air and moisture, creating a damp, unsuitable atmosphere.

- **Don’t neglect your coats.** Once we stop wearing them, there’s a tendency to stop thinking about them. Then, on that first chilly day, you may be in for a nasty surprise.

*Source: Cleaning Matters, American Cleaning Institute for Better Living newsletter May/June 2011*
Family Sun Safety

Picnics, parks, and pools are all great for summer fun, but they can also be a problem for sun exposure. Children can get too much sun whenever they are outside - in the backyard or on a trip to the farmer’s market. Just a few serious sunburns can increase a child’s lifetime risk of skin cancer, the most common cancer in the US. Skin needs protection from the sun’s harmful ultraviolet (UV) rays any time children are outside.

What we know

While it’s important to play it safe with sun exposure any time of year, it’s especially critical during the summer when more skin is exposed for longer periods of time.

Everyone, regardless of skin color, is at risk for skin cancer: People with fair skin that freckles or burns easily are at the greatest risk. However, everyone - even if they tan or have naturally darker skin - is at risk and should learn to be sun safe.

UV radiation can go through thin clothing, windows, and clouds: UV rays can reach skin through a car windshield or a picture window. Sun protection is important on cloudy or hazy days as well as on bright sunny days.

Children need protection from UV radiation early in life: The effects of sun exposure are cumulative, so everyone needs serious sun protection from birth through their adult years. Unprotected skin can be damaged by UV rays in as little as 15 minutes.

What you can do

Hide (from the sun) and seek (the shade).

- During the summer, it’s smart to stay out of the sun, especially during the middle of the day when UV rays are the strongest and most harmful.
- Seek shade under a tree, large umbrella, or pop-up tent. Remember that UV rays can also reflect off surfaces like water, cement, and sand.

Cover up from head to toe and slip on sunglasses too.

- Clothing and hats can keep the UV rays from reaching the skin. Choose clothes that are made from tightly woven fabric. Hats should have wide brims.
- Shades are cool - and they protect eyes from UV rays (which also increase the risk of cataracts later in life). Choose wrap-around glasses that block both UVA and UVB rays.

Splash on the sunscreen and reapply often.

- Like the other methods of sun protection, sunscreen reduces damage from UV rays, but does not eliminate it. Use sunscreen under clothes and hats - and even in the shade.
- Use a sunscreen of at least 30 to 45 SPF (sun protection factor). Apply thoroughly and reapply every 2 hours, and after swimming or sweating.

Source: Eat Right Montana, June 2011
**Scrumptious Salad Dressings**

There’s no need to top your cancer-fighting salad with store-bought dressings when making your own is easy, healthy and delicious. Here are some tasty dressing ideas.

Eating salads is a delicious way to enrich your meals with nutrient-rich vegetables and fruits recommended by the American Institute for Cancer Research (AICR). Piling on produce and tossing in whole grains, beans and a sprinkle of nuts is a sure bet for a nutritious salad. But a fatty dressing can load your dish with unwanted fat and calories.

If you buy bottled salad dressings, make it a habit to read their labels and look out for the following:

- **salt**: aim for a dressing with under 300 mg of sodium per serving.
- **unhealthy fats**: in particular, avoid “partially hydrogenated” oils.
- **sweeteners**: beware of corn syrup and sugars that add calories but not nutrients.

Better yet, try making your own dressing so you can control the ingredients.

**Homemade Dressings for Taste and Health**

When you make your own dressings, you have many healthy and delicious possibilities.

Start with a healthy fat as a base. Options include olive oil, canola oil, peanut oil or even fancier oils like walnut, avocado or almond. Then add an acid such as vinegar (balsamic, white or red wine, rice or cider vinegars work well) or citrus (lemon, orange, or lime juice). To make a basic balsamic vinaigrette use a ratio of 2:1, oil to vinegar/juice.

For creamy dressings, try a touch of plain low-fat yogurt or a teaspoon of reduced-fat versions of mayonnaise or sour cream.

Then add other seasonings, like herbs, spices, garlic, salt and pepper to taste and shake it up. Homemade dressings keep in the fridge for a week or more.

*Source: American Institute for Cancer Research Newsletter, Summer 2011*

**Are Diet Sodas Okay?**

Many Americans switch from regular soda to diet soda as a first step toward weight loss. It seems a sensible and straightforward step to cut back on calories and sugar.

But some headlines claim that diet beverages can cause weight gain and may even boost risk for stroke. How seriously could you take these warnings?

Some researchers theorize that the sweet taste of artificial sweeteners may lead to a desire for more sweet taste and cause a person to eat more. They also say that if you drink diet sodas, you may believe you can “indulge” in other high calorie treats.

**Moderation is Key**

But, in general, the science does not back up the negative claims and the study results are inconsistent and conflicting.

Drinking less sugary soda is a solid step toward a healthier weight. Research shows that sugary beverages can lead to overweight and obesity.

And if diet beverages help you limit calories and sugar and are working for weight loss, they may be the right choice for you. But don’t drink too many of them.

The best, evidence-based advice is to drink more water and choose low- or no-calories drinks such as unsweetened herbal tea, tea or coffee most often. These drinks keep you hydrated, satisfied and leave plenty of room for healthful, nutritious foods that support a healthy weight.

*Source: American Institute for Cancer Research Newsletter, Summer 2011*
DAILY DOZEN TIPS FOR BATHROOM CLEANING

A grungy bathroom is not only unpleasant to look at – it’s also a breeding ground for germs, mold and mildew. Here are 12 tips to help keep the bathroom clean and sparkling on a daily basis. For family members with asthma, many of these best practices will help keep mold and mildew, which can trigger an asthma or allergy attack, under control.

1. **Use the bathroom fan:** It can help remove the moisture that causes mold and mildew. Vacuum the vents regularly to remove any dust that might inhibit the fan’s effectiveness.

2. **Keep pop-up disinfectant wipes next to the sink:** Train family members to wipe down the sink and its surroundings every time they turn the tap water off.

3. **Hang a squeegee in the shower:** Use it to quick-clean the walls and glass doors before stepping out of the shower.

4. **Use wipes:** These are handy for cleaning around toilet rims, tanks, faucets, sinks and basins. Check the label for disposal instructions – flushable wipes disperse in water when agitated (like toilet paper) and they’re safe for plumbing and septic tanks.

5. **Be soap-smart:** The choice between bar soap and liquid soap is a matter of personal preference. However, the way your family uses the soap may influence your choice. Bar soaps are great if they find their way back to the soap dish. Pump dispensers may be neater if the user’s aim is accurate!

6. **Keep a bleach pen on hand:** It’s a great tool for spot-cleaning mold and mildew.

7. **Get a hand-held vacuum:** When you think of vacuuming, the bathroom isn’t the first room that comes to mind. However, consider the hair, dust, talcum powder and more that finds its way to the floor. A small, hand-held vacuum makes quick pickups a breeze.

8. **Rinse the tub:** Doing this after each use helps keep soap film and hard-water deposits from forming.

9. **Keep shower doors and curtains open after use:** This allows them to air-dry and helps prevent mildew.

10. **Use a daily shower cleaner:** Regular use will help keep shower and tub surfaces free of soap scum, mildew stains and hard-water deposits. Mist surfaces right after showering while the walls are wet and warm – no rinsing, wiping or scrubbing is necessary.

11. **Sort out reading material:** If reading in the bathroom is a family habit, don’t let old magazines and newspapers accumulate. They are a magnet for dust and mold.

12. **Stock up:** Keep a set of cleaning supplies in the bathroom. Cleaning is easier if you don’t have to travel far to get what you need. If there are small children in the household – or small visitors who use this bathroom – make sure the cleaning supplies are stored in a cabinet with a child-resistant lock.

*Source: Cleaning Matters, American Cleaning Institute for Better Living newsletter May/June 2011*
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