

TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION

BACK TO BASICS

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TIPS ON TURNING OFF THE TV

Think good health is only a remote possibility? Not when you put down the TV remote—and find ways to be more active. Turning off the TV is a great way to improve the health of you and your family. Watching less TV can also help you eat less since many of us munch while gazing at our favorite shows. And many TV ads even push a diet that's exactly opposite of what doctors recommend. For instance, a recent study at Tufts University found that families who had their TVs on during mealtimes consumed more processed meats, salt, soda and quick-preparation foods and fewer fruits and vegetables. And don't forget about limiting Web surfing and playing video games, too.

Want to get unglued from the tube? Try these simple TV turnoff tips:

Keep the TV off during meals

Hide the remote

Designate certain days of the week as TV-free days

Move your TV to a less prominent location

Don't worry about boredom—it often leads to creativity

Is changing channels your definition of exercise? Then channel your energy into some body-boosting activities by turning off the TV and turning on a healthier lifestyle.

Source: American Academy of Pediatrics

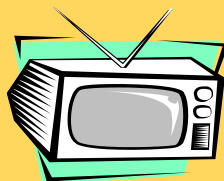
FACTS ON READING FOOD LABELS

Are you label-conscious? Many of us pay more attention to the designer labels on our clothes and accessories than we do food labels. But reading labels can help you make wise food choices.

Most packaged foods in the grocery store list nutrition information on the package in a section called "Nutrition Facts." The information on the left side of the label provides total amounts of different nutrients per serving. Choose your food wisely by checking the total amounts.

Want to turn some heads? Then take a healthy, nutritious approach to eating by learning about nutrition facts. When you do, you'll label yourself healthy and get noticed for more than what you're wearing.

Source: American Diabetes Association



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TOTAL AMOUNTS TO CHECK FOR WHEN READING FOOD LABELS:

- Total Fat
- Saturated Fat
- Cholesterol
- Sodium
- Total Carbohydrates
- Calories
- Fiber

MAKING NUTRITIOUS FOOD CHOICES

You're on the run and starving, and the triple meat cheeseburger and super-size fries are clamoring for your attention. While it's okay to occasionally indulge yourself in this caloric creation, there are ways to cure the desire for unhealthy fast food choices.

Try these great ideas to help you drive down fat and calories at the drive-through:

- Pass on the “value-size”—the size of your fries isn't the only thing that gets bigger
- Skip the high-fat sides, or consider a fruit cup or side salad with low-fat dressing
- Eat your sandwich open-faced to help eliminate unnecessary calories
- Try asking for a wheat bun rather than white
- Forgo the mayo and other calorie-laden dressings and sauces



Ready to super-size your health? Put these ideas into practice and say goodbye to fast food fever.

Source: American Heart Association

SIX CAN CHICKEN TORTILLA SOUP

Delicious and EASY zesty soup recipe that uses only 6 canned ingredients! Serve over tortilla chips, and top with shredded Cheddar cheese. Throw away the cans and no one will know that it is not from scratch!"

Prep Time: 5 Minutes

Cook Time: 15 Minutes

Ready In: 20 Minutes

Servings: 6

Ingredients:

1 (15 ounce) can whole kernel corn, drained

2 (14.5 ounce) cans chicken broth

1 (10 ounce) can chunk chicken

1 (15 ounce) can black beans

1 (10 ounce) can diced tomatoes with green chile peppers, drained

Directions:

Open the cans of corn, chicken broth, chunk chicken, black beans, and diced tomatoes with green chilies. Pour everything into a large saucepan or stock pot. Simmer over medium heat until chicken is heated through.



SEARCHING FOR HIDDEN WATER LEAKS



Searching for leaks and other hidden losses of water can be an adventure. Consider enlisting your kids to help and offering them a prize if they successfully identify a leak. To check for a water leak, turn off all water sources in and around your home. If the triangular dial remains stationary, there is no water flowing through the meter, hence no leaks. If it continues to move, you have a leak. To detect how much water is being lost, note the position of the sweep hand. Wait at least 15 minutes and check the position of the sweep hand again. This method only identifies leaks that are ongoing. Some installed devices such as pool pumps may leak only when they are running.

Fixing a leak is simple, inexpensive, and can save more than 500 gallons each month. Here are some useful tips:

- Listen for dripping faucets and toilets that intermittently refill themselves.
- Pools and spas may have leaks in their basins, piping, or pumps.
- Don't forget to check outdoor faucets, pipes, and hoses. Check your sprinkler system valves. Investigate unexplained patches of damp earth.
- Check your evaporative cooler, if you have one, to ensure that the recirculation pump is working properly.
- Problems with the automatic recharge cycle of water softeners are common. A faulty timer or stuck solenoid may waste hundreds of gallons during the night.
- Catch a silent leak from your toilet tank into the bowl by putting a few drops of dark food coloring into the water tank. Wait 10 minutes. If the colored water seeps into the bowl, your toilet is leaking. Sometimes the float arm gets out of adjustment, allowing water to flow down the overflow tube. More commonly, the flapper valve needs to be replaced.

Investigate if you notice a "hot spot" underneath your floor—this could indicate a broken hot water pipe under the concrete slab.

Source: www.mesaaz.gov/conservation



**YOU CAN PLAN
and prepare
balanced meals for your family**

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LORRIE COOP CEA-FCS
PO BOX 22BENJAMIN, TX 79505
940-459-2651
knox@ag.tamu.edu

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KNOX COUNTY
EXTENSION & 4-H**