

Cooperative Extension

F.Y.I.

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The University of Arizona • Cooperative Extension • Maricopa County

2006 Walk Across Arizona is Coming!!

How far can you and your family, neighbors or co-workers walk in 16 weeks? All 455 plus miles from Yuma to Page or 484 miles from Bisbee to Page or somewhere else across Arizona?? **Start a team of 6-10 people** to “Walk Across Arizona.” Teams have a friendly competition to see who can get their friends, co-workers and family out to build a healthy habit and walk for fitness. “Walk Across Arizona” is part of the Healthy Lifestyles programming outreach through the University of Arizona Cooperative Extension. Walking with friends is a great way to get fit for the new year, gain new friends and reduce health risks. In 2005 more than 140 teams with 1240 participants from work sites, churches, schools, and neighborhoods completed more than 180,000 miles!

Be a team captain and start gathering your team now! Make physical activity part of your New Year’s resolutions.

Kickoff is January 18, 2006 at the UA Cooperative Extension, 4341 E. Broadway Rd. from 11 AM – 6 PM to bring team registrations along with individual sign-up forms. 2006 Walk Across Arizona begins Sunday, January 22nd through Saturday, May 13th.

The registration fee of \$10.00 per adult and \$5.00 per youth under the age of 10 for Maricopa County residents includes a “Walk Across Arizona” t-shirt and information on healthy lifestyles, managing weight, safety and more. Team captains can turn in their team-individual sign-up forms and receive a start-up packet at the kick-off January 18th between 11 AM and 6 PM at the UA Cooperative Extension office. Participants will be eligible for eight-week midpoint promotional gifts and healthy lifestyles classes during the 16 weeks. Participants completing the wrap-up forms and 16 weeks of walking will be

submitted for the grand prize drawing in May, 2006. For more information or team and individual registration forms, visit the web site – cals.arizona.edu/maricopa/fcs/walk.htm. Captains report the miles their team members walked each week online and can track their progress on the website.

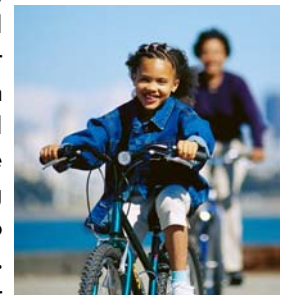
Team captains should contact Walk Across Arizona by email to shday@ag.arizona.edu or call 602-470-8086, extension 332 for a team registration form, team on-line ID and password for the on-line registration. Visit the Walk Across Arizona website for Maricopa County at cals.arizona.edu/maricopa/fcs/walk.htm to download team and individual registration forms. Sponsorships are still available for organizations and companies to help promote healthy living in Arizona and support Walk Across Arizona.

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Healthy Active Kids

Cooperative Extension is sponsoring an all day Healthy Active Kids workshop on Friday, January 13th to help partners and volunteers learn more about including active lifestyle programs in our communities for children and their families. The workshop is free to people interested in getting involved in working with a team to reduce overweight issues in children. Please call Sharon Hoelscher Day at 602-470-8086, extension 332 for more information.



Germ City

Clean Hands – Healthy Children – Healthy People

It's happening in schools, on cruise ships, in restaurants, in health care settings, and in your home. Every year, thousands of Americans become ill - severe vomiting, diarrhea, headache, fever, abdominal pain, and nausea. It seems to spread like a wild fire through schools with symptoms lasting several days. Often called the "24-hour" flu, this illness is the second most likely infection in America after the common cold.

It's called Norwalk or Norwalk Like Virus. Humans are the only known hosts. People get Norwalk virus infection by swallowing food or water that has been contaminated with microscopic viral particles from the stool of an infected person. That's how the virus is most commonly spread from one person to another.

This illness spreads rapidly from person to person when hands are not washed after toileting. Any surface the ill person touches, like door knobs, faucet handles or computer keyboards may be contaminated. When a healthy person touches the same surface, they can easily carry the virus to the food and water they consume. This is especially true when people don't take time to wash their hands prior to preparing food or eating.

One of the best ways to stay healthy and fight the flu is to wash your hands frequently and well: especially before preparing food, eating meals, and snacks. This simple step will make a difference in your health and the health of your family and friends. Clean Hands means Healthy Children and Healthy People!

"Hand washing is the single most important means of preventing the spreading of infection."

Centers for Disease Control – Atlanta, GA

It's a Dirty Little Secret

Several studies have shown that adults fail to wash their hands frequently and effectively. In 2002, the American Society for Microbiology asked 1,021 people, "Do you always wash your hands after using the bathroom?" 95% responded they did. When 7,836 adults were observed in a subsequent follow-up study in public restrooms in five major metropolitan areas, only 68% even placed their hands under running water prior to leaving the restroom.

A 1999 study conducted in 82 cities in North America by Audits International showed at least one critical violation that could lead to food borne illness occurred in 69% of the households. The most frequently observed critical violations

were cross contamination (31%), improper cooling of leftovers (29%), and neglected hand washing (29%).

Take time today and make plans to encourage good hand washing in your home.

Germ City is a new project to teach children and their families more effective handwashing. If you would like to get involved or volunteer to help with Germ City, call Sharon at 602-470-886, extension 332 or email shday@ag.arizona.edu or visit our website: <http://www.cals.arizona.edu/maricopa/fcs/germcity.htm> for more information.

Happy Holidays? Cope with Stress, Tension

"I'm dreading the holidays. Something always happens and I usually become very upset. Is there anything I can do to de-stress and actually enjoy myself this year?"

First, you're not alone. The holiday "blues" often stem from the demands of the season – shopping (on a deadline, no less), parties, family obligations, housecleaning, decorating, house guests – you name it, there's always something extra to sap your time and energy.

It's also often a time many people feel lonely or soberly self-reflective as the year draws to a close. Combine that with fatigue, financial stress, and disappointments stemming from unrealistic expectations, and you have a solid mix for stress, tension and even depression.

The National Mental Health Association offer tips for coping during the holidays. Among them are:

- **Be realistic about time and traditions.** Be sure to pace yourself during the holidays. Remember, you don't have to accept every invitation. Prioritize your activities, and make sure you have the time and energy to enjoy the ones that are most important to you. And be sure you don't get so caught up in yearning for the "good old days" that you can't enjoy today's festivities. Traditions change over time, no matter how enjoyable they once were. Try something new; you might find you like it.
- **Accept that it's OK to feel sad or lonely.** These are common feelings this time of year, especially if a loved one has recently died or you've been through another stressful situation. If you feel this way, know that it's normal and that you don't have to force yourself to be happy just because it's the holidays.
- **Reach out to others.** If you're hosting the family gathering this year, get help for meal preparation and clean-up. If you feel alone and have few obligations on

your time, try volunteering at a local church or organization. Reaching out to family and friends, contacting someone you haven't heard from for awhile, and getting involved in larger causes can get you the support and companionship you may be looking for.

- **Keep up healthy habits.** Holidays shouldn't be your excuse to over-indulge on sweets, snacks, or alcohol. Some indulgence is okay, but going overboard can lead to additional stress, guilt, and, in the case of alcohol, depression. Be sure to build in time for both physical activity and sleep. Take a walk everyday and plan to start your own Walk Across Arizona team!

Phishing: Don't Take the Bait

There's a new sport in town that involves some real poachers. It's called "phishing" – and the phishermen are trolling for you.

Phishers use spam – unwanted email – to lure people into fake web sites to obtain personal information and commit identity theft. Victims receive fraudulent emails containing authentic looking logos and familiar graphics. They often will lead to a "spoofed," or fake site that looks authentic. You're asked to divulge account information or other personal data such as usernames, passwords, and Social Security numbers.

Your credit union or bank never will send you an email – or call you by phone – asking for personal data. They already have this information.

Studies show that most identity theft still occurs when thieves obtain information from paper – by digging through trash cans or stealing from mailboxes. Even so, it's a fact that even the most tech-savvy people can be victims of phishing attacks.

Take these measures to help avoid becoming the "catch" of the day:

Be a cautious Internet user

- ✓ *Install a firewall as your first line of defense.* This is the primary block between you and other computers on the network. Also install, run, and update antivirus and anti-spyware programs.
- ✓ *Ensure your browser is up-to-date with security patches.*
- ✓ *Never use e-links within email to visit a web site.* Open a new browser window and type the URL (uniform resource locator) in the address bar.
- ✓ *Don't fill out emailed forms that ask for personal information.* The only way you should send credit card or account information is via a secure web site – you'll see

https (s for secure) and the padlock icon on the browser frame; click on the lock to view the security certificate.

- ✓ *Be cautious of urgent emails requesting personal information.* Phony emails often include upsetting or exciting statements to get people to respond. DON'T. If a company or financial institution really needs to update your expired credit card number, for instance, you'll be able to take care of it the next time you make a transaction, or by a telephone call you place to the company's customer service number on the card.
- ✓ *Be suspicious if someone claiming to be from your financial institution asks for confidential information.* This information should already be on file.
- ✓ *Always review statements closely.* Report any suspicious activity immediately to whomever the statement is from. Most financial institutions and online companies will reimburse customers for any phishing losses. If you generally receive statements by mail, call the company if a statement is late to make sure an ID thief hasn't redirected your mail by changing your address.
- ✓ *If you have online access, monitor your accounts frequently.* That assures you'll notice unauthorized transaction promptly and can take steps to prevent more transactions.
- ✓ *Change your online banking and shopping account passwords often – experts suggest every three to six months.* If your information is caught, your passwords should be out-of-date by the time crooks try to sell the data to other phishers. Experts recommend using passwords with a combination of letters (upper and lowercase), numbers, and symbols.
- ✓ *Request a free copy of your credit report from the three major credit reporting agencies – Experian (experian.com, 888-397-3742); Equifax (equifax.com, 800-685-1111); and TransUnion (transunion.com, 800-888-4213).* The Fair and Accurate Credit Transactions Act (FACT Act) requires each major credit bureau to provide one free credit report annually to consumers who request a copy (annualcreditreport.com, 877-322-8228).
- ✓ *If you've mistakenly taken the bait, call the company that's been spoofed right away.* If you're quick enough, you might be able to change your password or account number in time to stop unauthorized transactions.

Source: © 2005 Credit Union National Association, Inc., the trade association for credit unions in the U.S.

Whole Grains, the Other Carbohydrate

Low to no carbohydrate diets are the current craze for a nation obsessed with being thin, yet becoming increasingly obese. With the carb cutting rage, many people are missing the benefits of eating whole grain foods. The new MyPyramid adds new emphasis on eating **WHOLE** grains.

Whole grains are complex carbohydrates that help lower the risk of developing some life threatening, nutrition-related diseases. They naturally provide the body with essential nutrients that are often lacking in processed carbohydrate foods. Choosing to go the low or no carb route could lead to missing the benefits of whole grain, the other carbohydrate. Grains are divided into 2 subgroups, **whole grains** and **refined grains**.

Whole grains are mainly associated with providing roughage in the diet, keeping the digestive system free flowing and healthy. However, in addition to the excellent and long standing digestive benefits, whole grains have many other great health benefits, such as providing cancer fighting agents, improving cholesterol panels, and lowering the chances of developing heart disease. Brown rice, 100% whole wheat bread, and ready-to-eat whole grain breakfast cereals are examples of whole grain food products that have these health benefits. Refined grains have been milled, a process that removes the bran and *germ*. This is done to give grains a finer texture and improve their shelf life, but it also removes dietary fiber, iron, and many B vitamins. Some examples of refined grain products are: white flour, degermed cornmeal, white bread or white rice.

Most refined grains are *enriched*. This means certain B vitamins (thiamin, riboflavin, niacin, folic acid) and iron are added back after processing. Fiber is not added back to enriched grains. Check the ingredient list on refined grain products to make sure that the word “enriched” is included in the grain name. Some food products are made from mixtures of whole grains and refined grains.

Consuming all parts of the grain is more nutritious for the body than consuming only parts of the grain. The outer portion of the grain is the bran. Bran contains an abundance of fiber, which helps improve cholesterol and further reduces the risk of developing heart disease. The bran also has phytochemicals, also called phytonutrients.

Phytochemicals are getting lots of attention because of the beneficial, natural defense system they provide the body. Phytochemicals, the innate defense systems of plants, help plants ward off fungi, viruses, and bacteria. When people consume a plant product, the same defense system is inherited, which helps them fight against cancer, heart disease and diabetes.

The smallest, but still important, part of the whole grain is the *germ*. The *germ* also contains phytochemicals, but vitamin E as well. Vitamin E, antioxidant vitamin, is important in protecting against heart disease and cancer. Depression fighting B vitamins are found in both the germ and bran.

The powerhouse, energy portion of the whole grain is the endosperm. It is the largest part of the grain and is used to make processed breads, cereals, rice, and pasta, after removal of the bran and germ. Twenty-five to ninety percent of the nutrients in whole grains are lost when they are processed and are added back later. Although some people may choose to consume bran and wheat germ separately from the whole grain, it is more valuable to eat the whole grain because the nutrients work together.

Part 2: Choose Whole Grains will be in the next newsletter.

Your Information Source

If you have questions about water treatment, food safety, home care, food preparation or other everyday problems, call Cooperative Extension, your Free Information Source. Master Consumer Advisors (MCA's) have the latest, research-based information. Some of the newest information is on home water treatment options and consumer water issues. Call 602-470-8086, extension 341 to talk with an MCA volunteer or leave your phone number and question at any time and someone will get back to you. Additional information is available online at our website – cals.arizona.edu/maricopa/fcs/water.htm or send your question by email from this site.

Food Acidity

The acidity level, or pH, of foods determines whether they should be processed in a boiling water canner or pressure canner. The lower the pH, the more acidic the food.

Acidic foods have pH values below 4.6. These foods include pickles, most fruits, and jams and jellies made from fruit. (In pickling, the acid level is increased by adding lemon juice, citric acid, or vinegar). Acidic foods contain enough acidity either to stop the growth of botulinum bacteria or destroy the bacteria more rapidly when heated. Acidic foods may be safely canned in a boiling water canner.

Low-acid foods have pH values higher than 4.6. They do not contain enough acid to prevent the growth of botulinum bacteria. These foods are processed at temperatures of 240 degrees F to 250 degrees F, attainable with pressure canners operated at 10 to 15 pounds per square inch (psi) of pressure. The exact time depends on the kind of food being canned, the way it is packed in jars, and the size of jars.

When you mix low-acid and high-acid foods, assume the mixture remains low-acid.

Although tomatoes used to be considered an acidic food, some are now known to have pH values slightly above 4.6, which means they are low acid. To safely can them as acidic foods in a boiling water canner, you must add lemon juice or citric acid.

If you have not had your pressure canner gauge tested within the past year, contact our Master Consumer Advisors at 602-470-8086, extension 341 for testing details and options.

Take Steps to Avoid Diabetes

How is “pre-diabetes” different from regular diabetes?

Basically, if you have blood glucose levels that are higher than normal but not high enough to rate as full-blown diabetes, then you have “pre-diabetes.” If you have pre-diabetes, you’ll want to adjust your diet and exercise to regain control of blood glucose. Once you’re officially diagnosed with full-blown diabetes, the stakes get much higher.

Diabetes occurs when your body can’t use the glucose flowing through your blood stream after you eat. Normally, the hormone insulin helps your body’s cells take in glucose and use it for energy. If your pancreas doesn’t make enough insulin to allow your body’s cells to absorb that glucose, or if your body has developed insulin resistance and can’t make use of the insulin that the pancreas does produce, then you’ve got a problem.

You really don’t want all that glucose running amok in your bloodstream. It damages blood vessels, causing blindness, kidney and heart disease, and nerve problems that can cause leg and foot amputations. If you’re not one of the 20 million Americans who already has diabetes, you don’t want to become one.

The only way to find out your risk is to get tested. Your doctor will likely order a fasting glucose test, which measures your blood glucose level after an overnight fast. A normal result is below 100 milligrams of glucose per deciliter (mg/dl) of blood. If the result is between 100 and 125 mg/dl, you have “impaired fasting glucose,” or pre-diabetes. A level of 126 or higher indicates diabetes; a second test is needed for confirmation.

A more thorough exam is the glucose tolerance test, in which you consume a sugar solution and your blood is tested two hours later. A normal result is 140 mg/dl; between 140 and 199 indicates you have impaired glucose tolerance, another

pre-diabetic condition. A level of 200 or higher indicates diabetes.

To prevent or reverse pre-diabetes, become more active – for at least 30 minutes a day, five days a week. And, if you’re overweight, drop some pounds – even 10 or 15 can make a difference. To learn more, go to the Web site of the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases, <http://diabetes.niddk.nih.gov/>, and do a search for “insulin resistance.”

Source: Ohio State University Extension, Chow Line, November 2005.

Give up to \$200 Receive up to \$200

Arizona law (ARS 43-1088) provides a dollar-for-dollar tax credit for individuals making cash donations to qualifying charitable organizations.

University of Arizona Cooperative Extension contributors may participate in this 2005 tax credit program if the following conditions are met:

- ▶ This opportunity is available to individuals who have itemized deductions and deducted charitable contributions on a prior year’s Arizona return (1996 or later) at least once.
- ▶ The first such year establishes a baseline year and amount.
- ▶ The credit is figured on amounts over and above the baseline up to a maximum of \$200 for this specific credit.

The credit may be claimed in addition to other Arizona tax credits, such as those for public schools or school tuition organizations. First-time and ongoing donors to University of Arizona Cooperative Extension may qualify if the above conditions are met. You can support Family and Consumer Sciences programs like Bone Builders, Master Consumer Advisors, and general programs. Call 602-470-8086, extension 332 for options.



We recommend you consult your tax advisor. Questions may also be answered by calling Arizona Dept. Of Revenue at 602-255-3381 or 1-800-352-4090, or by accessing:

www.revenue.state.az.us

Thank you for your support!