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UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND / FEARLESS IDEAS



UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND EXTENSION

Prince George's County

April 2020

Your Monthly News & Updates



Greetings!

The current COVID-19 pandemic has caused changes throughout the entire country. University of Maryland Extension (UME) is committed to maintaining the resources Maryland needs to continue thriving during these trying times.

We are adjusting how we function to continue providing citizens with the knowledge and assistance

they need to stay productive and healthy,

UME is currently working to meet the changing needs of the community and transitioning educational programs and events to virtual platforms. Programming and events online will still be held throughout the day, evening and on weekends. Your local educators are available via email to offer advice and information. Please visit [your local extension office's website](#) for information on email and phone contact information.

Find a full list of resources on the COVID-19 epidemic, as well as tips on protecting health and financial wellness for you and your family at <https://extension.umd.edu/learn/covid-19-resources>.

As a part of the University of Maryland College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, UME follows the guidelines developed at the state and university level. Information and updates on the college's [response to COVID-19](#) can be found on the University of Maryland website.

Sincerely,



Karol Dyson
Capitol Area Extension Director
University of Maryland Extension



@UMEPGC

Staying Financially Healthy



It's normal to feel anxious and uncertain during this unprecedented time. Your personal health is most likely your No.1 priority. You should make every effort to stay healthy and safe from COVID-19. However, it's important to try to maintain your financial health as well.

Here are some tips on how you can keep your finances healthy during COVID-19.

Create a Spending Plan

A spending plan is simply a map for your money. Track your income and how and what you spend your money on and you will see where you are headed,

Spending > Income = Deficit.

Income > Spending = Surplus.

Take Inventory

Shelves are being emptied of everyday essentials such as food, hand sanitizers and, of course, toilet paper. Before you give in to the impulse to panic buy everything, take inventory of what you already have at home. Many of us already have well-stocked pantries and medicine cabinets that could help us survive for at least a few weeks. When it is time to shop, go prepared with a shopping list.

Streeeeetch Your Money

Eliminate nonessential spending. Practice needs vs. wants when it comes to how you spend your money.

Add to Your Emergency Fund

COVID-19 has taught us that yes, emergencies do happen. If you're fortunate enough to continue working, then it's a good time to add to your emergency fund since you'll most likely be staying at home during the next few weeks, and many temptations are removed as are your regular commuting costs.

Contact Your Lenders, Landlords and Utilities for Help

If your income has been affected by COVID-19, then you may find it difficult to keep up with your bills. It is a scary situation that can be overwhelming but don't make it worse by doing nothing. Contact your lenders, landlord and utility companies as soon as possible to let them know that your income has been affected by the virus. You might be surprised, but lenders may be willing to work with you. Most lenders will go out of their way to help you successfully navigate this difficult financial time.

In Conclusion...The world is unsettled and on edge due to the COVID-19 situation, but that doesn't mean your personal finances need to suffer. Take these small steps and others you may think of to mitigate any long-term financial damage, and when this is over you will emerge healthy in all aspects of your life.

Patricia Maynard
Family and Consumer Sciences
Financial Wellness Educator

Hydration

Summer is on its way, and it's bringing the heat! To stay hydrated in the summer months to come, drink at least 8 cups of water each day and even more if you are exposed to the heat or exercising. Water is one of the most essential nutrients that your body needs to function correctly, so it is important to meet intake goals each day!

Some tips to help keep yourself adequately hydrated:

- * Add natural flavoring to your water using fruits and herbs.
- * Carry a reusable water bottle with you and refill for free!
- * Try to drink throughout the day, not just when you feel thirsty.
- * Be sure to drink extra water before, during and after exercise.

Keep your taste buds on their toes by trying this recipe that uses easily accessible and affordable ingredients.

Fruit Infused Water: Strawberry, Lemon and Mint



Ingredients:

- 1 Lemon
- 1 Cup Fresh Strawberries
- 10 Mint Springs

Instructions:

1. Wash all ingredients under running water. Slice the lemon and strawberries, and bruise mint leaves.
2. Place everything in a jug or glass bottle, and pour over water.
3. Chill in the fridge for 4 hours before serving.

Beat Grocery Store Anxiety with FSNE

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, grocery stores have been even more chaotic and challenging to navigate. During these difficult times, the Food Supplement Nutrition Education (FSNE) program is here to provide you with some food safety tips. With our guidance, we will help you navigate your way through the grocery store as you purchase high quality and nutrient-dense foods to nourish you and your family during these difficult times properly. A good rule of thumb when grocery shopping is to shop

the perimeter of the store. The perimeter of the grocery store is where you will find all of the perishable items, such as fruits, vegetables, meats, dairy, and fish. These foods are typically fresh and hold the most nutritional value. However, it is essential to remember that all forms of fruit and vegetable intake count. Canned and frozen items contain vital nutrients; this is important to remember, especially during any emergency. Both canned and frozen items are a great way to stock up and maintain healthy habits while saving money for your family's food allowance. While selecting fresh produce has its own set of best practices, like choosing firm foods without any cracks, soft spots, or discoloration and always washing items before consumption, there are also best practices for selecting frozen and canned goods. Frozen and canned goods are essential when you are stocking up because they are cost-effective and preserve well, which means the food has a more



extended shelf and storage life. Buying frozen vegetables without any added salt, sugar, or sauces are the best way to maximize nutritional value and also decrease sugar, sodium, and caloric intake. Frozen fruits and vegetables can be stored for months at a time and offer a variety of ways to be incorporated into snacks and meals. Frozen vegetables can be incorporated into pasta, casseroles, soups, and stews, but can also be served alongside whole grains and lean meats or fish. Frozen fruit can be used to make smoothies or to add flavor to your water. Canned items can last even longer than frozen items, but to ensure that you are selecting the healthiest and safest option, then you should shop for canned vegetables that are either low in sodium or have no added salt. When shopping for canned fruit, look for fruit in water instead of syrup, and be sure to confirm that there is no added sugar on the nutrition label. Eating canned fruit

with added sugars would be similar to cutting an apple or mango and then pouring sugar on it, it adds no nutritional value, but it does add unnecessary calories. If possible, purchase a few extra cans in case of an emergency.

Sometimes it is a little intimidating grocery shopping during this pandemic, but here are some helpful tips to better prepare you. When preparing for grocery store shopping, make a shopping list in advance. Buy just 1 to 2 weeks worth of groceries at a time. It is best to keep a three-day supply of non-perishable foods on hand, which can be achieved by purchasing a wide variety of pantry items such as:

- • Canned fruits and vegetables
- • Canned beans
- • Canned meat like chicken and fish
- • Nut butter and crackers
- • 100% fruit and vegetable juice
- • Low-sodium soups
- • Nuts
- • Oats
- • Pasta sauce
- • Rice
- • Shelf-stable milk
- • Whole wheat bread and pasta

Having these foods on hand makes meals simple and easy. Be sure to avoid foods that will make you thirsty by having high sodium levels and avoid foods that either your family will not eat or that do not meet personal dietary preferences. Purchasing foods just because they are cheap can be wasteful if they are not consumed; buy items you are familiar with already, if possible. If you already have canned foods at home then, discard any cans that are swollen, deeply dented or corroded, even though the product may look safe to eat it could be spoiled.

As you can see, there is nothing to fear about shopping at the grocery store while keeping healthy choices at the top of your list. Remember that planning is key and that all forms count when it comes to being both healthy and prepared.

Are you looking for a new recipe to try at home with your family? Use our [Eat Smart Recipe Search](#) to search new recipes by ingredient, category, curricula, or title.

Did You Know

Did you know...Our 4-H Youth Development Program has found some distance learning websites? To keep up with posts about some activities and

information, please see our [Facebook Page](#) or visit our [News & Updates Page](#).



Did you know... Our Family and Consumer Science Team has found some financial resources that may be helpful? [Check out our website](#) for news and information.



Did you know... The Food Equity Council has Food Resources for Food Assistance? For more information [click here](#).



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Prince George's County, Maryland

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UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND EXTENSION

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