



the CommonHealth Compass

Put Your Best Foot Forward

Our poor, overworked feet! In a single day, the average person takes 8,000 to 10,000 steps. That works out to be 4 trips around the world over a lifetime. And we mistreat them terribly – standing on them for hours; walking on hard, unyielding surfaces; and cramming them into shoes that may be fashionable, but are often far from comfortable. It’s no wonder that 3 out of 4 adults eventually suffer from foot problems.

The human foot is truly an amazing piece of engineering, perfectly designed to give years of service – if you treat them right. When you walk, your feet bear the force of 1 ½ times your body weight. When you run, they feel the force of 2 to 3 times your body weight. That is a lot of work on your feet and your shoes.

Let CommonHealth help you “Put Your Best Foot Forward” beginning September 1. We’ll learn about:



- Common foot problems
- Keeping your feet strong on the inside
- Keeping your feet healthy on the outside
- Getting the right shoes
- Diabetic foot care
- Self-care and proper foot hygiene
- Simple exercises to keep your feet healthy and strong

Ask your agency CommonHealth coordinator to schedule one or more sessions.

RECIPE

Kale Salad with Fresh Strawberries and Toasted Almonds Recipe

As a great source of beta carotene, vitamins C and K, as well as vision-friendly lutein and zeaxanthin, raw kale makes this a nourishing, colorful and intensely-flavored salad!



Ingredients

- 1 large bunch kale leaves (9 cups bite-sized pieces kale leaves)
- Juice of 1 medium orange, divided
- ¼ cup plus 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- Pinch of salt
- 1 tablespoon orange zest
- 2 teaspoons honey
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 1 cup sliced strawberries (or blueberries, blackberries or raspberries)
- ¼ cup dried currants or raisins
- ¼ cup slivered almonds or pine nuts, toasted
- ¼ cup crumbled feta cheese, if desired

Directions

1. Remove and discard center ribs and stems from kale leaves. Tear kale leaves into bite-sized pieces.
2. Combine kale, half of orange juice, 1 tablespoon olive oil and salt in a large bowl. Massage kale by scrunching small amounts with your clean hands, then releasing and repeating. With massaging, kale will soften, somewhat deepen in color and become more fragrant.
3. Make the dressing by whisking remaining orange juice, orange zest, honey and pepper in a small bowl. Gradually whisk remaining ¼ cup olive oil into the juice mixture to combine well. Set aside.
4. Pour the dressing over kale. Add strawberries, currants and toasted almonds. Toss gently. Let salad ingredients marinate for 15 to 20 minutes before serving. If desired, top with feta cheese.

Nutritional Information

Serves: 6

Calories: 220; Calories from fat: 130; Total fat: 15g; Saturated fat: 2g; Trans fat: 0g; Cholesterol: 0mg; Sodium 120mg; Total carbohydrate: 21g; Dietary fiber: 4g; Sugars: 12g; Protein 5g

Recipe By: Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, <https://www.eatright.org/food/planning-and-prep/recipes/kale-salad-with-fresh-strawberries-and-toasted-almonds-recipe>



Fighting Weight Gain: Rhea Brown

Rhea Brown works at the DMV in Pulaski. Rhea has participated in CommonHealth since she started there and has worked hard to improve her health. She joined Weight Watchers on March 1, 2017 after hearing about it at a CommonHealth presentation. She has Lupus and Fibromyalgia and struggled with weight loss for a long time due to having to be on prednisone for a few years for Lupus. She had found success in the past with Weight Watchers. Her cardiologist suggested joining Weight Watchers because she was having a hard time keeping up with my kids and life in general. After putting it off for a while and gaining 15 pounds more, she recalled CommonHealth discussing the benefits of Weight Watchers, and Rhea decided to rejoin and regain her life back. She has also started working out with Zumba, the YMCA, and other exercise programs, which as Rhea says, “have been a very important part of my weight loss journey” She has lost a total of 72 pounds since joining Weight Watchers in 2017, and a total of 101 pounds in the past 2-3 years. “I haven’t felt this good in years! Weight Watchers and the Commonhealth programs are both amazing, and I am very thankful for them!”



Before and After: Rhea Brown is shown a few years ago at her highest weight, and about 10 pounds ago.

Making Changes for a Healthier Life: Sara Luna

Allie McCallum shared the inspiring story of her co-worker, Sara Luna, as an excellent example of how we can make small changes for our health. Allie noticed Sara eating healthier, walking during breaks, looking healthier overall, and even changing her demeanor. Allie asked if she would share her story and how she got started. We at CommonHealth are pleased to share Sara’s story here:



“I began changing my lifestyle when I noticed that my clothes started fitting quite snug. I felt lethargic, weak, and had back pain. At a health fair, I was screened for diabetes and learned that because of my family history of diabetes, weight, and sedentary lifestyle, I had a higher risk of developing the disease. I knew I had to make changes for a healthier life or continue suffering the consequences. For these reasons, I began changing my diet by making small changes such as choosing water over soda at meals, fruit as a snack over chips, whole wheat bread over white bread and other small decisions every day. I eventually created a profile on Choose MyPlate website and it provided me with the recommended amount of servings I needed from each food group, what counted as serving, and daily calorie intake. I used this information to tailor a diet that included these amounts. It was difficult at first because I had to portion out my meals and learn what foods belonged to each food group but with time I was able to do it by eyeballing instead of measuring. I was quite surprised of how much I was overeating and even more surprising was that I was full with what was on my plate. That is the beauty of fiber in vegetables, fruits, and whole grains!

I also incorporated physical activity by walking 30 minutes a day and slowly worked my way up to running and strength training several days a week. After 6 months, I had lost 12 pounds but gained so much more in return. I had more energy, slept better, my clothes fit and the best part was that my back pain was gone! It has been a difficult but rewarding journey and now these changes are part of my daily lifestyle. For anyone that wants to improve their health, I would say that small changes in your diet and physical activity goes a long way and to not worry about getting fast results for it is a journey not a race to a healthier you.”

We are so proud to share Rhea’s and Sara’s inspiring stories. CommonHealth is always here to help other state employees get started on the path to a healthy lifestyle.



Four Ways Low-Calorie Diets Can Sabotage Your Health

Your body requires energy to power its biological functions such as digestion, breathing and pumping blood, along with the activity you do throughout the day. Did you know that your resting metabolic rate (the amount of energy your body uses at rest) makes up the majority of your total energy expenditure? It's important to consume enough energy from food to keep your body functioning normally. If you eat too few calories, you put your health at risk in the following ways.

You Won't Meet Your Nutrient Needs

It's easy to underestimate the significance of something you can't see or feel, but vitamins, minerals, fiber and other nutrients are just as important to your long-term well-being as the number on the scale.

For example, dietary calcium is important for both bone health and bodily functions such as muscle control and circulation. For the first 30 years of life, the body stores excess calcium in bones. After 30, you stop gaining bone mass and rely on existing stockpiles to keep your bones strong for the rest of your life. If you can't meet your calcium needs, your body is forced to "break open the piggy bank" and scavenge your bones for this crucial mineral. This process increases your risk for osteoporosis (thinning of the bones and loss of bone density) and hip fractures.

And, even with great planning, it can be difficult to get enough vitamin E, a fat-soluble vitamin found in foods such as nuts and oils, on a low-calorie diet. Vitamin E is an immune-booster and antioxidant that protects cells from free radical damage — the kind of damage that can cause cancer and chronic disease.

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When you don't eat enough, your body goes into survival mode and starts breaking down muscle for energy.

You Slow Your Metabolism

When you don't eat enough, your body goes into survival mode and starts breaking down muscle to release the glucose stored inside, which can be used for energy. Because you're not taking in enough calories, your body slows down your metabolism in an effort to conserve energy. You might feel sluggish and cold and have gastrointestinal abnormalities, such as constipation.

You Lose Your Mental Edge

Your brain runs on glucose just like a car runs on gasoline, and it needs a constant supply to keep everything running smoothly. If you're hungry all day and running on fumes, you can't work at peak capacity.

You Might Get Gallstones

Very low-calorie diets (around 800 calories per day), cause rapid weight loss and increase the risk of gallstones, which may cause abdominal pain and require surgery.

How do you know how low is too low? It depends on many factors that vary among individuals. A registered dietitian nutritionist who has the expertise to devise a nutrition plan tailored to your needs can help.

Source: Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics; <https://www.eatright.org/health/weight-loss/your-health-and-your-weight/4-ways-low-calorie-diets-can-sabotage-your-health>



Tips for a Healthy Cookout

From traditional favorites such as hot dogs to side dishes and desserts, grilling is a great way to add flavor to all types of food. Make sure you do it right with these healthy grilling tips.

Before the Big Cookout

Start by cleaning your grill. Scrub it with hot, soapy water. Then, when you're ready to cook, allow the grill to heat up sufficiently to eliminate potential bacteria problems.

Be sure you have the right tools. Relying on color alone does not ensure the doneness of meat, poultry and fish. A food thermometer is the only way to ensure food has been cooked to a safe internal temperature.

And, remember to pack extra plates and utensils because it's important to separate: use one set for raw meat, poultry and seafood; and the other set for cooked and ready-to-eat foods. The same rule of separation applies when marinating foods. Do not use the same brush to baste raw meat as you do for cooked foods, as doing so can contaminate the cooked foods and result in food poisoning.

Setting the Menu

Once you're equipped for a safe cookout, think beyond the traditional favorites. Start building your healthful barbecue around fruits and vegetables, which are low in calories, high in fiber and packed with the nutrients you need. Look no further than your local grocery store or farmers' market for fresh, seasonal fruits and vegetables.

Here are a few ideas for featuring fruits and vegetables at your barbecue:

■ Go Lean

Grill marinated portobello mushrooms or turkey burgers. Ground turkey breast can be as lean as 99% fat-free. Add cilantro, shallots or chili sauce to spice things up. Or, mix in feta cheese, Kalamata olives, oregano and pepper and serve on a pita with fresh tomatoes and cucumbers for a Greek-style burger. Just remember to use a food thermometer to ensure ground turkey reaches a safe temperature of 165°F.

■ Grill Vegetables

Baste vegetables such as red peppers, corn, eggplant, summer squash, sweet potatoes, cherry tomatoes, mushrooms or onions, season with herbs and place directly on a hot grill (or a piece of tin foil) until they are tender and brown.

■ Don't Forget Dessert

Grill fruit kabobs, pineapple slices or peach halves on low heat until the fruit is hot and slightly golden for a tasty and nutritious dessert. Grill watermelon for 30 seconds on each side to bring out unique flavors. You also could carve out a watermelon to use as a bowl for fruit salad!

Source: Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics; <https://www.eatright.org/food/planning-and-prep/cooking-tips-and-trends/tips-for-a-healthy-cookout>



Family Corner

Looking for a way to stay cool this summer with the family? Think underground! Virginia boasts four top notch caverns that stay cool (about 55 degrees) even when the heat above ground is scorching. Exploring the natural formations and soaking up the history on a family friendly tour makes these destinations in Virginia's Shenandoah Valley a great pick for summer fun. As you plan your trip, look for Shenandoah Caverns, Luray Caverns, Grand Caverns, and Natural Bridge Caverns. Underground adventures and natural wonders await you and your family this summer!



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