

FOOD NEWS FLASH

Happy
New Year!

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RESOLVE TO EAT HEALTHFULLY IN THE NEW YEAR

Small, simple steps will take you on the road to becoming more fit or losing a few unwanted pounds in the new year, according to Susan Nitzke, University of Wisconsin-Extension nutrition specialist and professor of nutritional sciences at UW-Madison. "Change your diet in ways that will work for you all year long," says Nitzke. "Drastic changes can be hard to maintain because they make you feel overwhelmed or deprived," she says.

Pick one or two tips from the following list and make it routine. "When you've mastered one improvement, add another healthy habit or two and keep working toward your long-term health and fitness goals," says Nitzke.

- Buy milk with less fat. If you're drinking whole milk, switch to 2 percent for a few weeks and eventually go down to 1 percent or nonfat milk.
- Avoid mindless eating. If snacking in front of the television or computer screen is a problem, find an activity like knitting that will keep your hands busy. Or stock up on nutritious snacks like apples, low-fat cheese or whole-wheat crackers.
- Be realistic and plan ahead. If you want to drink less soda, think about types of drinks you may need to take its place. Stock up on nonfat milk, tea and other beverages without added sugar. Keep cold water and lime slices in the refrigerator for a quick thirst-quencher.
- Keep moving on a daily basis. Park a few extra blocks from work, take the stairs instead of the elevator, or ask a friend to take a brisk walk with you every Saturday morning.
- Avoid fads. Don't bother finding the latest diet book. Instead, keep a diary of your food and exercise habits for a few days and make a sensible plan for gradual improvement.
- Remember that small, concrete changes add up to significant results over time. Cutting just 100 calories each day from your diet, or burning an extra 100 calories through exercise each day will result in a 10-pound weight loss in the next year.
- Consider brown-bagging it. At work, rather than eating at vending machines or fast food places, bring something quick and nutritious from home. Lunch ideas aren't limited to sandwiches. Include salads, yogurt with fresh fruit, a low-fat frozen entree for the microwave, or reheated leftovers from last night's dinner.

"Don't be too hard on yourself if your eating habits aren't perfect right away in the New Year," Nitzke says. "Instead, be positive and keep making improvements that will fit your lifestyle for the whole year and beyond."

Written by Susan Nitzke, University of Wisconsin-Extension nutrition specialist and professor of nutritional sciences at UW-Madison.

RECIPES **Soups are easy to make and easy on the food budget!**

EASY CHILI

2 POUNDS LEAN GROUND BEEF
 2 MEDIUM ONIONS, CHOPPED (ABOUT 1 CUP)
 1 SMALL GREEN PEPPER, CHOPPED (ABOUT 1/2 CUP)
 1 TABLESPOON CHILI POWDER
 3 CUPS TOMATO JUICE
 1/3 CUP KETCHUP
 2 (15.5 OUNCE) CANS KIDNEY BEANS, DRAINED AND RINSED

1. IN A LARGE SKILLET, OVER MEDIUM HEAT, BROWN BEEF, ONIONS, AND GREEN PEPPER UNTIL BEEF IS BROWNED AND MIXTURE FALLS APART. DRAIN AND DISCARD FAT.
 2. ADD CHILI POWDER, TOMATO JUICE, KETCHUP, AND BEANS.
 3. HEAT TO A BOIL. REDUCE HEAT TO LOW AND COOK 15 MINUTES.
 RECIPE PROVIDED BY CAMPBELL'S
 MAKES APPROXIMATELY 12 CUPS.



SPLIT PEA SOUP

1 CUP DRIED SPLIT PEAS	1/2 TEASPOON GARLIC POWDER
1 SMALL ONION, CHOPPED	SALT AND PEPPER TO TASTE
1 TABLESPOON BUTTER	<u>ADD THESE IF YOU'D LIKE TO:</u>
2-1/2 CUPS CHICKEN BROTH	1/2 POUND SMOKED HAM, DICED
1/2 TEASPOON THYME	1/4 CUP GRATED CARROT
1/2 TEASPOON SAGE	

WASH AND DRAIN SPLIT PEAS IN COLANDER. COOK ONION IN BUTTER IN A 3-4 QUART SAUCEPAN UNTIL TENDER. PUT REMAINING INGREDIENTS INTO THE POT AND MIX TOGETHER. BRING TO A BOIL. LOWER HEAT AND COVER POT. SIMMER ABOUT 1-1/2 HOURS UNTIL THICKENED. MAKES 3 SERVINGS.



CHICKEN SOUP

1/2 CUP CHICKEN, COOKED AND CUT INTO BITE SIZED PIECES
 5 CUPS CHICKEN BROTH
 2/3 CUP SLICED CELERY
 1/2 CUP SLICED CARROTS (OR 1 CAN CARROTS, DRAINED)
 1/4 CUP CHOPPED ONION
 1 TABLESPOON DRIED PARSLEY
 1/2 CUP FROZEN PEAS
 1 CUP PASTA, UNCOOKED

IN A LARGE 3-4 QUART SAUCEPAN, COMBINE CHICKEN, BROTH, CELERY, CARROTS, ONION, AND PARSLEY. SIMMER, COVERED, UNTIL VEGETABLES ARE SOFT. ADD PEAS AND PASTA. COOK ABOUT 15 MINUTES OR UNTIL PASTA IS TENDER. COOL SLIGHTLY AND SERVE. MAKES 4-6 SERVINGS.

COMMUNITY RESOURCES

FREE Income Tax Assistance in Portage County

Low-to-moderate income individuals/families and those 60 and over qualify for free tax assistance.

TCE

Tax Counseling for the Elderly

Administered by AARP Tax-Aide for people age 60 or older

VITA

Volunteer Tax Assistance

For low-to-moderate income people of all ages (household income in 2011 \$49,000 or less)

**** Starting January 9, 2012 ****

Simply dial 2-1-1 or 1-800-922-5590 to make your free tax preparation appointment.

Call this confidential United Way Community Info line

Monday – Friday 8am-5pm to schedule your tax prep appointment.

TAX PREPARATION LOCATIONS:

Aging & Disability Resource Ctr – Lincoln Ctr (TCE)

1519 Water Street, Stevens Point

Taking Thursday and Friday Appointments

Portage County Public Library (TCE)

1001 Main Street, Stevens Point

Taking Saturday Appointments

Mid-State Technical College (VITA)

933 Michigan Avenue, Stevens Point

Taking Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday Appointments



Tax preparation services start on February 2 and run through April 14.

Note: Some complex tax situations cannot be handled. These include part-year residents, states other than WI, divorce during 2011, foreclosure, business (certain simple self-employment is OK), farm, rental income, depreciation. These and certain other complex tax situations are beyond the scope of our volunteers' training.

Tax preparation services brought to you through a collaborative effort with AARP Tax-Aide, Aging and Disability Resource Center-Lincoln Center, CAP Services, Portage County Library, Mid-State Technical College, United Way of Portage County, and United Way's 2-1-1.

*If you experience difficulty connecting to 2-1-1 using your cell phone, please dial 1-800-922-5590.

The NEW Dietary Guidelines, MyPlate

Take action on the Dietary Guidelines by making changes in these three areas. Choose steps that work for you and start today.

Balancing Calories

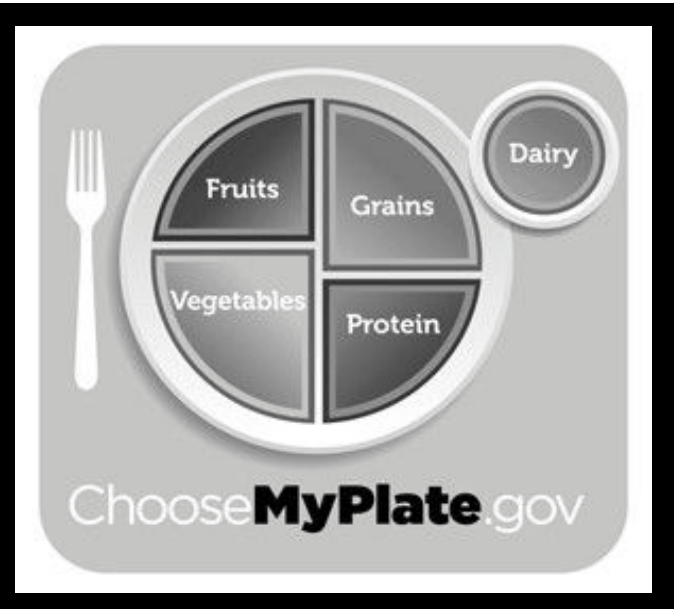
- Enjoy your food, but eat less.
- Avoid oversized portions.

Foods to Increase

- Make half your plate fruits and vegetables.
- Make at least half your grains whole grains.
- Switch to fat-free or low-fat milk.

Foods to Reduce

- Compare sodium in foods like soup, bread, and frozen meals and choose foods with lower numbers.
- Drink water instead of sugary drinks.



 United States Department of Agriculture

What is the Earned Income Credit??

The Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)

sometimes called the Earned Income Credit (EIC), is a refundable federal income tax credit for people who earn low-to-moderate incomes. Working families and individuals may keep more of what they work for.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE EITC, VISIT www.irs.gov/eitc or call 1-800-TAX-1040



See if you may be eligible for Foodshare (Foodstamps) *online!*

**All information is private.
www.access.wisconsin.gov**

**Request your Free Annual Credit Report
www.annualcreditreport.com**

UW-EXTENSION NUTRITION EDUCATION PROGRAM

HEALTHY BEGINNINGS, Ruth Gilfry Center, 817 Whiting Ave., Stevens Point, WI 54481

Phone: 715-346-1664 WNEP education is supported by the USDA Food Stamp Program, UW-Extension and local partners. FoodShare can help provide a healthy diet. To find out more about FoodShare, call 715-345-5350.



UW-Extension provides equal opportunities in employment and programming, including Title IX and ADA.