

Family and Consumer Newsletter

Yadkin County Center

January 2009



Winter Edition

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2009-Healthier Year

If you have been putting off lifestyle changes that you have been meaning to make, now is the time! A new study by researchers at the Medical University of South Carolina reported that participants that made 4 significant lifestyle changes later in life lowered their risk of heart disease by 35% and their overall risk of premature death by 40% in just 4 years. Researchers began the study in the late 1980's with adults (ages 45-64) at risk for atherosclerosis. The study showed the most significant improvement came when adopting all 4 of the healthy lifestyles. Adding just 3 of the healthy habits yielded no measurable heart benefit and only a modest decrease in overall risk of death. Results showed that within 4 years that participants had caught up with those who had been doing these behaviors all along. Lead researcher, Dana King, MD, added, "Even if you have not had a healthy lifestyle previously, it's not too late to adopt those healthy lifestyle habits and gain almost immediate benefits."

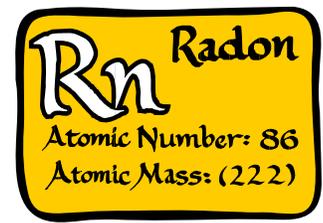
The 4 Healthy Habits to Adopt are:

- Eating the recommended 5 or more fruits and vegetables daily
- Exercising 2 1/2 hours or more per week
- Keeping weight down
- Quit smoking

Fitness for Your Brain

Growing evidence through studies are showing that exercise and keeping fit helps keep your brain in shape also. There is also evidence that exercise prevents and actually reverses mental decline. The Journal of the American Geriatrics Society researchers, found that seniors enrolled in a fall prevention exercise program not only suffered fewer falls, but also improved cognitive function. After 1 year of exercise, the group had 36% fewer repeat falls. Another study done by Erickson and Kramer states that "an active lifestyle with moderate amounts of aerobic activity will likely improve cognitive and brain function." They define the most effective exercise as physical activity strenuous enough to make a person breathless. So let's get in those 30 minutes per day to get fit, prevent falls and improve our brain power!

National Radon Action Month

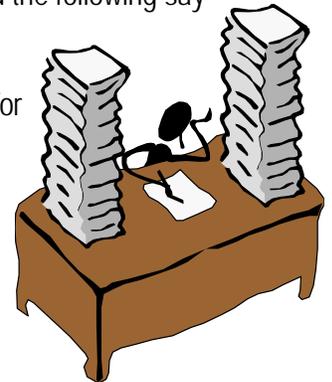


January has been named as the National Radon Action Month by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer in the United States. Testing your home is the only way to determine the level of radon present. The EPA recommends radon levels to be below 4pCi/l (picocuries). During January, the NC Radon Program is offering free radon test kits to citizens of NC to encourage homeowners to test their residence. Generally, radon is found in counties of higher elevations but it is an environmental precaution to test any home. For a free radon test kit, email <http://www.ncradon.org/freetestkitsjan2009.htm>. Instructions will be included. If you do not have access to a computer to order a test kit, contact the Yadkin County Center at 679-2061 for assistance.

4 Sayings to Help You Organize

Do you need to begin the new year by organizing your home? With a positive attitude and the following sayings, you can get started today.

1. **A home for everything and everything in it's place.** Designate a specific location for all your items and return to it's home when finished using. Don't give clutter a chance to form. You'll find it when you need it, and your environment will remain clutter-free.
2. **File, don't pile.** Our paper volume increases by the day, so don't let it pile up. As you bring in the daily mail, sort, recycle, file. A paper shredder by the door is a good way to eliminate junk mail as it comes in the house. If you take time to file bills and other important papers, it won't grow to a large pile.
3. **Quality over quantity.** Remember to place your emphasis on quality rather than quantity to avoid clutter and chaos. The more items we possess, the easier it is to form clutter. It's more important to have fewer things that you really enjoy and use than a lot of things you will never use. To stay organized, simplify your life.
4. **Find everything you need when you need it.** Having everything neat and tidy, does not always mean a person is not organized. The key to organization is being able to find everything you need when you need it. If you accomplished this goal, you are on your way to being an organized person.



Tips and Tidbits

- In a test whether people snack more when they're distracted, 45 adults ate 42%-44% more potato chips watching late night TV than with the TV off.
- According to studies, a severely obese worker averages 75% more medical and pharmacy costs than a normal weight employee.
- Add herbs and spices to eliminate salt in the diet. A tablespoon of fresh herbs are equal to 1 teaspoon of dried herbs.
- Have all ingredients for a cake at room temperature when mixing for a smoother, better blended cake.



Heritage Skills

A Snowman Basket will be taught on Thursday, January 29 starting at 5:15 p.m. For details and registration, call 679-2061. Deadline: Monday, January 26.

Basic tools you will need to bring are: sharp scissors, awl or ice pick, clothes pins, pencil, tape measure, spray bottle, towel and a pan to soak reed.

Calendar of Events

- January 27 Yadkin County ECA County Council, 10:00 a.m.
- January 29 Snowman Basket Workshop, 5:15 p.m.
- March 5 Southern Spring Show
- March 24 Yadkin ECA Achievement Day
- April 2 ECA Spring District Day

ECA County Council

The Yadkin County ECA will meet on Tuesday, January 27, at the Yadkinville Senior Center at 10:00 a.m. for a covered dish luncheon. The hostesses will be the West Yadkin Club. Bring your Cultural Arts Items made within 2008 for the county judging contest. All winners will then be judged on the district level in April at the West Central District ECA Meeting. Entries for the contest should be present by 9:45. This year we are looking for more district and state winners as last year. Yearbooks will be distributed at this meeting and Issue Coordinators will receive information. Everyone is asked to bring a covered dish for lunch.



Southern Spring Show



The annual Southern Spring Show is just around the corner! It will be held in Charlotte, March 4-March 8, 2009. The theme for this year is "Being Green" and will display plants, techniques and products to boost our gardening skills. If you are interested in attending on Thursday, March 5, contact the Yadkin County Center at 679-2061 for details.

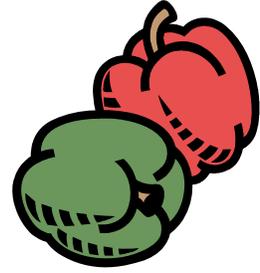
Spring ECA West Central District Meeting

The Spring meeting of the ECA of the new West Central District will be Thursday, April 2, 2009, at the Union Rd. Church of God in Gastonia, NC. Further details will follow as available.

Tex-Mex Chicken

This slow cooker recipe is heart healthy and perfect for a winter warm-up.

- 1 lb. boneless, skinless chicken breasts, cut into strips
- 2 T. taco seasoning mix
- 2 T. flour
- 1 green pepper, cut into strips
- 1 red pepper, cut into strips
- 1 ½ c. frozen corn
- 1 ½ c. chunky salsa
- 1 c. Mexican style shredded cheese



Toss chicken with flour and seasoning in slow cooker. Stir in vegetables and salsa. Cover and cook on low 6 to 8 hours or on high 3 to 4 hours. Top with cheese before serving. Serve over hot cooked rice and top with sliced onions and chopped cilantro. Leftovers can be served in flour tortillas.

Makeover Pecan Upside-Down Cake

For a reduced fat coffee cake, try the following recipe.

- ½ c. packed brown sugar
- ½ c. reduced fat butter, melted
- ¼ c. dark corn syrup
- 1 ½ cups pecan halves
- 1 pkg. (18 ¼ oz.) butter pecan cake mix
- 1 c. reduced fat sour cream
- 1/3 c. unsweetened applesauce
- 2 eggs
- 2 egg whites
- 1 t. vanilla extract



In a small bowl, combine the butter, brown sugar, corn syrup and pecans. Spread evenly into a 13 in. x 9 in. baking pan coated with cooking spray. Set aside. In a large bowl, combine the remaining ingredients. Beat with mixer on low speed for 30 seconds. Beat on medium for 2 minutes and transfer to baking pan. Bake at 350 degrees for 30-35 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near the center comes out clean. Cool for 5 minutes before inverting onto serving plate.

For accommodations for persons with disabilities, contact Marilyn Wells at least one week in advance of event at 336-679-2061.

Marilyn C. Wells
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