



Todd County Extension Family & Consumer Sciences Newsletter

When to Seek Help for Stress or Mental Health

For many people, the holidays and winter months can bring on feelings of stress, anxiety, and depression. Sometimes, the stress or mental health challenges can worsen because of seasonal changes. Seasonal changes are a normal part of life, but worsening symptoms of stress and mental health challenges are not. If your symptoms of stress, anxiety, depression, or other mental health challenges are worsening, then it's important to seek support and professional help.

If your symptoms or experiences are worsening within the last couple of weeks or more and include the following, then seek support and professional help.

- Problems sleeping or falling asleep
- Increased sadness or thoughts of suicide
- Difficulty getting out of bed
- Prolonging or procrastinating certain tasks
- Trouble focusing or making decisions
- Loss of interest in normally enjoyable activities
- Problems completing daily activities
- Some examples of seeking professional help can include contacting your primary care provider, your counselor, or therapist, especially before you begin feeling overwhelmed.

If you feel like you are in a crisis, then you can seek help immediately by texting, chatting, or calling 988 or <https://988lifeline.org/>, which is the Suicide & Crisis Lifeline.



Reference

National Institute of Mental Health (2021). "Caring for Your Mental Health." 2022, from <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/caring-for-your-mental-health>.

Source: Paul Norrod, DrPH RN, Extension specialist for rural health and farm safety

Carbon Monoxide Poisoning and Prevention

The National Fire Protection Association defines carbon monoxide (CO) as:
"Often called the invisible killer, carbon monoxide is an odorless, colorless gas created when fuels (such as gasoline, wood, coal, natural gas, propane, oil, and methane) burn incompletely. In the home, heating and cooking equipment that burn fuel are potential sources of carbon monoxide. Vehicles or generators running in an attached garage can also produce dangerous levels of carbon monoxide."



Since you can't see, taste, or smell carbon monoxide you unknowingly breathe this gas in when exposed. These exposures cause hundreds of accidental deaths and make thousands ill each year.

Symptoms of Carbon Monoxide Poisoning

The CDC reports the most common symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning are:

- Headache,
- Dizziness,
- Weakness,
- Upset stomach,
- Vomiting,
- Chest pain,
- Confusion, and
- Flu-like symptoms.

High levels of exposure can lead to passing out or death, especially if you are asleep or drunk. If you think you are suffering from carbon monoxide exposure, get into fresh air immediately, contact emergency personnel, and seek medical attention.

Steps of Prevention

What steps can you take to prevent your exposure to carbon monoxide?

1. Install a carbon monoxide detector in your indoor space.
2. Have a qualified technician service your heating system, water heater, and other appliances fueled by gas, oil, or coal each year.
3. Have a qualified technician service your chimney each year to prevent CO build up.
4. Never use a charcoal grill or portable gas stove indoors.
5. Never use a gas range or oven for indoor heating.
6. Don't use a generator inside your home, basement, or garage or less than 20 feet



from any window, door, or vent. Experts recommend using an extension cord that is longer than 20 feet to keep the generator at a safe distance.

7. Never leave a gas-powered motor running (car, truck, motorcycle, lawn mower, etc.) in the garage even if the garage door is open.

References:

- <https://www.nfpa.org/Public-Education/Staying-safe/Safety-equipment/Carbon-monoxide>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/co/faqs.htm#:~:text=The%20most%20common%20symptoms%20of,pass%20out%20or%20kill%20you.>
- <https://hes.ca.uky.edu/news-story/carbon-monoxide-safety-extremely-important-during-winter>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/co/guidelines.htm>
- https://www.usfa.fema.gov/downloads/pdf/publications/co_safety_flyer.pdf
- <https://www.cdc.gov/nceh/features/timechangecodetectors/index.html>

Source: Hardin Stevens, senior Extension associate, University of Kentucky, College of Agriculture, Food and Environment, October 2022

Is Coconut Oil For Me?

Coconut oil is a white, solid fat that comes from the meat and milk of the coconut fruit. Although coconut oil is called an oil, it is solid at room temperature. It has become increasingly popular in cooking, baking, and cosmetic use. Unlike other sources of fat, coconut oil may contribute a fruity, tropical flavor when using it in food preparation.

There are claims that coconut oil is a healthy replacement for fat when cooking, particularly to promote heart health. However, many studies show conflicting results on coconut oil for heart health. What we do know is that coconut oil is



almost entirely saturated fat. This is the type of fat that is related to an increase in LDL cholesterol and the development of heart disease. On the other hand, some studies show an increase in HDL cholesterol. That is the cholesterol associated with decreasing risk for atherosclerosis. More studies are needed with larger groups of more diverse people to get a better idea of the effect of coconut oil on health. Another consideration is that the coconut oil used in research studies may not be the same as what is available to you in the store.

The USDA recommends eating less saturated fats, like those in coconut oils, butter, whole milk, and cheese. People should choose foods with mostly unsaturated fats, when possible, like those in olive oil, nuts, avocado, and salmon. Coconut oil should be moderately enjoyed in the diet, alongside a variety of oils and foods that have mainly unsaturated fats. If you are looking for other ways to use coconut oil, it can be used as an effective moisturizer for hair and skin.

For additional reliable nutrition information, reach out to your local Extension office.

Reference: Neelakantan, N., Seah, J. Y. H., & van Dam, R. M. (2020). The effect of coconut oil consumption on cardiovascular risk factors: a systematic review and meta-analysis of clinical trials. *Circulation*, 141(10), 803-814.
Source: Sarah Donnell, Human Nutrition Undergraduate Student, and Heather Norman-Burgdolf, PhD, Extension Specialist for Food and Nutrition

Slow Cooker Smoky Black-Eyed Peas

- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1/2 medium bell pepper, chopped
- 2 cloves minced garlic, or 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- 2 small or 1 large jalapeno pepper, ribs and seeds removed and finely chopped (optional)
- 1-pound dried black-eyed peas, sorted and rinsed
- 1 package (12 ounces) smoked turkey sausage, cubed
- 1/2 teaspoon Cajun seasoning
- 1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper, or to taste
- 2 small bay leaves
- 7 cups water

1. Wash hands with warm water and soap, scrubbing for at least 20 seconds.
2. Rinse produce under cool running water and gently scrub using a clean vegetable brush before chopping.
3. Add all ingredients to a 6-quart or larger slow cooker.
4. Cook on high for 5 hours or until peas are tender, adding more water if needed.
5. Remove bay leaves.
6. Serve over hot, cooked brown rice, if desired.
7. Refrigerate leftovers within 2 hours.

Stovetop option: Sauté chopped vegetables in 1 tablespoon vegetable oil in a large pot over medium heat. Cook for 5 minutes or until tender. Add all remaining ingredients, increasing water to 8 cups. Bring mixture to a full boil. Reduce heat to low, cover, and cook for 1 hour or until peas are tender.

Makes 12 servings. Serving size: 1 cup
Cost per recipe: \$6.69. Cost per serving: \$0.56.



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We hope to move into our new building, located at 240 Pond River Road, in February. However, that depends on whether everything goes as planned. Please be patient with us as we move and schedule events. Watch Facebook for more information.

Sincerely,

Jill B. Harris

Jill Harris
Extension Agent for
Family & Consumer Sciences



Upcoming Classes & Activities

January Leader Training – Ready, Set, Bake

The January lesson, “Ready, Set, Bake” will be taught at the **Christian County Extension Office on Thursday, January 5, at 10:00 a.m.** The class is hands-on and has a fee of \$3.00 per person. Please make sure you pre-register by contacting the Todd County Extension Office.



Ready, Set, Bake!

Become a better baker by getting back to the basics. This lesson is designed to give you a better understanding of ingredients and their role in the baking process, as well as demonstrate basic baking techniques. This will be a hands-on class.

January 5, 2023 10:00 a.m. Christian Co. Extension Office
 January 5, 2023 2:00 p.m. Lyon Co. Extension Office
 In case of inclement weather, the class will be offered by Zoom on January 5, 10:00 a.m.

Elements & Principles of Art – Date Change

The February lesson on Elements & Principles of Art will be offered by Zoom only on **Monday, February 6, 10:00 a.m.** Lesson sheets will be sent by mail. Please contact our office for a copy of the PowerPoint. (Due to the possibility of moving, we will not have this event at our office.)

Sweaters & Bows – Annual Meeting

Thank you to everyone who attended the Homemaker Annual Meeting. And a special thank you to Cherie Morris for teaching us how to tie bows!

Big Blue Book Club - First Book of 2023

Join Family and Consumer Sciences Extension for our next Big Blue Book Club series featuring, *Is Butter a Carb? Unpicking Fact from Fiction in the World of Nutrition*. This book removes the moral stigma from food and breaks down the science to provide easy, accessible evidence-based advice on how to live your healthiest and happiest life. This practical book is the modern must-have nutrition book for everybody interested in food, health, and pop science.

Led by Dr. Heather Norman-Burgdolf, Extension Specialist for Food and Nutrition, this series will be held on **Thursdays March 2, 9, 16, and 23 at 9:00 a.m.** CT. The first 200 registered participants will receive a free copy of the book. The registration deadline is January 27, 2023. Please scan the bar code to register or go to <https://ukfcs.net/BBBC23Book1>



Todd County Homemakers Council

Todd County Homemakers Council will meet **Monday, January 23, 5:00 p.m.** at the Extension Office Meeting Room in the Courthouse.

Area Cultural Arts

Because of a conflict, the date for the Pennyryle Area Cultural Arts contest has been changed to **March 17, 2023**, at the Christian County Extension Office. The categories are below.



1. Apparel
2. Art, 3-Dimensional
3. Art, Natural
4. Art, Recycled (Include A Before Picture)
5. Basketry
6. Beading
7. Ceramics A
8. Counted Cross Stitch
9. Crochet
10. Doll/Toy Making
11. Drawing
12. Embroidery
13. Felting
14. Holiday
15. Jewelry
16. Knitting (Hand)
17. Knitting (Other)
18. Needlepoint
19. Painting, Art
20. Painting, Decorative
21. Photography
22. Quilts
23. Paper Crafting
24. Rug Making
25. Wall Or Door Hanging
26. Weaving
27. Miscellaneous

For a list of subcategories, please contact the Todd County Extension Office or go to this link on the KEHA website: http://keha.ca.uky.edu/files/cah_cultural_arts_categories_and_rules_2022.pdf

Holiday Schedule

The Todd Co. Extension Office will be closed December 26-January 2, and again on January 16.

