

NCWVCAA

Nutrition and Safety

April Newsletter

Courtney Cummins
Nutrition/Safety Program Specialist

Topics Discussed
National Garden Month
Exercise toward a Healthier Future
Is Your Family Prepared?
Let's Eat Out! Healthful Fast Foods



Gardening offers family fun. April is National Gardening Month... In your garden, you can be active, relax, and spend time together. A garden can teach your child about new foods and usually will taste a new food if they knew they grew it!!!

What you need for a family garden.

- Garden plot- 2 foot plot would be good.
- Child-sized tools
- Seed or seedlings (young plants)
- Water from a hose or watering can
- Soil for container gardens and fertilizer (adult uses only)

Plant easy things such as beets, lettuce, green beans, cherry tomatoes, zucchini, onions, peppers, and spinach

Gardening tasks for children could be watering, measuring the plant, pull weeds, pick them, wash the foods, and help prepare the meal with this item.



Exercise is part of Recovery

According to www.addictioncenter.com Substance abuse takes a tremendous toll in the body and mind, and repairing that damage is a long and complex process. Physical activity improves the health of the body, which in turn improves the health of the mind. Learning new ways to exercise and stay fit can also provide the foundation for building better habits in recovery. Exposure to past triggers, stressors, and bad influences are the leading causes of relapse. Physical activity can not only provide a constructive outlet for handling cravings, but also limit the risk of exposure to potentially dangerous elements of one's environment.

Exercise influences behavior in that it causes dopamine release. Dopamine is the brain's naturally occurring "reward" neurotransmitter that causes pleasurable feelings after meeting a need or performing a satisfying action. People inherently seek out behaviors that trigger dopamine releases.

Exercise is a healthier alternative because it not only fosters a more natural and healthy dopamine cycle in the brain, but also requires the person to work for it. Achieving goals and building a structured life is a major facet of sober living after rehab. Exercise and physical activity should play a role in any person's life after completing rehab, and there are countless possible ways to work physical activity into a regular routine.

Family Preparedness: Thinking Ahead

Unfortunately, disasters can strike at any time and there is usually little warning and time to prepare. To help in the event of a disaster, create a Family Preparedness Plan. Teaching this plan to all members of the family will help increase family effectiveness and reduce stress in an emergency.

Educate yourself and your family

- ✓ Learn about disasters that may strike in your area, check out the community's evacuation shelters, learn about the disaster plan at your workplace, and keep up on the evacuation plans for your child's school.

Create you family emergency plan

- ✓ Hold a meeting with your family to create a plan. This plan needs to include routes out of the home, safe places to meet outside of the home, have family contact information, have a plan for pets, make an emergency kit for supplies and know how to turn off your electric, eater, and gas.

Make a family communication plan

- ✓ Fill out and carry an emergency contact information card that has information on it that will be needed if the family needs to contact someone for help.

Make a supply kit

- ✓ Supplies in your home evacuation kit can be simple to put together and you can add or take things away that are more suitable for your family. Supplies may include, shelf stable food and water, blankets, flashlight, batteries, tools for shut off valves, first aid supplies, sanitation supplies, personal items and clothing.

Be informed and practice

- ✓ Keep up to date on information from around your community on the disasters to know your risks and safety. Practice evacuating from the home every 6 months and update changes and/or supplies as needed



Eat out often? Let's be smart about choices.



Most fast food meals and snacks are...

- High in fat, calories, and sodium.
- Low in fiber, calcium, and other nutrients.
- Short on fruits, vegetables and calcium rich foods.

Super-size fast foods may not be a good deal! Big portions...

- Overwhelm young children, who have small appetites.
- Provide more than your family needs.
- Encourage people to eat until they are stuffed, not satisfied.
- Set the stage for overeating and weight problems.

Smart choices include...

- Choose smaller portions.
- Choice items that have fruits or vegetables as a side.
- Skip sugary drinks, order milk, juice or water.
- Order meats and seafood grilled not fried.
- Pick a fast food place near a park or playground to get some physical activity after your meal.

Questions about Nutrition or Safety...

Please contact:

Courtney Cummins

Nutrition/Safety Program Specialist

304 363 2170 ext.122

ccummins@ncwvcaa.org

