



Nourish

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What are some keys to a healthy long life?

Nutrition, physical activity, regular health screenings and visits to a healthcare provider help keep us healthy. According to researchers, another key component is probably even more important to longevity.

Staying connected with friends and family can help people live longer and healthier. Being lonely and isolated can have negative effects and even shorten our lives.



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March is National Nutrition Month

“Food Connects Us” is the 2025 theme. Connecting with friends and family while enjoying food or physical activity may have benefits to our health on several levels. Put aside cell phones and connect with others with health-promoting activities.

- Cook a themed meal together and involve everyone in the preparation process. Try food from other cultures, such as Mexican, Thai or Indian recipes. Alternatively, have each person bring a part of the meal to share, such as an appetizer, bread, main course or dessert. Provide recipes ahead of time.
- If you have children or grandchildren, ask them to help pick out a recipe to try with you. See the **NDSU Extension website** and explore the recipes.
- Invite a friend over to enjoy “fika,” the Swedish custom of slowing down and having coffee and a treat with family or friends. Instead of a cookie or other dessert, how about making a fruit platter with a tasty dip?
- Teach younger family members or friends about cultural traditions around food. Show them how to make a recipe from your childhood or heritage. Consider putting a healthy spin on it. As examples, see the NDSU Extension “Exploring North Dakota Foodways” publications, “Scandinavian Cuisine (Past and Present)” and “Germans from Russia.” In these publications, we reduced sodium and fat in some traditional favorites while keeping the recipes true to the original flavors.
- Join a fitness group with a friend, whether you enjoy swimming, walking or other activity. Having a buddy can be motivating.

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Question

Grocery prices have increased. How can I stretch my money to provide healthy meals for myself and my family?

Here are some steps to help stretch your dollar:

- Figure out a food budget. Consider the number of people in your family and how often you eat out. Save your grocery and restaurant receipts to help keep track of food expenses. Use the store apps.
- Plan and prepare. Being prepared is the key to creating tasty meals and stretching your budget. Set a time during the week to see local grocery store's sale ads. Scour the sale ads for items that you could incorporate into this week's menu. After you have created a week's worth of meal ideas, make a list of ingredients you need.
- When you go to the store, stick to your list. Let's say the sign says "Three cans for \$5" and you only need one. Be aware that you usually get the "sale price" even when you buy one unless the sign says "must buy three cans."
- Buy some items to have on hand. Flour, sugar, rice, beans, canned or frozen vegetables, whole grains and other food items can be stored and used in your weekly meal plan. Some meats purchased in bulk are cheaper by the pound, and you can freeze them in meal-sized packages.
- Keep it simple. Not every meal has to be fit for royalty. Simplify your mealtime process and focus on enjoying time with your loved ones. You will reduce your stress and save money.
- Watch for deals. In season, fresh produce from a farmers market often is a better buy. Plain pasta often costs less than processed pasta meals. Store brands are good quality but often cost less.



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Instead of cookies, cake or brownies, try a naturally sweet treat to help meet the recommendation for 1½ cups of fruit per day.



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Fruit with Yogurt Dip

- 1 apple, sliced
- 1 banana, sliced
- 1 orange, peeled and separated in slices
- ¼ cup orange juice
- 1 cup vanilla yogurt (or soy yogurt for dairy-free option)
- ½ teaspoon cinnamon, if desired
- * Personalize with your favorite seasonal fruit.

Wash and prepare fruit. Pour orange juice into a small bowl. Dip fruit pieces into the orange juice to prevent browning. Arrange fruit on a plate. Mix the yogurt and cinnamon in a small bowl. Arrange the fruit around the bowl of yogurt and cinnamon dip. Provide tooth picks or forks for dipping. Alternatively, make fruit kabobs or "fruit on a stick."

Makes four servings. Each serving has 120 calories, 1 gram (g) fat, 4 g protein, 27 g carbohydrate, 3 g fiber and 40 milligrams sodium.