

April 2021

April is Stress Awareness Month

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Offers Tips to Lessen Stress

Since 1992, Stress Awareness Month has been observed in April to shed light on the increase of chronic stress and to provide resources to lessen the effects of stress on our health. Stress normally occurs in our lives, such as giving a presentation in front of people, planning a wedding, or dealing with the stressors brought on by illness or COVID-19. These stressors have an affect on us, but we can work through them and learn some resiliency skills. Though, when there is constant stress affecting our lives, this can lead to chronic stress. According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), COVID-19 has impacted both young and old, as many face challenges, losses, illness, and mental health challenges.

So how does stress affect us? First, we must understand what stress is. According to the American Institute of Stress, “Stress is a natural, physical and mental reaction to life experiences...Your body responds to stress by releasing hormones that increase your heart and breathing rates and ready your muscles to respond [to the situation].” The body is affected when there is constant stress (chronic stress), where your body does not bounce back to its natural state and continues to release hormones that increase your heart and breathing rates, which takes its toll on the body. Some common signs of stress include frequent headaches, neck and back pain, insomnia, stomach pain, depression, and many more.

With chronic stress, the heart beats faster increasing blood pressure and blood sugar in our bodies. Under stress, the liver releases more sugar, which over time, increases risk of Type 2 Diabetes, or if already diabetic, causes more harm to the body. Stress also causes blood vessels to constrict, which can lead to high blood pressure or affect those who already suffer from the disease. Other effects are a weakened immune system and inflammation to heart arteries.

What can we do to lessen effects of stress? According to Extension Program Specialist Julie Tijerina, “By learning some simple techniques, we can learn to accept that stressors in our lives will exist, but how we choose to handle them, will help us lessen its effect on our bodies.”

Tijerina offers the following simple tips to help cope with stress:

- **Avoid negative people or situations:** If people, news, social media, traffic, or other things cause you stress, try to avoid it. Although simpler said than done, removing something that is in your control to avoid, you can create a more positive environment
- **To Do List:** There will be times when the To Do list does not have to be completed. The room does not have to be cleaned today. Opt to take a walk outside, take deep breaths, or listen to the birds, even if it is only for a few minutes. Changing your mindset with something positive will help.
- **Learn to listen to your body:** Do you clench your jaw when stressed? Perhaps, your heart beats faster, or your thoughts are not focused. Take time to listen to your body, make a note of the things that affect you.
- **Meditate:** Learning how to quiet the mind and learning breathing exercises are two of the most popular methods to release stress.
- **Exercise:** Dancing, gardening, jogging, walking, or anything that helps you get into a different mindset helps relieve stress. Even 5 minutes of activity can help.
- **Sleep:** Create a sleep routine that allows for some down time before bed; no phones, caffeine, or other stimulants. During sleep, our bodies heal.
- **Nutrition:** Eating a healthy, well-balanced meal helps you think clearly and become alert. During times of stress, to boost mental health, eat plenty of fruits, dark green leafy vegetables, foods high in Omega-3 fatty acids, whole grains, nuts, and legumes. Include, lean proteins and reach for healthy snacks. Avoid processed foods.

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension offers programming to fit your community's needs. For more information, visit your local health department, or ask for more information on Stress classes/programming from your local County Extension office at (colorado.agrilife.org) or by calling (979-732-2530).

Texas A&M AgriLife
Extension Service
Colorado County

Ja'Shae Horn, CEA
Family & Community
Health

316 Spring Street
Columbus, TX 78934
979-732-2082

Resources:

Lifestyle and Managing Stress – <https://www.eatright.org/health/wellness/preventing-illness/lifestyle-and-managing-stress>

Healthy ways to handle life's stressors - <https://www.apa.org/print-this>

Stress Effects - <https://www.stress.org/stress-effects>

Serving Up Food Safety



From the Food Safety Education
Program
Texas A&M AgriLife Extension
Service

2253 TAMU 118 Cater-Mattil
College Station, TX 77843
979-458-2025
FPM@ag.tamu.edu

Spring 2021

Foraging for Mushrooms this Spring?

"It's that time of year again, Spring! Gathering wild mushrooms from the woods, or foraging, is a popular activity, but it is critical to make sure the mushrooms are not poisonous before eating them. Eating mushrooms gathered in the wild can make people very sick, causing serious illness or death. People should not eat wild mushrooms unless an expert identifies them as safe.

A new CDC report shows that accidental mushroom poisoning causes nearly 1,400 emergency department visits every year. The report found that 9% of patients experience serious health problems such as an irregular heartbeat, kidney or liver failure, and seizures."

What are the implications for food service workers and consumers?

Wild mushrooms should not be used or consumed unless identified by an expert and purchased from an approved source. Establishments and educators should continue to learn and educate themselves about the potential dangers of the consumption of poisonous wild mushrooms.

What should an establishment do if they want to sell or use wild-harvested mushrooms?

It is recommended any establishment wanting to use or sell wild-harvested mushrooms contact their local regulatory authority for specific rules and regulations.



Sources and more information:

https://www.cdc.gov/foodsafety/newsletter/poisonous_mushrooms.html

Gold JA, Kiernan E, Yeh M, Jackson BR, Benedict K. Health Care Utilization and Outcomes Associated with Accidental Poisonous Mushroom Ingestions — United States, 2016–2018. MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep 2021;70:337–341. DOI:

<http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm7010a1external icon>

<https://www.dshs.texas.gov/foodestablishments/pdf/GuidanceDocs/E23-14686GuidanceDocMushroom.pdf>



**FOOD SAFETY
EDUCATION**
TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION



MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID

A workshop for the Greater Colorado Valley Community

Who Should Attend?

Physicians, Nurses, First Responders, Law Enforcement Officers, Ministers, Nursing Home Staff, HR Managers, Business Owners & Managers, Family & Friends of those suffering with a Mental Health Disorder, EVERYONE!

What Time Is Required?

A Pre-Class 2-hour Module is to be completed ONLINE prior to attending Class. The class is 5 hours long and can be attended in person or by Zoom. Class materials and lunch will be provided by AgriLife.

What Will I Learn?

- *Common Signs/Symptoms of Mental Illness
- *Common Signs/Symptoms of Substance Use
- *How to Interact with a Person in Crisis
- *How to Connect the Person with Help
- *NEW: How to administer Naloxone in the Event of an Opioid Overdose



April 22nd



8:30 - 2:00



**Columbus
Medical Clinic
Classroom
2nd Floor**



**To Register:
979-732-2530
By April 16th
Class limited
to 20**

**Sponsored by:
Colorado County Behavioral Health Task Force**

TEXAS A&M AGRI LIFE EXTENSION

What's Cooking!

Beefy Taco Casserole

Servings: 8

Ingredients:

- 1 lb. 93% lean ground beef
- 2 white mushrooms, finely diced
- ½ bell pepper, chopped (red, yellow, or orange)
- 1 (16 oz.) can low-sodium black beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 (16 oz.) can unsalted diced tomatoes, drained
- 1 (4 oz.) can diced green chilies
- 3 Tbsp. reduced sodium taco seasoning
- 7 small corn tortillas
- ¾ cup light sour cream
- ½ cup shredded cheese

Optional Toppings: Lettuce, Tomato, Salsa, Guacamole

Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 350° F. Spray a 9×13 pan with cooking spray and set aside.
2. Heat a large sauté pan to MEDIUM heat. When hot, add beef and chopped onion. Cook together for 10-12 minutes until brown. Drain any excess fat.
3. Add mushrooms, bell pepper, beans, tomatoes, green chilies and taco seasoning to pan. Simmer for 5 minutes.
4. Place half of the tortillas on the bottom of the 9×13 pan (ripping them as needed to create a single layer covering the bottom of the pan). Top tortillas with half of beef mixture. Dollop sour cream on beef mixture and spread using the back of a spoon. Place the rest of the tortillas in a single layer over the sour cream (ripping them as needed). Top with remainder of beef mixture. Sprinkle with cheese. Bake for 25 minutes.

Nutrition Facts:

364 Calories	431.4 mg Sodium	3.4 mg Iron	0.3 mg Vitamin B6
116 Calories from fat	34.5 g Total	734.7 mg Potassium	1.8 mcg Vitamin B12
12.9 g Total Fat	Carbohydrate	0.1 mg Thiamin	4.9 mg Zinc
6.1 g Saturated Fat	6.2 g Dietary Fiber	0.3 mg Riboflavin	17.2 mcg Selenium
71 mg Cholesterol	25.7 g Protein	7.7 mg Niacin (NE)	76.9 mg Choline

Healthy Hints:

- Three ounces of lean beef provide 25 grams of protein and 154 calories
- Fewer calories than 25 grams of protein with edamame, black beans, peanut butter and quinoa

Resource: <https://beeflovingtexans.com/recipe/beefy-taco-casserole/>

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Jashae Horn

County Extension Agent—Family &Community Health—Colorado County

jashae.horn@ag.tamu.edu

979-732-2082

colorado.agrilife.org

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