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*Mon thru Fri, 8 am-4:30 pm  
(closed 12 - 1 pm)*

*Mon, Wed, Fri, 8 am-4 pm  
(closed 12 - 12:30 pm)*

*Tue, Wed, Thurs, 8 am-4 pm  
(closed 12 - 12:30 pm)*

We hope you enjoy your copy of this free monthly resource which highlights upcoming programs and topics for better living. To stay up to date on all of our programs, visit our web page: [extension.illinois.edu/hmrs](http://extension.illinois.edu/hmrs) and follow us on Facebook @[uiextensionhmrs](https://www.facebook.com/uiextensionhmrs)

## Brain-Healthy Lifestyles

*Cheri Burcham, IL Extension Educator, Family Life*

When someone asks you to think about health, wellness and fitness, you usually think about physical health, exercise or nutrition. Throughout a person's lifetime, they should not only concentrate on improving and maintaining their physical health, but also be working on their cognitive or brain health.



Getting enough good, quality sleep is important along with eating a heart healthy diet and exercising regularly. I have heard the phrase "what's good for the heart is good for the brain" more than once while working with this topic. Lowering your stress levels and keeping solid social connections and support also contribute to achieving good brain health. Researchers agree that challenging your brain daily is also beneficial and necessary to maintain brain health and delay cognitive decline as we get older.

The Dana Foundation is an organization that is committed to advancing brain research and to educating the public about brain health. From their publication "Successful Aging & Your Brain" they give us some simple strategies that can help us improve our memory and ability to learn:

- **Relax:** Tension makes memory lapses more likely. Reducing stress improves learning and recall.
- **Slow down, pay attention, and stay focused:** If you want to recall something later, pay close attention to it now. Concentrate on what you're doing and reduce distractions and interruptions. Don't rush—focus and attention take time.
- **Repeat it:** Repetition strengthens connections in your brain.
- **Write it down:** Putting important information in writing both repeats it and provides a visual reminder. Carry a notepad, calendar, or use your smartphone.
- **Visualize:** Creating an image of what you want to remember improves recall by giving your brain another way to access the information.

- **Make associations:** Relate new experiences and information to what you already know, to embed it in existing synaptic connections. This strategy can be useful in remembering names: at a dinner party, you might associate "Pam" with "red dress" and "red wine."
- **Stay organized:** Keep things you regularly use in the same place: put keys on a hook by the door, your wallet in a basket on your dresser.
- **Plan and prioritize:** Because multitasking may be more difficult as we age, planning becomes critical. Prioritize: some things will simply have to wait.

The **Dana Foundation** is a great resource for information on neuroscience and brain health.

### Test your knowledge: True or False?

**1. Things you do for heart health may help reduce some risks to your brain. TRUE!** It's said that a heart healthy diet is also a brain healthy diet. Think Mediterranean eating patterns with lots of fruits and vegetables, whole grains, nuts, fish and extra virgin olive oil. By eating a heart-healthy diet, reducing sodium and added sugars, you'll be working to keep your cholesterol in check as well as your blood pressure. The heart and brain blood vessels are so closely linked that conditions, like high blood pressure, can affect both organs.

**2. If you haven't exercised in years, it's not safe to do so. FALSE!** It doesn't matter how long it's been since you exercised. Start with an activity that doesn't strain your body. And consult with your doctor about the type and amount right for you. Regular physical activity may reduce risks of diabetes, heart disease, depression and stroke, prevent falls, and improve connections among brain cells. Get at least 150 minutes of exercise each week. Move about 30 minutes on most days. If you're able, walking is a great place to start.

**3. There's nothing you can do to reduce medicine-related problems. FALSE!** While medicines can help you treat your health conditions, some can create problems for your brain. Whether you're taking prescription or over-the-counter medications, talk with your doctor if you notice changes in your cognitive function.

While you may not have control over all of your risk factors- like genetics- you do have control over many others like the foods you choose, your level of activity and how well you're managing other health conditions.



## There is no age limit for art and its many benefits!

*Chelsey Byers, IL Extension Educator, Family Life*

People need to pursue activities that bring purpose and meaning throughout their life. Sometimes we can continue those same activities throughout life, and other times, due to health or disability, it is time to transition to new activities. Expressive Arts, including music, writing, dance, painting, can be therapeutic, especially as one ages. A well-known gerontologist, Dr. Gene Cohen, conducted a national longitudinal study on quality of life. This Creativity and Aging Study found that the arts positively affect health as individuals age. Individuals who regularly participated in art had better overall health, fewer doctor visits, and used less medications over time. Participants also reported higher responses on mental health assessments and engaged in more community-based activities. All of these results look to promote health and lend themselves towards disease prevention.

Dr. Bagan, in Today's Geriatric Medicine, highlights a laundry list of health benefits from regularly engaging in the arts that includes:

- Increasing relaxation and reducing stress
- Decreasing depression and anxiety
- Offering a sense of control
- Providing an opportunity for socialization and playfulness
- Increasing sense of humor
- Offering sensory stimulation
- Offering a sense of identity and self-expression
- Increasing self-esteem
- Cultivating spirituality
- Diminishing boredom



Research has also shown that the neural pathways are strengthened by engaging in modes of art, thus improving cognition and enhancing cognitive reserve. We have plans to do some creative classes where you can give your "wits a workout". Check out the one we've planned for June 28:

## Paint & Sip: Get Creative with Extension Monday, June 28, 6 - 8 pm Rock Island County Extension, Milan, IL

Join us for a fun evening getting creative through expressive arts! You'll be guided through a painting in this hands-on class led by Beth Peters of Painting for a Purpose. You can choose to paint a pineapple (like the one pictured) on a canvas tote or a canvas. Also, as part of the evening, Kristin Bogdonas, IL Extension nutrition and wellness educator, will lead a demonstration of healthy hydrating summer sippers (non-alcoholic). You'll enjoy learning fun and creative concoctions you can make to hydrate this summer!

Cost is \$15 person and includes all supplies. Class size is limited, so register early for this fun evening where you can stimulate both your mind and your taste buds!

Register at [go.illinois.edu/PaintSip](http://go.illinois.edu/PaintSip)



**Paint this pineapple and make a  
tasty drink using this versatile fruit!**



# MEDICAL IDENTITY THEFT

TUESDAY, JUNE 8, 2021 AT 10 AM CDT - 11 AM CDT

Medical identity theft can be a real burden if it happens to you. A thief may use your name or health insurance number to get care for themselves. This program will help you detect signs of medical identity theft, protect your medical information, and what to do if you notice mistakes or find out your identity has been used.

Register at [go.illinois.edu/medicalIDtheft](http://go.illinois.edu/medicalIDtheft)



## SIGN-UP FOR THE WELLNESS TIPS AT YOUR FINGERTIPS TEXT PROGRAM!

Once signed up, you will get a text message each week on a variety of topics geared towards healthy finances, healthy living/healthy aging, and healthy eating.

If you are interested, click to sign up [go.illinois.edu/wellnesstips](http://go.illinois.edu/wellnesstips)

- Standard text message rates apply
- You can opt-out of messages at anytime
- You will get minimally one message each week and no more than 2/week
- Your number will not be shared with anyone, and we won't use it for any other purposes
- Questions? Contact Kristin Bogdonas, [kmbogdo@illinois.edu](mailto:kmbogdo@illinois.edu)



## Add interest by creating a moonlight garden

Mary Fischer, Horticulture Educator, Illinois Extension

Gardeners who look forward to enjoying their landscapes during warm summer nights should consider creating a moonlight garden that extends the experience late into the evening. White flowers in garden with lights shining on them.

“Moonlight gardens have been around for centuries,” said Mary Fischer, horticulture educator at University of Illinois Extension, who serves Clay, Effingham, Fayette and Jasper Counties. “There’s something about a beautiful garden illuminated by moonlight that engages the senses in a different way.”

It’s not difficult to create a moonlight garden, provided the designer takes care to focus on specific elements, says Fischer.

First, determine where moonlight typically falls, and consider existing objects or plantings that occupy the space. These could block out moonlight through the shadows they cast. Consider views from within the home, and how views can be accessed from inside.

Install low-output artificial night lighting. Hardware stores and home centers offer inexpensive lighting kits, and solar lights can offer subtle illumination to specific garden areas. Reflective items such as mirrors add ambiance and a perception that the space is larger.

Consider a water feature, which provides relaxing sounds and can also be illuminated. Fragrant plants add charm and romance, something gardeners have recognized for centuries. Archeologists discovered ruins of a lost garden at the Taj Mahal that contained night-blooming white flowers that perfumed the evening air.



“Consider plants that sparkle or glimmer in moonlight or in subtle lighting,” says Fischer. “Make sure to include plants that have light colored or white blossoms and light or silver-gray foliage. Add evergreen plants, since these provide the garden with structure in winter, and vividly contrast with white flowers and light-colored foliage.”

White-blooming annual varieties include ageratum, begonias, cosmos, daisies, dianthus, impatiens, marigolds, pansies, spider flower, violas, and zinnias. White-scented annuals include alyssum, petunias, night phlox, stock and flowering tobacco.

White or light-colored perennial varieties include asters, bellflowers, bugbane, candytuft, dahlias, Shasta daisies, daylilies, foamflower, foxglove, irises, mums, peonies, creeping phlox, and violets. White-scented perennials may include peonies and roses.

“Designers should also look for trees and shrubs that have white flowers, and include bulbs such as crocus, daffodils, hyacinths, lily-of-the-valley, snowdrops, and tulips,” says Fischer. “And remember vines, which can add vertical interest, as well as light and depth to the space.”

# Check out these events and online workshops



## Top 9 Vegetable Garden Insects | Four Seasons Gardening | June 15 | 1:30 pm

Learn nine of the most common and destructive insect pests in your vegetable garden and how to control them. Join University of Illinois Extension Horticulture Educator Kelly Allsup as she shares tips on identification, scouting, prevention, and organic methods of eradication. Whether you are new to gardening or a master, you will walk away with tips to make the gardening season a greater success.

Register at [go.illinois.edu/fourseasons](https://go.illinois.edu/fourseasons)



## Mental Health First Aid For Agriculture Communities Webinar | June 29, 8 am – 3:30 pm

We see them every day, America's farm families dealing with uncertainties of weather, cost of inputs, growing season risks, and long hours. Illinois Extension can provide the tools to identify mental health issues and communication skills to support and save lives in the agricultural community. As part of this webinar, you'll complete a 2-hour self-paced online course before joining the June 29 live video conference. The conference will cover: Mental illness symptoms; Substance use signs and addiction; Crisis interaction; Trauma; Self care. IL Extension educators will lead the trainings. Ag producers, agribusiness personnel, stakeholders, and others who want to support the agricultural community should register by June 15 at [go.illinois.edu/mentalhealth2021](https://go.illinois.edu/mentalhealth2021)



## What to Expect at Farmers Markets June 16 | Noon

Tempted to go to the Farmers Market, but not sure why or how? Learn why it's better for you and your local economy to shop at the Farmers Market first! Get to know the farmer who grows the food. Learn the ins and outs of shopping at the market: when to go, what to buy, what to bring. Presenter: Mary Liz Wright

Register at [go.illinois.edu/eatfresheatlocal](https://go.illinois.edu/eatfresheatlocal)

## I MADE THAT! July Kits: Hydrating Summer Sippers Register for your kit at: [go.illinois.edu/IMadeThatJuly](https://go.illinois.edu/IMadeThatJuly)

University of Illinois Extension and 4-H have put together fun cooking and activity kits for youth to enjoy this July. These are designed to inspire healthy hydration and physical activity in celebration of the 2021 Summer Olympics in Tokyo.



Join in on the fun with the Olympic-themed activities which will help youth meet their daily physical activity needed to build strong muscles and bones.

Whether you're an Olympian or not, hydration is a key component to safe summer activity. There are many ways to stay hydrated, so which is best? Youth will learn about the importance of hydration and healthy beverage choices in addition to recipes they can try at home.

**Register early to reserve your July kit while supplies last.** The cost is \$5 per kit. It includes the July "I Made That!" booklet, fun Olympic-themed activities, healthy and hydrating recipes, popsicle molds, plus 4-H frisbees and beach balls for your activities. Kits will be available for pick-up the second week in July at one of our Extension offices in Milan, Viola and Galva, Ill.





SUPPORT MERCER COUNTY 4-H

# 4-H BBQ

**FRIDAY, JUNE 11**  
**4:00- 6:00 PM**  
**DRIVE THRU EVENT**  
**ALEDO FIRE STATION**



**Pick up dinner to go!**  
Grilled Pork Chop sandwich (\$8) or  
Hot Dog (\$5), two sides & dessert

You can also phone ahead to order by calling 309-373-3636 or 309-371-6158.

## Mercer County 4-H Drive-thru BBQ Fri, June 11, 4 - 6 pm, Aledo Fire Station

Mercer County Extension & 4-H Foundation is hosting the annual 4-H BBQ Fundraiser. This year it will be a drive-through event located at the back of the Aledo Fire Station.

Mercer County 4-H members and volunteers will be serving grilled butterfly pork chop sandwiches and grilled hot dogs, along with two side dishes, and a dessert. Pork Chop Meals are \$8 and hot dog dinners are \$5. It's a delicious way to support your local 4-H programs.

**We hope to see you there. Thank you for your support!**



**4-H Shotgun Club Thursdays, 5 pm, Colona, IL**  
4-H has open enrollment for youth ages 10 to 18 who want to join the Shotgun Club. Sessions are held on Thursdays at 6 p.m. at the Bi-State Sportsman Assoc Inc., Colona, IL.  
Register at [go.illinois.edu/RI4HShotgunClub](http://go.illinois.edu/RI4HShotgunClub)

**4-H Archery Club Fridays, 6:30 p.m. Moline, IL**  
4-H has open enrollment for youth ages 8 to 18 to join the Archery Club. Sessions are held on Fridays at 6:30 p.m. at the YSSA Range & Academy, Moline, IL.  
Register at [go.illinois.edu/RI4HArcheryClub](http://go.illinois.edu/RI4HArcheryClub)

## Henry County 4-H Shows Henry County Fair, Cambridge, IL

### Saturday, June 19

General Projects Judging TBA

### Monday, June 21

Small Pets Judging, 4 pm

Dog Obedience & Showmanship, 6 pm

### Tuesday June 22

Equestrian Ambassador, 6 pm

### Wednesday, June 23

Master Showmanship, 6:30 pm

### Thursday, June 24

Swine Show, 8 am

Bucket Calf followed by Dairy Show, 8 am

Sheep Show after Swine Show

Beef Show (steers and heifers) after Dairy Show

Goat Show after Sheep Show

Junior Livestock Auction, 6:30 pm

### Friday, June 25

Horse Show, 9 am-6 pm

### Saturday, June 26

Rabbit Show, 8 am

Poultry Show, 9 am



## Henry County 4-H Food Stand proceeds support the program!



The Henry County 4-H food stand will be open Tues. June 22 - Sat. June 26 serving breakfast from 7:30- 10:30 am, and for lunch from 11 am - 2 pm.

**A brand new sign showcases the building, thanks to Wyffels Hybrids and Precision Sign.**

*Pictured are Cambridge Champs 4-H members (back left) Baylee Palmer, Miranda Reed, Jolene Blackert, and (front) Livvy and Lawson Edmund.*

# University of Illinois Extension: Family and Consumer Sciences Breakroom Buzz

## 5 Ways to Eat More Veggies

**1.** Dip carrots, peppers, broccoli, or cauliflower instead of chips in dip.



**2.** Always be prepared. Pre-chop & pre-portion radishes, cucumbers, celery, peppers, carrots, and snap peas to make for an easy and quick snack.



**3.** Bulk up an omelet! Add spinach, broccoli, carrots, peppers, tomatoes, and onions to add more color, flavor, and nutrients.



**4.** It's grilling season! Grill veggie kabobs. Skewer mushrooms, bell peppers, tomatoes and onions or another veggie favorite.



**5.** Swap the pasta for zucchini noodles or spaghetti squash. Get a serving of veggies while still enjoying twirling faux pasta on the fork.



Source: Lisa Peterson, Nutrition & Wellness Educator

## Ways to Increase Daily Dairy Intake

The daily recommended amount for dairy for individuals 9 years old and up is **3 cups a day**. Below are tips to help reach the daily dairy goal while cutting down on fat:

**Lactose intolerant?** Try soy milk, lactose free milk, or yogurt. Fish and dark leafy vegetables are an additional source of calcium.

**Snack on the go?** Grab low-fat string cheese, a container of low fat or fat free yogurt, or a pudding pack made with low fat milk. When hitting the coffee shop ask for low-fat or skim milk in a latte.

**Substitutions?** Substitute plain non-fat yogurt for sour cream, use fat free evaporated milk instead of cream, or try Neufchâtel cheese or low fat ricotta cheese in place of cream cheese

Source: [ChooseMyPlate.gov](http://ChooseMyPlate.gov)

## SAVE THE DATE



**MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID FOR THE AGRICULTURE COMMUNITY**

JUNE 29 | 8AM CT | ONLINE

**Illinois Extension**

Register by June 15 at [go.illinois.edu/mentalhealth2021](http://go.illinois.edu/mentalhealth2021)

## I Didn't Know That! Stay Cool this Summer

Older adults 65 and older are more likely to suffer from a heat stroke or heat exhaustion. Some older adults don't adjust to the sudden change in temperature as well as young people. Older adults are more likely to have a medical condition that changes their responses to heat. They are more likely than younger adults to take prescription medicines that affect the body's ability to control its temperature or sweat.

Here are 5 ways to stay cool recommended by AARP:

**Stay Hydrated!** Drink water and remember you are sweating so, drink more water than normal, don't wait until you are thirsty. Eat fruits and vegetables that contain water, such as cucumbers, celery, zucchini, watermelon, strawberries, and cauliflower. It is recommended to avoid alcoholic beverages because it dehydrates you.

**Stay indoors!** Avoid going outside during the sun's most intense hours of the day. Early mornings and later in the afternoon are typically the best times to go outside. Continue to check the weather forecast.

**Stay Cool!** If you are heating up, place a liquid ice pack around your neck and under your armpits.

**Stay Light!** Remember to wear lightweight, light-colored clothing and a wide-brimmed hat to reduce the chances of heat stroke.

**Stay Safe!** Know where to go to find your local cooling center.

Here are additional tips by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommended to help you stay cool this summer:

<https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/extremeheat/heattips.html> Resource: <https://states.aarp.org/new-york/5-helpful-tips-to-stay-cool-this-summer> and <https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/extremeheat/older-adults-heat.html> adapted by Tessa Hobbs-Curley

