

# EXTENSION CONNECTIONS

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS EXTENSION

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)



**Illinois Extension**

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

Rock Island County  
321 W 2nd Ave. Milan, IL  
(309) 756-9978

Henry/Stark Counties  
358 Front St. Galva, IL  
(309) 932-3447

Mercer County  
910 13th St. Viola, IL  
(309) 871-5032

*Win!*

Play our November Wellness BINGO for a chance to WIN a \$15 Hy-Vee gift card! See details on the back cover of this issue!

Offices are currently closed to foot traffic due to COVID-19. Staff are working remotely but can be reached by phone or email. Visit our website for contact information or call your county office, leave a message and we will get back to you ASAP. Thank you!



## November is National Diabetes Month

*Kristin Bogdonas, IL Extension nutrition and wellness educator*

There is an entire month dedicated to educating the public about this disease for good reason. Diabetes increases your risk for other chronic diseases including heart disease, cancer and stroke (the leading causes of death in the United States).

Diabetes self-management requires an investment of time and energy. Having to co-manage multiple illnesses can be even more challenging. In the Quad Cities Area, 14% of adults have diabetes, and that is up 3% from 2015. Another 8.1% have been told they have prediabetes or “borderline” diabetes. This is a condition where blood glucose is higher than normal but not high enough to be diagnosed with diabetes. The good news is that lifestyle modifications can delay or prevent prediabetes from progressing to type 2 diabetes.

### FIND OUT IF YOU ARE AT RISK BY TAKING THIS FREE ONLINE TEST!

The first step is to find out if you’re at risk. The sooner you know, the sooner you can take action and take charge of your health. Take a free online assessment at: [cdc.gov/prediabetes/takethetest](http://cdc.gov/prediabetes/takethetest).

### Diabetes Recipes Website [extension.illinois.edu/diabetesrecipes](http://extension.illinois.edu/diabetesrecipes)

University of Illinois Extension has a great website with recipes for those living with diabetes! From main dishes and sides, to breads and desserts, each recipe contains an approximate analysis for calories, protein, carbohydrate, fat, saturated fat, fiber, sodium and cholesterol. Check it out today!



## DIABETES MYTHS

There is not a one-size-fits-all diet plan and there isn’t a “special diet” that people with diabetes need to follow. The new approach to diabetes management takes into account personal goals, needs and current lifestyle behaviors which is an individualized approach. It is estimated that a person with diabetes spends less than 1% of their life with their health care team, making self-management skills crucial to success.

### Here are some diabetes myths

**Myth: People with diabetes can’t eat sweets.**

- **Fact-** sweets are no more “off limits” to people with diabetes than they are for people without. The key is to add them to a healthy meal plan and to have very small portions so the focus of the meal stays on the more healthy foods.

**Myth: If you are overweight or obese, you will eventually develop type 2 diabetes.**

- **Fact-** although weight is a risk factor, other risk factors such as family history, ethnicity, smoking, physical activity, and age also play a role. Many overweight people never develop the disease.

**Myth: People with diabetes have to eat special ‘diabetic’ foods.**

- **Fact-** they should follow a healthy meal plan, which in general is a healthy diet for anyone. This includes foods low in fat, moderate in salt and sugar with ample whole grain foods, vegetables and fruit.



## Savor the Joy

*Michele Crawford, Extension Educator, Community Health*

Are you finding it a little more difficult to find joy during pandemic life? While the burden of suffering felt during this experience is undoubtedly unequal, it is quite possible you have felt the toll in one way or another. Upon reflection, you may find your mental list of thorns to be more extensive than your list of roses, so to speak.

You may actually find yourself ruminating over negative experiences. It turns out the human brain is naturally inclined to focus on, learn from, and use negative information more often than positive information.

Psychologist Rick Hansen says our brains are like Velcro for bad experiences but Teflon for good ones. This means the negative experiences tend to stick, while the positive experiences easily slip away. You might have experienced the negativity bias if you have ever remembered having a great day overall, yet you found yourself focusing on the one thing that did not go so well. On more than one occasion, I have found myself dwelling on one negative program evaluation in a sea of positives.

Because of this inherent bias, we actually have to intentionally practice savoring the joy in life. The same holds true in relationships. The work of Gottman and Levenson demonstrates that it takes five positive interactions to counter a single negative one.

Most often, pleasant and beneficial experiences happen many times a day – enjoying a good cup of coffee or tea, a good conversation with a friend checking something off your to do list, laughing with your child. If we don't consciously take the time to soak in these good experiences, they pass through the brain like water through a sieve. So the question becomes, how do we make these good experiences stick?

Rick Hanson summarizes the process of deliberately internalizing beneficial experiences with the acronym HEAL.

**Have a beneficial experience:** Either notice an existing experience, or create one yourself.

**Enrich it:** Stay with the experience for at least 30 seconds. Feel it fully with all your senses.

**Absorb it:** Receive it into yourself. Let it soak in.

**Link it (optional):** Use the beneficial experience to soothe painful experiences.

I encourage you to try and make this a regular habit – savoring the joy of the positive, good feeling moments in your life. Start by noticing those simple pleasures and challenge yourself to stay with them by practicing the HEAL steps.



## Turkey for the Holidays Website

[extension.illinois.edu/turkey](https://extension.illinois.edu/turkey)

### Did you know?

University of Illinois Extension has a great website dedicated to helping you prepare your turkey and all the fixings! From main dishes and sides, to how to safely thaw and cook your turkey, what to do with leftovers plus fun facts, history and lore and more!

Here's a sample recipe:

### Chilled Sweet Potato Salad with Coconut, Currants & Pecans

#### Ingredients

- 6 medium sweet potatoes (about 3 pounds) scrubbed, unpeeled
- Water to cover by 2 inches
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1/2 cup brown sugar
- 1 cup shredded coconut
- 1/2 cup finely chopped pecans
- 1/2 cup currants or raisins
- 1/2 stick butter, optional

#### Directions

- Put potatoes in a large pot, add water, and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat, partially cover the pot, and simmer for about 30 to 40 minutes or until potatoes are just tender. Check each potato.
- Remove the potatoes from the water and when cooled enough to handle, peel. Cut into small pieces and place in a large bowl.
- Add sugars, coconut, pecans, currants, and butter. Mash with a potato masher until well blended. Will be slightly lumpy. Chill 3 to 4 hours or overnight.

#### Nutrition Facts

15 servings per recipe; 1/2 cup serving size; 210 calories (70 calories from fat) 8 g total fat; 10mg cholesterol; 55mg sodium; 35g carbohydrate; 4g dietary fiber; 2g protein

# Learn from home with Good Growing Winter Webinars

From selecting and caring for a Christmas tree to creating a winter haven for birds, the University of Illinois Extension Good Growing Wednesday Winter Webinar series has seasonally appropriate tips and tricks to keep you informed from the comfort of home this winter. Extension educators will lead each live sessions with follow-along activities. Webinars are free. Sign up for one or all of the sessions. Advance registration is required.

## Christmas Tree Types and Care | November 25, 3 - 4 PM

Different types of Christmas trees offer different colors, strength of fragrance, needle retention, branch sturdiness, and other attributes. Join Local Foods and Small Farms Educator Katie Parker to learn about the different types of trees and how to care for live trees. Illinois Extension educators will demonstrate how to create nature-themed ornaments, in this kid-friendly hands-on activity. Sign up at [go.illinois.edu/GGChristmasTrees](http://go.illinois.edu/GGChristmasTrees)

## Fun with Evergreen Foliage | December 2, 3 - 4 PM

Craft some holiday elegance with evergreen foliage for your home. Learn how to craft your favorite holiday décor and how to source suitable materials in your home landscape. Extension Educator Andrew Holsinger will demonstrate how to make a wreath and follow along at home with hands-on activities for kissing balls, outdoor holiday planters or evergreen gnomes. Sign up at [go.illinois.edu/GGEvergreenFoliage](http://go.illinois.edu/GGEvergreenFoliage).

## Popular Holiday Plant Care | December 9, 3 - 4 PM

Do you love buying holiday plants like poinsettia and amaryllis, but struggle to keep the plants alive through the holidays let alone keeping them going year-round? Join Illinois Extension educators as they discuss popular holiday plants and their care. During this webinar they will talk about poinsettia, amaryllis, holiday cactus, and Norfolk Island pine. Sign up at [go.illinois.edu/GGHolidayPlantCare](http://go.illinois.edu/GGHolidayPlantCare)

## Holiday Spices | December 16, 3 - 4 PM

Ever wonder about where those holiday spices you're using come from, or if you could grow them? Illinois Extension educators Ken Johnson and Chris Enroth will cover the origins and how to grow popular holiday spices such as nutmeg, cinnamon, clove, allspice, peppermint, citrus, and ginger. Sign up at [go.illinois.edu/GGHolidaySpices](http://go.illinois.edu/GGHolidaySpices).

# November is National Caregiver Month

We all know someone who is providing care for someone else. They may be caring for an older parent, a disabled adult child, or a spouse suffering from a traumatic injury or chronic illness. Even parents raising children are considered caregivers. Caregivers give of themselves without expecting anything in return, and they rarely think of themselves first.

During National Family Caregiver Month this November we honor the over 41 million people in the U.S. who provide care for someone over the age of 50. 21% of them provide care for more than 41 hours a week, and the majority of these caregivers continue to work. It is a rewarding experience for most, but also has many challenges.

Caregivers experience many difficult emotions along their journey and can also experience many losses including loss of privacy, freedom, money, identity and work.

University of Illinois Extension has a wealth of caregiving resources and materials on our Caregiving Resources page [extension.illinois.edu/global/caregiving-resources](http://extension.illinois.edu/global/caregiving-resources)

We should all reach out to someone we know in that caregiver role and offer some small kindness. Can you run an errand for them? Provide a meal? Maybe send them on an evening out while you supervise? Even a small encouraging note or gift would brighten their day.

***Our caregivers are valuable treasures that we need to acknowledge. Take a moment today to support them and encourage them to also care for themselves.***



## Sign-Up for the EAT.MOVE.SAVE. Healthy Text Program!

Choose ONE of three ways to sign up to get 1-2 text messages per week! Text message and data rates may apply. Text STOP to unsubscribe at any time.

If you live in Rock Island or Mercer County:  
Text "rockisland7" to (833) 369-2916

If you live in Henry or Stark Counties  
Text "henry7" to (833) 369-2916

Fun ways to be active

Local events and resources

Easy, tasty recipes

OR



Use a smartphone camera to scan and sign-up with an online form.

Win!  
\$15 gift card

Play Wellness BINGO in November for a chance to WIN a \$15 Hy-Vee gift card! We will be selecting 5 winners on Tuesday, December 1st. Have fun!

Throughout the month of November, try to do as many of the activities on this Wellness BINGO card as you can as you try to get a BINGO (horizontal, vertical, or diagonal). The more BINGOs you get, the more chances you have to win! One BINGO is 1 entry, 2 BINGOs is 2 entries, etc. If you fill all boxes (black out), you will get 5 entries into the drawing.

Keep track of the number of BINGOs you get, then fill out an entry form online at <https://go.illinois.edu/NovemberWellnessBINGO>

Have a social media free day this week	Have a meatless meal once this week	Send an encouraging text or note to three friends	Spend 30 minutes outside this week	Do a stress relieving activity (yoga, walking, deep breathing)
Try a recipe from IL Extension's Eat.Move.Save. Website @eat-move-save.extension.illinois.edu/	Be the reason someone smiles today	Drink a glass of water before each meal	Give someone a compliment	Try a dairy substitute such as almond, coconut, rice or soy milk
Eat a rainbow of colorful fruits and veggies this week	Take time to write down 3 things you like about yourself	No screen time 60 minutes before bed two nights this week	Get 30 minutes of activity 1 day this week	Make a healthy snack
Exercise your brain with a crossword, word search or Sudoku	Pick one day and avoid all sugary beverages	Cook with a new herb or spice (fresh or dried)	Do one thing you've been putting off	Keep track of your spending when eating out
Share a healthy snack with a friend	Walk in place while watching TV	Accomplish your "to-do" list this week	Write down something that went well this week	Put on some music and dance while doing housework



## Find IL Food Map

To help Illinois residents and families meet their basic food needs, University of Illinois Extension launched a new Illinois community food map that allows individuals to search by Illinois zip code for all food resources in that area.

Visit the site at: [go.illinois.edu/ILFoodMap](https://go.illinois.edu/ILFoodMap)