

OCTOBER 2020

# EXTENSION CONNECTIONS

University of Illinois Extension

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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!

University of Illinois Extension experts are here to help families, businesses, and communities solve problems and learn new skills with research-based webinars, virtual meetings, videos, and more. 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)

Sincerely,  
*Jenny Garner*  
County Director



## October is Eat Together, Eat Better Month

by Kristin Bogdonas, IL Extension nutrition and wellness educator

October is Eat Together, Eat Better Month and the perfect time to make family meals a priority. Eating more meals together has a positive effect on both the nutrition and emotional well-being of the entire family. This month, make it a goal to eat one meal together each day. This can be breakfast, lunch or dinner. Whatever works best for your family! Are you a single household? Try setting up a virtual dinner date or weekly outing with a friend or coworker.

### Five Reasons to Eat More Meals Together:

- 1. Healthy eating behaviors are encouraged**- we tend to copy the habits of the people we eat with, so be a good role model for the others in your household. If you have children and you want to promote a balanced diet, eat one yourself- in front of them, at the table, on a regular basis.
- 2. Young children are more likely to try new foods**-challenge your family to try a new vegetable or fruit every week. DIY (Do It Yourself) nights are another great way to have an assortment of ingredients available to try. Think tacos, pizzas, salads, and baked potato bars.
- 3. Family values are learned**- children set roots for a lifetime as they experience their family's values and traditions.
- 4. Helps kids do better in school**- parents are more likely to know about deadlines for homework, upcoming test days, and ways they can be involved with how their children are doing in school.
- 5. Bonds are formed and strengthened**- nightly dinners are a great way to debrief the day, share mini successes and stay engaged in each other's lives. Everyone seems to have a busy schedule so taking an hour to unplug, unwind and communicate without digital distractions can help keep mealtimes interesting and engaging.



## FAMILY MEAL CONVERSATION STARTERS

Some studies have shown that dinner conversations are a potent vocabulary booster and can help build resilience. Avoid battles and keep conversations pleasant- kids eat better when they're relaxed. Don't know what to talk about? Try some of these conversation starters or create your own.

### Conversation Starters

- What is one way you helped someone today?
- What was the best thing about your day?
- What is your favorite thing to do as a family?
- Complete this statement. The best day of the past week was:
- What is your favorite month of the year and why?
- If you had one superhero power, what would it be and why?
- If you could solve one problem in the world what would it be?

By keeping the flow of communication open you'll build trust, accountability, healthy habits, and uncover real issues to get behind as a family.

**Take the time this October to start a family tradition of eating together and eating better.**



**Illinois Extension**  
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN



## Practical tips to manage your diabetes

*Diane Reinhold, IL Extension Family Life Educator*

For the millions of Americans living with diabetes or prediabetes, adopting a healthy lifestyle is critical in managing the disease for improved quality of life. University of Illinois Extension’s upcoming webinar series, **Managing Diabetes in a Modern World**, will provide research-based information and strategies that strengthen the diabetic’s wellness journey as they navigate managing the disease in a modern world of fad diets, food myths, instant meals, and instant gratification.

“Over 34.2 million Americans have diabetes, and 34.5% of the adult U.S. population has prediabetes,” said Extension nutrition and wellness educator Diane Reinhold. “Whether you are newly diagnosed, or have been living with the disease for years, this webinar series offers valuable information and strategies to help navigate questions and concerns, enrich wellness, and overall management of the disease.”

The five-week online webinar series occurs weekly on **Wednesdays at 1 p.m., beginning Oct. 14 and running through Nov. 11.** Register for the FREE webinars at: [go.illinois.edu/ManageDiabetes](http://go.illinois.edu/ManageDiabetes)

### MANAGING DIABETES CLASS DESCRIPTIONS:

**October 14 | Take the First Step** In our series kick-off, we will dive into what it means to have diabetes, what is going on in your body, and the next steps. This session will help set you up for success in setting realistic personal goals related to what you eat and being more active with diabetes in mind.

**October 21 | Choose It, Count It, Eat It!** Sustain, nourish, and enjoy eating while you keep on track for managing diabetes. Choose your meal wisely, count it accurately, and enjoy eating what you cooked or ordered. Learn about meal planning tools and counting carbohydrate servings.

**October 28 | Making the Most of Your Diabetes Resources** In this session, explore the different resources, services, and supports related to diabetes that you and anyone in your life can use. From websites, books, and classes to insurance-covered education classes and diabetes footwear, we will cover a variety of resources you can use to manage your health better.

**November 04 | Fat Sodium and Sugar – Oh My!** Learn about the different types of fat, which ones you should limit, and how to include more of the good stuff. You’ll also walk away with strategies to enhance flavor in your meals while keeping sodium and sugar at a low.

**November 11 | Manage Your Risk** Uncontrolled diabetes puts you at risk for many chronic health conditions. During this session, we will discuss the importance of talking with your healthcare team, how high blood sugars impact your health, and what you should be aware of when you are feeling ill.

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

Contact [dreinhol@illinois.edu](mailto:dreinhol@illinois.edu) if you need a reasonable accommodation to participate.

## Diabetes Recipes

[extension.illinois.edu/diabetesrecipes](http://extension.illinois.edu/diabetesrecipes)

### Did you know?

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. Here's one:



### BASQUE CHICKEN

#### Ingredients

1.6 pounds skinless boneless chicken breast  
1 tablespoon olive oil, 2 tablespoons water.

**Seasoning:** 2 teaspoons paprika, 1 teaspoon garlic powder, 2 tablespoons flour, 2 tablespoons minced onion, 1/2 teaspoon black pepper, 1/2 teaspoon dried thyme  
1/2 teaspoon dried oregano.

#### Directions

Combine all ingredients for seasoning in plastic container with lid. Add chicken and shake to coat. Refrigerate at least 2 hours, shaking several times to coat chicken with seasoning. Add oil to non-stick skillet. Add chicken and cook to brown. Add about 2 tablespoons water and cover to steam until chicken is done; about 20 minutes.

#### Nutrition Facts

Servings per Recipe: 6 servings

#### Amount Per Serving

Calories 218

Calories from Fat 54

Total Fat 6 g

Cholesterol 93 mg

Sodium 77 mg

Carbohydrate 3 g

Dietary Fiber 0 g

Protein 36 g

Exchange 4 lean meat

Carbohydrate Units 0



# Shopping to Save: Your Buying Guide to Good Deals

## Look Low for Bargains

Most bargain brands will be located on the lower shelves. More expensive and name brands are located at eye level to grab your attention.

## The Power Wall

Looking to save big money? Shop the Power Wall. This is usually the wall just inside the front door of the grocery store. It displays both seasonal and weekly sales items.

## Use a Grocery List

Use your grocery list to help you stay on track and avoid impulse buys. Try arranging your list to follow the flow of departments in your favorite grocery store—backtracking leads to impulse buys!

## Shop the Weekly Sale Ads

Shopping the weekly sales ad offers significant savings. Stock-up on extras when on sale. If you buy more than you can use, simply freeze for later use. Make sure you have ample freezer space to prevent unintended food waste.

## Use Electric Coupons

Many stores allow you to use both electronic manufacture and local store coupons, for double the savings.

## Check for Savings Clubs and APPS

Many stores offer member-only savings benefits.

## Limit the Number of Trips

Plan menus for one or two weeks, and then shop for everything in one trip.

## Keep a List of Items You Have

Keeping a list will help prevent buying duplicate items, reduce food waste and help with menu planning.

## Buy Seasonal Produce

During winter months buy frozen and canned items, they are just as nutritious and less expensive! When purchasing canned items, select low-sodium veggies and fruit packed in 100% fruit juice.

## Go Meatless one Day a Week

Beans and eggs are great sources of protein and less expensive.

## Track the Food You Throw Away

Only buy enough food you can use before it will spoil or buy it in a form that has a longer shelf life, such as canned, frozen, or dried.

## Check your receipt

Look over your receipt before leaving the parking lot to make sure you were not mischarged for any items.

## Don't Shop When Hungry

A small snack and a bottle of water can help prevent impulse buys!

Watch and learn with SNAP-Ed on our YouTube Channel: [go.illinois.edu/ILExtensionhMrsYouTube](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC...)



COMING SOON: FREE online classes from Illinois Extension's SNAP-Ed staff are being planned for this fall! Visit our Facebook @[uiextensionhMrs](https://www.facebook.com/uiextensionhMrs) for information on: **Healthy Cents series for adults featuring healthy eating habits, food budgeting & more. Eat.Play.Grow! Adult/youth series offering healthy eating habits and family activities.**



## 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)



Illinois Extension's [Eat.Move.Save](https://eat-move-save.extension.illinois.edu/) website is dedicated to helping you make healthier choices on a budget with fitness activities, recipes and a monthly newsletter: <https://eat-move-save.extension.illinois.edu/>

**Sign up for Illinois Extension's Healthy Text Program**  
Get texts sent to your cell phone to inspire healthy living!  
Sign up at [go.illinois.edu/HealthyText](https://go.illinois.edu/HealthyText)



# PLAY Virtual Wellness BINGO to WIN!

University of Illinois Extension has put together a fun virtual wellness challenge to inspire healthy lifestyles during the month of October. Each week, participants will receive a new BINGO card to their email with a variety of activities to promote healthy habits at home. Don't let social distancing get in the way of your wellness goals!

**The BINGO card activities incorporate all dimensions of wellness.**

## Here's how \*Virtual Wellness BINGO works.

You sign up to participate at

[go.illinois.edu/VirtualWellnessBINGO](http://go.illinois.edu/VirtualWellnessBINGO)

We will email you a new BINGO card on the Monday of each week of the challenge: (You can do one or all 4, it's up to you!)

**Week 1: October 5-11**

**Week 2: October 12-18**

**Week 3: October 19-25**

**Week 4: October 26-November 1**

**When:** Each weekly challenge begins at 8:00 am Monday and ends at 5:00 pm Sunday. You will need to fill in your Virtual Wellness Challenge BINGO form we email you to indicate what you've completed in order to be included in the prize drawing. Your form must be turned in before 5 pm Sunday to be eligible for that week's prize drawing.

### Game rules:

- Complete the activities to get a BINGO (diagonal, horizontal or vertical).
- For each BINGO you'll get 1 entry into the weekly drawing (2 BINGOs = 2 entries, etc).
- Complete all the activities on the card (black out) for 5 entries into the weekly drawing!

**Prizes** will be shipped directly to your house from Amazon. Winners will be announced on Mondays (October 12, 19, 26, & November 2) There will be 1 prize drawing each week and winners will get to pick one of these prizes:

\*Color changing diffuser/humidifier \*Daily Positivity Journal  
\* Tea by Mood Gift Set \*Restful Sleep System.

**Who:** Anyone can participate, and it's free; however, prize winners must be from Henry, Mercer, Rock Island or Stark Counties in Illinois to receive a prize. If you need a reasonable accommodation to participate, email [@uie-hmrs@illinois.edu](mailto:@uie-hmrs@illinois.edu)

## Bring houseplants indoors before the first frost

*Ken Johnson, Horticulture Educator, Illinois Extension*

As fall draws near, it's time to bring houseplants inside for winter. Many houseplants are native to tropical and subtropical climates and do great outside in Illinois in the summer, but cannot tolerate cold temperatures.

**"When temperatures drop below 55°F, it's time to bring plants indoors,"** says Ken Johnson, University of Illinois Extension horticulture educator.

Inspect plants for any insects and other pests before bringing them indoors, for once inside they can rapidly increase and spread to other plants. Before resorting to insecticides, spray foliage with a steady stream of water. If spraying doesn't work, insecticidal soaps can be used to eliminate soft-bodied insects.

In addition to the foliage, Johnson recommends checking the soil. Insects, such as earwigs and ants, will move into soil in potted plants. Flush pots with water to drive out insects. If ants are present, the plant may need to be repotted.

Over a period of about a week, gradually reduce light levels by moving plants to increasingly shadier areas outside. This will start to acclimate them to light conditions indoors. Once plants are indoors, put them next to the brightest, sunniest window, typically south or west facing. If you don't have a sunny location, provide supplemental lighting.

Plants grow slower indoors, so will need less water and fertilizer. For most plants, allow the soil to dry slightly between watering. One way to check soil moisture is to stick your finger in your potting media up to your second knuckle.

If the soil is still moist, you don't need to water. If the pot feels light when lifted, it may be time to water.



Plants can be watered by top or bottom. If top watering, apply enough water so that some comes out the drainage holes at the bottom of the pot. This may need to be done more than once if the soil is very dry. If you have a saucer under the pot, make sure to empty the water out after half an hour or so. This will allow the potting mix to absorb additional water, but prevent the mix from becoming saturated.

To water from the bottom, fill your plant saucer or sink with a few inches of water and let plants soak. Once the potting mix on the top of the pot is moist, the plant can be removed from the water.

Plants often drop leaves and yellow when they are moved indoors. Increasing humidity levels around plants and providing supplemental lighting can help reduce leaf drop, Johnson says. Over time, plants will acclimate to their new environment.

