Welcome to the February 2021 edition of the EFNEP Bite! February is Heart Month, not only because of Valentine’s Day but because our Heart is so important to our over-all health and well-being. I hope that you enjoy our exciting and fun articles, tips, and recipes in this edition. We are currently coming to a conclusion of our virtual Winter Series nutrition classes and will be starting our virtual Spring Series the week of March 22, 2021. Please check out our various days and times for our virtual Spring 6-week Series. EFNEP classes are no-cost nutrition classes to empower our community for healthy lifestyle habits! We teach classes in English and Spanish, please see our link to register today for our Spring Series.

Sending everyone wishes for a happy, healthy, and heartwarming Spring,

Joanie MA Contreras, Program Coordinator, Senior
University of Arizona Pima County Cooperative Extension

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Facebook: U of A Community Nutrition Education EFNEP, Pima County
Instagram: @ua_efnep
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YouTube: Pima Community Nutrition- EFNEP

SPRING SERIES REGISTRATION LINK
Fill out this google form to signup for our Spring Series of community nutrition classes.

https://forms.gle/cvedkSRAFGbEAmyP6
Nutrition and Heart Health
Paola Gonzalez

Eating well is not just about looking good on the outside, but also feeling good on the inside—especially the parts of us that we can’t see! And while we ARE talking about your organs, let’s take a special look at our blood vessels known as arteries. The types of foods that we eat can affect the amount and type of fat that will end up in our arteries. If there is too much bad (LDL) cholesterol and not enough good (HDL) cholesterol, this fat will build up in the artery walls and form plaque. Plaque can eventually restrict blood flow to different parts of the body and can lead to many health problems including heart attacks! But, if we eat plenty of foods high in fiber and foods with the good types of fat like polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fat, the bad cholesterol in our blood will decrease. Examples of foods high in fiber are fruits, veggies, and whole grains and foods with good fats include nuts, seeds, avocados, plant-based oils (e.g. olive oil), and some types of fish. On the other hand, if we eat processed foods high sugar and the bad types of fat (saturated and trans fat), we increase bad cholesterol and build up more plaque. Therefore, we should reduce our consumption of sugary drinks, sweets, fried/fast food, and meat and dairy products that are high in saturated fat.

If you want to learn more about heart health and other ways to prevent heart disease, check out our YouTube video on this topic: https://youtu.be/hGiMw8XRoRs

Physical Activity and Heart Health
Stephanie Brennan

Physical activity is important for keeping our hearts healthy. It reduces your chances of developing diseases like type 2 diabetes or cardiovascular disease, but there are lots of benefits to physical activity besides protecting yourself from diseases. It can improve memory function and attention, improve insomnia, and improve bone health and balance. Adults are recommended to get at least 150 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity each week. With moderate intensity, your heart is beating a little faster and may be catching your breath, but you should still be able to talk. Here are some moderate intensity activities you can try:

- Dancing
- Going for brisk walk
- Gardening
- Going for a bike ride.

If you feel discouraged because exercise is not part of your regular lifestyle, it is never too late to start! Here are some tips for anyone who is just starting out:

- Don't exercise too vigorously right after meals, when it's very hot or humid, or when you just don't feel up to it.
- Ask family and friends to join you — you may be more likely to stick with it if you have company.
- Don't get discouraged if you stop for a while. Get started again gradually and work up to your old pace.
- If you have a high risk of coronary heart disease or some other chronic health problem, check with your healthcare provider before beginning a physical activity program.


Click on this link to check out our YouTube video for a guided workout you can do from your desk chair: https://youtu.be/PiVZoqJT-eM
VEGETABLE TOSTADAS
(from EFNEP’s 50TH ANNIVERSARY RECIPES COOKBOOK)

Yield: 15 - ½ cup servings

TOSTADA MIX
- ½ head of cauliflower (about 1.5 cups)
- 3 carrots
- 2 cucumbers
- ½ cup diced red onion (about half an onion)
- 2 diced fresh tomatoes (2 medium tomatoes yields about 1 c.)
- ½ cup finely chopped cilantro
- 1 cup lemon juice (6-7 fresh lemons)
- Salt to taste (optional)

INSTRUCTIONS
1. Chop cauliflower, carrots and cucumbers into a large bowl.
2. Add onion, tomatoes, cilantro and lemon juice.
3. Stir to combine.
4. Add salt to taste.
5. Refrigerate for 30 minutes.
6. Spoon ½ cup of mixture onto tostadas and serve.
7. Refrigerate leftovers.

"Vegetable tostadas dish was well received and enjoyed by our participants in our multi-cultural classes and selected to encourage our participants to consume more vegetables. They loved it!! As a Nutrition Educator, I am happy to say that this recipe is requested often by the participants. It’s tasty, healthy, great on the budget and easy to make." (University of California EFNEP)

EASY FRUITY PIZZA CRACKERS

INGREDIENTS
- Cream cheese or peanut butter
- Crackers of your choosing
- Strawberry/Blueberry/Banana/Fruit of your choosing
- Pancake Syrup (optional)*

DIRECTIONS
1. Wash all fruits before chopping
2. Mix ½ cup cream cheese with 3 TBS of pancake syrup*
3. Spread the cream cheese/peanut butter on top of the crackers
4. Chop fruit and place on top
5. Enjoy!

*The pancake syrup is only if you intend to use cream cheese to act as a sweetener. It may be left out of the mixture for a version with less added sugars.