Live Well Northeast

Contributing Authors:
Cathy Agan
Kimberly Butcher
Markaye Russell
Joy Sims
Cynthia Stephens

Food Safety Facts

By Cathy Agan

Food safety risks at home are more common than people think. Even though we can't see bacteria, there could be millions invading our foods, utensils, and other surfaces. Foodborne illness is serious, so let's follow four basic food safety practices to help reduce the risk of foodborne illness.

Clean:

- Wash your hands with warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds. This is especially important before and after handling food.
- Wash cutting boards, dishes, utensils, and counter tops with hot soapy water. You can use a bleach solution to sanitize after cleaning. Use unscented bleach and follow the directions on the label to dilute with water.
- Use paper towels to clean up kitchen surfaces instead of cloth towels.
- Rinse and rub fruits and vegetables under tap water and scrub with a brush while rinsing. This should even be done for those that you plan to peel before eating.
- Clean lids of canned goods before opening.

Separate:

- To avoid bacteria being spread from one food to another, always separate raw meat, poultry, seafood, and eggs from other foods.
- Use cutting boards wisely by using one cutting board for fresh produce and a separate one for raw meats, poultry, and seafood.
- Use a clean plate for cooked foods, and never place cooked food on a plate that previously held raw meats, poultry, or seafood.

Cook:

- Food is safely cooked when it reaches a high enough internal temperature to kill the bacteria that can cause foodborne illnesses.
- Use a food thermometer to measure the internal temperature of cooked foods. Visit www.foodsafety.gov to learn safe temperatures for different foods.
- Food thermometers should be inserted into the thickest part of the food.

Chill:

- Refrigerate or freeze meats, poultry, eggs, or other perishables as soon as you get them home from the store.
- Never let perishable foods sit at room temperature for more than two hours.
- To thaw foods safely, avoid thawing food at room temperature. Instead, thaw foods in the refrigerator, in cold water, or in the microwave. Food thawed either in cold water or the microwave should be cooked immediately to prevent the growth of bacteria.
- Marinate foods in the refrigerator.

Starting a Walking Program

By Cynthia Stephens

Let's begin 2021 with healthy habits and a great lifestyle. Do you have an exercise program? It is important to begin one as soon as you can. The recommendation is to walk 30-45 minutes, 5 days a week. If you haven't been participating in an exercise program, start slowly by going on 15-20 minute walks, 4-5 days a week.

To move to the intermediate level, begin adding a brisker pace so you are walking a 17-20 minute mile. This can be achieved by increasing your time by 5 minutes at each walk until you can walk for 30 minutes continuously, 6 days a week. If you struggle with the brisker pace, slow down and add time.

An intermediate walker should be able to walk 3 miles in 45 minutes, 3-5 days a week. If you start as a beginner, it will take a month or more to work up to this pace and distance. Don't become discouraged or compare yourself to others. Concentrate on how you feel and the accomplishments you've made.

Fitness Walking Technique

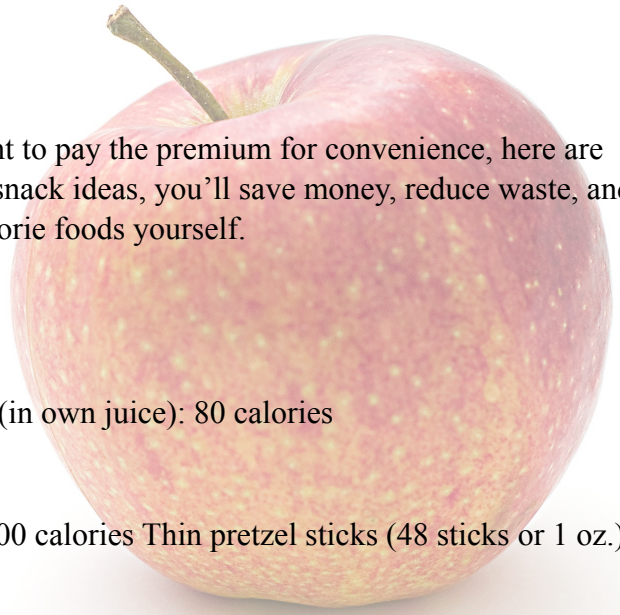
Proper technique in fitness walking can make your workout more effective and enjoyable while helping to prevent injuries.

- **Posture:** Keep your head upright, looking ahead. Your chin should be in a neutral position, not too high or tucked in towards your chest. Your shoulders remain back and relaxed, not hunched over.
- **Foot Placement:** Keep feet close to an imaginary line in the center of the pavement in front of you (follow lines on a track).

- **Finding Stride Length:** Stand upright with feet slightly apart. Lean forward at the ankles (like a ski jumper). Transfer your weight forward and as you do, put your right foot out in front of you and catch yourself before you fall forward. This is your stride length. You should maintain the same stride length regardless of the type of walk you do.
- **Stride:** Always keep at least one foot on the ground. The heel strikes the ground first, following with rolling onto the ball of your foot, finishing with a strong push off the toes (trailing foot). Focus on quicker rather than longer strides. Avoid slapping the ground with your feet and concentrate on smoothing out the movement.
- **Arm Swing:** This makes your walk a total body exercise. You will burn an additional 5-10% calories. Let your arms bend at the elbows and swing them in step with your feet in an arc from your waist to the front of your chest; your hands should reach just below chin level. Your forearms should brush your hips to keep your stride forward.

Smart Snack Alternatives

By Markaye Russell



If you want a healthy, low-calorie snack, but you don't want to pay the premium for convenience, here are some healthy snacks you can prepare yourself. With these snack ideas, you'll save money, reduce waste, and stay fuller longer. You can easily portion these 100-200 calorie foods yourself.

- Raisins (50 or about 1 oz.): 85 calories
- Skim milk latte (8oz.): 85 calories
- Low-fat cottage cheese (4oz.) with 2 canned pear halves (in own juice): 80 calories
- Air-popped popcorn (3 cups or 1 oz.): 95 calories
- Graham crackers (8 small rectangles or 2 full squares): 100 calories Thin pretzel sticks (48 sticks or 1 oz.): 100 calories
- Celery (5 pieces) with peanut butter (1 Tbsp): 100 calories Unsweetened applesauce (1 cup): 100 calories
- Apple (small) with low-fat cheese (2 oz.): 150 calories
- Baby carrots (10) with hummus (1/4 cup): 150 calories
- *Peanuts (a handful or 1 oz.): 175 calories
- *Raw or toasted almonds (23 whole or 1 oz.): 170 calories
- *Walnuts (14 halves or 1 oz.): 190 calories
- *Pecans (20 halves or 1 oz.): 200 calories
- Low-fat yogurt (6 oz.): 175 calories (or less)
- Tortilla chips (12 chips or 1 oz.) with salsa (1/2 cup): 175 calories Whole wheat crackers (10) with peanut butter (1/2 Tbsp): 175 calories

*Nuts are a great source of protein, healthy fats, and fiber. Watch your serving size!

For the latest research-based information on just about anything, visit our website:
LSUAgCenter.com

William B. Richardson, LSU Vice President for Agriculture
Louisiana State University Agricultural Center, Louisiana Agricultural Experiment Station, Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service, LSU College of Agriculture
The LSU AgCenter and LSU provide equal opportunities in programs and employment.

William B. Richardson, LSU Vice President for Agriculture Louisiana State University Agricultural Center
Louisiana Agricultural Experiment Station
Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service
LSU College of Agriculture

The LSU AgCenter and LSU provide equal opportunities in programs and employment.

If you need an ADA accommodation for your participation, please contact Cynthia Stephens at 318-428-3571 at least two weeks prior to the event. The LSU AgCenter provides equal opportunities in programs and employment.