

Living Well

FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES NEWSLETTER FOR NORTHEAST COLORADO



January-February, 2023

A Healthier Weigh

Please join us for this year's A Healthier Weigh challenge. We are preparing some new lessons to help you learn and stay motivated through the course of this 12 week challenge. You can register as a team, partnership, or individual. Once you have decided, please email your local FCS agent ASAP! They will give you an entry form, consent forms, and details about the weigh-in process. We are looking forward to launching another challenge and helping you get through the winter by keeping in shape and focused on maintaining or improving your health in 2023!

A poster for the 'A Healthier Weigh 2023' challenge. It features the Colorado State University Extension logo, the year '2023', and the title 'A Healthier Weigh'. The poster lists the program details: 'A 12 Week Health and Fitness Program to Start Your Year Off Right! "How Far Will You Go in this Journey!?"'. It includes dates for weigh-ins: January 3rd (Morgan and Washinton), January 4th (Logan, Morgan, and Yuma), January 5th (Kit Carson, Logan, and Phillips), and January 6th (Kit Carson and Phillips). Entry fees are listed as Team of 4: \$160, Team of 2: \$80, and Individual: \$40. Contact information for local extension offices is provided for Kit Carson, Logan, Morgan, Phillips, Washington, and Yuma counties. A small disclaimer at the bottom states: 'Colorado State University Extension is an equal opportunity provider. Colorado State University does not discriminate on the basis of disability and is committed to providing reasonable accommodations. CSU's Office of Engagement and Inclusion ensures meaningful access and equal opportunities to participate to individuals whose first language is not English. Colorado State University Extension's Office of Engagement and Inclusion ensures meaningful access and equal opportunities to participate to individuals whose first language is not English. Colorado State University Extension's Office of Engagement and Inclusion ensures meaningful access and equal opportunities to participate to individuals whose first language is not English. CSU-1603'.

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Colorado State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture and Kit Carson, Phillips, Sedgwick, Washington, and Yuma Counties cooperating.

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What is a Successful Mindset for Weight Loss Maintenance?



In today's calorie-rich, ultra-processed, movement-sparing, chronic stress-inducing, so-called "toxic" environment, losing weight is hard work. Implementing a healthy and sustainable approach that keeps the weight off is even harder.

Short-term weight loss can be easier than long-term weight maintenance

Most of us can successfully achieve weight loss in the short term, but those who hop from one fad diet to the next often experience the metabolic roller coaster known as yo-yo dieting that jacks up hunger hormones, plummets metabolic rates, and causes a vicious spiral of weight loss followed by regain. Even most medical interventions to help treat obesity produce the typical trajectory of rapid weight loss followed by weight plateau and then progressive weight regain. In [a meta-analysis](#) of 29 long-term weight loss studies, more than half of the lost weight was regained within two years, and by five years more than 80% of lost weight was regained. Based on best estimates, only one in five individuals who is overweight is successful in long-term weight loss.

What is so special about weight loss maintainers?

Studies from the National Weight Control Registry, a database of more than 4,000 individuals who have maintained at least 10% body weight loss for at least one year, provide insight into some tried and true tactics. These include various energy intake-reducing behaviors — limiting calorie-dense foods and sugar-sweetened beverages, portion control and a consistent eating pattern across days, increased fruit and vegetable consumption — as well as being physically active for at least an hour per day.

This makes sense and is [consistent across the scientific literature](#). Any successful weight loss necessitates tipping and keeping the scale toward greater energy expenditure and less energy intake (a net negative energy balance). How do people actually sustain those weight loss-promoting behaviors over time in order to build a lifestyle that does not leave them feeling persistently deprived, lethargic, and hangry (hungry + angry)? The most important determinants are those that cement changes in behavior. As [more recent evidence](#) confirms, the proper psychology for weight loss is critical for regulating the physiology that supports weight loss.

Self-regulation and self-efficacy are key to long-term success

Only recently have we started to evaluate the psychological and cognitive determinants of weight loss maintenance. We all have anecdotal evidence from family, friends, and colleagues, but systematically collecting, processing, and analyzing the qualitative experiences, strategies, and challenges from successful weight loss maintainers is difficult.

The data to date confirm the importance of self-regulation, and in particular [self-monitoring](#) of the day-to-day behaviors that drive energy intake and energy expenditure, especially eating behaviors. Those who have high self-efficacy (belief in your capacity to execute certain behaviors) for [exercise in particular](#) are more successful at sustaining weight loss. And more recently, researchers have been decoding elements of the proper mindset that instills high self-efficacy for the larger constellation of important weight management behaviors.

One [recent study](#) used machine learning and natural language processing to identify the major behavioral themes — motivations, strategies, struggles, and successes — that were consistent across a group of over 6,000 people who had successfully lost and maintained about 20 pounds for at least a year. They consistently advised perseverance in the face

of setbacks and consistency in food tracking and monitoring eating behaviors as key behavior strategies. Most of them stayed motivated by reflecting on their improved health and appearance at their lower weight.

Studies about successful weight loss miss many people

The evidence suggests age, gender, and socioeconomic status are not significant factors in predicting weight loss maintenance, but most weight loss studies oversubscribe white, educated, and midlevel income-earning females. Given the prevalence of obesity and its related comorbidities is disproportionately higher in more socially disadvantaged and historically marginalized populations, we need richer, more representative data to paint a full and inclusive picture of a successful weight loss psychology. We need to better understand the lived experience of all people so we can determine the most powerful and unique motivations, effective behavioral strategies, and likely challenges and setbacks, particularly the environmental determinants that dictate the opportunities and barriers for engaging in and maintaining a healthier lifestyle.

Maintaining weight requires multiple tools, training, and support

For any and all of us, maintaining weight loss necessitates getting comfortable with getting out of our comfort zone — exercising instead of stress eating, honestly deciphering reward-seeking versus real hunger, and resisting the ubiquitous lure of ultra-palatable foods. This is no easy task, as it often goes against environmental cues, cultural customs, family upbringing, social influences, and our genetic wiring. In order to help each other achieve health and weight loss in our modern environment, we need to learn and practice the psychological tools that help us not only accept, but eventually embrace, this NEW comfort zone..

Source: <https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/what-is-a-successful-mindset-for-weight-loss-maintenance-202205112742>

Heart Health Month

February is American Heart Month, a time when people can focus on their cardiovascular health. While you can't change some risk factors such as family history, sex, or age, there are plenty of ways you can reduce your risk of heart disease. Below are five important risk factors that can give you a good idea as to how well you're protecting yourself against our nation's number one killer, heart disease.

1. Blood Pressure
2. LDL Cholesterol
3. Triglycerides
4. Blood Sugar
5. Waist Circumference



Blood Pressure:

Blood pressure readings tell you the force of blood pushing against your arteries when your heart contracts (systolic, the first number) and relaxes (diastolic, the second number). Your blood pressure reflects how hard your heart is working and the condition of your blood vessels. Narrowed, inflexible arteries cause your blood pressure to rise. Hypertension (high blood pressure) is a leading risk factor for heart disease and stroke.

Goal: *Less than 120/80 mm Hg*

LDL Cholesterol:

Knowing your low-density lipoprotein (LDL) cholesterol numbers helps you understand what is going on within your artery walls. Excess LDL particles lodge inside the artery walls. Once there, they are engulfed with white blood cells, forming fat-laden foam cells that make up atherosclerosis.

Goal: *Less than 100 mg/dL*

Triglycerides:

Triglycerides are the most common form of fat in the bloodstream. Excess calories the body can't use are turned into triglycerides and stored in fat cells. Elevated triglycerides values have been linked to higher risk of heart attack and stroke.

Goal: *Less than 150 mg/dL*

Blood Sugar:

High blood sugar levels damage blood vessel walls and cause sugar (glucose) to attach to LDL. This makes LDL more likely to oxidize — another factor that promotes atherosclerosis. Excess sugar in the blood also makes cell fragments called platelets stickier so they're more likely to form clots, which can trigger a heart attack or stroke.

Goal: *Less than 100 mg/dl*

Waist Circumference:

Abdominal or belly fat is also known as visceral fat. Visceral fat surrounds internal organs and secretes hormones that promote inflammation. This triggers the release of white blood cells involved in atherosclerosis. Measure your waist just above your navel (belly button).

Goal: *Less than half your height in inches OR for women, less than 35 inches and for men, less than 40 inches. Go by whichever number is lower.*

Making Lifestyle Improvements:

If one or more of these numbers are not ideal, work at improving your heart health by making small manageable lifestyle improvements. Make small caloric deficits by consuming less calories from highly processed foods full of sugar, salt, and saturated fats. Start to increase vegetables and fruits, beans or other legumes, lean meats, fish, low-fat or fat-

free dairy foods, whole grains, and healthy fats such as olive oil. Reduce alcohol intake. Get seven to eight hours of sleep a night. Don't smoke if you haven't started or work towards decreasing your overall tobacco use. Learn to manage stress in a healthy way such as moving your body for 30-60 minutes a day. Small lifestyle improvements can make a dramatic effect on your overall heart health.

Article adapted from: <https://www.health.harvard.edu> and <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/heart-disease/in-depth/heart-disease-prevention/art-20046502>

Tips to Successful Meal Planning



Meal planning can seem daunting or overwhelming, but there are many benefits and it can be enjoyable for the whole family. Starting small and creating a plan for a few days a week is an easy way to start the meal planning journey to ensure success so the planning habit continues.

First, think about your individual goal or outcome of meal planning. Each family's needs are different, so by identifying this goal the outcome is more achievable and realistic. Meal planning can take some time in the beginning, but with practice, that time is returned on having a less stressful evening and time lost trying to figure what's for dinner each day. Common goals of meal planning may be saving time, cost savings, or health benefits.

Time Savings Benefit: Think of the tried-and-true family favorite recipes first! Use a meal plan to jump start the planning and make a list of ingredients needed for those favorites. Once you have your ingredient list, do your shopping for the entire week to save time. Coordinate your meals depending on the day's schedule – i.e. dinner to be quick or the meal in the crock pot ready to go before a practice or meeting. When you have a meal plan you spend less time making multiple trips to the store, dining out at a restaurant and can cook once but eat twice by preparing enough for two meals.

Cost Savings Benefit: Meal planning creates definite cost savings benefits. Sticking to the shopping list and less trips to the store creates fewer impulse purchases and money spent on gas with frequent trips. Purchasing raw ingredients versus prepackaged or prepared meals has additional cost savings as well as health benefits too.

Health Benefit: There is an increased likelihood of meeting dietary requirements when composing fresh well-balanced meals with raw ingredients rather than premade or quick impulse meals. By planning we take the stress out of eating and preparing and improve mental and emotional well-being. Meal planning can keep meals interesting and involve the whole family in the creation and planning.

Regardless of each personal reason for meal planning, being organized and taking time to start with just a few days a week will help make the journey successful. There are meal planning tools and templates available you can individualize to fit your preferred style. The hardest part is starting, but once you do, you are sure to see the time, cost, and health benefits!

Adapted from: CSU Nutrition, Food, Safety and Health and CSU Extension Meal Planning with Confidence Program

Staying Motivated to Accomplish New Year's Resolutions

The New Year is often a time to evaluate our lives and consider changes to set us on the path of health, wealth, and happiness. After a short period, however, these resolutions get to be far less exciting and can become difficult and overwhelming.. Here are some tips to help keep you on track to accomplishing your New Year's Resolutions.



1. Take one small step at a time – Making a lifestyle change is not something that is going to happen overnight. Taking small steps towards a larger goal will make it feel much more manageable and prevents feelings of overwhelmingness. It also adds more time to celebrate accomplishments and keeps the motivation to continue working towards big goals.
2. Write down your goals – Once you have them recorded, hang them somewhere you will see them every day such as the fridge, bathroom mirror or back of the front door as a reminder. You can even add pictures that symbolize your goal to help you visualize them. Write down smaller goals to help you reach your big goal and celebrate your achievement of each one of them.
3. Invest in yourself – It is important to build your personal value. Take the time you need for yourself to accomplish your goals. It is important to set boundaries when you need them to help you reach your ultimate goals.
4. Have an accountability partner – This can be a spouse, friend, online group, or coworker with common goals. Seeing each other's successes can help motivate each other to keep working towards goals and help get back on track when needed .
5. Don't be so hard on yourself – Mistakes happen. Just because you slip up once, does not mean you should quit striving toward your goals. Do not wait for the next week, a new month, or next year to start working on making yourself better again. Pick up right where you left off and start acting as soon as you notice you fell off track.
6. Follow social media accounts that are going to motivate you – Social media can have a major impact on our daily lives. It is easy to focus on the negative impacts , but following accounts that help keep you motivated, give you new ideas, or connect you to others who are working toward a common goal can help you achieve your goals.

7.

Article adapted from: https://www.uaex.uada.edu/counties/carroll/torries-top-tips-blog/posts/keeping_resolutions.aspx and <https://wayne.ces.ncsu.edu/2014/01/ways-to-stay-motivated-to-keep-new-years-resolution/>

Tips for Reducing Food Costs and Waste



We all are probably aware of the notable increase in food costs, both when purchasing food for home as well as food away from home. The cost of groceries has risen about 13.5% in the past year – the largest increase in 43 years. Economy-wide factors, such as supply chain issues, energy, transportation and labor costs, have all contributed to increases in prices across all food categories. There are several ways to help reduce the financial impact, including reducing food waste.

Uneaten, wasted food accounts for 25-40% of the food grown, processed and transported in the US, and about 40% of that is directly caused from home food waste. Food waste is not only bad for the environment, but it also means wasted money for your family.

Here are some steps you can take to keep waste to a minimum at your home.

1. **Plan meals and snacks carefully.** Even though it may seem like one more thing to fit into your busy schedule during the week, the small amount of time you take to meal plan will end up saving you time and money in the end. Buy what you need and make a point of using any perishable foods like fresh fruits and vegetables before they spoil. Don't know what to do with your leftovers? Check out the Utah State University resources called "[Create](#)" that is all about using leftovers in new and interesting ways.
2. **Be food safe.** Store food appropriately and keep perishable products at a safe temperature. Keep your refrigerator at or below 40° F. Store raw meats in a container or dish on the bottom shelf or storage drawer to prevent juices from leaking and contaminating other foods.
3. **Check for quality.** Check the dates on foods when you are shopping. You can often find great price markdowns on meats or other perishable items that are close to the use by date. These are perfectly safe to eat. Just plan to cook them or freeze them within a day or two.
4. **Stay organized.** Keeping your refrigerator and cupboards organized will help prevent waste. You'll be more aware of what is in it and what needs to get used quickly. Arrange supplies so the oldest items are in front so you will see and use them first. Use see-through storage containers for leftovers. Label, date, and freeze them in meal-size servings. Always check your leftover supply when meal planning so you can work them into your plan.
5. **Freeze what you can.** The [National Center for Home Food Preservation](#) has tools to help you decide what to freeze and how to do it in a way that maintains the food's quality and safety.
6. **Donate.** If you have non-perishable food your family can't use and it is not expired, donate it to your local food pantry.

Source: <https://spendsmart.extension.iastate.edu/cook/food-waste/>, Iowa State University Extension, "Reduce Food Waste"

Keeping Your Family Active During Winter

Children need lots of physical play every day. Ideally, they should be playing outdoors but that can be difficult during the winter months. According to *Caring for Our Children's* national health and safety standards, toddlers (twelve months to three years) and preschoolers (three to six years) should be allowed sixty to ninety total minutes of outdoor play per day. This can be spread throughout the day, especially in the winter months. If the temperatures outside are not too cold, there are several fun activities your family can do to keep active.



Children may need a little motivation from parents or caregivers to play outside in the snow or come up with creative ways to stay active indoors. Here are some examples to help you and your family stay active through the winter.

- Take a long walk in the snow and see if you can find any animal tracks.
- Work together or compete to build the best snowman or snow fort.
- Throw snowballs at a target. If you have some leftover cardboard, have kids draw a target and take turns throwing snowballs at it to see who has the best aim.
- Color the snow by using spray bottles filled with water and a little bit of food coloring.
- Make homemade snowflake catchers by attaching some felt to a piece of cardboard and then gluing it to a popsicle stick. Keep them in the freezer until it snows, then use them to collect snowflakes.

- Do Snow Pile Olympics such as the Long Jump (draw a line in the snow and see who can jump the farthest), Snowball Throw (throw snowballs from the same line to see who can throw the farthest) and Snow Pile Hurdles (make piles of snow to jump over.)

Even when the temperature is too cold outside, it is still important to make sure kids are getting exercise.

- Create an indoor obstacle course with tasks such as crawling under a table or going under a rope tied between two objects, skipping in place, and jumping through a hula hoop five times.
- Have a dance party. Put on some fun music for the family and see who has the best moves.
- Do action rhymes together. Some classic action rhymes include “The Itsy-Bitsy Spider,” and “Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes.” These can be a great workout for younger children.

Article adapted from: https://www.canr.msu.edu/news/making_winter_enjoyable_for_children, <https://extension.psu.edu/programs/betterkidcare/knowledge-areas/environment-curriculum/activities/all-activities/outdoor-play-on-winter-days>, and <https://nrckids.org/CFOC/Database/3.1.3>

Welcome – Anne Mason, Washington County FCS Agent!!



Anne started in Washington County on December 5th 2022. She was born and raised in Arvada Colorado on a small family farm. That is where she gets her love of the outdoors, gardening, and horses. She attended Regis University in Denver where she attained her Bachelor's Degree in Biology with a Minor in Environmental Studies and later went on to earn a Master's Degree in Elementary Education from the University of Phoenix.

After graduating from college, she began a career with the Colorado Division of Wildlife as a Wildlife Officer in Bailey, Colorado. After a few years, she changed career paths and became a teacher with Jefferson County School District. For the past 17 years, she taught first and second grades in the mountain community.

Her family moved north of Akron this past August because of her husband's job transfer. She enjoys hunting and fishing throughout Colorado. She is excited to see what will grow at a lower elevation in her garden this coming year. Her two children keep her busy with their sports and rodeos. She is excited to join the Office of Extension and Engagement team!

Program Highlights

Farm Family Survival Guide for 2023 – Join us as we lend a hand offering support for farm families dealing with inflation, stress and margin squeeze in 2023. Learn more about enterprise budgeting and cash flow monitoring, family budgeting and FCS resources, along with stress reduction and local mental health resources available to farm families. This event will take place on January 16, 2023 at the Northeast Regional Engagement Center in Sterling, Colorado.



Upcoming Events!

- **Strengthening Families Program 10-14 --**
 - This will take place January 11-February 22 at the Wray School. Contact Yuma County Extension Office at (970) 332-4151
 - 3:00-5:00 p.m. Afterschool homework help and meal prep
 - 5:00-7:00 p.m. Strengthening Families 10-14 class (Youth, Parent and Family)
- **Morgan County Dining with Diabetes –**
 - Taking place every Tuesday evening from 5:30-7:00 p.m. between January 17 and February 7 at the Morgan County Extension Office. Contact Katie to RSVP (970) 542-3540
- **Morgan County Matter of Balance –**
 - Every Wednesday morning from January 18 – March 8 at 8:00 at the Gene Doty Senior Center in Fort Morgan. Contact Katie Seelhoff to RSVP (970) 354-8544.
- **Logan County Meal Planning w/Confidence**
 - This workshop will take place from 12:00-1:00 p.m. at the Logan County Extension Office. Call (970) 522-3200 x5 or email Jaci at jaci.wagner@colostate.edu
- **Logan County Dining with Diabetes --**
 - February 1, 8, 15, and 22 in conjunction with Banner Health from 12-1 p.m. each of those days @Logan County Extension Office. Contact Jaci Wagner to RSVP at (970) 522-3200 ext 5.
- **Diabetes Webinar --**
 - Learn more about dental health and diabetes on February 9 from Noon – 1:00 pm. Contact your local Extension Office for more information and to register for a site or on-line viewing.
- **ServSafe Manager Training --**
 - February 16, 7:45 am – 5:30 pm, Burlington Community Center. Contact the Kit Carson County Extension Office or Yuma County Extension Office for more information or to register
- **Logan County Smoothie Workshop –**
 - This workshop will take place March 2 from 12:00-1:00p.m. at the Logan county Extension Office. Call (970) 522-3200 x5 or email jaci.wagner@colostate.edu
- **Be sure to check our Facebook page listed below to stay up to date on all our upcoming events.**



CSU Extension – NE Colorado FCS: <https://www.facebook.com/CSUExtensionNortheastFCS>

CSU Extension – Phillips County: <https://www.facebook.com/PhillipsCountyExtension/>

CSU Extension – Logan County: https://www.facebook.com/csuextensionlogancounty/?_tn=%2Cd%2CP-R&eid=ARCS5-NbtiQryVnN5X513c5--hwVu-1ZfnhynwZsPotP7AZIVStJaoCEoaVYzZjBFhCH0tHJLHaJxC

CSU Extension – Morgan County: <https://www.facebook.com/extensionmorgancounty/>