Monthly Strides
Taking strides to better your health

September Issue Includes

- Family Health and Fitness Day (September 26)
- Food Safety Education Month
- Fruits and Veggies - More Matters Month
- National Cholesterol Awareness Month

Family Health and Fitness Day
Family Health & Fitness Day USA is a national health and fitness event for families. The event's purpose is to promote family involvement in physical activity. Get out with your family and play!

To learn more, visit StayWell Online at https://uclivingwell.online.staywell.com and click on “Physical Activity” under “Health Centers.”

Fruits and Veggies - More Matters Month
Getting a variety of fruits and vegetables in your diet is important to maintaining good health. Save time and money by doing a few of the following:

- Buy pre-cut, pre-washed or pre-packaged into single servings. The fewer excuses, the more likely you will be to eat them.
- Purchase items on sale, at a farmers market and when you can, freeze or can them so that they are available all year long.

To learn more, visit StayWell Online at https://uclivingwell.online.staywell.com and click on “Eating” under “Health Centers.”

Food Safety Education Month
Washing Produce
Before using fresh produce to eat or add to a meal, wash it under cold running water to remove any dirt. This reduces bacteria that may be present. If there is a firm surface, such as on apples or potatoes, the surface can be scrubbed with a brush. Consumers should not wash fruits and vegetables with detergent or soap. You could ingest residues from soap or detergent absorbed on the produce.

When preparing produce, cut away any damaged or bruised areas, because bacteria that cause illness, thrives in those places. Immediately refrigerate any fresh-cut items such as salad or fruit for best quality and food safety.

To learn more about preventing food poisoning, visit www.foodsafety.gov.

Cholesterol Awareness Month
The higher your blood cholesterol, the greater your risk for heart attack or stroke. The problem is, you can’t “feel” high cholesterol. That's why it is important to know your cholesterol level. Get your cholesterol checked, and if it's high, take steps to bring it within a healthy range. Eating the right foods and exercising regularly can help. Some people also need medication to control their cholesterol.

To learn more, visit StayWell Online at https://uclivingwell.online.staywell.com and select “Cholesterol” under “Health Centers.”
September
Food Safety Education Month
Easy Lessons in Safe Food Handling
Did you know that in the United States each year 76 million cases of foodborne illness occur? More than 325,000 people are hospitalized for foodborne illness and 5,000 people will die from foodborne illness. Use the guidelines below provided by the United States Department of Agriculture- Food Safety Inspection Service and the FDA Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition.

These four easy lessons can help prevent harmful bacteria from making you and your family sick.

1. **Clean.** Wash hands, utensils, and cutting boards before and after contact with raw meat, poultry, seafood and eggs.
2. **Separate.** Keep raw meat and poultry apart from foods that won't be cooked.
3. **Cook.** Use a food thermometer – you can't tell food is cooked safely by how it looks.
4. **Chill.** Chill leftovers and takeout foods within 2 hours and keep the fridge at 40 °F or below.

**Six steps to safer produce:**
**Separate**
- When shopping, be sure fresh fruits and vegetables are separated from household chemicals and raw foods such as meat, poultry and seafood in your cart and in bags at checkout.
- Keep fresh fruits and vegetables separate from raw meat, poultry or seafood in your refrigerator. Do not use the same cutting board without cleaning with hot water and soap before and after preparing fresh fruits and vegetables.
**Cook**
- Cook or throw away fruits or vegetables that have touched raw meat, poultry, seafood or their juices.
**Chill**
- Refrigerate all cut, peeled or cooked fresh fruits and vegetables within two hours.
**Throw Away**
- Throw away fresh fruits and vegetables that have not been refrigerated within two hours of cutting, peeling or cooking.
- Remove and throw away bruised or damaged portions of fruits and vegetables when preparing to cook them or before eating them raw.
- Throw away any fruit or vegetable that will not be cooked if it has touched raw meat, poultry or seafood.
- If in doubt, throw it out!
**Check**
- Check to be sure that the fresh fruits and vegetables you buy are not bruised or damaged.
- Do not buy fresh cut items that are not refrigerated.
**Clean**
- Wash hands with warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds before and after handling fresh fruits and vegetables.
- Clean all surfaces and utensils with hot water and soap, including cutting boards, counter tops, peelers and knives that will touch fresh fruits or vegetables before and after food preparation.
- Rinse fresh fruits and vegetables under running tap water, including those with skins and rinds that are not eaten. Packaged fruits and vegetables labeled “ready-to-eat”, “washed” or “triple washed” need not be washed.
- Run firm-skin fruits and vegetables under running tap water or scrub with a clean vegetable brush while rinsing with running tap water.
- Dry fruits and vegetables with a clean cloth towel or paper towel.
- Never use detergent or bleach to wash fresh fruits or vegetables.

**Resources:**
United States Department of Agriculture- Food Safety Inspection Service
http://www.foodsafety.gov

StayWell Online
https://uclivingwell.online.staywell.com