



# February 2022

## FAMILY AND COMMUNITY HEALTH

Hello all, and Happy February.

February is American Heart Health Month. Whether you need to eat better, manage your diabetes, or lose a few pounds, the battle may be difficult without some help. Here are four online courses to help keep your ticker top notch.

1. [Eating Well for Healthy Living](#)
2. [Cooking Well with Diabetes](#)
3. [Dashing Your Way to Improved Health](#)
4. [Step Up Scale Down](#)



With demanding schedules, it can be difficult to make it to the doctor for your checkup. If you can't remember the last checkup, it's time. Tell your doctor if you have any concerns about your heart health. If you find that you have heart health issues, don't feel alone. About 30 million of your fellow Americans are in the same boat. The good news is that education and treatment have come a long way in the past few decades. Be proactive, educate yourself and start making those changes you already know are tried and true.

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## Parenting:

When is the last time you sat down for a family meal? Maybe some of your fondest memories occurred around the morning breakfast table or at a special, holiday table with loved ones. It turns out that family mealtimes have more of an impact than meets the eye. Some benefits include:

1. Children learn the life skill of preparing nutritious food.
2. It provides the chance for adults to set examples.
3. There is a positive association of lower obesity rates.
4. Children develop better vocabularies.
5. The bond is increased between parents and children.



For many families, eating together is reserved for holidays and special occasions. Couples find that the routine of sitting down together carves out time for each other and creates work schedule boundaries, providing a balance between work and personal life. This is a time children will learn about loving, positive family relationships.

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## Nutrition:

Well, it's February. It's just too cold outside for barbeques, cold salads aren't hitting the spot and what you really want by day's end is something comforting and warm to fight off the cold. With just a little digging you can find a recipe like the one below that is warm, delicious and won't break the calorie bank.

## Baked Potato Soup

### Ingredients

- 3 cups baked and peeled russet potatoes
- 3 ½ cups fresh cauliflower florets
- ½ cup chopped yellow onion
- 2 garlic cloves chopped
- 2 cups fat-free lower sodium, chicken broth
- 2 cups 1% milk
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon pepper
- ½ cup plain nonfat Greek yogurt
- ½ cup reduced fat shredded cheese
- 1/4 cup chopped green onion
- 3 slices cooked low sodium turkey bacon crumbled

Servings	Prep Time	Cook Time
8	5 min	20 min



### Instructions

1. Wash potatoes well with a brush under cool running water. Place potatoes in oven for 1 hour at 400 degrees Fahrenheit, or pierce potatoes with a fork and microwave on high for 5 minutes, turning over and microwaving for about 4-5 minutes until tender. Cool, peel and cube potatoes.
2. Steam fresh cauliflower in microwave following ready to eat bag instructions or boil fresh cauliflower in a pot. Drain and set cauliflower to the side.
3. In a large pot, using cooking spray, sauté chopped onion and garlic on medium heat until tender.
4. Add potatoes and cauliflower to onion and garlic. Stir in chicken broth and milk, bring to a slow boil.
5. Use an immersion blender to puree in pot until smooth or pour soup into a blender to puree- return to pot.
6. Add salt, pepper, and yogurt to pureed soup and cook on low heat another 10 minutes, stirring occasionally.
7. Remove from heat, serve 1 cup into each bowl. Top with shredded cheese, chopped green onion, and crumbled bacon.

## Physical Fitness:

With the amount of daylight increasing, soon we will have sun filled, warmer evenings to follow these brisk mornings. Plan to walk more this year. Perhaps the simplest form of exercise, walking is underrated. A regular brisk walk could help you:

1. Burn up to 200 calories in just 30 minutes.
2. Improve your mood, cognition, memory and sleep.
3. Strengthen your immune system.
4. Prevent or manage disease.
5. Increase energy levels.



Walking regularly should become an important part of your fitness routine. It can also be the jumping off point for a more balanced lifestyle which includes more strenuous aerobic exercise like swimming, running and cycling. Some fitness experts claim that by the time you feel exhausted, you are only at 40% of your body's potential. Have you ever pushed yourself further that you thought you could go? This year why not run your first 5K, half-marathon or even a full marathon. Start by walking one mile per day. Increase that distance by one mile each week thereafter. After you're able to walk 5 miles, try jogging one mile. Once you can jog one mile without stopping, increase your distance by 1 mile each week. Once you're able to run 3 miles regularly, you are ready for your first 5K, 10 miles regularly for a half-marathon and 20 miles regularly for a marathon.

## Did you know?

1. Exercise will give you more energy, even when you're tired.
2. A tick bite can make you allergic to red meat.
3. Our muscle fibers are thinner than a human strand of hair yet can hold 1,000 times its own weight.
4. Men are more forgetful than women.
5. Our blood makes up one tenth of our body weight.



## Coming Events:

- ❖ Check out our new Facebook page [here](#) for advice, tips and how-to videos.
- ❖ The [hockley.agrilife.org](http://hockley.agrilife.org) website will soon be getting a face lift. In the meantime, activities and information will be posted per usual.
- ❖ I will soon be holding Food Manager Certification training. Please let me know if you or your staff will need the training and I will notify you as soon as the class is set.
- ❖ For those of you who will be preserving food this spring and summer, I am able to test pressure canner gauges.

Heath Johnson,  
Hockley County Extension Agent  
Family and Community Health

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