KENTUCKY
CABINET FOR HEALTH AND FAMILY SERVICES
CHFS FOCUS
December 4, 2006

Snacking During the Holidays

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It's hard to avoid snacks, particularly during the holidays. More snacks are available, which means it can be an easy way to increase your calorie intake without even realizing it. It becomes a challenge to "eat right and snack right" during this time of year. For children under the age of 6, snacks are a way to try new foods and to eat what they need for growth and development.

To prevent holiday weight gain seen by many adults and meet the needs of children, think variety. Giving your child many options to choose from increases the chances they will choose wisely. This works for adults, too. Children may not ask for healthy foods, but when given choices they will often choose the healthier ones. Completely eliminating a food or group of foods from the diet is not effective. We all crave less nutritious foods sometimes. We have to teach children it is OK to eat these foods occasionally. Making foods "taboo" only increases the desire to consume them.

Teach your children how to make wise food choices and then allow your children to be involved in making choices. Some ideas to help you and your child in developing healthy snack habits:

- Read food labels and select foods with lower fat, salt and sugar content.
- Let your children help make decisions while shopping.
- Let children assist in preparing foods. They are more likely to eat foods they helped make.
- Divide snack foods into portions and make them easily accessible by putting them in small containers or bags.
- Keep healthy snacks on hand.

Try these healthy snack ideas:

- Pretzels
- Chex Mix or other cereal mixes
- Trail mix
- Baked tortilla chips with salsa
- Fruit with dip
- Veggies with low fat dip
- Yogurt with granola or fruit
- Low fat crackers and cheese or peanut butter
- Cereal
- Low fat popcorn
- Nuts
- Dried fruit
- Rice cakes (plain or with topping)

Be aware of small foods that can cause young children to choke, such as popcorn, nuts or dried fruit. Take a little extra time to plan ahead for your children's meals and snacks by using some of these ideas. Have a healthy and happy holiday season.

Last Call for Flu Shots

CHFS employees have one more chance to receive a flu shot. Flu shots will be given from 8:30 to 11:30 a.m. and 1 to 3:30 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 6, at the Kentucky History Center.

A Starting Point for New Supervisors

The Office of Employee and Organizational Development (OEOD), formerly known as GSC, has seats available for the class "Introduction to Supervision"* on Wednesday, Dec. 6.

This class is for all new managers who need help making the transition from co-worker to boss. Learn critical supervisory skills in addition to planning your professional development in this new role.

The class is one day and is in Frankfort. To register, contact your department training liaison (http://chfsnet.ky.gov/afa/ohrm/dpod/trainlia.htm). Refer to the OEOD Web site (http://personnel.ky.gov/oeod/empdev/) for additional classes.

*Note: This is not the same class as "Personnel Management Training" offered by the CHFS Office of Human Resource Management that is mandated by the Cabinet.

CHFS Employees Leading the Way to Savings

Our Cabinet is in the lead for savings to the Commonwealth through the Employee Suggestion System (ESS) for 2006. To date this year, CHFS employees have saved the state $74,963. This figure does not include the suggestions that cannot be measured monetarily.

Although savings for the Commonwealth are one benefit of the program, the ESS also recognizes employees who go above and beyond their jobs by thinking of creative ways to better serve the people of Kentucky. Linda Clements, a retired field services supervisor for the Department for Community Based Services, won a $2,500 award for saving the Cabinet $70,783 this year.

Karen McGaughey, CHFS ESS coordinator, attributes the high amount of savings to our "employees' dedication to customer service." Our Cabinet provides many services to the people of the Commonwealth and every cent we can save helps those who need our programs, she said.

Departments can support the ESS by making sure they advertise the program. Doing simple things such as hanging posters, supplying brochures and advertising in a monthly newsletter such as the FOCUS can go a long way to reaching employees.

Do you have a suggestion and want to know the best way to get it approved? McGaughey has a few tips:

- Give detailed information about your suggestion so that it can be properly evaluated.
- Take the time to send it in.
- Track your suggestion online to see where it is in the process.
- Do not give up on your suggestion. Keep trying.

Go to the ESS Intranet site (http://chfsnet.ky.gov/afa/ohrm/KESS.htm) to get started. Good luck!

Four More Reasons to Submit Employee Suggestions

CHFS employees are at it again – saving money for the Cabinet and state. Michelle Kent, Bradford Richie, Linda Clements and Robert Lefevers all won $100 awards for their employee suggestions.

Lefevers suggested updating the Disaster Recovery Plan for the Department for Disability Determination Services. Lefevers is increasing safety by revamping the disaster plan to address critical issues previously not addressed.

Kent, personnel administrator for the Division of Personnel Administration, suggested that an overtime status code be put on the voluntary transfer/demotion form. This will improve office methods and efficiency. This is Kent's second implemented suggestion.

Richie suggested that employees with the Department for Community Based Services (DCBS), particularly field office workers, be recognized monthly via a department newsletter. By celebrating individual and team achievements, Richie hopes to improve morale and retention.

Clements, from DCBS, another two-time award winner, suggested that an item be deleted from the PAFS202 form and that the form be changed to two-sided to increase office efficiency and processing.

These employees have contributed to the success of the Cabinet and so can you.

Bring your ideas to life and be rewarded for your suggestion.

Go to the ESS Intranet Site (http://chfsnet.ky.gov/afa/ohrm/KESS.htm) and learn how to submit your suggestion!

Living Well

Got Iron?

By Kris Hayslett, Wellness Coordinator

Weight training is often a component left out of an exercise program. The lack of equipment, time or know-how all are contributing factors to not including weight or resistance training in your workout. The benefits of resistance or weight training are:

- Increased capacity to perform work

- Increase in bone mass density
- Increase in motor performance
- Increase in strength of connective tissue (muscle, tendons and ligaments)
- Increase in lean body mass (muscle), which equals an increase in metabolism
- Improved posture
- Decreased risk for injury

Resistance training is often associated with making people gain weight or excess bulk. However, muscle is denser than fat and takes up less actual space than fat. A pound of fat is equal to a pound of muscle, but the actual space they take up is quite different. Also, muscle mass benefits the body by making it more metabolically active, increasing a person's metabolism. This increase, along with a consistent exercise program, can help in the process of weight loss.

Similar to cardiovascular activity, the progression should be gradual. In other words, start with lighter weights and gradually increase the weight. The general guideline is to do some type of weight training at least twice a week. The workouts should involve all muscle groups. Spot training or isolating exercises to a specific muscle group can lead to muscle imbalance and injury.

- Start with larger muscle groups and more complex exercises.
- Maintain muscle balance by not excluding any body part.
- Do eight to 12 repetitions, working to fatigue.
- Breathe naturally or when lifting heavier weights exhale on the hardest portion of the lift and inhale on the easiest portion.
- Vary your resistance training routine and equipment (switch from machines to free weights, dumbbells, stability balls or resistance bands).
- Do exercises for your core muscles (abdominals and lower back) last because they assist in maintaining posture and form.
- Allow a minimum of two days rest between training sessions.
- Most importantly, follow all training sessions with stretching to decrease muscle soreness after exercise.

If you can successfully perform an exercise with 8-12 repetitions, increase the weight by 5 to 10 percent. Be sure to maintain good posture and form throughout the full range of the lift. Lift the weight with controlled movements, counting to two on the way up and releasing the weight slowly or with three to four counts on the way down.

Join us for free classes on Mondays and Fridays from noon to 1 p.m. in the Health Services Building, third floor Distance Learning Center, Room B. Classes started Dec. 1 and run through Dec. 18. Bring your own water and a towel or mat.

Fundamentals of Safety and Health Training for Supervisors

In an effort to reduce employee injuries and associated costs, the Personnel Cabinet requires that all employees complete Fundamentals of Safety and Health Training.

Because most workplace accidents and injuries are preventable, it is crucial that employees know their roles and responsibilities regarding:

- Cost of accidents and injuries
- Facility safety inspections and audits
- Personal protective equipment
- Incident investigation
- Effective safety committees

Contact your department training liaison to register for one of scheduled dates below. The class is one day from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

CLASS LOCATION	MONTH	DAY
Frankfort, Transportation Cabinet Conference Center	January	11, 25
Frankfort, Transportation Cabinet Conference Center	February	6, 20
Lake Cumberland State Resort Park	March	20
Frankfort, Transportation Cabinet Conference Center	April	6
Pennyrile State Resort Park	April	10, 11
Barren River State Resort Park	April	18, 19
Frankfort, Transportation Cabinet Conference Center	May	1
Pine Mountain State Resort Park	May	9
Pennyrile State Resort Park	May	15
Rough River State Resort Park	May	16
Frankfort, Transportation Cabinet Conference Center	May	30
Frankfort, Transportation Cabinet Conference Center	June	12
Jenny Wiley State Resort Park	June	19
Carter Caves State Resort Park	June	27

Focus Health Tip of the Week

Holiday Home Safety Tips

Submitted by Anne Parr, R.N.

To fully enjoy your holiday season, consider these tips for keeping you and your home safe during the holidays:

- To keep your tree from becoming a tinderbox, cut one inch off the trunk to help absorb water, and remember to add water frequently. A 6-foot tree requires one gallon of water every two days.
- Do not place the tree near floor heaters, fireplaces or other heat sources.
- Use miniature lights with cool-burning bulbs, and make sure they are UL-listed. Do not string more than three strands of lights together.
- Turn off the holiday lights before going to sleep or if you're leaving your home for more than a few minutes.
- Install a smoke detector (or put new batteries in your current one) and test it.
- For outdoor decorating, use only lights specially designed for outdoor use. The same goes for extension cords.
- Avoid overloading wall outlets and power strips.
- Never use candles, even on artificial trees.
- After the holidays, dispose of the tree properly. Do not burn it in the fireplace.

Employee Enrichment

By Anya Armes Weber

Employee Enrichment is a weekly feature for CHFS staff. These tips for making work better focus on team building, customer service and personal development.

If you want to be more in touch with your boss, pay more attention to what he or she values and act upon that. To connect without seeming to praise dishonestly, try one of these suggestions from Workingwounded.com columnist Bob Rosner.

Pitch in when your boss is overloaded. Don’t just wait to get your next assignment. Volunteer to tackle one of his or her projects.

Be enterprising and seek out information your boss and co-workers can use. Don’t forward every e-mail or news story vaguely related to your job. If you pass along facts that improve your work environment or productivity, your boss will see that you are committed to the evolution of your workplace.

When you complain or mention a problem, offer a solution. Many people won’t do this because they don’t take time to come up with a creative alternative or don’t want to do the work. If you do, you’ll be seen as an innovator by both your boss and colleagues.

Don’t be afraid to criticize constructively. If one of your boss’s ideas would distress the office or your customers, speak up. This might be easier to do when you are directly asked for comments. Remember, your boss is being assessed by his or her bosses and wants to perform well for them.