

Healthy HAPPENINGS

December 2023/ Vol 03, Issue 10

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service Hidalgo County Family & Community Health

Welcome to the December 2023 issue of "Healthy Happenings"! This is a monthly newsletter with healthy tips, recipes, and information on the Family & Community Health programs of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service in Hidalgo County.

December is **WRITE A LETTER OF THANKS** *Month*

December marks National Write a Letter of Thanks Month, providing the perfect opportunity to express gratitude during the holiday season. Taking a few minutes out of your day to write a heartfelt letter of thanks is a simple but meaningful way to brighten someone's day. Whether you're thanking a mentor, coach, teacher or family member who has supported you, writing a letter allows you to articulate your appreciation in a personal and impactful manner. The written word carries more weight than a brief verbal "thank you" ever could. National Write a Letter of Thanks Month encourages all of us to pause, reflect on those who have helped us along the way, and send a customized letter sharing how their actions have made a difference in our lives.

A small gesture of thanks can go a long way.

CANDIED PECANS

by Dinner Tonight Healthy Cooking School

This easy candied pecans recipe is a delicious holiday treat. The result is a lightly crunch nut enhanced with warm winter flavors. They make a great homemade gift or party contribution. Plus, their sweet-salty flavors and pleasing crunch mean they are snacks that are sure to disappear quickly from any holiday spread!

Click below for the Recipe:
[Candied Pecans](#)





Mindful Eating

Here are some quick tips to practice mindful eating:

- Before eating, take a moment to look at your food and appreciate where it came from.
- Use all your senses - look closely at colors and textures, smell different aromas, listen to sounds of chewing.
- Take small bites and chew slowly, paying attention to flavors and sensations in your mouth.
- Put your utensils down between bites and don't rush through your meal.
- Eat without distractions like phones, TV, or conversations. Focus solely on the eating experience.
- Notice physical and emotional feelings of hunger, fullness, satisfaction. Listen to your body's signals.



FAMILY & COMMUNITY HEALTH

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FRESH AIR

Studies show that levels of anxiety, stress, and others are reduced by being outdoors. When you are outside, the fresh air can help raise oxygen levels in your brain, Getting some fresh air is a simple way to improve your mood!

HEALTHY HOLIDAYS

The holiday season is synonymous with indulgent foods like cookies, cakes and rich dishes. However, it's still possible to make smart, balanced choices even when celebrations are in full swing. Moderation is key to balanced holiday eating success.

Family & Community Health Programs

- Cooking Well with Diabetes
- Cooking Well for Healthy Blood Pressure
- Food Handler Certifications
- Stress Less with Mindfulness
- Mindful Self (Youth)
- Mental Health First Aid Certification (available upon request for groups)



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If you have any questions or would like more information on our programs please contact me at 956-383-1026 or andrea.valdez@ag.tamu.edu.