



WILSON BITS & BITES

FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2022 EDITION

**NC COOPERATIVE
EXTENSION**



WILSON COUNTY CENTER

INTRODUCTION - ABOUT ME

Hey everyone! Welcome, I'm so glad you're here. My name is Taylor Cabaniss and I am the new Family and Consumer Sciences Agent at the N.C. Cooperative Extension, Wilson County Center. I started in October and I am so ready to jump right in and serve the residents of this county.

My goal is to provide education and increase consumer's knowledge and confidence in the areas of foods, nutrition, and health. I act as a resource to community members who want to lead a healthier lifestyle through food-based programs. I want to help you make the healthy choice, the easy choice while staying within your budget. If this sounds like something you're interested in, please give me a call and I would love to tell you about my upcoming programs.

A little about me, I am a Pitt County native, now residing in Greene County. I received both my bachelor and master degrees from East Carolina University in Public Health and Health Education. In my spare time, I love to be outside with my boyfriend, bonus-son, and our Great Dane puppy.

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HEART DISEASE - KNOW THE RISKS

February is considered American Heart Month. But why do we dedicate a whole month to our hearts? Well, every year more than 650,000 people die of heart disease, which equals out to about 1 in 4 Americans. Let's take a closer look at home, heart disease is the second leading cause of death for Wilson County residents. Now that you know the severity of heart disease, let's identify the risk factors associated with heart disease.

Blood Pressure

When the heart pumps blood through the arteries, the blood puts pressure on the artery walls, known as blood pressure. Blood pressure numbers less than 120/80 mm Hg are considered normal for most adults.

Cholesterol

Blood cholesterol is a waxy, fat-like substance that your body needs, but only in the right amount. Cholesterol is often broken down into HDL "good" and LDL "bad" cholesterol. Too much "bad" cholesterol can cause a build up of plaque in your blood vessels, making it harder for the blood to flow through your body. Normal total cholesterol levels for adults are between 125-200 mg/dL.

Type 2 Diabetes

Diabetes is a condition where the body either doesn't make enough insulin or can't use it as well as it should. Insulin helps break down the food and sugar we eat into energy our body

can use. If our body doesn't use insulin correctly, the sugar stays in our blood stream which can lead to nerve damage, blindness, and heart disease. Normal blood sugar levels for adults without diabetes is 80-100 mg/dL.

Diet and Physical Activity

A heart healthy diet is one that is packed with fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and fat-free or low-fat dairy products. It also incorporates a variety of protein sources and is low in fat, added sugars, cholesterol, and sodium. Physical activity also plays a key role in reducing one's risk of heart disease. The recommended amount of physical activity for adults is 150 minutes per week, which equals out to be about 20 minutes per day.

Weight

Overweight and obesity is simply excess body fat. An unhealthy diet and limited physical activity often causes obesity. To determine if you are overweight or obese, you can use a Body Mass Index Chart or consult with your health care provider.

Alcohol and Tobacco Use

Excessive alcohol use over time can lead to many chronic conditions including high blood pressure and heart disease. The carbon monoxide from cigarette smoke reduces the amount of oxygen that your blood can carry, while the nicotine in tobacco also raises blood pressure.

WHAT'S IN SEASON - SPINACH

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Vitamins

Vitamin A
Vitamin B6
Vitamin C
Vitamin E
Vitamin B9
Vitamin K

Minerals

Calcium
Iron
Manganese
Phosphorus
Copper
Magnesium
Potassium



Health Benefits

- Very low in calories and carbohydrates
- Good for bone health
- Can help improve immune system
- Good for digestive health
- May reduce risk of diabetes and heart disease
- Can help lower blood pressure
- Has cancer prevention qualities
- Can improve health of eyes
- Promotes healthy hair and skin

Fun Facts

- Spinach is native to Persia (modern day Iran) and was brought to the U.S. in 1806
- Spinach falls into 3 different categories: savoy, flat/smooth leaf spinach, semi-savoy
- March 26th is National Spinach Day
- Half of its nutrients are lost after the 8th day of harvest
- Medieval artists extracted green pigment from spinach to use as an ink or paint

Source: [Spinach Nutrition & Facts](#)

EASY STUFFED PASTA SHELLS

This recipe is an easy dish that is sure to be a crowd pleaser and is vegetarian friendly. This meal can also be made the night before and placed in the refrigerator for dinner on those busy days.

Prep Time + Cook Time = Total Time

10 mins + 1 hour = 1 hr & 10 mins

Ingredients:

- 10 oz frozen chopped spinach, thawed
- 12 oz low-fat cottage cheese
- 1.5 cups part-skim mozzarella cheese, shredded (reserve 1/2 cup for topping)
- 1.5 tsp dried oregano
- 1/4 tsp black pepper
- 26 oz light tomato basil pasta sauce, low sodium
- 1 cup water
- 6 oz large pasta shells, uncooked

Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 375°F and lightly coat a 13x9-inch baking dish with cooking spray. Set aside.
2. Drain spinach by placing in a sieve or colander and pressing with a spoon to remove the liquid. Place spinach in a medium bowl.
3. Mix in the cottage cheese, 1 cup mozzarella cheese, oregano, and pepper to the spinach.
4. Pour half the spaghetti sauce into the baking dish and mix in the water.
5. Spoon 3 tbsp cheese mixture into each uncooked pasta shell and place in the baking dish.
6. Sprinkle the remaining mozzarella cheese evenly over the sauce.
7. Cover tightly with foil and baking for about 1 hour or until shells are tender. Let stand 10 min. before serving.

Nutrition Information Per Serving:

(makes 8 1-cup servings)

Calories: 250

Total Fat: 7 g	Sodium: 334 mg
Saturated Fat: 3 g	Protein: 16g
Cholesterol: 18 mg	Vitamin D: 0 mcg
Carbohydrate: 29 g	Calcium: 268 mg
Dietary Fiber: 4 g	Iron: 2 mg
Total Sugars: 7 g	Potassium: 461 mg
Added Sugars: 1 g	



Source: [USDA MyPlate](#)



February Fit Challenge



SUNDAY

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY

		1 10 kickbacks 10 leg raises 10 side leg raises 15 squat jumps 5 burpees 20 jumping j's	2 30 min. cardio of your choice. Ex: walk, jog, bicycle, jump rope, etc.	3 5 crunches 5 bridges 10 mtn. climb. 10 s. plank 15 sit ups	4 30 min. cardio of your choice. Ex: walk, jog, bicycle, jump rope, etc.	5 20 arm circles 5 push ups 5 tricep dips 5 shoulder taps 20 air punches
6 REST	7 15 lunges 15 calf raises 15 s. wall sit 20 squats 30 jumping j's	8 30 min. cardio of your choice. Ex: walk, jog, bicycle, jump rope, etc.	9 15 bicycle 15 scissors 15 s. boat 15 s. superman 20 toe touches	10 30 min. cardio of your choice. Ex: walk, jog, bicycle, jump rope, etc.	11 10 bird dogs 5 wide push ups 5 plank up-downs 5 side plank walk 5 tricep dips	12 30 min. cardio of your choice. Ex: walk, jog, bicycle, jump rope, etc.
13 REST	14 20 kickbacks 20 leg raises 20 side leg raises 15 squat jumps 5 burpees 20 jumping j's	15 30 min. cardio of your choice. Ex: walk, jog, bicycle, jump rope, etc.	16 10 bridges 10 crunches 15 mtn. climb. 15 s. plank 20 sit ups	17 30 min. cardio of your choice. Ex: walk, jog, bicycle, jump rope, etc.	18 20 arm circles 5 push ups 5 tricep dips 5 shoulder taps 20 air punches	19 30 min. cardio of your choice. Ex: walk, jog, bicycle, jump rope, etc.
20 REST	21 10 high knees 20 squats 15 calf raises 15 s. wall sit 15 lunges	22 30 min. cardio of your choice. Ex: walk, jog, bicycle, jump rope, etc.	23 10 crunches 10 russian twist 10 leg raises 15 s. plank 10 heel touches	24 30 min. cardio of your choice. Ex: walk, jog, bicycle, jump rope, etc.	25 10 bird dogs 5 wide push ups 5 plank up-downs 5 side plank walk 5 tricep dips	26 30 min. cardio of your choice. Ex: walk, jog, bicycle, jump rope, etc.
27 REST	28 20 kickbacks 20 leg raises 20 side leg raises 15 squat jumps 5 burpees 20 jumping j's		REPEAT EACH CIRCUT 3 TIMES			s. = second

UPCOMING PROGRAMS, EVENTS & HIGHLIGHTS



It's a Busy Life Cooking Series - Freezer Meal Workshop
Spending hours every night to cook dinner is a thing of the past. Join FCS Agent, Taylor, in learning how to prepare freezer meals that the whole family will love. You'll learn how spending just 1 hour of prep time can give you multiple meals that are nutritious and delicious. This workshop will be held March 2nd 5:30pm-7:30pm at the NC Cooperative Extension, Wilson County Center. For more information and to register, visit the [Eventbrite Freezer Meal Workshop page](#).

Dial Gauge Pressure Canner Testing

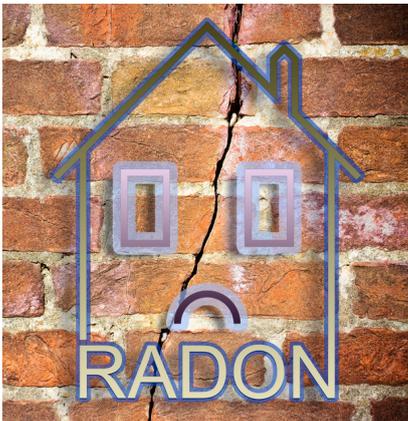
A dial gauge pressure canner needs to read the correct pressure to ensure that foods being processed are properly canned. There is a potential for unsafe processing if the gauge reads 2 pounds pressure high or low, jeopardizing the safety of the food in the jar. Bring your dial gauge pressure canner lid to the Extension Office anytime Monday-Friday 8:00am-5:00pm to be checked for FREE!



North Carolina Radon Program

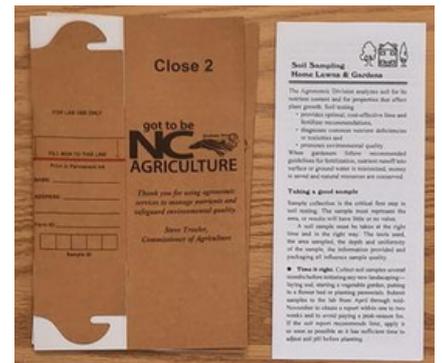
Radon is the second leading environmental cause of lung cancer in the nation. Radon is a colorless, tasteless, odorless, and chemically inert radioactive gas. It is formed by the natural radioactive decay of uranium in rock, soil, and water. Starting January 1, 2022, the NC Radon Program is offering FREE test kits to households. If you are interesting in receiving your test kit or just want more information, visit the [NC Radon Program website](#).

Supplies are limited, so don't wait.



Lawn & Garden Soil Sample Information

If you're wanting to plant a garden in the new year to reap some delicious, healthy fruits and vegetables, bring a sample of your soil to our office for testing. The laboratory at NC State University will be able to provide you with recommendations on how to make your soil optimal for your gardening needs. Visit [this website](#) for more information or come into our office for a soil sample box.





..... **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

Health Heart | Visit the [American Heart Association website](#) to learn more about healthy living and other heart health topics.

Spinach | For more healthy spinach recipes, visit the [Eating Well website](#) or [visit this website](#) for more general or nutrition information.

Exercise | Check out the [MatFit YouTube channel](#) for at home workouts that require little to no equipment. The [Hasfit YouTube channel](#) also has free at-home exercise routines that can be modified to meet your physical needs.

Support Local | To find fresh and local produce, download the [Visit NC Farm](#) app. Available for Apple and Android devices.

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