Successful Aging VI: The Buncombe County Aging Coordinating Consortium in collaboration with a myriad of various local agencies offers the sixth annual Successful Aging event. This event is held annually in Buncombe County during Older Americans Month for older adults, caregivers and others interested in aging successfully. This year the event will be held May 27 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Asheville. The day is filled with fun and informative workshops, entertainment and health screenings. The registration fee is $15 and includes lunch and all the day's activities. Pre-registration is necessary by calling Council on Aging as space is limited. For a brochure contact the Buncombe County Extension Center at 255-5522 or the Council on Aging at 277-8288.

Having a Safe Easter Egg Hunt

If you are planning an Easter egg hunt this year, keep in mind that you want to make sure that you follow safe egg handling tips in order to avoid food borne illnesses. Follow these tips from www.fightbac.org for safe holiday egg handling.

Before the hunt

- Wash your hands with soap and warm water thoroughly before handling eggs at every preparation step, including cooking, cooling, dyeing and hiding.
- Only use eggs that have been refrigerated; discard eggs that are cracked or dirty.
- When cooking, place a single layer of eggs in a saucepan. Add water to at least one inch above the eggs. Cover the pan, bring the water to a boil, and carefully remove the pan from the heat. Let the eggs stand (18 minutes for extra large eggs, 15 minutes for large, 12 minutes for medium). Immediately run cold water over the eggs. When the eggs are cool enough to handle, place them in an uncovered container in the refrigerator where they can air-dry.
- When decorating, be sure to use food-grade dyes. It is safe to use commercial egg dyes, liquid food coloring, and fruit-drink powders. When handling eggs, be careful not to crack them. Otherwise, bacteria could enter the egg through the cracks in the shell.
- Keep hard-cooked Easter eggs refrigerated until just before the hunt. Keep them fully chilled by storing them on a shelf inside the refrigerator, not in the refrigerator door.
- Buy one set of eggs for the hunt and another set for eating. Do not eat the eggs you use for outside hiding.

Tips for inside hunts

- Hide the eggs in places that are protected from dirt, pets and other potential sources of bacteria.
- To prevent bacterial growth, don't let eggs sit in hiding places for more than two hours.
**Nutrition: It’s a Matter of Fact Quiz**

March is National Nutrition Month® and this year the focus is getting the facts straight. Let’s see whether you can tell fact from fiction. *Answers on page 4.*

1. In a healthy eating plan, all the foods I eat should be low in fat  
   Fact or Fiction
2. Snacking may keep me from becoming ravenously hungry and overeating at mealtime  
   Fact or Fiction
3. Eating carbohydrates causes weight gain  
   Fact or Fiction
4. It’s easy to spot whole-grain food products - they’re brown  
   Fact or Fiction
5. I’ll gain about 10 pounds a year by eating an extra 100 calories a day  
   Fact or Fiction

**Remember the Word “Spring House Cleaning”?**

Okay, so spring is coming! Now we need to do what our mother’s used to call spring cleaning. Of course, it would also be less time consuming if we did what our mother’s did on a regular basis, which was keeping up with the weekly and monthly cleanings.

The bathroom has almost become an all-purpose room and the more it is used the more attention it will require. Often overlooked when cleaning are the light switch plates/fixtures and faucets. The sink handles and faucets get lots of use from alot of different hands, so not only do you want to make your bathrooms sparkle by keeping them clean, but you also want to prevent the spread of germs. Use an antibacterial cleaner to sanitize the various areas of your bathroom. All the surfaces that come in contact with water and/or soap will need to be cleaned often to prevent mold, mildew and bacteria from accumulating. These surfaces include all porcelain-coated items, such as toilets, sinks, shower and tubs, as well as ceramic or plastic tiles and glass shower doors. Clean all your bathroom surfaces at least once a week. As with the rest of your bathroom, wash your bathroom floor thoroughly once a week. Since you will most likely stand in your bathroom in bare feet, it is important to keep the surface clean. Periodically wash the shower curtain, shower liner, and walls.

When washing walls, start at the bottom and work up to the ceiling. Change the wash and rinse water often so the dirt is not smeared around on the walls. Wash quickly; never let the sponge or cloth get so wet it drips.

One of the most common areas in the home for unwanted household pests is the kitchen. Many times this can be avoided with added cleanliness and thus eliminating the breeding grounds for ants, cockroaches and the like. In addition to the surfaces you can readily see in your kitchen, don’t forget cleaning the areas behind closed doors. This includes inside cabinets for food debris that will attract insects, inside your oven for burned on food that can give a bad taste to the next meal or the food that is unrecognizable in the refrigerator.

**The River Runs Through It**

If you have had basement moisture problems in the past, now is the time to begin searching the causes before our spring rains. With 95% of the water entering the basement of most homes coming from poorly-controlled surface runoff, it is a good place to start your search. Water always follows the path of least resistance so providing an uninterrupted route to channel water away from the foundation walls is always superior to using “waterproofing”¹ to keep it out. Some of the areas around your home that will need to be checked or maintained for surface runoff are:

* Cracks between the driveway and house
* Clogged drain tiles
* The soil around the house must slope away from the foundation
* Sewer back-up
* Flower beds that hold water
* Broken/clogged storm drains

Water can also enter through:

- Openings in foundation walls through cracks, holes, gaps in mortar, entry points for water pipe, sewer lines and other penetrations.
- Porosity of the walls and/or floor materials and mortar.

¹Waterproofing is a coating on the exterior of the foundation walls to reduce the surface dampness inside.
Harder to Make Ends Meet

With the cost of almost everything going up each month it seems that the available money is getting less and less. Do you ever wonder at the end of the week where your money went? A few areas you may be able to save are: eliminating the daily 50¢ spent at the office vending machine will add up to $120 a year. A $3.50 latte per day for five days will equal $17.50 a week, $70 dollars a month or $840 a year. That $7 lunch out five days during the work week will total up to $35 a week or $1820 a year. Bringing snacks from home, changing coffee habits or even bringing leftovers or brown bagging a lunch can all add up to more money in your pocket at the end of the year. **Hint:** To better control your spending and see where money goes, carry a piece of paper in your billfold for a week, write down each item that you purchase and the cost. It may be surprising to find out where the money has gone. It will also enable you to make better choices to save money in the future.

Guiding Your Child’s Media Exposure

Spring break is just around the corner and many families are trying to decide what their children will do during this time. It can be a time when they increase their screen time and this gets parents wondering whether the media that my child is exposed to appropriate for them. Children are exposed to media through TV, computer games, internet, videos and popular music. Here are some tips for setting a “Healthy Media Diet”.

- Ask yourself these three questions: Is it appropriate for my child’s age and maturity level? Knowing my child as I do, is there a chance it may do harm or have a negative effect on her? Do I want my child to see or hear or read it? These are all individualized questions where you know your child the best.
- Establish media guidelines with your children. This includes time limits such as the recommended no more than 2 hours of screen time per day. You can use a timer if need be to keep to these limits.
- Keep media out of the bedroom and have it in a central place where use can be supervised.
- Get your child in the habit of asking permission before using media or switching from web page to web page on the internet.
- Be a role model by watching or listening to adult level media at a time when your children are not going to be exposed to it. This could include watching the news at a later time if the content is above what you feel is appropriate for your child.
- Take the time to turn off the media and have your children play games, go outside or do other activities during their free time.

Make sure that you use media together and talk about what you see, hear, and read and how that relates to your values. Remember, that not all of your child’s friend’s families will have the same values as you and be ready for situations where you may have to discuss your differences.

Spring Painting

If spring cleaning is also bringing with it spring painting of the interior walls, there are some points to remember.

- Flat paint is the best cover up for those uneven wall surfaces and bad drywall joints. However it is also difficult to remove dirt and stains from flat paint so the choice for its use is better suited in areas with less traffic.
- Satin paint will accentuate unevenness in wall surfaces and bad drywall joints. It has better resistance to dirt and stains so will be easier to clean than flat paint. Since satin paints reflect light they can brighten hallways and smaller rooms.
- Semi gloss and gloss have excellent resistance to dirt and stains so are often used for interior doors, trim, windows, etc. They are good for the areas that receive regular traffic and require washing. They can be used in some kitchens and baths.

When all is said and done, the paint color and the sheen that is used is all a matter of personal choice that only you can make. There is no right or wrong choice.
Nutrition: It’s a Matter of Fact Quiz - Answers

1. **Fiction:** Your goal should be to keep your total daily fat intake within 20-35% of your calories, but that doesn’t mean every single food you eat must be low in fat. Look for foods that are low in saturated fats, trans fats and cholesterol.

2. **Fact:** Healthful snacking – including carbohydrates and proteins, like whole grain crackers with low-fat cheese or fat-free yogurt with fresh fruit – can help your body stay fueled so you will be less likely to overeat at your next meal.

3. **Fiction:** Calories are calories. Consuming too many calories, from any source – carbohydrates, fat or protein – combined with a sedentary lifestyle make you more likely to gain weight. Despite the claims of “low-carb” weight-loss plans, a high carbohydrate diet doesn’t cause your body to store more fat by enhancing insulin resistance. Excess calories from any source are stored as fat.

4. **Fiction:** Color is not a reliable way for identifying healthy whole grains. The most reliable information is on the food label. You need to read the ingredient label and look for “whole wheat, whole grain or oats”. To get the full range of health benefits provided by whole grains, including fiber, vitamins, minerals and antioxidants, eat three or more servings of whole grains every day.

5. **Fact:** One hundred calories per day adds up to about a pound of weight gain per month. On the other hand, look at it this way: You can lose 10 pounds in a year by cutting 100 calories per day and increasing your physical activity. Try to get at least 30 minutes of activity most days of the week.