



December 2010

Dear Homemakers,

**Wibaux County
Extension Office**

As the end of another year draws to a close, I would like to take this opportunity to extend my sincere thanks to any and all who volunteered their time and talents to help make our community events throughout the year a success. I would like to wish you and your loved ones a Joyous Holiday and a Happy and Healthy New Year!

Sincerely,

Patti A. Goroski
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Prairie Fare: Enjoy the Science of Baking This Season

By: Julie Garden-Robinson, NDSU Extension Food & Nutrition Specialist

"How much sugar should I add?" I asked my 7-year-old daughter, who was my baking assistant last weekend. "The recipe says 3/4 cups," she replied.

"Are you sure about that?" I asked as I looked over her shoulder. I felt a math lesson was in order.

"Well, there's a 3 and a 4 on the recipe," she noted.

"Do you see the line between the 3 and the 4? That's a fraction," I said. I showed her the 1/4-cup measure and she filled it with sugar three times. She added each scoop to a 1-cup measure. I wanted her to visualize the measurement.

"Well, we haven't learned about fractions yet in second grade," she responded a bit indignantly as she measured.

"We can learn something about math and science when we make cookies," I said.

"I like science and I like cookies. Math is OK, too," she added.

A kitchen can be a learning laboratory for math and science. Unlike most lab settings, you get to taste your end product. When you mix sucrose (sugar) with lipid material (butter or shortening) and agitate, you are dispersing the ingredients and incorporating air. The protein in eggs helps bind the ingredients together. If you mix the cookies too long, you may develop the gluten (flour protein) and end up with tough, dry cookies.

We also had a physics experiment in progress about heat transfer. Since I wanted to bake cookies continuously, we used many cookie sheets. The cookie sheets needed to be cool when we placed the dough on the pans. If not, the cookies would become misshapen during baking. We weren't patient enough to wait for the pans to cool.

Unfortunately, my cookie sheets are not made of the same material, so the cookies baked at different rates. We used some insulated baking sheets, which bake more slowly. We used two large aluminum professional chef baking sheets, which transfer heat more rapidly.

We used a couple of dark, nonstick cookie sheets. Baking cookies on these pans often results in crunchier cookies. In fact, many manufacturers suggest that you lower the oven temperature by 25 degrees to avoid overbaking cookies and other foods on dark, nonstick pans.

After all this baking, I had quite a bit of cleanup to do. Next time, I will pick up more parchment paper to reduce cleanup time. Parchment paper is sold on rolls next to the plastic wrap and aluminum foil in many grocery stores. You simply put a layer of parchment on the pan and bake your cookies on the paper.



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The heavy paper eliminates the need to grease pans and allows you to lift the batch of cookies off the pan, paper and all, onto a rack to cool. Therefore, you are less likely to damage the cookies when you remove them with a turner.

Since the holiday season is just around the corner, here's a cookie recipe that you can prepare and enjoy right away. If you prefer, you can layer the ingredients in a jar as described and give as gifts.

These tasty cookies contain some healthful ingredients. The dried fruit adds disease-fighting antioxidants to your diet, and the rolled oats add fiber.



Remember that cookies and other holiday treats are considered discretionary calories. Try to limit yourself to a couple of cookies.

Oatmeal-Cranberry Cookie Mix in a Jar

- 1 c. plus 2 Tbsp. flour*
- 1 c. rolled oats
- ½ tsp. baking soda
- ½ tsp. salt
- ¼ c. brown sugar
- ¼ c. white sugar
- ½ c. dried cranberries
- ½ c. white chocolate chips
- * You can substitute some whole-wheat flour, if you wish.

Layer the ingredients in a clean, quart-sized jar. Cover the jar tightly with a lid and decorate as desired. Add a card with the following directions.

Additional ingredients:

- ½ c. butter
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 1 egg

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a large bowl, mix butter, vanilla and egg together until smooth. Add cookie mix and mix well. Place by the spoonful onto a greased cookie sheet and bake for eight to 10 minutes until golden brown. For best flavor, use the cookie mix within nine months. Makes 28 cookies. Each cookie has 100 calories, 4.5 grams (g) of fat, 13 g of carbohydrate and 70 milligrams of sodium.

Try this recipe from the Popcorn Board at www.popcorn.org. This whole-grain snack provides a crunchy, flavorful lower-fat option to chips.

Chipotle Ranch Popcorn

1 Tbsp. ranch salad dressing mix
1/4 tsp. ground chipotle chili pepper or chili powder
1/4 tsp. garlic powder
4 quarts popped popcorn (popped in oil)

Stir together ranch salad dressing mix, chipotle pepper and garlic powder in a small bowl. Sprinkle the seasoning mix over popcorn; toss and serve. (If you air-pop the popcorn, lightly spray the popcorn with butter-flavored cooking spray before sprinkling with the seasoning.) Store leftover popcorn in an airtight container.

Makes eight servings (about 2 cups each). Each serving has 110 calories, 6 grams (g) of fat, 14 g of carbohydrate, 2 g of fiber and 25 milligrams of sodium.

Prairie Fare: Weather Influences TV Viewing & Potentially, Our Health

By: Julie Garden-Robinson, NDSU Extension Food & Nutrition Specialist

Researchers in the United States and Europe have noted seasonal and weather variations in TV viewing. In one European study, researchers analyzed meteorological data, including temperature, wind speed, precipitation, atmospheric pressure and other factors, and compared the information with TV viewing statistics.

Higher wind speed, more precipitation and colder temperatures were among the factors linked with more TV viewing. Similar results have been shown in U.S. studies.

We in Midwestern states can relate to blustery weather keeping us indoors. However, what does watching more TV have to do with health? Potentially, quite a bit.

When we sit in front of a TV for many hours, we are not burning very many calories. Health experts recommend that we get at least 30 minutes of physical activity on most days of the week. Getting enough physical activity can lower your risk for heart disease, cancer, osteoporosis and diabetes. Getting enough physical activity helps us maintain our weight and our mental health.

Obviously, watching TV isn't a good exercise program unless you are exercising along with a personal trainer on TV.



However, you will burn a few more calories watching TV compared with sleeping.

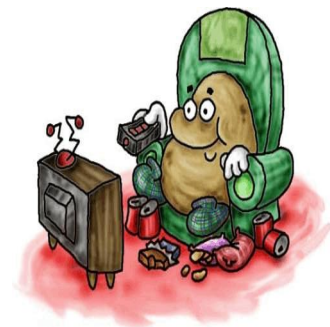
If a 155-pound person spends 30 minutes lounging on a couch watching TV, he or she will burn about 28 calories. If the same person falls asleep on the couch, the calorie tally is 23 calories in 30 minutes.

If the 155-pound person gets off the couch to cook a meal, he or she will burn 93 calories in 30 minutes. For the same person and amount of time, shoveling snow will burn about 223 calories, sledding 260 calories and exercising on an indoor ski machine 350 calories.

Eating in front of the TV can be an issue. We may lose track of how much we eat, especially if we are watching a spellbinding program. Eating snacks directly from the box or package can be especially problematic. When we reach the end of the program, we might discover that the box is empty.

Therefore, if you are hungry for a snack as you sit down to enjoy your favorite TV show, read the serving size information on the Nutrition Facts label. Place a "serving" in a small bowl and stop with that amount.

Set a goal to stay active and healthy this winter season. If you are hungry for something crunchy, have apple slices, carrot sticks or other fruits and vegetables, or some popcorn.





Prairie Fare: Be Prepared to Survive Frigid Temperatures

By: Julie Garden-Robinson, NDSU Extension Food & Nutrition Specialist

Having lived in the Midwest my entire life, I am accustomed to frigid temperatures. What we consider "extreme cold" in this part of the country differs from the perspective of someone in warmer areas of the U.S. In other parts of the country, temperatures near freezing would be considered "extreme cold."

From a safety and health perspective, extreme cold can be deadly if you were to become stranded after a vehicle stalls. The best thing we can do is be prepared with water, food and other supplies in the event of vehicle problems.

Nutritionally, we can survive without food for days, but staying hydrated is a concern. Keep at least a gallon of water in the passenger compartment of the vehicle so it doesn't freeze in the event of an emergency. Experts advise allowing a gallon of water per person for every three days of planned travel.

Pack high-energy foods such as snack mixtures that include nuts, dried fruit and chocolate. Canned goods can be kept in the vehicle as an emergency food supply, but be sure to have a can opener available.

Avoid eating snow because it can lower body temperature in already cold conditions. You can melt snow in a can in a pinch for a water supply, but only if you have no other liquids available. Snow can contain various chemicals and bacteria, so it's a last resort.

Maintain your body temperature. Run the car's engine and heater about 10 minutes each hour, but be sure the exhaust pipe is clear of snow to prevent carbon monoxide poisoning.

If you are with a companion, take turns sleeping and huddle closely for warmth. Wear a hat or hood and wrap up in a blanket or sleeping bag. If you are in a situation where no blankets are available, use newspapers, maps or car mats. Do some light exercises in the car to aid circulation and stay warmer.

For more information about assembling a winter survival kit and other tips, visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Web site at <http://www.bt.cdc.gov/disasters/winter/guide.asp#stranded>.

5 Nutrient-Rich Ways to Make Meaningful Food Donations

Most food banks/pantries prefer cash donations, so that they can maximize their purchase of most-needed items. When you do donate food, focus on the nutrient-rich options listed below. Most locations will refuse perishable items, homemade products, unlabeled cans, home canned foods, and any open packages.

1. **Donate Protein Foods.** These more expensive items are usually very welcome donations for hungry families. Options include canned tuna, salmon, and chicken. Canned meals - such as beef stew, chili, or hearty soups - are also good choices. Other shelf stable proteins include nuts, sunflower seeds, and peanut butter, as well as canned beans, peas, and lentils.
2. **Donate Whole Grain Foods.** Grain staples are important foods for every family. Maximize the nutritional value of your food donations by choosing whole grain options whenever possible. Meaningful options include whole grain pastas, quick cooking brown rice, and breakfast cereals that are lower in sugar and higher in fiber (ex. oatmeal, Cheerios®, and Chex®).
3. **Donate canned/dried fruits and 100% juices.** Fruit and 100% juice are good sources of vitamin C (and sometimes vitamin A), as well as potassium. Excellent shelf-staple options include fruits canned in juice (pineapple, peaches, apricots, etc.), as well as applesauce and dried fruit (without added sugar, if possible). Purchase 100% fruit juice or juice mixtures in cans, boxes, or plastic bottles.
4. **Donate canned vegetables and 100% juice.** Reduce-sodium veggies are also important sources of vitamins, potassium, and fiber, while veggie juice can be an excellent source of vitamins A and C. Tomato products - such as tomato sauce, stewed tomatoes, chopped tomatoes, prepared spaghetti sauce, and 100% tomato juice - are especially nutritious and versatile items to donate.
5. **Donate shelf-stable dairy foods.** Dairy foods are important for families, especially growing children. Cash donations to food banks can help to purchase low-fat fluid milk, cheese, and yogurt. You can also make direct donations of shelf-stable products, including dehydrated milk powder instant breakfast, and evaporated canned milk.

www.eatrightmontana.org





Tiny Tim Sandwich Cookies

Ingredients:

1 cup sugar, divided
2 to 3 drops red food coloring
2 to 3 drops green food coloring
½ cup butter, softened
½ cup shortening
¼ cup confectioners' sugar
1 teaspoon almond extract
2-1/3 cups all-purpose flour

FROSTING:

2 cups confectioners' sugar
3 tablespoons butter, softened

4-1/2 teaspoons heavy whipping cream

3/4 teaspoon almond extract

Red and green food coloring, optional

Directions:

- In a small bowl, combine ½ cup sugar and red food coloring; set aside. In another small bowl, combine remaining sugar with green food coloring; set aside.
- In a large bowl, cream the butter, shortening and confectioners' sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in extract. Gradually add flour and mix well. Shape into 1/2-in. balls.
- Place 1 in. apart on ungreased baking sheets. Coat bottom of two glasses with cooking spray, then dip one in red sugar and the other in green sugar. Flatten cookies alternately with prepared glasses, redipping in sugar as needed.
- Bake at 375° for 8-10 minutes or until edges are lightly browned. Remove to wire racks to cool completely.
- For frosting, in a small bowl, combine the confectioners' sugar, butter, cream and extract. If desired, tint half of the frosting red and the other half green. Frost the bottoms of half of the cookies; top with remaining cookies. Yield: 5 dozen.

Chocolate Marshmallow Meltaways

Ingredients:

½ cup butter-flavored shortening

¾ cup sugar

1 egg

¼ cup 2% milk

1 teaspoon Spice Island® Pure Vanilla Extract

1-¾ cups all-purpose flour

½ cup baking cocoa

½ teaspoon salt

½ teaspoon baking soda

18 large marshmallows, halved

FROSTING:

3 tablespoons butter, softened

3 cups confectioners' sugar

3 tablespoons baking cocoa

1/8 teaspoon salt

4 to 6 tablespoons 2% milk

Directions:

- In a large bowl, cream shortening and sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in the egg, milk and vanilla. Combine the flour, cocoa, salt and baking soda; gradually add to creamed mixture and mix well.
- Drop by tablespoonfuls 2 in. apart onto ungreased baking sheets. Bake at 350° for 8 minutes. Press a marshmallow half, cut side down, onto each cookie; bake 2 minutes longer. Remove to wire racks to cool.
- In a small bowl, beat the butter, confectioners' sugar, cocoa and salt until smooth. Add enough milk to achieve a spreading consistency. Frost cookies. Yield: 3 dozen.



Prairie Fare: Enjoy Some Outdoor Winter Activities

By Julie Garden Robinson, Food and Nutrition Specialist NDSU Extension Service

Cold winter weather may tempt us to hibernate in the warmth of our homes. Interestingly, in some areas of the country, temperatures around 32 degrees Fahrenheit are considered "extreme cold," according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. We consider those temperatures nearly balmy at this time of the year.

Despite all the fun you can have during mild winter weather, think safety when sledding, skiing or even walking on icy sidewalks. According to the Consumer Products Safety Commission, about 74,000 emergency room visits per year are linked to accidents from sledding and snowboarding. Many are head injuries, which can be very serious.

Here are some tips to stay active, warm and safe while enjoying some outdoor activities.

Be sure you're in good physical shape before deciding to go sledding or doing any outdoor physical activity, especially if you are a parent or grandparent. Cold weather puts an extra strain on your heart. If you have heart disease or high blood pressure, follow your doctor's advice before exerting yourself.

Dress in layers to stay warm. A wool, silk or polypropylene inner layer will keep you warmer than cotton, which can become damp and chilling as you perspire. You can take off a layer if you get too warm. Be sure clothing is wind- and water-resistant, and wear a hat, too.

Don't forget to wear sun block. Yes, you can get sunburned in the winter as the sun reflects off the snow.

Protect your eyes with sunglasses or goggles. Doctors recommend that kids under 12 wear well-fitting helmets. Avoid going "headfirst" down a hill, too.

Supervise your children and be sure the equipment is in good shape. Hills can be obstacle courses that can lead to broken bones.

Stay hydrated. Warm beverages are best. Try some warm apple cider in a thermos bottle. Alcohol-containing and caffeinated beverages may appear to be "warming," but they actually can cool you.



Be aware of the dangers of hypothermia and frostbite. Hypothermia is an abnormally low body temperature caused from being in cold temperatures too long. Infants and the elderly are most at risk. Symptoms of hypothermia include shivering, confusion, memory loss and exhaustion. To treat hypothermia, get the person to a warm room, cover with blankets, provide warm beverages if the person is capable of drinking and get medical attention.

Winter Weather Checklists

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Information

Communication Checklist: Make sure to have at least one of the following in case there is a power failure:

- Battery-powered radio (have extra batteries) OR
- National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) weather radio receiver
- Listen to emergency broadcasts.
- Winter Storm Warning Terms:
 - Winter Weather Advisory: expect winter weather conditions to cause inconvenience & hazards*
 - Frost/Freeze Warning: expect below-freezing temperatures*
 - Winter Storm Watch: be alert; a storm is likely*
 - Winter Storm Warning: take action; the storm is in or entering the area*
 - Blizzard Warning: seek refuge immediately! Snow & strong winds, near-zero visibility, deep snow drifts, & life-threatening wind chill*

Food & Safety Checklist: Have at least a week's worth of food & safety supplies.

- Drinking water
- Canned/no-cook food (bread, crackers, dried fruits)
- Non-electric can opener
- Baby food & formula (if baby in the household)
- Prescription drugs & other medicine
- First-aid kit
- Rock-salt to melt ice on walkways
- Cat litter or bag of sand to add traction on walkways
- Flashlight & extra batteries
- Battery-powered lamps or lanterns (to prevent the risk of fire, avoid using candles)

Water Checklist: Keep a water supply. Extreme cold can cause water pipes in your home to freeze & sometimes break.

- Leave all water taps slightly open so they drip continuously.
- Keep the indoor temperature warm.
- Allow more heated air near pipes. Open kitchen cabinet doors under the kitchen sink.
- If pipes do freeze, thaw slowly with warm air from an electric hair dryer, **not a torch**.
- If you can't thaw the pipes, or if they have broken, use bottled water or get water from a neighbor's home.
- Have bottled water on hand.
- In an emergency—if no other water is available—snow can be melted for water. Brining water to a rolling boil for one minute will kill most germs but won't get rid of chemicals found in snow.

Heating Checklist: Have at least one of the following heat sources in case the power goes out:

- Fireplace with plenty of dry firewood or gas log fireplace OR
- Portable space heaters or kerosene heaters (check with your local fire dept. to make sure that kerosene heaters are legal in your area.)
- Never place a space heater on top of furniture or near water.
- Use electric space heaters with automatic shut-off switches & non-glowing elements.
- Keep heat sources at least 3 feet away from furniture & drapes.
- Never leave children unattended near a space heater.
- Have the following safety equipment: chemical fire extinguisher, smoke alarm in working order (check monthly & change batteries once a year), carbon monoxide detector.
- Never use an electric generator indoors, inside the garage, or near the air intake of your home because of the risk of carbon monoxide poisoning.

- Do not use the generator or appliances if they are wet.
- Do not store gasoline indoors where the fumes could ignite.
- Use individual heavy-duty, outdoor-rated cords to plug in other appliances.

Winter Weather Checklists Continued...

Cooking & Lighting Checklist:

- Never use charcoal grills or portable gas camp stove indoors - the fumes are deadly.
- Use battery-powered flashlights or lanterns.
- Avoid using candles.
- Never leave lit candles alone.

Car & Emergency Checklist: Prepare your car with emergency supplies.

- Cell phone, portable charger & extra batteries
- Shovel
- Windshield scraper
- Battery-powered radio (& extra batteries)
- Flashlight (& extra batteries)
- Water
- Snack food
- Extra hats, coats, mittens, blankets
- Chains or rope
- Tire chains
- Canned compressed air with sealant (for emergency tire repair)
- Road salt & sand
- Booster cables
- Emergency flares
- Bright colored flag; help signs
- First-aid kit
- Tool kit

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- Paper towels

Road maps



Compass
Waterproof matches & a can (to melt snow for water)

Winter Weather: Stay Safe & Healthy

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Information

Serious health problems can result from prolonged exposure to the cold. The most common cold-related problems are hypothermia and frostbite.

Hypothermia: When exposed to cold temperatures, your body begins to lose heat faster than it can be produced. Prolonged exposure to cold will eventually use up your body's stored energy. The result is hypothermia, or abnormally low body temperature. Body temperature that is too low affects the brain, making the victim unable to think clearly or move well. This makes hypothermia particularly dangerous because a person may not know it is happening and won't be able to do anything about it.

- Warning signs in adults: shivering, exhaustion, confusion, fumbling hands, memory loss, slurred speech, drowsiness.
- Warning signs in infants: bright red, cold skin, very low energy.
- What to do: Take the person's temperature. If it is below 95°F, the situation is an emergency - get medical attention immediately.
- If medical care is not available, begin warming the person, as follows: get the victim into a warm room or shelter; if the victim has on any wet clothing, remove it; warm the center of the body first (chest, neck, head, and groin)-using an electric blanket, if available; or use skin-to-skin contact under loose, dry layers of blankets, clothing, towels or sheets.
- Warm beverages can help increase the body temperature, but do not give alcoholic beverages. Do not try to give beverages to an unconscious person.
- After body temperature has increased, keep the person dry and wrapped in a warm blanket, including the head and neck.
- Get medical attention as soon as possible.

Frostbite: Frostbite is an injury to the body that is caused by freezing. Frostbite causes a loss of feeling and color in affected areas. It most often affects the nose, ears, cheeks, chin, fingers, or toes. Frostbite can permanently damage the body, and severe cases can lead to amputation. The risk of frostbite is increased in people with reduced blood circulation and among people who aren't dressed properly for extremely cold temperatures.

- Any of the following signs may indicate frostbite: white or grayish-yellow skin area, skin that feels unusually firm or waxy, numbness.
- If there is frostbite but no sign of hypothermia and immediately medical care is not available, proceed as follows: get into a warm room as soon as possible; unless absolutely necessary, do not walk on frostbitten feet or toes (this increases the damage); immerse the affected area in warm (not hot) water; or warm the affected area using body heat; don't rub the frostbitten area with snow or massage it at all (this can cause more damage); don't use a heating pad, heat lamp, or the heat of a stove, fireplace, or radiator for warming (affected areas are numb and can be easily burned).

Carbon Monoxide (CO) Poisoning: CO is an odorless, colorless gas that can cause sudden illness and death if inhaled. When power outages occur during emergencies such as winter storms, the use of alternative sources of fuel or electricity for heating or cooking can cause CO to build up in a home, garage, or camper and to poison the people and animals inside.