



## University of California Cooperative Extension Programs Newsletter

University of California  
Agriculture and Natural Resources

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The following updates and resources are brought to you by your local UCCE office. These resources will help guide your program participants to make healthier lifestyle choices. For more information, contact:

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### Did You Know?

#### Can zinc boost your immune system?

Often during cold and flu season, people think loading up on vitamin C is the answer to a quick relief or to avoid the cold altogether. New research shows that zinc can help as well. Researchers from Tufts University found that immune function was boosted after given to a group with low blood zinc concentrations. They observed an increase of white blood cells — a key role in immune response —when blood zinc concentrations were increased. Good sources of zinc include fortified breakfast cereals, beef, pork and beans, as well as oysters and other shellfish. Read more at <https://www.ars.usda.gov/news-events/news/research-news/2016/adequate-zinc-vital-to-healthy-immune-response/>

#### Vitamin D and pregnancy

A recent study conducted by researchers from the United States Department of Agriculture and the University of California, Davis found that higher doses of vitamin D had a positive effect on pregnant women when taken in their first trimester of pregnancy. More vitamin D circulating in the blood was correlated to reducing inflammation. This is important since inflammation during pregnancy can cause health problems such as high blood pressure, pre-eclampsia, premature delivery and low birth weight. Most prenatal vitamins currently contain 400 IUs of vitamin D. The researchers found 2000 IUs decreased the inflammatory marker TNF-  $\alpha$ .

Read more at <https://www.ars.usda.gov/news-events/news/research-news/2016/higher-dose-of-vitamin-d-may-benefit-pregnant-women/>

## Nutrition Resources

### Mobile Health

Technology is a part of everyday life and has allowed people to have everything tailored to their needs. Now personal health care is on its way to be included with Mobile Health, mHealth, devices and applications. Patients are becoming empowered by controlling and monitoring their own health. The mHealth system helps to manage the way health is managed by providing: education; new avenues to connect with doctors, such as video conferencing and emails; information about disease symptoms; tips on practicing healthy lifestyles; and medication reminders via text messages. Examples of mHealth devices include smartphone ECG devices, Breast Cancer Smart Bra, and glucometers. mHealth is becoming global and even reaching third world countries. The possibilities are endless.

Read more at <http://web.stanford.edu/group/siph/cgi-bin/siphsite/mobile-health-power-in-your-palm/>

### Is all sugar really bad for us?

Many people believe all sugars are bad for health because they cause weight gain and other health problems. There are many different types of sugar and artificial sweeteners in foods. Glucose, a type of natural sugar found in foods such as fruit, is needed by the body. Other types of sugar that are added to food such as high-fructose corn syrup, fruit-juice concentrates, nectars, or raw sugar, should be consumed in moderation. You can find those types of added sugars by reading the food label. Another type of sweetener is 0 calorie artificial sweeteners such as Saccharin (Sweet 'N Low) or Sucratose (Splenda) that can be found in diet beverages or low calorie snack foods. These types of sweeteners have shown to cause other health problems. It is important to remember eating a balanced diet with a variety of fruits and vegetables will help maintain a healthy weight and overall health.

Read more at <https://newsinhealth.nih.gov/issue/oct2014/feature1>



### 2-Step Chicken

**Makes:** 4 Servings

**Total Cost:** \$5.30

**Serving cost:** \$1.32

#### Ingredients:

- 1 Tbsp vegetable oil
- 2 boneless chicken breasts
- 1 can cream of chicken soup (10 oz)
- 1/2 cup water

#### Directions:

1. Heat oil in skillet at a medium-high setting.
2. Add chicken and cook for 10 minutes.
3. Remove chicken from pan and set aside.
4. Stir the soup and water together in the skillet and heat it to a boil.
5. Return chicken to the skillet. Reduce the heat to low and simmer for an additional 10 minutes, or until the chicken reaches an internal temperature of 165 °F.

**Source:** [What's Cooking? USDA Mixing Bowl](#)

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