



# NUTRITION bites

Brought to you by the UMass Extension Nutrition Education Program

ISSUE 4

*Nutrition Bites* is a weekly newsletter that highlights helpful information on staying safe, an easy and healthy recipe to try with your family, physical activity ideas, and food resources in your area. We know you are taking extra steps to keep you and your family safe during this pandemic. Our goal is to work together to provide information to help our community maintain the safety of us all.

## STAYING SAFE



**Keeping you and your family safe and healthy when working in the kitchen is always important. Which tips below do you already follow to protect against foodborne illness?**

- **Wash your hands** with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds before and after preparing or eating food.
- **Wash cutting boards**, dishes, utensils, and kitchen countertops with hot, soapy water between uses.
- **Use paper towels or clean cloths** to clean kitchen surfaces or wipe up spills.
- **Clean your washcloths** often using the hot cycle of the washing machine.
- **Rinse raw fruits and vegetables** thoroughly under cold running water before preparing and eating them.

## RECIPES AND NUTRITION TIPS



**Trying to include a vegetable in a favorite family meal?**

- Try this crowd-pleasing Mac and Cheese with Broccoli dish. If you don't have all the ingredients to cook from scratch, you can use boxed macaroni and cheese and add fresh or frozen broccoli. Change it up by substituting another favorite vegetable such as butternut squash, sweet potatoes, or peas. When you add vegetables to any meal, you're adding vitamins and minerals.
- We all know that kids love pasta. If you're looking for more pasta dishes, watch this video on how to make Chicken Penne, which uses similar ingredients. This meal is filled with whole grains, calcium, and vitamin A.

## PHYSICAL ACTIVITY TIPS

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**Stretching improves flexibility and balance. Try this simple seated Cat-Cow yoga stretch at home.**

1. Sit straight in a chair with your feet on the ground. Relax your arms at your sides or place your hands in your lap.
2. As you breathe in, roll your shoulder blades back and down. Doing this pulls your chest forward and arches your back. This is the Cow Pose.
3. As you breathe out, pull your belly button back into your spine to engage your abdominal muscles and round your back, leaning forward. This is the Cat Pose. It helps stretch the back, promotes flexibility of the spine, and warms up the body. Repeat this series of stretches five times.



**Gardening can relieve stress. Try growing green onions from scraps.**

1. Save the white bulbs from the bottom of your green onions. Include a small amount of the pale green stem.
2. Place them in a cup with enough water to just cover them. Keep the cup on a sunny windowsill and change the water every couple of days.
3. Within a week, you will have new green onions. Snip off the green portions as they grow and use them when you cook!
4. You can transplant green onions to a pot with soil or plant them outdoors in warm weather.

## FOOD ACCESS RESOURCES IN MASSACHUSETTS

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**The Massachusetts Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Nutrition Program is committed to providing families with continued support during the COVID-19 pandemic.**

Keeping with social distancing requirements, WIC programs and services are accessible by phone. If you have provided your local program with your email address and/or cell phone number, you will receive notifications about important updates. You can [check your eligibility](#) and [apply for WIC online](#).

### **Do you need help buying healthy food?**

You may be eligible for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Apply for SNAP benefits using the link below.

<https://www.mass.gov/how-to/apply-for-snap-benefits-food-stamps>

For more SNAP Nutrition Education information, visit:

<https://www.mahealthyfoodsinasnap.org>