Making a Difference in Tarrant County

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Koran Watson is a senior Nutrition major at Prairie View A&M University. While attending PVAMU she has served as a Student Trainer for various sports, member and officer for the Student Dietetic Association, member of the National Collegiate Scholars and a two term Senator for the Student Government Association. In her spare time she volunteers with her local Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service office, Houston Food Bank, Prairie View Community Garden and also round the campus. She will be graduating in May 2014 with a Bachelor’s of Science in Human Nutrition. After graduation she will be pursuing her Masters in Nutrition and Athletic Training. Her goals for her career are to impact those around her by giving back to those who gave to her.

Tanner Stasey is 21 years old and from Aledo, TX. He is currently a senior with a 3.53 GPA as an Economics major at The University of Texas at Arlington. While attending UTA, Tanner has been an officer in four student organizations; Treasurer of the UTA Racquetball club, Vice-President and founding member of Young Americans for Liberty, Philanthropy Chair of his fraternity Beta Theta Pi, and Programs chair for the Big Event Executive Committee. Tanner has been an intern for Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service - Tarrant County for the summer of 2013, and he enjoyed the opportunity to bear witness to a wide variety of the agent’s influence on the community. He believes that what makes AgriLife Extension special is its ability to translate knowledge in a way that provides solutions for the entire community, and to prevent detriment from occurring. Tanner enjoys spending his free time outdoors by playing a variety of sports, lending service to the community, and escaping to his family ranch in Chalk Mountain, TX known as the B-S Ranch. Tanner will be graduating in May 2014, and he has plans of pursuing his Master’s degree at Texas A&M University.

Charles Anderson is a junior Agriculture Economics major at Prairie View A&M University. While attending PVAMU he serves very diligently as a Manager of the Prairie View Football Team. He is the Vice President of the Young Ministers Association on the campus. He is a member of the Dr. Emmet J. Conrad Program under Senator Royce West. He enjoys watching movies, reading books and in the future he hopes to work for the United States Department of Agriculture.
Winter management must start in the fall, before cold weather. This means carefully assessing body condition on pregnant cows when calving is nearing and re-breeding is in the offing. Adequate condition at the start of winter and good maintenance throughout, most animals winter well. But, without adequate nutrition, anything else we do is set up for failure. Producers often underestimate the importance of fall nutrition and body-condition scoring. About 70% of open cows each year are the result of inadequate fall nutrition.

An adequate, balanced diet may merely mean adding a trace-mineral supplement to pasture, some good hay, a protein supplement if grass becomes too dry, or hay if the grass becomes depleted. If a cow is deficient in protein or phosphorus through fall and winter, she won’t re-breed on time after calving. Plus, thin cows are unable to handle the stress of bad weather and lose more weight. Therefore, it takes more feed to put weight back on a cow during cold weather.

If you manage pastures properly — without over-grazing or running out of grass — forage-efficient cows won’t lose much weight during fall or winter grazing; they generally gain weight after weaning calves and go into winter with fat reserves. To help cattle maintain health and body condition during winter, vaccinations should be up to date, parasite populations assessed, and cattle dewormed.

Adjust feed for cold weather
How much hay or supplement a cow needs depends on weather conditions, cow age, body condition, available pasture or crop residue, and reproductive stage of the cow. Some herds do well through fall and winter on good native pasture with just a salt/mineral supplement, especially if cows aren’t nursing calves. In cold or stormy weather, cattle need more energy to maintain body heat. This can be adequately supplied by forages, since fermentation breakdown of roughage in the rumen produces heat. If cattle aren’t fed additional energy, they rob body fat to keep warm, and lose weight.

During extremely cold or windy weather, cows should be given all the hay they’ll clean up, or a protein supplement on dry pastures to encourage them to eat more. As long as protein is adequate, cows can process/ferment sufficient roughage to provide energy and body heat. Access to good windbreaks during severe weather is important to reduce cold cows’ stress and energy requirements, as well.

Cows in early or mid-gestation don’t need your best hay; save it for later or feed it to heifers and two-year-olds. Of course, the only way to truly know the nutritional value of hay is a lab analysis. Weaned calves need the highest-quality feed; next would be pregnant heifers and two-year-olds that just weaned off calves. This is a critical time for this latter group as these females are still growing and pregnant, and nursing calves may have pulled down their condition. Mature, dry cows can get by on lesser-quality forage, be it pasture or hay, until late gestation.

Adequate protein is crucial during the last 60 days of pregnancy for development of the unborn calf, and for colostrum formulation. Having cattle on pasture through winter is healthiest for both cows and their calves next spring. If you must feed hay, have it come from the same sources rather than try to create a feeding program to fit cattle that won’t do well on their own in your environment.

How to handle laundry packets
As of this writing, there are 6,229 known cases of children under the age of 5 who have ingested single-load laundry and dishwasher packets. Even though single-load liquid laundry packets have been widely available for a few years, a reminder to all who purchase them, these powerful packets contain highly concentrated detergent and require the same attention that is used with common household cleaning products. According to the American Association of Poison Control Centers (AAPCC), in 2012, poison centers reported that there were 6,229 unintended exposures to these laundry detergent packets by children 2 years and younger. Of course, the only way to truly know the nutritional value of hay is a lab analysis. Weaned calves need the highest-quality feed; next would be pregnant heifers and two-year-olds that just weaned off calves. This is a critical time for this latter group as these females are still growing and pregnant, and nursing calves may have pulled down their condition. Mature, dry cows can get by on lesser-quality forage, be it pasture or hay, until late gestation.

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Food 6: A cup of me is similar to milk in calcium content while also a good source of protein and the B vitamin riboflavin. I’m available in several flavors.

Food 7: I’m a good source of potassium. Remember to store me at room temperature until I ripen; then refrigerate me. Though my skin darkens in the refrigerator, I’ll still be light inside.

Food 8: I belong to the morning glory family, orange in color, high in vitamin A and sometimes served mashed. I taste best stored in a cool, dry dark place (55 to 60°F) and stay fresh for 3 to 5 weeks. At room temperature, I’m at my peak for about a week.

Food 9: I am frequently pickled or used to make borscht, a traditional Russian soup. As a colorful root vegetable, my leaves are edible as well. Made of phytochemicals, I help protect against heart disease, birth defects and certain types of cancer, especially colon cancer.

Food 10: I’m yellow in color and found in over 4,000 everyday items, such as toothpaste, aspirin, makeup soap and medicines. A perennial State Fair favorite, peel the outside, boil the inside, nibble on the outside and throw the inside away.

Adapted from “Kids In the Kitchen” University of Missouri Extension, University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension

Answers...
1. Tomato
2. Dried beans (Great northern, kidney, garbanzo, black beans, etc.)
3. Avocado
4. Almond
5. Popcorn
6. Yogurt
7. Banana
8. Sweet potato
9. Beet
10. Corn on the cob

More than 65 million Americans have high blood cholesterol, a serious condition that increases risk for heart disease. High blood cholesterol itself does not cause symptoms, so many are unaware their levels are too high.

WHY IS CHOLESTEROL IMPORTANT?
Your blood cholesterol level has a lot to do with your chances of getting heart disease. High blood cholesterol is one of the major risk factors for heart disease. A risk factor is a condition that increases your chance of getting a disease. In fact, the higher your blood cholesterol level, the greater your risk for developing heart disease or having a heart attack. Heart disease is the number one killer of women and men in the United States. Each year, more than a million Americans have heart attacks, and about half a million people die from heart disease.

THESE ARE THINGS YOU CAN DO SOMETHING ABOUT:

- Diet – Saturated fat and cholesterol in the food you eat make your blood cholesterol level go up. Saturated fat is the main culprit, but cholesterol in foods also matters. Reducing the amount of saturated fat and cholesterol in your diet helps lower your blood cholesterol level.

- Weight – Being overweight is a risk factor for heart disease. It also tends to increase your cholesterol. Losing weight can help lower your LDL (bad) cholesterol and raise your HDL (good) cholesterol and lower your triglycerides levels that are another form of fat in your blood.

- Physical Activity – Not being physically active is a risk factor for heart disease. Regular physical activity can help lower LDL (bad) cholesterol and raise HDL (good) cholesterol levels. It also helps you lose weight. You should try to be physically active for 30 minutes on most, if not all days.

FOODS LOW IN SATURATED FAT
Foods lower in saturated fat are fat-free or 1% dairy products, lean meats, fish, skinless poultry, whole grain foods, fruits and vegetables. Look for soft margarines (liquid or tub varieties) that are low in saturated fat and contain little or no trans fat (another type of dietary fat that can raise your cholesterol level). Limit foods high in cholesterol such as liver and other organ meats, egg yolks, and full-fat dairy products.

Good sources of soluble fiber (helps lower cholesterol) include oats, certain fruits (such as oranges and pears) and vegetables (such as Brussels sprouts and carrots), and dried peas and beans.

You probably have heard that half of your plate should be filled with fruits and veggies in order to obtain maximum nutrition from your grains, you should make at least half of them “whole.” What’s the big deal, you may ask? The answer is fiber.

There are many supplements available for purchase and many companies have advertised that their product is the best choice for optimum fiber content. If you are still left wondering why fiber is so important; or for that matter, what specific foods contain high amounts of fiber, here is a brief overview to get you on track to believing in the power of fiber.

- Fiber is important for proper bowel function and can help to reduce constipation.
- Fiber has also been shown to reduce blood cholesterol levels and may lower the risk of heart disease.
- Whole or cut-up fruits and vegetables are sources of dietary fiber.
- Fruit juices contain little or no fiber so it is important to take it easy on fruit juices.
- Fruit juice lacks the dietary fiber that keeps you feeling full and you’re often left with all of the sugar and calories without the satisfaction.
- Dietary fiber from whole grains or other foods may lower the risk of obesity, and type 2 diabetes.
- Whole grains contain the entire grain kernel which includes the bran, germ, and endosperm.

Examples of whole grains include:
- whole wheat flour
- bulgur (cracked wheat)
- oatmeal
- whole cornmeal
- brown rice

Fruits and vegetables not only provide you with variety and sweetness but great satisfaction. Whole grains will also leave you feeling fuller longer without a lot of extra calories and this is definitely an added bonus when trying to lose or maintain a healthy weight. Hopefully it’s a little clearer why fiber is such an important part of your diet. Remember, fiber isn’t just a fad and you will certainly benefit from including it or maintaining it in your daily meals!

References: www.choosemyplate.gov

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The Açai (ah-sah-EE) berry is the fruit of the Açai palm tree and is traditionally consumed in Brazil but has gained popularity abroad as a food and functional ingredient, yet little research based information exists on its health effect in humans. The characteristics of the Açai berry include:

- Hard seed (80%) covered by a thin layer of edible fibers
- Viscous, sometimes oily, pulp is prepared by mixing with water
- Fruits have exceptionally high antioxidant content.
- Used in cosmetics and beauty products
- No known health benefits that are any different than that of similar fruit.

Açai Berry has been recognized for having high amounts of the antioxidants anthocyanin (meaning “plant” and “blue”) and flavonoid; antioxidants are substances that may protect your cells against the effects of free radicals. Free radicals are molecules produced when your body breaks down food, or by environmental exposures like tobacco smoke and radiation. Free radicals can damage cells, and may play a role in heart disease, cancer and other diseases.

Açai Berry has also been recognized as being a SuperFruit as researched by Dr. Steve Talcott Associate Professor of Food Chemistry in the Department of Nutrition and Food Science at Texas A&M University. The term “Super” is based on:

- Nutrient density
- Potential health benefits
- High antioxidant capacity
- Presence of unique compounds
- Exotic nature, unknown

Other SuperFruits that are common include mangos, oranges, strawberries, cranberries, blueberries, and cherries.

For now, there is research that supports eating a diet rich in antioxidants, which are useful in reducing the risk of some diseases. Although berries and other fruits are a key part of any healthy diet promoting weight loss, there is still not enough conclusive research to definitively state that the açai berry has the ability to shed excess pounds.
Steve Chaney County Extension Agent - Horticulture

The increased frequency of cooler temperatures and decreased day length make fall an ideal time to garden. The fall beckons you out of doors from the air-conditioned confines of Texas summers. Gardeners and yardners alike migrate to nurseries and back home to plant flowers, vegetables, shrubs, and trees. Landscape remodelling or reestablishing additions abound throughout your neighborhood. At a time when northern gardeners are closing up shop for the winter, Texans are beginning anew. Truly the fall may be the best season to plant, surpassing even the spring. What a truly wonderful time of the year!

The fall months of September through December have distinct advantages for planting compared to the spring months of March to May. Fall planting follows the heat of summer and precedes cool to cold temperatures. Trees, shrubs, flowers, and vegetables planted in the fall use this to good advantage.

- Plant roots grow anytime the soil temperature is 40 degrees or higher, which may occur throughout the winter in all areas except the Panhandle. During the fall and winter months, the root systems of fall-planted plants grow and become well established. When spring arrives, this expanded root system can support and take advantage of the full surge of spring growth.
- Fall is a perfect time to plant container-grown trees and shrubs. Restricted root systems of these plants have ample time to recover from transplanting and proliferate new roots before spring growth begins.
- The cooler days of fall reduce overall plant stress. Most newly planted shrubs, groundcovers, and perennial flowers benefit from lower fall temperatures. There are exceptions of course; be careful planting small plants that are marginally cold tolerant for your area. Check with your local extension office or nursery professionals to identify these plants for your area.
- Rainfall is more common in fall months, thus a reduced need for irrigation. Rainfall also helps dilute and flush salts from the soil that have accumulated during summer long irrigation with poor quality water (i.e., high salt content).
- For vegetables, crops mature in the fall, as daytime and nighttime temperatures are much cooler than in the summer. This results in less plant stress and higher quality, better tasting produce, whether it be fruits or beans, pepper, and tomato plants or edible parts, such as broccoli, cauliflower, leaf lettuce, and spinach.

The most important reason to garden in the fall may be a truly selfish one - it feels good to humans. Working in the garden is much more pleasant in the fall. The heat of summer is in the past. The garden appears more vibrant and beautiful. The birds are much more active. The mosquitoes and other pest populations are retreating from the cooler weather. There is exuberant life in the garden and a heightened intensity due to pending dormancy. Thank goodness in Texas that winter dormancy is of such short duration. So, “fall into gardening” once again or for the very first time!

**Save the Date:**
Texas Water Star Conference. Saturday October 26, 2013
Resource Connection

**Contact:** Billie Hammack at 817 884-1945 or bhammack@ag.tamu.edu

Laura M. Miller County Extension Agent - Horticulture

Drought and excess salinity in irrigation water go together like drought and lack of sufficient water for irrigation. As the quantity of available water in our lakes goes down so does the quality of that water. Water evaporates from lakes, rivers, and even the soil surface. Salts in that water do not.

Evaporation is not the only reason that irrigation with salty water is an issue during drought. As if to add additional salt to our water deprived wounds, the reclaimed (treated) waste water that becomes a more significant irrigation resource during times of drought also tends to be two to three times higher in salts than potable water from the same municipal system.

Reclaimed water is the only available landscape irrigation source that actually increases as population increases. Wastewater treatment requires that harmful biological contaminants are removed and that standards for pH, total suspended solids, dissolved oxygen and chlorine. There are no requirements to remove salts.

Salts in water can’t be seen, but can be easily measured with an electrical conductivity (EC) meter. EC is expressed in ds/m. One ds/m is equivalent to 640 ppm. High quality water will measure less than 1 EC, reclaimed water is generally 1.3 to 2.0 EC, and sea water is over 4.0 EC. When screening plants for salt tolerance, Dr. Genthua Niu at the Texas A&M AgriLife Research and Extension center in El Paso, used water with EC values ranging up to 7.4. That’s salty.

The possibility that saline irrigation is in our future is high. Here are some tips for successful irrigation with salty water:

- **Select salt tolerant plant material:**
Drought tolerant plants can often be recognized by their little/waxy/hairy/thick leaves, but salt tolerance in plants is not if necessarily easy to see. It would be nice if drought tolerance and salt tolerance always went together, but they don’t. Some drought tolerant plants, such as Desert Willow, are not very salt tolerant. Some salt tolerant plants, like Oleander, have fairly high water requirements.

There are tools available to help identify salt tolerant, or halophytic, plants. The USDA halophyte database, [http://www.usssl.ars.usda.gov/pls/caliche/](http://www.usssl.ars.usda.gov/pls/caliche/) Halophyte has thousands of species and is searchable by genus, species, family and common name. Looking for a salt tolerant holly? Put in the genus Ilex and the answer will be *Ilex vomitoria* or Yaupon holly.

Dr. Niu’s research is more extensive and specific to landscape plants commonly used in Texas. A look at her Photo Guide: Landscape Plant Response to Salinity [http://elpaso.tamu.edu/files/2011/10/Photo-Guide-Landscape-Plant-2004.pdf](http://elpaso.tamu.edu/files/2011/10/Photo-Guide-Landscape-Plant-2004.pdf) will provide visual proof that Bermudagrass can take some salt, and that Texas sage is a great salty water shrub selection.

- **Establish plantings with the highest quality water available:**
Any plant will be better able to handle saline irrigation when its roots are well established. Give plants the very best water that can be provided while they are getting started. This is an excellent use for captured rainwater. Avoid reclaimed water during establishment.

- **Keep water off plant leaves:**
Most plants are more sensitive to salt on their leaves than in the soil solution. Plant visual quality is greatly reduced by leaf burn. Avoid sprinkler irrigation in favor of drip, hoakier or other surface irrigation. If sprinklers are used to water salt tolerant turf, adjust the spray angle as low as possible to keep water off tree and shrub leaves.

- **Improve soil drainage:**
Well drained soils allow leaching of salts during rainfall events. Aeration and the addition of organic material can improve drainage and minimize the accumulation of salts in the plant root zone.
The days and weeks of checking items off of your “Back to School” checklist have ceased. You’ve completed the enrollments, medical check-ups, meal planning, and the anticipated shopping. Now that school is underway, the young scholar’s days are filled with lunch, P.E., art, computer and those expected subjects such as reading, writing and arithmetic. When the pace slows a bit or a “rainy” day beckons, carve out some time for some crafty personalization of the common school tool, your notebook. Disney’s [http://spoonful.com](http://spoonful.com) offers some delightful suggestions on ways that young scholars can create some buzz with their school notebooks. The following activities can be found at [http://spoonful.com/back-to-school/back-to-school-crafts](http://spoonful.com/back-to-school/back-to-school-crafts).

**Personalized Notebooks**

By Catherine Newman | Photograph by Ronnie Andren

Total Time 30 minutes or less

Customize plain notebooks with collaged covers tailored to each recipient. Brown paper bags make sturdy covers, and they’re free! If you have guests, make sure there are enough scissors to go around.

**What you’ll need:**
- brown paper bags
- scrapbooking paper and colored card stock
- glue dots
- Pencil
- blank notebooks (such as composition books)
- glue stick
- scissors

**Helpful Tip:**
THE 3-D VERSION: To add dimension to your collage, bend up the edges of your shapes before gluing them to the cover. Use this method to create a flower with pop: glue petalled circles in a stack from largest to smallest.

MONOGRAM: Top your cover with simple cut-outs of your recipient’s initials.

**How to make it:**
1. Trace a notebook onto a paper bag. Cut out the shape and use a glue stick to adhere it to the front of the notebook.
2. Cut shapes from the decorative papers and arrange them on the notebook, adhering them with a glue stick or glue.

**The Colorful Cover-up Notebook**

Total Time: 1 hour, Ages: all-ages

Here's a fun and fuzzy way to dress up your plain notebook.

**What you’ll need:**
- spiral-bound notebook
- tacky glue
- pipe cleaner
- colored paper

**How to make it:**
1. Spruce up a plain spiral bound notebook with bold stripes by using tacky glue to stick pipe cleaners (the extrawide, fuzzy type work especially well) over the cover.
2. Fold the pipe cleaner ends against the top and bottom edges of the inner cover, then conceal them with a glued-on sheet of colored paper.

The topic of Leadership was discussed recently on Prairie View A&M University’s campus at Youth Leadership Laboratory (YLL) 2013. At this event youth from several counties in Texas congregated on the campus of Prairie View A&M to take part in YLL. Tarrant County sent a delegation of twelve participants to YLL, three CEP Agents (two 4-H and one Family & Consumer Sciences Agent), one summer intern, seven youth and one adult volunteer. The Youth Leadership Laboratory was an educational activity for youth, 13 -19 years of age, sponsored by the Prairie View A&M University, Cooperative Extension 4-H & Youth Development Program. The program provided experiential learning opportunities that promoted healthy living, developed and improved leadership skills, reinforced the importance of education, and discover career and scholarship opportunities.

Youth engaged in social and life skills, seminars and experienced dormitory style living in a college environment. This event also gave youth the opportunity to display their leadership skills, which they learn through participation in the program.

Youth and adult participants that attended YLL were actively engaged in a variety of workshops designed to assist with expanding their leadership skills and potential. Participants attended sessions such as:
- Classroom Management and Leadership
- Public Speaking and Co-Facilitation
- Fast Foods
- Eat Breakfast
- Sweetened Drinks
- Fruits/Vegetables
- Whole Grains
- Nutrition Facts Labels

Also included in these sessions was a tour of the Prairie View A&M University farm where participants toured the poultry, goat and pig facilities.

All information gleaned from YLL will be used by trained Tarrant County youth to produce and implement a healthy living action plan that will help improve the lives of younger youth as the targeted audience.
Making A Difference in Tarrant County

To address an increased demand for science and technology professionals, the national 4-H organization set out to reach a goal of engaging one million new young people in science programs by 2013 - and we've met it.

The 4-H science projects engage youth in fun, hands-on activities which enable youth to develop a strong understanding of scientific concepts. Through the inquiry-based activities youth explore various ideas and test their hypotheses. Utilizing the experiential learning model, youth develop critical thinking skills while having fun and building teamwork.

One project which has generated a lot of excitement is the Robotics project. Utilizing common materials to make robots, youth learn the basic principles of engineering to design, construct, and test simple machines to autonomous robots.

In the GPS project, youth learn how a global positioning system works and how to use hand-held devices to set waypoints, track, and record data. Many enjoy participating in geo-caching activities, which is similar to a technology-enhanced treasure hunting expedition.

October 9, 2013 is National Youth Science Day. On this day, schools, clubs, and individuals engage youth in a science activity. This year’s focus is 4-H Maps & Apps. This activity will introduce youth to the importance of geographic information systems (GIS) and geographic positioning systems (GPS) as they become citizen scientists who design and map their ideal park.

If your club, classroom, or neighborhood community would like to learn more about National Youth Science Day or the 4-H program, contact:

Tarrant County 4-H
817-884-1291
CPBryant@ag.tamu.edu

Getting Quality & Quantity Sleep: Tips to a Good Night's Sleep

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ...as many as one quarter of Americans report occasionally not getting enough sleep. A lack of sleep has been linked with chronic diseases such as diabetes, obesity and depression, which severely impacts the health of our nation. In addition, lack of sleep is cited as the reason for a significant number of motor vehicle and machinery crashes each year. Driving while sleep deprived can be as dangerous as driving while intoxicated and it is just as preventable. Most adults need at least 7-9 hours of sleep per night. If you are not getting enough sleep, you probably feel groggy during monotonous or boring activities, or feel unreasonably irritable. But even if you feel like you are adapted to a schedule of lost sleep, your body hasn’t. Insufficient sleep is directly linked to poor health – so if you aren’t getting enough zzzz’s – you are putting yourself at risk.

So, how do you sleep in our society of 24/7 commerce? How do you sleep when caregiving for an infant or elderly parent? How can you sleep when it’s hot and humid, cold and dry, your spouse is snoring, or the stress at work keeps your mind running in circles? It is important to get both quantity (enough hours) and quality (uninterrupted) sleep so that your brain and body can go through all of the necessary stages of sleep for you to be healthy, alert, safe, and productive the next day. Here are some tips that may help you make gains in the area of more quality and quantity sleep:

- Stick to a sleep schedule. Go to bed and wake up at the same time each day – even on the weekends, if possible. It helps set your biological clock and makes it easier to wake up on those Monday mornings.
- Use your bed for sleep and intimacy. Don’t use your bed for anything but sleep and intimacy. Your bed should be associated with relaxation and sleep.
- Exercise, but not too late in the day. Try to exercise 30 minutes a day, but avoid exercising close to bedtime since exercise can stimulate and increase alertness.
- Avoid caffeine and nicotine. Both caffeine and nicotine stimulate the central nervous system.
- Avoid alcoholic drinks before bed. A ‘nightcap’ might help you get to sleep, but alcohol keeps you in the lighter stages of sleep and tends to cause you to wake up in the middle of the night when the sedating effects have worn off.
- Avoid large meals and beverages late at night. A large meal can cause indigestion that interferes with sleep. Drinking too many fluids at night can cause you to awaken frequently to urinate.
- Drink a glass of fat-free milk before bed. The amino acid tryptophan in the milk will help make you feel sleepy. All dairy foods as well as oats, bananas, poultry, and peanuts are good sources of tryptophan.
- Avoid medicines that delay or disrupt your sleep, if possible. Some commonly prescribed heart, blood pressure, or asthma medications, as well as some over-the-counter and herbal remedies for coughs, colds, or allergies, can disrupt sleep patterns. Consult your doctor.
- Nap, only if necessary. A 20-30 minute nap for someone who is not working a night shift and needs some short-term alertness in the day can be beneficial – just don’t nap too long or too late in the day (after 3 p.m.), or you might find yourself awake at night.
- Take a hot bath before bed. The drop in body temperature after the bath may help you feel sleepy, and the bath can help relax you.
- Have the right sunlight exposure. Daylight is key to regulating daily sleep patterns. Try to get outside in natural sunlight for at least 30 minutes each day.
- Don’t lie in bed awake. Don’t get in bed before you are tired. If you find yourself still awake after staying in bed for more than 20 minutes, get up and do some relaxing activity until you feel sleepy. Then go back to bed.
- Reduce anxiety. The anxiety of not being able to sleep can make it harder to fall asleep. Try removing clocks from your vision so you are not always watching the clock to see how long you’ve been awake or how soon you will have to get up. Place a ‘worry book’ next to your bed to help you work to race with worries. Jot down a brief note about the problem/worry, and schedule a time to focus on the problem and a solution the next day.
- See a doctor if you continue to have trouble sleeping. If you consistently find yourself feeling tired or not well rested during the day despite spending enough time in bed at night, you may have a sleep disorder. Your family doctor or a sleep specialist should be able to help you.

This article was written by Janet M. Pollack, MPH, AgriLife Extension Associate–Health, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, with additional content noted from the Centers for Disease Prevention and Control, www.cdc.gov/sleep.
Engage with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service in Tarrant County through a variety of Social Media outlets. Stay abreast of upcoming events and activities, see our staff and volunteers in action and learn new things.

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SAVE THE DATE
DINNER TONIGHT! Healthy Cooking School
Easy, Nutritious and Economical Ways to Feed Your Family!

Wednesday  September 25  5:30-7:30 pm   Tarrant County College
Trinity River Campus

Ways to Register:
Visit: http://www.texashealth.org/FortWorth
Instructions: Click on “Classes and Event Calendar” from menu on the left
Under “Events” select “Dinner Tonight! Healthy Cooking School”, follow prompts
Or Call: (877) 847-9355 to register by phone
Monday - Friday: 8 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.

For more information contact Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service
817-884-1946