



AGRABILITY CHIT CHAT

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NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS

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CARM'S COMMENTS: Carmen Schacht

The theme for December is New Year's resolutions and developing a healthier lifestyle. The most common New Year's resolution that we hear about every year is the fact that we want to lose weight and have a healthier lifestyle. That's easier said than done!

There are many ways we can get help. I found a program on our satellite dish that demonstrates exercises that can often be done from a wheelchair or just a plain chair. On the days I am home, I do these and they help a lot.

With the Internet, magazines, handouts in the grocery store, and bulletins and specialists in local Extension offices there are endless sources for suggestions to

healthy eating. Although most of us know what we should eat and that we need to reduce the sweets and fats in our daily diets, the hard part is actually doing it! It is the sweet and fatty things that we are used to tasting, which is why they are hard to give up.

There are so many good New Year's resolutions - peace and good will in the world, helping people who are less fortunate than we are, making our communities better places, or reading a good book that teaches us something new. I am challenging myself this year and I would like to extend the same challenge to each of you: make this a fruitful year by living healthier and safer. Whatever your resolutions are, may you all have a wonderful new year.

NEW YEAR SIGNIFIES RENEWAL

Resolutions are thought of at the beginning of a New Year because we have a feeling of renewal. Start thinking about your resolutions now, before New Year's Eve. You'll have more success if you put more thought into the resolution. Here are some healthy resolution ideas and resources to help you succeed:

Exercise: Try Lighten-Up Iowa (see information in this issue of Chit Chat)
www.lightenupiowa.org/

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National Center on Physical Activity and Disability www.ncpad.org/

Eat Healthier: What you need to know about the health benefits of functional foods (PM1798)

www.extension.iastate.edu/Publications/PM1798.pdf

Lose weight: Do you want to feel better (NCR560)

www.extension.iastate.edu/Publications/NCR560.pdf

Smile more: Learning to feel good about yourself (PM1322)

www.extension.iastate.edu/Publications/PM1322.pdf

Save money: Money Mechanics: Saving & investing (PM1462a)

www.extension.iastate.edu/Publications/PM1462A.pdf

Planning to \$tay ahead (PM1924)

www.extension.iastate.edu/Publications/PM1924.pdf

Reduce stress: Stress on the farm (NCR192b)

www.extension.iastate.edu/Publications/NCR192B.pdf

Get organized: Getting organized brochure (SP76)

www.extension.iastate.edu/Publications/SP76.pdf

Quit Smoking: Freedom from Smoking® American Lung Association
www.lungusa.org/events/ffs.html or call 1-800-LUNG-USA.

The resources are Extension publications, with the exception of the *Exercise* and *Quit Smoking* portions. If you do not have access to the internet you can ask for a copy of the publication at your local extension office by

using the letter/number combination listed above.

TRY LIGHTEN UP IOWA!

Lighten Up Iowa provides the opportunity for community groups (like AgrAbility consumers, that's you!) of adults, youth or families to become involved in the statewide challenge of increasing physical activity, along with eating five daily servings of vegetables and fruit. With these new or improved behaviors the participants could even lose some weight.

What is *Lighten Up Iowa*? Teams of up to 10 members will challenge themselves and others in the community to lose weight, walk a little farther and eat fruits and vegetables. Top teams reaching their goals will be recognized this Summer at the Iowa Games. Teams enroll by January 5, 2004 and for a \$10 fee per team member will receive a training t-shirt, weekly support tips for the team and enrollment in the Iowa Games Volkswalk. Team members will be able to purchase pedometers to monitor distance traveled.

Lighten Up Iowa is sponsored by the Iowa Games, Iowa Department of Public Health and Iowa State University Extension. To learn more, look at the Web site www.lightenupiowa.org or contact your local county extension office for more information.

In 2003, Iowans collectively walked 2.5 million miles or 7773 times across the state of Iowa from east to west. In addition, 47,000 pounds were lost, the equivalent of 78 State Fair butter cows!

EATING RIGHT!

- ✓ Choose foods rich in nutrients such as lean meats, poultry, and fish; fresh fruits

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and vegetables; whole grain breads and cereals; and low fat dairy products.

- ✓ Bake, broil, or steam – don't fry
- ✓ Don't forget the *dairy* (milk, yogurt, cheese), *iron* (green leafy vegetables & enriched whole grains), or *fiber* (whole grains and fresh fruits and vegetables).

EXERCISE

There are many ways to get exercise without spending the pennies you have left over from the holiday season. Walking or wheeling, lifting cans of soup or old milk jugs partially filled with water, and stretching are all ways to more active without spending a dime. For a minimal cost, many communities have a YMCA or school with a swimming pool, which offer classes or open swim time. Because each disability presents its own challenge, you have to find an exercise regime you are comfortable with. Additionally, your doctor should be able to give you more personalized advice on exercise.

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"The best exercise I help Ron with is not to do anything for him that he can do for himself," -Helen Thomas, Indiana AgrAbility Project: Breaking New Ground.

NO MORE EXCUSES: Erin Haafke

I think I must have the world's longest list of excuses for not exercising, which is followed by another long list of excuses for unhealthy eating. No time. That's my number one response on both lists. Other justifications making the lists are varied. For example, when it comes to exercise, I really like to tell myself (especially with the weather in Iowa) that it's too hot, too cold, too rainy, too windy, or even too nice outside to do something simple like go for a walk. I find that during December, holiday parties, family gatherings, and visits with

friends all revolve around food and present a unique excuse for unhealthy eating.

Regardless of the excuse I use, the outcome is inevitable... and it's never good!

After attempting (and failing) to cure bad habits with New Year's resolutions in several of the past years, 2004 is going to be different. That's because I am surrendering my excuses to "Lighten-Up." My mom challenged our family to join her in *Lighten Up Iowa*, and 16 of us took her up on it. The result, two teams: "Too Fat and Furious About It" and "REM – Real Exercise Manics." The teams are composed of my grandparents, my mom's six brothers and sisters, their spouses, along with my sister and a cousin ranging in age from 16 to 78. Although most team members live in Iowa, we also span the world with some members who live near China! Knowing my family as I do, I am predicting a friendly competition between the teams. Let the games begin!

So, if you have also taken the holiday season as an opportunity to "eat, drink, and be merry," start the New Year off on the right foot. *I challenge you too, to make this year different by making a personal lifestyle change.* Bring your neighbors, friends, family, and fellow AgrAbility consumers together to form a team for Lighten-Up Iowa. Pick a team captain, come up with a crazy team name, and make a plan for success. Encourage and support each other to shake away the excuses and have fun!

NEWSLETTER THOUGHTS: Erin Haafke

Please let me know if you have something you would like to share with other consumers in the newsletter. I know you have each made great accomplishments to overcome barriers and have achievements worthy of recognition, so inspire us with your story or even a few brief comments.

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For example, if you participated in last year's Lighten-Up Iowa or are getting a team together this year, we want to know! In addition, if there is something you would

like to read about in a future newsletter, I will do my best to include your requests. Call me at 515-294-8522 or send me an email at ehaafke@iastate.edu.

IOWA AGRABILITY - A joint effort of ISU Extension and the Rural Solutions Program of Easter Seals Iowa. The program can help farm family members with a disability stay in farming.

This newsletter from the Iowa AgrAbility Project will be sent monthly to AgrAbility families and other interested individuals. Please send comments and suggestions to:

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