

Stay Connected

With the COVID-19 pandemic affecting services, Southcentral Foundation wants to stay connected with customer-owners and offer information on activities, recipes, and much more. The Wellness Newsletter is a weekly newsletter providing information for customer-owners to help with health and wellness. The newsletter can be found at both the *Benteh Nuutah* Valley Native Primary Care Center Wellness Center and Anchorage Health Education websites.

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Outdoor Safety

ASHLEY SCHROEDER

As it warms up in Alaska, opportunities for outdoor fun become more plentiful. Whether you're hiking, biking, fishing, playing outside, hunting, or attending outdoor events, considering safety is essential. Depending on the activity, safety includes everything from wearing sunscreen to being bear aware. While outside in the sun, using sunscreen can prevent sunburn and lower the risk of developing certain skin cancers. Drinking water is important when the weather begins to heat up. Ensuring adequate water intake helps reduce dehydration and can lower the risk of heat injuries. Heat injuries occur when a person is in a hot environment for a prolonged period without rest, shade, or adequate water. Heat injuries are more common when doing heavy exercise or playing in the hot weather. To prevent heat injuries, take breaks in cool areas, drink plenty of water, and try to limit heavy activities to the coolest parts of the day (*usually the morning and evening*).

When using wheeled means of recreational transportation (*from rollerblades to 4-wheelers*), wearing an appropriately rated helmet can prevent serious injuries to the head. Helmets should be properly fitted, and not loose or tipping backwards. For more information about helmet safety, visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's helmet safety resource at: <https://www.cdc.gov/headsup/helmets/index.html>.

Being bear and moose aware while recreating outdoors can help prevent conflicts with animals. Making noise is the best first defense against a surprise run-in; using bells, talking, singing, or playing music are all great ways to make noise. If any fresh bear tracks or scat can be seen close to the trail, turn around and go the opposite direction. When camping, keep food in sealed containers approximately 100 feet away from your tent. Additionally, traveling in pairs or groups ensures that no one is alone in the event of an animal sighting.

Enjoy the wonderful gifts Alaska has to offer and remember to think ahead about staying safe outdoors!

Resources:

https://www.fws.gov/refuge/Kenai/visit/visitor_activities/safety.html

<https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/extremeheat/heattips.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/headsup/helmets/index.html>



Healthy Camping Tips, Tricks, and Recipes

CALLIE BRAY

Camping is a fun way to connect with nature, family, and friends. It is an experience that will create good times and lasting memories. While preparing for your outdoor adventure, there are two things you cannot forget to pack — food and drinks. Here are tips to help you prepare for healthy camping cooking and eating:



1. Plan, plan, plan. Not only will this ensure you have enough food for your camping trip, but it will lessen stress and help save money when purchasing your camping foods.

- Assess the type of trip. If it is more relaxed, you can plan more involved meals. If you are going to be busy hiking, fishing, kayaking, etc., consider quick and easy meal options.
- Plan meals with ingredients that will not spoil quickly. Unless you have a camper with a working fridge, plan meals that will last in a cooler.
- Don't forget to plan for healthy in-between meal snacks, i.e. sliced veggies and hummus, trail mix, apples with peanut butter, etc.
- Consider what equipment you may need. Can your meals easily be cooked over a fire or a camp stove/grill? Be sure to pack the essentials required to prepare your meal, like pans, foil, and cooking utensils.

2. Prepare as much as you can ahead of time.

- Wash, chop, and store vegetables or fruits you plan to eat raw or use in a dish.
- Pre-make any dishes, sauces, or dressings. Soups, cold salads, chili, boiled eggs, breakfast burritos, or tuna/chicken salads are great options for premade meals. Premade meals are efficient because you can simply eat them chilled or reheat them when you're ready to eat.
- Measure out ingredients for each meal and pack them in Ziploc bags. Label each bag accordingly.
- Pre-cook long cooking whole grains or rice you plan to eat.
- Marinate meats and/or skewer kababs. Seal them in Ziploc bags and aim to cook these during the beginning of the trip.
- Premeasure spices you may need for a recipe or dish.

3. Pack accordingly.

- Pack all perishable goods in one cooler and your drinks (i.e. *bottled water or 100% juice*) in another. This way, you limit how often the food cooler is opened, helping the food stay cold. Alternatively, freeze a case of bottled water and use these as ice packs to keep your perishables cold. Pack non-perishable foods (i.e. *crackers, bread, popcorn, canned goods, cooking oils, spices, oranges, and bananas*) in a plastic bin and your cookware in another. When it comes to mealtime, everything will be in one place and easy to access.
- Replenish ice often to ensure your perishable foods always stay cold to prevent spoilage and food-borne illness.
- Don't forget your cooking essentials — fuel/propane/matches, camp grill, knives, cutting board, fireproof skillet/Dutch oven, utensils, foil, hot pads, can opener, plates/bowls, napkins, Ziplocs, handwipes/sanitizer/soap, towels/paper towels, trash bags etc.

4. Camp cooking: have fun and be safe.

- Don't forget to wash your hands, utensils, and all surfaces before preparing and eating.
- Cover your pots when cooking. This will help foods cook/reheat faster, save fuel (*if using grill*), and help keep dirt and insects out of your food.
- To reheat or cook meals over the fire, let the fire die down to hot coals, and place a pot/pan over them or foil packet meals on them (*using hot pads and tongs*). Good management of your coals will help keep the heat consistent.
- Keep handles of pots and pans away from extreme heat and flames and use potholders to grab them. This will help lower the risk of burns.
- Use a food thermometer to ensure meats are safely cooked to the recommended temperature.
- To avoid unwanted animal visitors, keep your camp clean. Throw trash away in a bear proof garbage can, put food away when not in use, and store food in vehicle or bear-proof container. If you are in the back country, cook and store food at least 100 feet away from your camp, downwind. If possible, cache food or store camp food out of a bear's reach.



Enjoy these tasty camping eats:

Shrimp Boil Foil Packets

Ingredients: serves four

- 1 pound of shrimp, peeled, and deveined
- 13 ounces, smoked turkey rope sausage, sliced
- 2 cups potatoes, diced
- 2 ears of corn, cut into 8 small sections
- 1 small onion, thinly sliced
- 2 zucchinis, sliced thick
- 4 tablespoons olive oil, divided
- 1 teaspoon Cajun seasoning, divided
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Garlic powder or 4-5 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 tablespoons, Fresh parsley
- Juice of 1/2 lemon and wedges for serving

Directions:

1. Cut four sheets of heavy-duty foil, about 12 inches long. Divide shrimp, sausage, potatoes, corn, onion, and zucchini into four equal portions and add to the center of each foil in a single layer.
2. Fold up all sides of each foil packet. Add olive oil and Cajun seasoning, salt, pepper, and garlic powder to taste. Fold the sides of the foil over the shrimp, covering completely and sealing the packets closed.
3. Cooking on the grill/grill grate over campfire: Place packets on the grill and cook until potatoes are soft, about 12-15 minutes. If your fire has died down, you can also place the packets directly on the embers.
4. Remove from grill or embers and let cool slightly. Open packets carefully as they will be full of hot steam. Top with parsley and lemon wedge. Enjoy!

Source: Callie Bray, Valley Wellness Center



Fireside Fajitas

Ingredients: serves four

- 2 teaspoons salt free fiesta lime seasoning, such as Mrs. Dash
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- Salt and pepper
- 1 pound of skinless, boneless chicken breast halves, cut into strips
- 2 teaspoons olive oil
- 2 cups bell peppers, cut into thin strips
- 1 onion, thinly sliced
- 8 (6-inch) whole wheat flour tortillas
- Toppings: salsa, cilantro, guacamole, lime wedge, or plain Greek yogurt

Directions:

1. Build fire and let it burn down to coals. Top with grill rack.
2. In a plastic bag combine lime seasoning, garlic powder, salt, and pepper. Add chicken strips and seal bag. Shake to coat.
3. In a cast iron skillet, heat 1 teaspoon oil over fire. Add chicken, cooking 3-4 minutes or until no longer pink, stirring frequently. Remove chicken.
4. In skillet, heat remaining oil. Add peppers and onion, cooking 8-10 minutes or until tender and golden, stirring frequently. Stir in chicken and heat through. Meanwhile, wrap tortillas in foil and heat over campfire 8-10 minutes or until tortillas are warm, turning once.
5. Serve chicken mixture in tortillas with desired toppings. Enjoy!

Source: Eatingwell.com





Hiking to Health

JEFF LAYTON

A few days ago, I was feeling stressed and bored; so were my wife and kids. After spending most of the week close to home we needed to get away. We loaded the kids into the car, grabbed some snacks, bear spray, and water, and headed over to the Eagle River Nature Center. We got on the Albert Loop Trail and started walking. After a two-and-a-half-mile walk through the woods and along the banks of the sapphire blue Eagle River we arrived back at our car, but things were different. Our stress and boredom where replaced by rejuvenation and new experiences. We all felt much better.

This of course should have come as no surprise to me. After all, hiking is a form of exercise, and as an exercise physiologist I know the physical and psychological benefits of exercise. Nevertheless, it felt like a miraculous change in attitude and outlook had occurred in all seven of us.

Living in Southcentral Alaska provides easy access to some of the most amazing hiking locations. Normally, millions of tourists visit Alaska just to have a small taste of what we have in our backyard.

Whether you are new to hiking or have a thousand miles on your boots, there are trails near you to fit your skill level. The AllTrails app is free to download and offers information, ratings, and descriptions of hundreds of nearby trails to hike. Additionally, Alaska.org has information about trails and walks in your area. Of course, there are countless other hiking information resources online, in print, and in person.

If you decide to hike study the route, bring a friend or family member, let somebody know where you're going, bring plenty of water, sufficient food, and be bear aware (*bring bear protection and be aware of your surroundings*). Adequate preparation helps to ensure a safe and enjoyable outing.

Hiking is one of my favorite forms of exercise the whole family can participate in and enjoy. It elevates our heart rates, works our muscles, triggers the release of helpful hormones, and creates happy memories we can carry with us for a lifetime.

Risks of E-cigarettes for Kids, Teens, and Young Adults

RUTHI BLATCHFORD

Recent statistics show more youth are smoking fewer cigarettes and using more electronic cigarettes. Test your knowledge of e-cigarettes and the effects on kids, teens, and young adults with this quiz.

1. Are e-cigarettes a safe alternative for quitting smoking?

Answer: NO. The use of e-cigarettes is unsafe.

2. Are all e-cigarettes nicotine free?

Answer: NO. Most e-cigarettes contain nicotine. Nicotine is highly addictive and can harm adolescent brain development, which continues into the early to mid-20s. E-cigarettes can contain other harmful substances besides nicotine.

3. Will e-cigarettes keep young people from smoking cigarettes later?

Answer: NO. Young people who use e-cigarettes may be more likely to smoke cigarettes in the future.

4. Are e-cigarettes easy to spot?

Answer: NO. E-cigarettes come in many shapes and sizes. Most have a battery, a heating element, and a place to hold a liquid. Some e-cigarettes look like regular cigarettes, cigars, or pipes. Some look like USB flash drives, pens, and other everyday items. Larger devices such as tank systems or mods, do not look like other tobacco products.

For more information visit: https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/bam/e-cigarettes_quick_facts.htm



Be a Warrior for Future Generations and Quit Tobacco Today

ANCHORAGE HEALTH EDUCATION

Quitting tobacco is a difficult journey with many struggles and rewards. This journey tells the story for future generations of a warrior living a tobacco-free life. The journey to become tobacco-free models a healthy lifestyle for the home, community, and future generations who can be inspired to also live a tobacco-free life.

The best time to quit tobacco is now. Even though the negative effects from tobacco use may not be apparent right now, over time the effects of tobacco use slowly build up. Quitting tobacco improves your health and reduces your risk of heart disease, cancer, lung disease, and other smoking-related illnesses.

After quitting, the body does an amazing job repairing the damage caused by nicotine products. Day one after quitting the level of carbon monoxide in your blood drops; one to nine months after quitting, shortness of breath will decrease; and one to five years after quitting, your previous risk of coronary heart disease becomes half that of a smoker.

Southcentral Foundation offers a Quit Tobacco Program with one-on-one counseling, follow-up support, and access to nicotine replacement therapy for Alaska Native and American Indian people. Tobacco treatment specialists can provide you with the necessary tools and support to help you be successful in your tobacco cessation journey.

Be a warrior for future generations and quit tobacco today. Call your primary care team for a referral to the Quit Tobacco Program.

SCF Quit Tobacco Program:

Anchorage | Health Education | (907) 729-2689

Mat-Su Borough | *Benteh Nuutah* Valley Native Primary Care Wellness Center | (907) 631-7630



Rainbow Paper Craft

NICOLE NORDSTROM

Materials:

- Construction paper, various colors
- Cotton balls
- Scissors
- Template attached (optional)
- Glue

Instructions:

1. Use the attached template or draw your own rainbow on a piece of construction paper. The template rainbow has space for three colors, but you can draw however many lanes you would like for your rainbow. The more lanes, the more color in your rainbow.
2. Cut different colored construction paper into small strips, about 1/2 inch wide. Then cut the strips into small squares.
3. Glue the squares on the rainbow. Be as creative as you want! Have each lane be a single color or mix and match.
4. If you have cotton balls available, fluff up the cotton balls, and then glue them on the clouds.
5. Ta-da, your rainbow paper craft is complete!

Source: www.livewellplaytogether.com/



