



## Balanced Fitness

active aging



activities into your daily or weekly exercise routine, is one way to achieve a balanced, well-rounded, active life. These activities promote:

- **Endurance**—through walking, jogging, and swimming for aerobic conditioning
- **Strength**—through resistance training for increased independence and decreased risk of injury or falls
- **Flexibility**—through stretching for a reduced risk of injury due to stiff muscles
- **Balance**—through activities that have us up on our feet to reduce the risk of falls

The benefits of cross-training include the following:

**Improved cardiovascular fitness:** Most of us can only do a particular activity for so long before our muscles start to complain. By combining a walk or jog with a swim or a gentle bike ride, you can continue your cardiovascular workout while “resting” the muscles you started using in your walk or jog.

**Injury prevention:** By cross-training, you spread the physical stress of exercise over a greater area of your body; therefore, you are less likely to overwork any single joint or muscle. For example,

A balanced fitness program becomes even more important as we get older. The risk of injury increases with age, and the time it takes to recover lengthens with age. Cross-training, or the combination of several

combining walking with cycling helps develop balance between the muscles in the front of your legs and the muscles in the back of your legs.

**Increased variety:** Variety is the “spice of life”! Cross-training helps decrease boredom or burnout when working out. The weather may help you with your decision to cross-train; if it’s too cold outside for a walk, why not use an indoor pool or do some light weight-lifting? Indoor cycling is very popular and a great way to get your legs strengthened and your heart pumping.

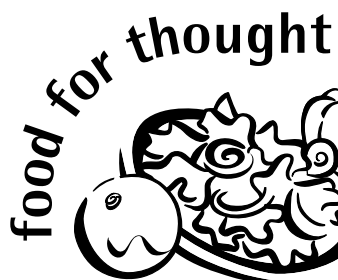
**Total body fitness:** No single sport or activity will provide a total body workout, so you can understand how important cross-training becomes when you consider your optimal health and improved fitness goals. For example, walking or jogging is great for your legs and your cardiovascular system, but doesn’t do much for the arms. Swimming is great for your upper body, but doesn’t offer as much for the lower body. If you put both of these activities together, you are working all the body’s major muscle groups!

The important thing to remember when incorporating cross-training into your fitness regime is to have fun, do what you like, and listen to your body. Allow yourself at least 10 minutes to warm up when you begin your workout and then simply enjoy! Not only will your body reap the benefits of moving, but your mind will, as well.

*By Lisa Marie Gibson, Ohio State University Extension, Franklin County. Source: Paffenbarger, Ralph S. Jr., MD and Olsen, Eric (1996). Lifefit: An Effective Exercise Program for Optimal Health and a Longer Life. Human Kinetics.*

# Preventing Foodborne Illness

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"You can't judge a book by its cover" applies to food safety too. You can't always tell if a food is safe to eat by the way it looks or smells. Following some safe food handling principles may help you prevent foodborne illness—commonly called food poisoning.

There are four basic rules to remember:

- 1. Keep it clean.** Wash hands and surfaces often. Always wash hands before handling food and keep everything that comes in contact with the food clean. Wash your hands often, and whenever you sneeze, touch your face, or use the bathroom. A twenty second handwashing with hot soapy water is recommended. If you aren't sure how long twenty seconds is, try singing a verse of "Happy Birthday"; that's about twenty seconds.
- 2. Prevent cross-contamination.** Keep raw foods (such as vegetables for salads) separate from foods that will be cooked. For example, never cut raw meat on a cutting board that is used for a salad unless you wash, rinse, and sanitize between each task.
- 3. Cook foods to the proper temperature.** Check with your county Extension office for proper cooking temperatures for meat, poultry, and fish. Use a meat thermometer to check temperatures. Reheat leftover foods to at least 165°F or until they come to a full rolling boil.
- 4. Refrigerate promptly.** Store leftovers promptly in shallow containers and do not stack the containers. This allows the air to circulate and prevents spoilage.

Remember the two-hour rule. Food should not remain at room temperature for longer than two hours and no longer than one hour if the temperature is above 90 degrees.

News this past summer has included several outbreaks of foodborne illness. Remember the guidelines: keep it clean, avoid cross-contamination, cook thoroughly, and refrigerate promptly to keep your food safe.

*By Cindy Oliveri, Center Specialist, Nutrition, Ohio State University Extension. Reference: "Foodborne Illness: Guess Who Came to Dinner?" Ohio State University Extension Fact Sheet HYG-5570-98.*



## The Gifts of Caregiving: Stories of Hardship, Hope and Healing

by Connie Goldman  
(2002, Fairview Press)

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Of all the descriptors one might use in connection with the word "caregiving," "gifts" is probably not one that comes to mind. Yet Connie Goldman's book of remarkable stories by a diverse group of more than thirty family caregivers connects those two words in a powerful way.

The genesis of this book was "Hardship into Hope: The Rewards of Caregiving," a one-hour public radio program, hosted by Goldman, consisting of a series of interviews with family caregivers. Urged by listeners to write a book based on the broadcast, Goldman began to interview several additional caregivers, some well known and some not. Her efforts have resulted in a collection of stories not only of hardship, hope, and healing but of courage, compassion, and love as well.

Readers of this book are "gifted" not only with a CD of the original one-hour broadcast of "Hardship into Hope: The Rewards of Caregiving," but also with an appreciation for the gift that is caregiving.

*By Judy Hardy, Ohio Department of Aging.*

# Meet Kate



Kate grew up as an affluent adopted child with two adopted siblings in the Berkshire Mountains, living "the good life" on a horse farm, showing and competing with her horses. Kate truly loved her adoptive parents and never searched for her birth parents, simply assuming that if they let her go there must have been a "reasonable" explanation.

After marrying, Kate and her husband moved to Ohio, refurbished a home overlooking their small town, and had two sons. She also adopted a variety of pets.

Kate was involved with various causes, and her love of animals drew her to the Humane Society. She proceeded to address issues facing thousands of unwanted animals, eventually becoming the board's president, which is how we met and became good friends. Kate worked hard for causes she believed in and recruited anyone who would help. She placed "blessings on your head" for any help you could give the little critters.

Approaching her 61st birthday, she experienced health problems that were undiagnosed for several months. The final diagnosis was Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease, which is a rare affliction that

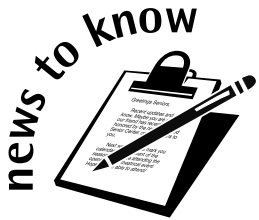
causes rapid mental deterioration and impairs movement.

At the nursing home, we talked about her favorite things, but her spunk faded fast. Soon she didn't know me anymore. I missed her already and she wasn't even gone yet!

Kate led an interesting, fulfilled life, and thoroughly enjoyed her family and friends. I think of her often, wishing I had known her longer, but thankful just to have known her at all. She was honest, outspoken, determined, and a great friend!

*By Deborah Weber, Community Services Coordinator, Ohio District 5 Area Agency on Aging, Mansfield.*

## Can Over-the-Counter Medications Be Harmful?



If you think medications that do not require a doctor's prescription cannot be harmful, think again. Over-the-counter (OTC) medications can create problems if used improperly or at the same time as some prescription medications.

**OTC medications can change the effect of prescribed medications.** OTC medications can make the effects of your prescription medications stronger or less effective. Be sure to ask your doctor or pharmacist before taking any OTC medication at the same time as a prescribed medication.

**OTC medications can mask symptoms of disease.** OTC medications, especially when taken regularly, can reduce or completely mask symptoms that warn of a more serious medical problem. For example, antacids taken for "upset stomach" may cover symptoms of ulcer disease.

**OTC medications can be harmful.** If misused, even common OTC medications, such as aspirin, vitamins, or cold remedies can be harmful. For example, the habitual use of laxatives and enemas can lead to loss of normal bowel function. Another example is the use of antacids, which may produce magnesium toxicity in patients with renal (kidney) problems or may contribute sodium to the diet.

Because of these concerns, it is important to be as informed about the medications you take as you are about other products you purchase. Whenever using over-the-counter medication, be sure to ask your doctor or pharmacist about any possible drug interactions, always read all drug labels carefully, and only take the directed dosage.

Avoid unnecessary medical problems—give over-the-counter medications the same care and respect you give to prescription medications.

*From: "Prescription and Over-the-Counter (OTC) Medications," SS-134-97-R02, <http://ohioline.osu.edu/ss-fact/pdf/0134.pdf>*

# Quality Time with the Grandchildren

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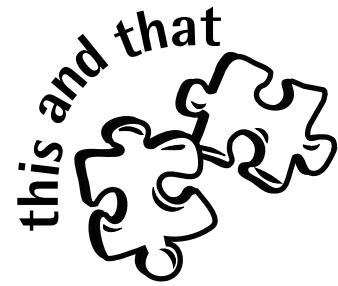


Whether you see your grandchild(ren) every day or only a few times a year, the time you spend together is precious. Sometimes your conversations may feel forced or shallow. If you think there is some room for improvement, here are some do's and don'ts that can help you

achieve a closer relationship through better conversations. During the next visit with your grandchild(ren) think about the following suggestions.

- DO take time to be alone with each grandchild. Establish individual relationships to learn what makes each child unique. Getting alone time with you can also make each grandchild feel special.
- DO give your full attention. Let your grandchild know how important they are by making direct eye contact with them, turning off the television, and turning on the answering machine. Reduce as many outside distractions as you can.
- DO NOT dominate every conversation. Spend most of your time listening to your grandchild instead of talking, giving directions, or correcting their behavior. While grandchildren should not run wild, they should have the freedom to be themselves and talk about things that are important to them.
- DO try to be available to them when they want to talk to you. If you cannot be available, agree on a time you can be together again very soon and be sure to make that happen.
- DO NOT always have a hurried activity planned or one that takes you away from home. Sometimes just taking a walk, baking cookies, or working in the wood shop together can turn into very special memories.
- DO ask older grandchildren how they are feeling or ask their opinion about something. By listening carefully to what they say you will be learning about the adults they are becoming. These conversations may also give you a chance to share your own thoughts and feelings about important topics and may help them to learn more about you.
- DO NOT always be in the role of teacher. Instead, ask your grandchild to teach you something, for example, how to use the computer or what to look for in a skateboard competition. You can give your grandchild a chance to feel useful and grown up at the same time you learn something new yourself!

By Christine A. Price, Ph.D., State Gerontology Specialist and Assistant Professor, Ohio State University Extension. Reference: Kettmann, S.M. (2000). *The 12 Rules of Grandparenting: A New Look at Traditional Roles and How to Break Them*. NY: Facts on File Inc.



## Thanksgiving Every Day

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Thanksgiving is more than a holiday—it's a state of mind. Our attitudes often affect the way we feel and act. Every day we choose how we will face the world—and how it sees us.

Sam Quick, Human Development and Family Relations Specialist at the University of Kentucky, says that the spirit of thanksgiving has three levels:

- Being grateful for the good things that happen to us.
- Being grateful for the things we usually take for granted. The fewer things we take for granted (health, friends, family, freedom) the more we notice the good in our lives.
- Keeping a positive, grateful attitude when dealing with problems. Being thankful doesn't mean that we ignore problems. We simply refuse to let those problems control our lives. Thankfulness means that we choose to look for the bright side of every situation.

Life is just better when we're thankful!

By Joyce J. Brown, Extension Educator, Family and Consumer Sciences, Ohio State University Extension, Athens County. Reference: Quick, S. (2003). "Thanksgiving: An Annual Celebration, A Daily Habit." In A. Lesueur and P. Hesseldenz (Eds.), *Holiday Survival Guide 2003*. Lexington: Kentucky Cooperative Extension. Available on-line at <http://www.ca.uky.edu/agcollege/fcs/holiday2003/Thanksgiving---AnAnnualCelebrationADailyHabit.htm>.

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