

# WELCOME WARMER WEATHER!

*Bi-monthly Family Consumer Sciences (FCS) Newsletter  
by Sarah Bock at the Fergus County Extension Office*



## Get Fit for Summer!

In honor of National Fitness Day on May 6th, let's talk about some ways we can get moving this spring and summer. Every time you move your body you are improving and making yourself better. Don't be discouraged and just keep moving!

- **Walking** - While this is a very simple form of movement, it can do wonders for your body and health. Walking for 2 1/2 hours a week (just 21 minutes a day) can reduce your risk of heart disease by 30%!
- **Gardening** - Do you have any yard work to do or a garden to take care of? If not, this can be a great way to get you outside and moving in the summer. Getting up and down, pulling weeds and hoeing are all good sources of movement.
- **Swimming** - Check out the hours at the local pool for swimming. Swimming will help get your heart rate up and is low-impact, protecting your joints.
- **Strength Training** - It is very important to incorporate strength training into your weekly routine to prevent muscle loss and improve strength and balance. Exercising with weights can make a huge difference if done twice a week.
- **Stretching or Yoga** - Try stretching for just a few minutes each day focusing on major muscle groups such as your thighs, hips, lower back, neck, and shoulders. Improving flexibility can increase muscle blood flow and decrease your risk of injuries.

## Upcoming Events and Classes:

### **Mondays and Fridays at 9 AM: Strong People Strength Training Class**

Everyone is welcome to the Strong People class that is held twice a week at the Council on Aging. Contact Sarah with any questions.

### **May 25th: Servsafe Manager Class**

Please see page 3 for more information.

### **June 20th: Fergus County Local Advisory Council (FCLAC) Listening Session**

Please join the FCLAC and let us know what your experience with mental health services in Fergus County has been. Location TBA. Contact Sarah with questions or check out the FCLAC Facebook Page.

# Let's Talk Food - Fun Tips for the Kitchen

## Food Tips of the Month

1. Use cookie cutters as a pancake mold to make fun-shaped pancakes.
2. Shred meat such as pork, beef, or chicken with a stand or hand mixer.
3. Peel garlic by shaking it in a jar.
4. Instant potatoes can help thicken a soup quickly.
5. Use an egg slicer when cutting vegetables or fruits for a salad to make all of the pieces look uniform.
6. The ratio for vinaigrette is 3 parts oil to 1 part vinegar. Then add any spices or extras to create your own flavor.
7. If your pasta sauce seems dry or is too thick, add a few tablespoons of reserved pasta cooking water.
8. It is easier to thinly slice meat if it is partially frozen.
9. When baking in a glass pan, reduce the oven temperature by 25 degrees.
10. Add a piece of bread to your brown sugar container to keep the sugar soft.



MAY/JUNE 2023

# SERVSAFE FOOD MANAGER CERTIFICATION



**TIME: May 25th  
9:00 AM - 5:00 PM**

**COST: \$125 -  
Please make  
checks payable to  
Fergus County  
Extension**

**LOCATION: First  
Christian Church,  
Lewistown**

Email  
[sarah.bock@montana.edu](mailto:sarah.bock@montana.edu)  
or call 406-535-3919 to  
register



# Recipe of the Month: Honey Sesame Chicken Broccoli

## Ingredients

### The Sauce

- ¼ cup low sodium soy sauce\*
- 2 Tablespoons water
- 1 ½ Tablespoons sesame oil
- 3 Tablespoons honey
- 1 Tablespoon rice vinegar
- 1 teaspoon fresh ginger (finely grated)
- 2 cloves garlic (minced)
- 1 Tablespoon sesame seeds
- 2 teaspoons cornstarch\*

### Chicken and Broccoli

- 2 Tablespoons cornstarch or arrowroot flour
- 2 Tablespoons all-purpose flour
- Salt and pepper
- 1- 1 ½ pounds boneless skinless chicken breast (cut into 1-2-inch pieces)
- 2 Tablespoons olive oil
- 6 cups broccoli florets (about 2 crowns)
- 2 whole green onions (diced)

This recipe was found on Fixed on Fresh Website.

## Directions

1. **STEAM THE BROCCOLI:** Fill a large pot with 2-3 inches of water and then add the broccoli along with 1 teaspoon of salt (use a steamer basket if you have one, but it's not necessary). Cover and bring to a simmer. Reduce the heat as low as you can and cook for 6 minutes or until the broccoli is tender-crisp. Drain the broccoli in a colander and rinse with cold water.
2. **PREPARE THE SAUCE:** In a small bowl stir together the soy sauce, water, oil, honey, rice vinegar, ginger, minced garlic, cornstarch, and sesame seeds. Set the sauce aside.
3. **PREPARE THE CHICKEN:** Place the chicken pieces in a large plastic zipper bag. In a small bowl, whisk together the cornstarch, flour, ½ teaspoon of salt, and ¼ teaspoon of pepper. Sprinkle the cornstarch mixture onto the chicken. Seal the bag and then toss to evenly coat all of the pieces.
4. **COOK THE CHICKEN:** Heat the oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Once the oil is hot (should be shimmering and thin, but not smoking), place the chicken pieces in a single layer across the bottom of the skillet. Allow the chicken to cook without touching them for 2-3 minutes or until golden. Flip the chicken to cook all the remaining sides of each piece until they are all golden all around and the chicken is fully cooked (no pink in the center).
5. **COOK THE SAUCE:** Once the chicken is cooked through and golden brown on all sides, pour the prepared sauce over top with the oven on medium-low heat. Toss the chicken to coat in the sauce and bring the sauce to a simmer. Stir the chicken in the sauce until it has thickened, then remove the pan from the heat.
6. **TOSS CHICKEN AND BROCCOLI TOGETHER:** If you have room in your skillet, add the broccoli to the chicken mixture in the skillet and gently fold to evenly incorporate. If you don't have enough room, do this in a separate bowl or pot. Sprinkle with chopped green onions and serve warm.



# Positive Communication: Why It Is Important and Techniques to Try

Positive communication is not only the lack of negative interactions or feelings from a conversation but the presence of positive emotions and conversation which includes verbal and non-verbal interactions. A lack of positive communication in a relationship, whether personal or professional, can lead to miscommunication, lack of trust, hurt feelings, or a general feeling of being distant or unheard by those you communicate with. Positive communication leads to more positive relationships and research shows that those with closer relationships are happier, healthier, and live longer overall compared to those that have more negative relationships.

While it is clear that maintaining positive relationships through good communication is important, it is also not always easy. Here are some ways you can be mindful when communicating and making space for a positive conversation. Listening is a very important piece of positive communication. It is not just looking like you are listening, but truly paying attention fully and making the other person feel confident you are hearing them. To do this, make eye contact with the person while they are talking and get rid of any distractions such as your phone or a TV. Avoid interrupting them while they are speaking and allow them some silence in between sentences to gather their thoughts so you are sure they are done talking.

If you are having a conversation with an individual about something you do not agree on, you can still maintain positive communication if you practice positive communication and are intentional in every conversation. While still using the same skills mentioned above, try to find something you agree on. Even if it is something very small, it can make a huge difference to find something you align on rather than just discussing what you don't agree on. It is also important when having a disagreement to still validate the other person's feelings even if you do not understand why they are feeling that way or do not agree. Showing that you recognize they are upset and that you care about them is crucial. Lastly, if you know the conversation may be argumentative, meet in a neutral place. For example, do not meet in a place where one of you has more power over the other, such as your own office or home. Try getting together at a coffee shop or somewhere where you can be on the same level in a respectful environment.



# MAY

## National Mental Health Month and Better Sleep Month

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5 Strong People - 9 AM at COA	6 National Fitness Day
7	8 Strong People - 9 AM at COA	9	10	11 Children's Mental Health Awareness Day	12 Strong People - 9 AM at COA	13 International Hummus Day
14 Happy Mother's Day!	15 Strong People - 9 AM at COA	16	17	18	19 Strong People - 9 AM at COA	20
21	22 Strong People - 9 AM at COA	23	24	25 Servsafe Class at 8:30 AM	26 Strong People - 9 AM at COA	27
28	29 Happy Memorial Day!	30	31			

# JUNE

## Alzheimer's and Brain Awareness Month

Sunday      Monday      Tuesday      Wednesday      Thursday      Friday      Saturday

				1 Rescheduled Sip N Paint at the Library	2 Strong People - 9 AM at COA	3
4	5 Strong People - 9 AM at COA	6	7	8	9 Strong People - 9 AM at COA	10 Family Health and Fitness Day
11	12 Strong People - 9 AM at COA	13	14	15	16 Strong People - 9 AM at COA	17 National Eat Your Vegetables Day
18 Happy Father's Day!	19 Strong People - 9 AM at COA	20 Local Advisory Council Listening Session	21	22	23 Strong People - 9 AM at COA	24
25	26 Strong People - 9 AM at COA	27	28	29	30 Strong People - 9 AM at COA	