



# Family and Consumer Sciences Newsletter

## Greetings From your FCS Agent

**UK** Cooperative  
Extension Service

Carter County  
Jan/Feb 2025

I hope this newsletter finds you well and your holidays were filled with joy. The craft fair was a success, thanks to Sue Tackett and all of the committee. Close to 400 people came to shop! I would like to also thank Sue for her help with the Bake-Off at Hometown Holidays. We auctioned off the items as a 4-H camp scholarship fundraiser. Missy Owens got 1st place, Sara-Jo Baer got 2nd, and Rose Mary Fannin got 3rd! Congrats to each of you!

I presented part 2 of the Pathways to Wellness program to our new Interagency Coalition. We've been having a great turn out at these meetings. Our next one is March 18th if you would like to mark your calendar.

I'm starting off the new year, partnering with ECHS and offering the 5 lesson series, Savor the Flavor, to high school students. I'm so excited about it and I hope to offer it to the public once the new teaching kitchen is complete. I'll also be teaching "Getting Out of a Mealtime Rut" to parents at both Prichard and Olive Hill. Those programs along with Laugh and Learn will take up most of January.

In February I will be traveling to the other end of the state to be a part of an Extension County review team. I will also be hosting all of the east region FCS agents in Carter County for our yearly in-service week. I usually like to slow down the first of the year to get caught up on things in the office, but this January and February are going to be anything but slow!

We will also be busy moving and organizing supplies to get the new building ready! Our new office addition is FINALLY almost complete and I hope by the time you are reading this, we will be using it for our meetings and programs!

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# Mark your Calendars

- January 14th- District Board 10am
- January 17th-Laugh and Learn Olive Hill 10am
- January 24th-Laugh and Learn Grayson 10am
- January 25-Barn Quilt Class registration closed
- February 14th- Laugh and Learn Olive Hill
- February 25th-Homemaker Council 10am
- February 26th-Leader Lesson Training
- February 28th-Laugh and Learn Grayson

\*\*\*We will follow Carter County School's schedule in regards to cancellations. If school is cancelled, FCS programs will be cancelled as well.



# Homemaker News

- We still have pecans left over from the craft fair! If you know anyone that needs them, please send them to the office!
- Thanks to everyone who sold pecans! Carter Caves Club sold the most!
- We have 226 members! We have eleven clubs this year. Great job on recruitment!
- If you are a county chairman or club president it is really important that you attend the council meetings. The next meeting is February 25th. If you aren't able to attend, please make sure you contact Whitney to get any necessary information.
- If your club has a checking account and hasn't yet completed your audit, please bring your financial statements, budget, and report to the February council meeting for the audit committee to approve!
- Homemaker state (KEHA) awards are due in March. All county chairmen have award information in their packets. I would like for each chairman to complete the application if it's an award we qualify for. Please contact Whitney for questions!
- Special Thanks to Denton Willard, Gregoryville, and Lindsey Pactolus for your donations of pumpkin and cake mix for food baskets!
- I have Roberts Rules in Brief books for all clubs. You can stop by and pick one up or I will have them at the February council meeting.
- The leader lesson training on February 27th includes the lessons for March, April, and May. Someone from each club should attend. Materials will be given out that day. You must register by the deadline to attend!
- Let me know if you have any questions! I'm always a phone call away!



Spring 2025

# HOMEMAKER

## LEADER LESSON TRAINING

February 27, 2025

10am-2pm

Carter County Extension Office

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Using your Airfryer  
How to Get Out of a Mealtime Rut  
Inspiring Grandchildren to become Grand Cooks

Call to register by  
February 17th  
Registration is \$10  
Lunch is included  
**606-474-6686**



# Indoor Air Quality:

## Sources and Effects on Our Health



### Hardin Stevens

Senior Extension Associate  
Family and Consumer Sciences Extension

The EPA estimates that we spend 90% of our time indoors, in homes, schools, workplaces, places of worship, or gyms. Research shows that indoor air pollution is increasing. Our air quality is affected by chemicals, gases, and particles from products used or naturally found inside buildings, inadequate ventilation, and moisture and humidity problems. The home is the most likely place you are exposed to indoor air pollution.

Developing an understanding of indoor air quality (IAQ) and identifying factors that impact the air you breathe while indoors will empower you to make decisions about how you can improve your indoor home environment.

### What do you think of when you hear the term “air quality”?

Many people think of outdoor air pollution such as smog, smoke, and vehicle exhaust. But what about indoor air quality?

According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), “Indoor Air Quality refers to the air quality within and around buildings and structures, especially as it relates to the health and comfort of building occupants.”



### Indoor Air Quality Problems

The main causes of indoor air quality problems are contaminants that release gases or particles into the air:

- Tobacco products and secondhand smoke,
- Radon,
- Burning wood,
- Mold,
- Dust, pet dander, and hair,
- Volatile organic compounds (VOC) found in household cleaners, dry cleaning, hobby supplies, etc., and
- Pesticides.

Household items that may impact your indoor air quality:

- Heating and cooling systems, air conditioning units, gasoline-powered heaters, and other appliances,
- Fireplaces and woodstoves,
- Cooking appliances, and
- Building materials and furnishings.

## Impacts of Poor Air Quality on Health

Indoor air pollution can cause symptoms such as irritation of the eyes, nose, and throat, headaches, dizziness, and fatigue. It might also cause, aggravate, or worsen asthma and allergies. It can also make it more difficult to fight off infections. Air pollution can also cause long-term health problems such as respiratory diseases, heart disease, and cancer.

## How Can We Improve Indoor Air Quality?

To improve or avoid any health symptoms, work to improve your indoor air quality. Controlling the source of pollution is the most efficient way to do that. An easy way to do this is to make sure your home has proper ventilation. Increasing the amount of air that exchanges between inside and outside will keep your air cleaner.

Here are some ways to make sure your home gets proper ventilation:

- Open windows and doors (weather permitting). Keep

windows and doors closed when outdoor air quality is an issue (wildfires, other health hazards, etc.).

- Use window and attic fans (weather permitting).
- Use bathroom and kitchen fans, especially if they are vented outside.
- Consider an air cleaner. They come in different types and sizes ranging from tabletop models to whole-house systems. Do some research to see if one is right for you.



To keep the air inside your home or office cleaner:

- Vacuum and dust often.
- Wash bedding regularly.
- Do not allow anyone to smoke or vape indoors. Adopt a smoke-free home and car. Ask people who use tobacco to go outside at least 20 feet from entryways, windows, and vents.
- Safely store chemicals away from children and pets.
- When taking a shower, use a ventilation fan.
- Dry any damp surfaces.
- Maintain and ventilate appliances and heating or cooling units. Change your air filters regularly especially in times of outdoor smoke events (e.g., wildfires).
- Use nonchemical products when possible.
- Seal all cracks in basements.
- Test for radon every two years. If your radon number is at or above 4.0 pCi/L, contact a certified radon measurement and mitigation professional to lower exposure to radon.

New home designs are adding features to bring outdoor air through the HVAC system.

## Do House Plants Improve Air Quality?

There is no direct evidence that having houseplants cleans indoor air. In fact, houseplants may contribute to indoor air pollution by releasing VOCs into the air. Additionally, the plant's soil may have bacteria, pesticides, or other contaminants. Overwatering plants can cause microorganisms to grow, which can affect people with allergies.

There is no way to totally rid your indoor air of pollutants, but by following these steps, you can reduce potential exposure to these risks.

Improving indoor air quality requires an understanding of what contaminants are affecting the air you breathe in your home. Once you have identified the contaminant source, take appropriate action to eliminate or mitigate the source. Sometimes, improving air quality is as simple as opening windows or doors. Sometimes, you need expert assistance to effectively improve the air quality.

### Sources:

Referenced 6/6/23

[https://www.epa.gov/indoor-air-quality-iaq/introduction-indoor-air-quality#:~:text=Indoor%20Air%20Quality%20\(IAQ\)%20refers,a nd%20comfort%20of%20building%20occupants.](https://www.epa.gov/indoor-air-quality-iaq/introduction-indoor-air-quality#:~:text=Indoor%20Air%20Quality%20(IAQ)%20refers,a nd%20comfort%20of%20building%20occupants.)

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<https://www.epa.gov/indoor-air-quality-iaq/improving-your-indoor-environment>

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ADULTS



# What's your move?

You know you need physical activity to stay healthy.  
But did you know it can help you feel better right away?



Boost your mood



Sharpen your focus



Reduce your stress



Improve your sleep

**So get more active — and start feeling better today.**

## How much activity do I need?

### Moderate-intensity aerobic activity

Anything that gets your heart beating faster counts.



Tight on time this week? **Start with just 5 minutes.** It all adds up!

Or get the same benefits in half the time. If you step it up to **vigorous-intensity** aerobic activity, aim for at least **75 minutes** a week.



## Is it moderate or vigorous? Use the “talk test” to find out.

When you're being active, just try talking:

- If you're breathing hard but can still have a conversation easily, it's **moderate-intensity activity**
- If you can only say a few words before you have to take a breath, it's **vigorous-intensity activity**

## What counts?

Whatever gets you moving!



Even things you have to do anyway



Even things that don't feel like exercise

## You can get more active.

No matter who you are, where you live, on your own, or together. You can find a way that works for you.



And over time, physical activity can help you live a longer, healthier life.

- ✓ Lower your risk of diseases like type 2 diabetes and some cancers
- ✓ Control your blood pressure
- ✓ Stay at a healthy weight

So take the first step. Get a little more active each day. **Move your way.**

Find tips to get moving and build a weekly activity plan.

[health.gov/MoveYourWay/Activity-Planner](https://health.gov/MoveYourWay/Activity-Planner)





**OLDER ADULTS**

# What's your move?

## Physical activity can make daily life better.

When you're active and strong, it's easier to:



Do everyday tasks, like chores and shopping



Keep up with the grandkids



Stay independent as you get older

And it has big health benefits, too.

✓ Less pain

✓ Better mood

✓ Lower risk of many diseases

## How much activity do I need?

### Moderate-intensity aerobic activity

Anything that gets your heart beating faster counts.

at least  
**150**  
minutes  
a week

AND

at least  
**2**  
days  
a week



Break it up over the whole week however you want!

## Physical activity can help manage many health problems.

✓ Reduce symptoms of arthritis, anxiety, and depression

✓ Help keep diabetes and high blood pressure under control

### Just getting started?

No problem — start slow and do what you can. **Even a 5-minute walk has real health benefits.** Build up to more activity over time.

**Mix in stretches and activities to improve your balance, too!** Keep your body flexible and help lower your risk of falls.

### And all sorts of activities count.



Even things you have to do anyway



Even things that don't feel like exercise

### You can get more active.

No matter your age, you can **find a way that works for you.**



So take the first step. Get a little more active each day.

**Move your way.**

Find tips to get moving and build a weekly activity plan.

[health.gov/MoveYourWay/Activity-Planner](https://health.gov/MoveYourWay/Activity-Planner)





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