

September 2024 EDITION

Monthly Russell County FCS Newsletter

Homesteading: The Extension Way to Self-Sufficiency



This August, Megan Gullett, FCS Agent, Jonathan Oakes, ANR Agent, and Sarah Beard, ANR Assistant, offered a homesteading series to punctuate easy ways to help you and your home become more self-sufficient. The series provided classes on making breakfast sausage, sourdough, rain barrels, and herb gardens, as well as how to preserve meat through pressure canning. If you are interested in information from these programs, please call 270-866-4477 or visit our website at russell.ext@uky.edu.

The University of Kentucky Talking FACS Series



The University of Kentucky has a podcast series that provides important information on all things family, food, finance, and fitness. You can listen to Talking FACS on any streaming service, or online here: <https://ukfcsext.podbean.com/>.

Natural Disasters and Vulnerable Populations

Source: Amy Kostelic, associate Extension professor adult development and aging

September is natural disaster preparedness month. Did you know that older adults and people with disabilities have the highest rate of disaster-related deaths and are at higher risk during all phases of disasters? This is because frail older adults and people living with various disabilities can face unique challenges. They might need to deal with various medical conditions, medication management, using special mobility or medical equipment, cognitive impairment, and developmental delays. Their needs do not go away in a state of emergency, and they may need some extra consideration, including early evacuation.

Do not wait until the last minute to plan or prepare for a disaster. Instead, consider an individual's specific need and make a plan and a backup plan that includes communication and a point person(s). Learn what resources in your community cater to at-risk populations. For example, check to see what agencies will offer shelters that support medical care. Make copies of important documents, including prescriptions, health and property insurance, information on mobility and medical equipment. Create a list for emergency contacts.

Stock a kit with basic supplies in addition to emergency medical supplies: extra medication, backup mobility equipment and power sources, whistle, radio, flashlight, food and water, blanket, shoes, and extra glasses and batteries for hearing aids. Be sure the person can access or carry the kit (you might consider a backpack versus a tote).

When recovering from a disaster, look for signs of injury, infection, and dehydration. Be able to recognize the signs of stress such as changes in emotions and behavior, increased confusion and/or fear. Be conscious of how the disaster may displace someone and leave them vulnerable, socially isolated, and lonely. Familiarize yourself with recovery assistance to help with post-disaster needs.

For more information, visit the National Institute on Aging resource page, <https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/safety/disaster-preparedness-and-recovery-older-adults>, or call your local county Extension agent for more information specific to your community.

References: NIH. (2022). Disaster Preparedness and Recovery for Older Adults.

<https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/safety/disaster-preparedness-and-recovery-older-adults>

U of KY FCS Extension. In the Face of Disaster Toolkit. (2023).

Upcoming Workshops

- September 10th: Preserve It: Dehydration Basics @ 12 PM
- September 16th: Cooking the Calendar: Ramen Skiller Dinner @ 5 PM
- August 23rd: Self-Care & Pampering @ 4 PM
- September 30th: Beginner Crochet @ 10 AM
- September 30th: Beginner Crochet @ 5 PM

For all workshops, please call 270-866-4477 to RSVP

RSVPING ALLOWS THE AGENT TO BETTER PLAN
FOR YOUR ATTENDANCE

You can also find these events on our Facebook
Page.

[FACEBOOK](#)

Office: 270-866-4477 OR Email: russell.ext@uky.edu

WEBSITE: RUSSELL.CA.UKY.EDU

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University of Kentucky, Kentucky State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and Kentucky Counties, Cooperating.
Lexington, KY 40506



Disabilities
accommodated
with prior notification.

Life with Alpha-Gal Red Meat Allergy

Heather Norman-Burgdolf, Extension Specialist for Food and Nutrition and Jonathan L. Larson,
Extension Specialist for Entomology

Entfact-656

Fast Facts

- Alpha-gal syndrome or red meat allergy is an allergic condition. Those with the condition must forgo eating beef, lamb, pork, and wild game. Sufferers can still eat poultry, seafood, eggs, and plant-based sources of protein.
- Symptoms can include gastrointestinal issue such as nausea, indigestion, and diarrhea and other allergic symptoms such as cough, hives, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, and swelling of the eyes/tongue/lips/throat, amongst others.
- Alpha-gal is currently only known to be spread by the lone star tick, which is also the most commonly encountered species of tick in Kentucky.
- Not every lone star tick bite will result in the red meat allergy. Allergic symptoms can appear 3-6 hours after eating red meat and sufferers will need to consult with a physician or allergist for diagnosis and management.

How do you get red meat allergy?

Current data suggests that alpha-gal syndrome is spread by bites from lone star ticks. No other tick has been associated with this issue in the state. Lone star ticks feed on other animals, possibly ending up with the alpha-gal sugar molecule in their mouth/saliva. When they feed on a human, they may accidentally “inject” the molecule into the bloodstream.

Humans do not have alpha-gal in our blood. Therefore, when a tick passes it to a person, the body may mount an immune response to this “foreign invader”. Unfortunately, alpha-gal is present in the red meat humans eat (even after cooking) and if the body encounters alpha-gal in the stomach after development of alpha-gal syndrome, it may engage the same immune response.

Not every bite from a lone star tick will result in alpha-gal syndrome. This could be due to the tick or to the immune response of the person who was bitten. It is more likely that red meat allergy is associated with adult and nymphal ticks than with larval ticks (aka seed ticks).



Figure 1: Adult female lone star ticks have a white dot on their back. Immatures lack the dot but are “rounder” than other tick species. Photos by Jim Kalisch, UNL Entomology

What symptoms might you notice?

As with other allergic reactions, alpha-gal syndrome can cause symptoms such as skin irritations, hives, gut issues, and breathing problems. The severity of the condition is different for everyone. Unlike the typical food allergy, a person with alpha-gal syndrome may have a delayed allergic reaction anywhere between three and six hours after ingesting meat or other products that come from mammals. This may make it difficult to diagnose.

What lifestyle changes will be made?

There is no known treatment for alpha-gal syndrome. Instead, lifestyle changes can be made that help manage and reduce the symptoms. People who have alpha gal must remove beef, pork, and lamb from their diets to avoid allergic reactions. Certain cuts and types of meat have higher amounts of alpha-gal and cause worse reactions. For example, organ meats such as liver, heart, and tripe have higher amounts of alpha-gal.

Other foods often made with ingredients from mammals that may cause reactions include broths, bouillon, stocks, gravy, and other items made with lard or tallow. For those who hunt, be mindful that wild game is also a source of alpha-gal. This includes everything from venison to squirrel.

Several food additives that utilize ingredients from animals may also cause a reaction. These include gelatin, glycerin, magnesium stearate, and bovine extract. As a result, those with alpha-gal syndrome should consider checking the ingredient labels when purchasing products like these.

Some prescribed medications and medical treatments may also cause a reaction. These may include heparin, antivenoms, certain chemotherapy drugs, and even heart valves derived from pigs or cows. Always ask if the prescribed medication or suggested treatment causes a reaction for those living with alpha-gal.

Depending on the severity of the condition, some people may still be able to have dairy. Those with a more serious form of alpha-gal may not be able to tolerate dairy at all.

The symptoms of alpha-gal may decrease over time, particularly if further bites from lone star ticks are prevented. In some cases this has taken 1-2 years. More bites from ticks carrying alpha-gal though could extend the window of symptoms.

What sources of protein are left?

Those living with alpha-gal may have concerns about getting enough protein in their diet. Luckily, there are high-protein foods that do not contain alpha-gal. These foods include:

- Poultry (chicken, turkey, duck, or quail)
- Seafood (fish, shellfish)
- Eggs
- Beans
- Nuts and seeds

Other foods like grains, vegetables, and fruits should still be consumed. As individuals with alpha-gal tend to have different tolerance levels to meat products, dairy, and other animal byproducts, individuals should work with a health care provider, such as a registered dietitian, to find a diet that works for them and meets their personal nutrition needs.

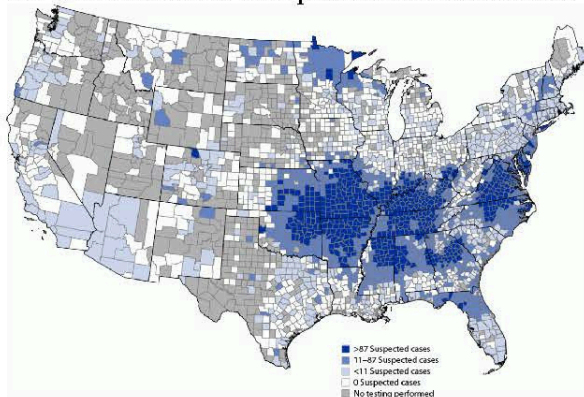


Figure 3: The darker blue areas have higher numbers of alpha-gal cases.

Kentucky and Alpha-gal and Prevention

While still considered “rare” relative to other medical issues in the state, Kentucky is one of the states with the most cases of alpha-gal in the US, according to the CDC.

Wearing repellents while outdoors, such as DEET, picaridin, and oil of lemon eucalyptus can help prevent tick bites. So too can permethrin applied to clothing. Lone star ticks are active as adults and nymphs from March-August and can be found nearly anywhere that is overgrown and weedy as well as along paths.

To learn more about lone star ticks, please read: <https://entomology.ca.uky.edu/ef648>

05/24 (Issued)

MONEYWISE

VALUING PEOPLE. VALUING MONEY.

SEPTEMBER 2024

Nichole Huff, Ph.D., CFLE | Assistant Extension Professor Family Finance and Resource Management | nichole.huff@uky.edu

THIS MONTH'S TOPIC: BUILDING AN EMERGENCY KIT ON A BUDGET

Building an emergency kit doesn't have to cause a disaster for your finances. Build it slowly, starting with essential food and water, and then buy other items as your budget allows. Add an extra item to your shopping lists once or twice a month that you can put in the kit to spread out the costs over time.

EMERGENCY KIT BASICS

There are basic items every kit should have in addition to food and water. Download a comprehensive list at <https://ukfcs.net/DisasterKit>. Tailor the list to meet the needs of your family. Start by checking at home for items you may have on-hand. You may have a manual can opener, flashlight, extra phone chargers, batteries, and matches in the back of kitchen drawers. You can also make your own first-aid kit with items you already have like bandages, antiseptic wipes, medications, tweezers, ointment, etc.

SHOP SALES

Make a list of items you don't have and watch for sales. If you're an online shopper, put pricier items (like a multitool or fireproof document bag) in your online cart to be notified when the price drops. Also, stock up during common sales like Back to School, Black Friday, or other annual holidays. Check



with friends or neighbors to see if they have an interest in building a kit. You may be able to combine lists and buy some items in bulk, lowering the cost for everyone.

A weather radio may also be helpful during inclement weather or power outages. Don't let price be the reason to go without. A weather radio doesn't have to be a top-of-the-line model; one that includes the basics will do. Weather radios can be battery operated or powered by a hand crank or solar panels. Check online for reviews and pricing options before buying.



STOCK UP ON NONPERISHABLE FOOD AND CANNED GOODS WHEN YOUR LOCAL GROCERY STORE IS HAVING A SALE



GRAB DOLLAR DEALS

Stock up on nonperishable food and canned goods when your local grocery store is having a sale. Check weekly ads for deals like “10 for \$10,” or shop the day after a holiday when certain items are marked down or put on clearance. Be mindful when buying canned goods and don’t buy leaking, swollen, or deeply dented cans. Also, it is important to buy things that you and your family enjoy. Don’t buy pinto beans because they are on sale if no one in your family will eat them. Consider buying generic or store brand items for your kit, but don’t skimp on nutrition. Buy nutrient-dense foods that are high in protein. Find examples at <https://ukfcs.net/DisasterMenuIdeas>.

WATER IS ESSENTIAL

Water is a necessity. You should have 1 gallon of water per person per day. If buying bottled water is too expensive, you can bottle your own. Use a food-grade container like a 2-liter

soda bottle. Don’t use containers that once held milk or juice, as these containers have residues that are difficult to remove and could provide an environment for bacterial growth. Wash the bottle and cap thoroughly using detergent and warm water. Rinse and sanitize with a solution made from 1 teaspoon unscented liquid bleach and 1 quart water. Shake the sanitizer solution all around the bottle and rinse well. Fill with clean water and add the date to the outside of the bottle. Replace this water every 6 months.

Once your kit is complete, consider making a “grab and go bag” or filling a backpack with essentials in case you must leave your home quickly. Don’t let budget constraints keep you from building an emergency kit. Start today and protect your family and your finances!

RESOURCE:

<https://www.ready.gov/low-and-no-cost>

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ADULT

HEALTH BULLETIN



SEPTEMBER 2024

Download this and past issues of the Adult, Youth, Parent, and Family Caregiver Health Bulletins:
<http://fcs-hes.ca.uky.edu/content/health-bulletins>

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THIS MONTH'S TOPIC

STEP INTO NATURE: GROUNDING



When you think of going barefoot in the grass, the first thing that comes to mind might be that of a small child. But taking off your shoes and feeling the Earth beneath your feet can be worthwhile for adults, too. Maybe you have heard of the practice of grounding. Grounding is going barefoot outside on the grass or dirt. You might have heard that it is beneficial for your health, or maybe you have wondered if it is true.

People have practiced grounding (sometimes also called earthing) for thousands of years for its positive effects. But the practice became popular again during the coronavirus pandemic as a way to relieve stress. Stress relief is one proven benefit of

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 Disabilities accommodated with prior notification.

Take care of your body and mind by trying grounding. Stand barefoot on a natural ground surface like grass, soil, or rock, in open air.



→ Continued from the previous page

grounding. There are other scientifically measured benefits as well. Recent studies have shown that in addition to reducing stress levels, grounding also helps improve overall mood, improve sleep and energy levels, improve circulation, reduce symptoms of anxiety and depression, improve immune system function, lessen the severity of chronic illnesses, and reduce pain in the body.

How does grounding work? When you stand directly on the Earth's surface, your body is able to absorb electrical energy from the Earth. Electrons emitted from the Earth act as antioxidants in human bodies that neutralize free radicals. Free radicals are known to tax our body's systemic function, leading to a variety of undesired results. They are also known to cause inflammation and may contribute to chronic disease risk and cancer. While part of combatting the effects of free radicals includes limiting contact with harmful plastics and other highly manufactured foods, products, and environments, counteracting those effects are just as, if not more important. Spending time outside, breathing fresh air, and eating a wide variety of plants are other important parts of our overall well-being.

Take care of your body and mind by trying grounding. Stand barefoot on a natural ground surface like grass, soil, or rock, in open air. Your yard is a perfect place to practice grounding. Or you could go to a local park or other natural setting.

As you relax your body, direct your attention to your feet. Feel the ground on the soles of your feet and on your toes and enjoy the feeling of your skin making contact directly with the Earth. You may choose to stand still or walk around if the ground is free of debris. Be mindful of sharp sticks, rocks, or trash that could hurt your feet.

As you're grounding your body, focus your attention on healing your mind as well by letting go of stress. Imagine the negative energy of your stress flowing out of your body from the top of your head, and the positive energy of well-being flowing into your body through your feet.

There is no limit to the amount of time you can spend grounding, so enjoy any mild days and sink your feet into the ground as often as you are able. Ideally, fit time for grounding into your daily or weekly routine to get the most from your experience on an ongoing basis.

REFERENCE:

<https://wellbeing.gmu.edu/thriving-together-series-the-well-being-benefits-of-grounding>

ADULT
HEALTH BULLETIN

Written by:

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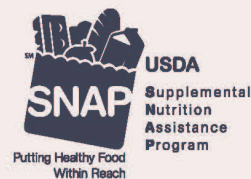
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Ramen Skillet Dinner



This institution is an equal opportunity provider. This material was partially funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program — SNAP.

Nutrition facts per serving:

280 calories; 8g total fat; 2.5g saturated fat; 0g trans fat; 60mg cholesterol; 360mg sodium; 22g total carbohydrate; 4g dietary fiber; 6g total sugars; 0g added sugars; 26g protein; 0% Daily Value of vitamin D; 4% Daily Value of calcium; 10% Daily Value of iron; 8% Daily Value of potassium

Source:

Martha Yount, former Nutrition Education Specialist, University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service

- 2 teaspoons vegetable oil
 - 1 medium onion, chopped
 - 1 medium carrot, thinly sliced
 - 1 bag (16 ounces) frozen broccoli
 - 2 cups cooked chicken, chopped
 - 1 package (3 ounces) chicken-flavored instant ramen noodles
 - 1 cup water
 - 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
 - 1/2 teaspoon ground ginger
 - 1/2 teaspoon red pepper flakes
1. Wash hands with warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds.
 2. Wash fresh produce under cool running water, using a vegetable brush to scrub veggies with a firm surface. Dry and cut to prepare for this recipe.
 3. Heat oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add onion, carrot, and broccoli. Cook until vegetables are crisp tender (about 5 minutes).

4. Add the cooked chicken to the skillet. Stir and heat, about 1 to 2 minutes.
5. In a small bowl, combine the contents of the ramen seasoning packet, water, garlic powder, ginger, and red pepper flakes.
6. Pour the water and seasonings into the skillet. Stir and bring to a boil.
7. Break ramen noodles apart and add to skillet. Stir to moisten noodles.
8. Cover the skillet and cook until noodles soften (about 2 minutes). Serve immediately.
9. Refrigerate leftovers within 2 hours.

Makes 4 servings
Serving size: 1 1/2 cups
Cost per recipe: \$7.66
Cost per serving: \$1.92

