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RECHARGE NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS, CELEBRATE NATIONAL NUTRITION MONTH IN MARCH



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Pensacola, Fla. – The Florida Department of Health in Escambia County (FDOH-Escambia) encourages residents to celebrate National Nutrition Month. Observed each year in March, National Nutrition Month recognizes the importance of making informed food choices and developing healthy eating and physical activity habits.

Initiated in 1973 as a week-long event, "National Nutrition Week" became a month-long observance in 1980 in response to growing public interest in nutrition. This year's theme, "Savor the Flavor of Eating Right," encourages everyone to take time to enjoy food traditions and appreciate the pleasures, great flavors, and social experiences food can add to our lives.

FDOH-Escambia registered dietitian, Kara Holton, suggests simple ways to improve eating habits while still enjoying flavorful food:

- Incorporate sources of unsaturated fat into your eating pattern by trying olive oil, canola oil, nuts, seeds, avocado, and seafood.
- Switch your regular canned vegetables for the no-salt-added variety. If they need more flavor, add fresh or dried herbs.
- Satisfy sweet cravings with whole fruit, rather than packaged or prepared desserts.

Additionally, regular physical activity can produce many long-term health benefits like weight control, risk reduction of heart disease, cancers, and type 2 diabetes, as well as mental health and mood improvement. According to the CDC, children and teens should get 60 or more minutes of physical activity per day while adults should get two hours and 30 minutes per week. Since fitting regular exercise into your daily schedule may seem difficult, try taking small steps by engaging in physical activity for at least 10 minutes at a time.

Whether you want to reach a healthy weight, improve your overall health, or lower your risk for chronic disease, consult a registered dietitian for nutrition advice. For more information on National Nutrition Month, visit the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics website at <http://www.eatright.org>.

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