

# EFNEP SUCCESS STORIES

## 2013 NC Cooperative Extension Perquimans and Chowan Counties



### Participant Reduces Salt Intake, Increases Flavor of Meals

About 1 in 3 U.S. adults have high blood pressure<sup>1</sup>, which increases the risk for heart disease and stroke, the leading causes of death in the United States<sup>2</sup>. Among North Carolina adults, 31.5% have been told by a healthcare professional that they have high blood pressure, a rate slightly higher than 28.7% among U.S. adults.<sup>3</sup>

The Dietary Guidelines recommend eating less sodium to help prevent, or control, high blood pressure.

During a recent Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) series of lessons, the program assistant in Perquimans County taught a group of participants strategies to make healthy food choices and be active throughout the day. During a lesson, a volunteer, who is also a former participant, shared with the group how her family has reduced the amount of salt they consume. She shared that before the EFNEP lessons, she and her family were “salt shakers.” Before eating a food, they would “shake, shake, shake” salt on the food. During the series, she learned that reducing salt intake could help improve her family’s health, especially for her husband who has high blood pressure. The participant shared that now she has removed the saltshaker from the table and if she uses salt, it is used only in small amounts while cooking or to help melt ice in the winter. To add flavor, she and her family have incorporated no-salt herb seasonings the program assistant provided to the class. She shared that at first her husband had a difficult time adjusting, but now her family prefers the herb seasonings instead.

This participant has learned to improve the flavor of the meals she prepares at home, while reducing her family’s risk for contracting a chronic disease. She credits EFNEP will be providing her with the information to make this healthy change.

### Youth Participant Learns to Love Milk

During a series of lessons as part of Chowan County’s 4-H Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (4-H EFNEP), a group of second graders learned about the importance of making healthy choices by choosing foods from all food groups on *MyPlate*. Prior to the lessons, the class shared that they did not like to drink milk. According to the Centers for Disease Control, calcium is a mineral needed by the body for healthy bones, teeth, and proper function of the heart, muscles, and nerves. The body cannot produce calcium; therefore, it must be absorbed through food and healthy dairy sources.<sup>4</sup> Knowing this, the program assistant taught a lesson about the importance of consuming dairy foods to ensure adequate calcium and vitamin D intake and provided a healthy recipe. Following the lesson, one participant shared that he and his younger brother enjoy making the recipe at home with their grandmother. Even though prior to the lesson, he did not like milk, he “loves this recipe” and now tries to increase the amount of milk and other calcium foods he consumes. Because of the lessons, he now understands the importance of choosing dairy foods for meals and snacks.

*EFNEP helps address the challenges limited resource families face when introducing healthy changes through nutrition education, cooking classes, exercise strategies, and shopping on a limited budget.*

1. CDC. Vital signs: prevalence, treatment, and control of hypertension—United States, 1999-2002 and 2005-2008. *MMWR*. 2011;60(4):103-8  
2. Miniño AM, Murphy SL, Xu J, et al. Deaths: Final data for 2008. *National Vital Statistics Reports*; vol 59 no 10. Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics. 2011.

3. Tchwenko SN. Burden of Cardiovascular Disease in North Carolina- September, 2012. Raleigh, N.C.: N.C. Department of Health and Human Services; 2012.  
4. <http://www.cdc.gov/nutrition/everyone/basics/vitamins/calcium.html>

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