

EFNEP SUCCESS STORIES

2014 NC Cooperative Extension Congressional District 4

Serving Cumberland, Durham, Harnett, Orange and Wake counties

Better Choices Lead to Lower Blood Pressure and Savings on Food Costs

The 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommends reducing daily sodium intake to 1500mg among persons who are 51 and older and those of any age who are African American, or have hypertension, diabetes, or chronic kidney disease.¹ One participant enrolled in the Durham County Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) fell into this category. She shared that she ate one hot dog from a local fast food restaurant every day and drank soda almost every day. She noticed her blood pressure was higher than normal.

While enrolled in EFNEP classes, this participant saw how much salt and fat were in popular fast foods and learned how to read the Nutrition Facts Label, paying close attention to sodium, fat, and sugar contained in foods she considered for purchase. The participant also practiced making a week-long menu by choosing foods that were low in fat, sodium, and sugars.

Upon completion of EFNEP, this participant has not ordered fast food as she did previously and has replaced regular soda with diet soda and water. She now pays close attention to the Nutrition Facts Label when grocery shopping and better monitors her sodium and sugar intake. Lastly, this participant has joined a weekly walking club with some of her fellow program participants. As a result, her blood pressure has decreased, and she reports that she is saving at least \$20 a week in food costs by eliminating fast foods.

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. <http://www.cnpp.usda.gov/dietaryguidelines.htm>.

Distributed in furtherance of the acts of Congress of May 8 and June 30, 1914. North Carolina State University and North Carolina A&T State University commit themselves to positive action to secure equal opportunity regardless of race, color, creed, national origin, religion, sex, age, or disability. In addition, the two Universities welcome all persons without regard to sexual orientation. North Carolina State University, North Carolina A&T State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and local governments cooperating.



United States Department of Agriculture
National Institute of Food and Agriculture

info@ncefne.net • www.ncefne.org



Young EFNEP Mom Sustains Positive Behavior Changes and Loses 20 Pounds

Orange County EFNEP and the Welcome Baby Program, a program that assists and educates limited resource audiences, specifically pregnant women and parents with toddlers, partnered to teach participants how to eat healthy and be active on a limited budget.

During the first week of the program, one of the participants shared with the EFNEP Program Assistant how unhappy she was with her current health and weight. She shared that it affected her daily life since she often felt sluggish and never had the energy to be physically active.

While enrolled in EFNEP, the participant learned to incorporate strategies such as shopping once a week, making weekly meal plans around sales, and comparing food prices and nutrition content at the grocery store. These changes allowed her to make one grocery trip a week, saving her time and money. With the saved time, she changed her schedule to include spending more quality time with her children while being active. Together, the family chose to take a walk daily and even when the weather was bad, they participated in physical activity by using *Walking Indoors*, an indoor activity video resource provided by EFNEP.

Since completing the program, the participant has lost roughly 20 pounds during an eight-month period. She has incorporated the strategies she learned from EFNEP, including preparing meals, which are low in calories, fat, and sodium, from the EFNEP cookbook. This participant shared that EFNEP “helped her improve her lifestyle and now she feels like a new and healthier person!”