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January 2023

## A Healthy Start to the New Year!

With the new year you may be interested in *being healthier*, but what does healthy mean? The word *healthy* can be hard to define because there are many factors that contribute to one's health. The Better Living for Texans program covers some (not all) lifestyle behaviors to help promote healthier living. Continue reading to learn more.

**A Balanced Plate:** A balanced eating routine adds up over time. Try to make half your plate fruits and vegetables, a quarter whole grains, and the remaining quarter low-fat protein, along with a serving of low-fat dairy or calcium-fortified alternative.



**Preparing Safe Food:** Proper food safety can reduce your family's risk of food poisoning. Some food safety practices that help prevent the spread of germs include washings your hands, utensils, and countertops, keeping ready to eat foods or raw produce away from uncooked meats or other proteins, using a food thermometer to measure the internal temperature of cooked foods, and cooling and storing foods safely in the refrigerator to slow the spread of harmful bacteria.

**Food Resource Management Skills:** Managing and creating a food budget may help promote balanced eating and reduce financial stress. Reduce the amount of money spent at the store by meal planning, using a grocery list, limiting the number of grocery trips, and being aware of local sales and available seasonal foods.

**Being Physically Active:** Find an activity you like to do! Recommendations vary between ages, as outlined below, every minute counts.

- Adults should try to do 150 minutes or more a week (30 minutes a day for 5 days a week) of moderate-intensity aerobic activity; and two days a week of muscle-strengthening activity.
- Children (ages 6-17) should do 60 minutes or more of daily moderate-to-vigorous physical activity.

**Growing Fruits and Vegetables:** Increase the availability of fresh produce at home by growing your own fruits and vegetables. It can be a fun activity for you and the family and an opportunity to get physically active while being outside.

*Remember, there are many factors that contribute to a healthy life. Do not feel like you have to 'master' everything at once; small steps can become great strides towards a healthier lifestyle. Contact the Extension agent in your county for more information regarding these topics.*

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Source: Better Living for Texans Curriculum: A Fresh Start to a Healthier You! and Growing and Nourishing Healthy Communities Gardening Course  
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## Recipe of the Month

Recipe and photo from *MyPlate Kitchen* at [MyPlate.gov](https://www.MyPlate.gov)

### Quick and Healthy Black-Eyed Peas

*Tasty turkey bacon and frozen black-eyed peas are the star ingredients in this recipe. For added heat, add a little chipotle pepper or sauce, cayenne pepper, or jalapeños.*

Serves: 6

#### Ingredients:

- 4 slices turkey bacon, chopped
- 2 cups black-eyed peas, frozen (about 2 pounds)
- 2 cups water
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper
- 1 tablespoon sugar

#### Directions:

1. Wash hands with soap and water. Over medium high heat cook bacon for 3-4 minutes.
2. Add the rest of the ingredients and bring to a boil.
3. Reduce heat to simmer and allow to cook until the peas are tender, about 30 minutes.
4. Serve hot.



#### Nutrients Per Serving:

241 calories, 3 g total fat, 1 g saturated fat, 7 mg cholesterol, 179 mg sodium, 39 g carbohydrates, 10 g fiber, 9 g total sugar, 2 g added sugar, and 15 g protein

**Total Cost: \$\$\$\$**



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