



FAMILY & CONSUMER SCIENCES



Finding Fitness on the Back of a Horse

By Marcy Crouch PT, DPT, CLT, WCS

Following my joy in the stables has allowed me to reap more health benefits than going to the gym ever could. I hate going to the gym. I loathe it. BLASPHEMY, I know. Especially coming from a physical therapist. Take my license away.

I don't hate working out, though, or getting exercise, or being healthy and fit, or being outside. I just really don't like boring, gym-based, exercise routines. So what's a girl to do? Well, get creative, I guess. If there's one thing I've learned from years of treating patients who promise to do their PT homework but don't follow through, it's this: If exercise doesn't excite you, you won't do it—and you definitely won't stick with it long term. My chosen fitness routine might surprise you, but there's only one activity that keeps me coming back for more—even after a 20-year hiatus.

Back in the saddle

Ever since I was a young, carefree, wild child, I've had a profound and deep love of horses. I feel a connection to them, and I love everything about them: the way they look, how they smell, the sound of leather and buckles, the clip-clop of horse hooves on the ground, the sounds of hay munching, soft nose kisses, and the rhythmic motion of brushing them.

After a 20-year break to get married, get my doctorate, finish residency, have kids, and move all over this country for work, I finally have found myself back in the saddle at almost 40 years young. During that 20 years, I tried to replace riding with other activities. Yoga, Pilates, running, triathlon, and spinning were all short-lived experiences for me. I enjoyed them and felt good doing them, but something was missing. Looking back, I think I was trying to convince myself to love them. And we all know the truth comes out in the wash. Nothing was able to fill the void until I got on the back of a horse.

Making it look effortless takes effort

The barn is my happy place, and I am able to fill my figurative cup just by being there. I would rather spend my day at the hot (or freezing), dirty, smelly barn, mucking out

stalls, cleaning water buckets, sweeping up barn aisles, oiling my saddle and bridle, hauling rocks out of pastures, and caring for my horse than spending time at a gym. Any day.

Aside from finding joy and being able to participate in something that is just for me (which is SO important as a mom), riding provides fitness benefits that most people never realize. This is clear if you've ever taken a 20-year hiatus and then tried to walk around Target the day after your first ride back. Cue the Bambi on ice scene.

I have been told over the years, by non-riders, that riding is "easy" and that "you just sit there," but that couldn't be further from the truth. The best riders make it look easy and effortless, have beautiful riding posture, and steady hands and legs. They look soft, strong, and perfectly balanced. You know how they do it? Years of practice, hours upon hours in the saddle, and a remarkably strong core.

Horses respond to "contact" or "aides." The slightest shift in weight, a gentle tap on the reins with one finger, moving your leg a centimeter behind the girth, or moving your seat all tell the horse what you want them to do. Now imagine doing all of that on a moving animal, at different speeds, while steering, navigating obstacles, and staying balanced, without holding your breath, for hours at a time.

Riding offers a holistic approach to fitness

The best attributes of all sports can be gained on the back of a horse: strength, balance, coordination, flexibility (ever try to get on a horse from the ground?), mental toughness, endurance, cardiovascular fitness, a clear mind, and trust. Riding requires an unbelievable amount of core strength, coupled with a high level of cardiovascular endurance. It has also been shown to increase both static and dynamic balance.

Studies have shown that healthy adults and older adults, who are not experienced riders, see an improvement in balance, coordination, and strength after participating in riding programs. These improvements can decrease the risk of falls, which we know can be serious for older adults.

But the research shows that the benefits of equestrian activities extend into mental health, too. Hippotherapy is the use of horses to help enhance neuromotor, sensory, and cognitive outcomes in rehabilitation settings. Children with cerebral palsy, adults recovering from stroke, patients with psychiatric disabilities, and veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) all experience decreased stress and anxiety, improved balance and strength, and report improved quality of life through hippotherapy.

Studies have also shown improvement in mood and concentration in adults and children with schizophrenia and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, or ADHD.

These benefits align with what I feel on a horse, too. I get so much more out of riding for an hour than I do at the gym, both physically and mentally. I leave the barn dripping in sweat, sore, exhausted, starving, and HAPPY. And I keep coming back for more, day in and day out, rain or shine.

Find the fitness that brings you joy

Horses, and the connection they provide, are magical. There just isn't another word for it. Sharon Ralls Lemon said, "The essential joy of being with horses is that it brings us in contact with the rare elements of grace, beauty, spirit, and fire." I feel this in my bones when I ride my horse. When I'm riding, I feel truly free and truly my own. I get lost in my thoughts while cleaning out a stall. The entire experience is meditative and joy-inducing, and I can't get enough.

As a result, I am stronger, happier, more patient, and WAY more fit than I was just 2 years ago. I have hay in my car, dirt under my nails, white horse hair stuck to my clothes, and mud on my boots. And I wouldn't have it any other way.

<https://www.healthline.com/health/fitness/feel-good-fitness-riding-horses>



Abbey Kelly, Morrow County 4-H Alumni

Pressure canner testing

Does your pressure canner need tested? Schedule an appointment with OSU Extension today to keep your household safe!

It's just about time to fetch canners out of the basement or garage. Fresh summer produce is on its way. When was the last time your dial gauge pressure canner was tested for accuracy? If it's been more than one year, it's time for a re-check. Register for an appointment at the link below or call for assistance.

Home canning is a relatively simple process, but many variables can affect your finished product. There are so many resources with unsafe information that it is important to make sure you are following the most recent safe home canning guidelines.

One guideline for home canning foods safely is using a pressure canner to process low-acid foods, such as vegetables, meat, poultry, and fish. These low-acid foods must be pressure canned at the recommended time and temperature to destroy *Clostridium botulinum*, the bacterium that causes botulism food poisoning. Home canning low-acid foods in boiling water canners is absolutely unsafe because 212 degrees F is not high enough to destroy botulinum bacteria.

With good reason, most people have a healthy regard for the possible dangers of pressure canners. Usually, this respect is based on an old story of a pressure canner "blowing up" in someone's grandmother's kitchen. Regardless, it is important to realize that pressure canners are safe if the safety precautions are followed, and the canner is used properly. Dangers arise when the unit isn't maintained and/or used properly. To make sure your pressure canner is working properly, all dial-gauge pressure canners should be tested for accuracy each year.

During each 30-minute appointment, the dial-gauge will be tested against a calibrated Master gauge for accuracy. I will also do a safety check on the canner. Educational materials will be available, and I will be happy to answer your food preservation questions. Remember, home food preservation can be safe, simple and easy to learn!

• \$5 fee per canner lid for non-residents of Morrow County

• No fee per canner lid for residents of Morrow County (levy funds)

Dates and times are provided for April, May, June, and July - select appointment times at this link: <https://go.osu.edu/cannertestingmorrow> 2022 or call our office at 419-947-1070 to register for an appointment.

Possible Resources Available for Purchase at OSU Extension Morrow County:

- Beginning Horse Management
- Light Horse Selection
- Horse Training: How to Talk To Your Horse
- Learning To Jump
- Draft Horse
- Small Equine
- Standardbred Horses
- Equine Reproduction & Genetics
- Trail Riding
- Dressage
- Horse Nutrition



FAMILY & CONSUMER SCIENCES



“Surprise” Medical Bills Healthy Options for your Charcuterie Board

By Barb Wollan, Family Finance Program Specialist, Iowa State University Extension and Outreach

I have been hearing over the past several months about a new law that reduces the likelihood that we consumers would get medical bills saying we owed more than our normal co-payment or deductible because a health provider was not part of our insurance plan's network. The law is called the “No Surprises Act.” It went into effect January 1 (2022), but I haven't had a chance to study it like I would wish.

This morning's issue of Kaiser Health News (which is a highly-reputable source of information on health policy and the health industry) linked to a podcast where the No Surprises Act was discussed. It's an 18-minute listen — I scanned the transcript, and pulled out a few key points. Please note that I am not including everything — just some highlights. I'd encourage you to check it out yourself to get the full story.

The No Surprises Act is good news — it is designed to protect us from the extra costs we might incur when an out-of-network provider gets involved in our care, even though our initial contact for care was with an in-network provider. Examples? It could be that our doctor sends our blood samples to an out-of-network lab for testing, or the anesthesiologist our hospital brings in to assist is an out-of-network provider — situations like that.

Of course, nothing is perfect, including this law. There are still things we need to know in order to protect ourselves.

1. The No Surprises Bill applies mostly* to hospital care. If you are getting care at a clinic or doctor's office, you are likely not protected from surprise out-of-network bills. That means you

still need to ASK.

*Why did I say mostly? Because there are some urgent care clinics that might be covered, but it is hard to find out. So it's safer to assume a clinic is not covered.

2. The law does NOT cover ground ambulance trips, so we may still get big bills for those. (Happily, it does cover air ambulance rides).

3. When asking if a provider is in network, the correct question is: “Are you in-network for my insurance plan?” And be sure they know the detailed name of your plan. Note: the WRONG question to ask is “do you take my insurance?” They might accept your insurance, but still be out of network.

4. Be cautious if a hospital asks you to sign a “Surprise Billing Protection Form.” The name makes it sound helpful, but you need to read the details. This form is used if the hospital is bringing in a provider who is not in your network. By giving you the form, they are disclosing the out-of-network provider, giving you an estimate of the extra cost you'll incur, AND telling you the names of in-network providers you could use instead. If you sign the form, you are agreeing to pay the extra charge for an out-of-network provider.

This is a starting point for understanding your rights under the new law. Since it is new, everyone (including providers and insurance companies) will need to be learning new processes and rules. The law creates a hotline for reporting or appealing violations: 800-985-3059. The staff on this line will also be learning, but it's still wise to report and appeal. Just recognize it may not be a fast or easy process to resolve disputes.

<https://blogs.extension.iastate.edu/moneytips/>

Closer to Zero: Partnership to Protect Our Food

Posted by Dr. Pamela Starke-Reed, Deputy Administrator, Agricultural Research Service and Dr. Melanie Abley, Senior Advisor, Office of the Chief Scientist in Research and Science

USDA is collaborating with the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) on the Closer to Zero (C2Z) initiative. C2Z provides a crucial framework for the work that must be done to reduce heavy metal content in foods, but particularly in foods consumed by infants and children, our most vulnerable group. USDA has a wealth of expertise to support FDA in solving this challenge that impacts all Americans.

The Agricultural Research Service studies every facet of how plants uptake heavy metals from the soil so that we can find ways to mitigate heavy metals in foods to the greatest extent possible. The National Institute for Food and Agriculture's vast partner and stakeholder network plans to collaborate in developing and sharing targeted communications on how women who are pregnant and/or lactating, infants, and young children can reduce their exposure to toxic elements in foods.

Its investments in agricultural research, edu-

cation, and extension will help develop data-driven approaches to reduce toxic elements in the food production system. The Food Safety and Inspection Service will provide essential oversight for assessing metal contamination in foods. FSIS serves as a critical link in notifying appropriate USDA and FDA offices if elevated levels of a concerning substance are detected in food.

As part of their overall mission, the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) encourages consumers to follow a healthy dietary pattern, which is important at every stage of life. The benefits of a balanced diet can help minimize adverse effects of consuming excess of any one food.

FNS continues to coordinate with its FDA partners to ensure that USDA nutrition assistance program policies, guidance, and education are informed by current food safety regulations and guidance. As USDA continues its focus on ensuring all

Americans have access to nutritious and safe foods, Closer to Zero efforts bring us closer to that goal.

<https://www.usda.gov/media/blog/2022/01/21/closer-zero-partnership-protect-our-food>

By Shannon Smith, RD, CDCES, Program Coordinator, OSU Extension, Wood County

Charcuterie boards have recently become one of my favorite ways to create a meal. I have created a charcuterie board for various meals and snacks. According to Eat Cured Meat, the modern definition of a charcuterie board is, “a selection of food that offers contrasts, various textures and different colors. Consumed in a group, the focus of the charcuterie board is food that is easy to eat, finger food is the goal.” In other words, it's simply a mixture of numerous foods, all artfully arranged on a serving board. They are fun, easy to assemble, and can be filled with all sorts of delicious and nutritious foods!

When I assemble my charcuterie board, my goal is to make it colorful and nutritious. Portion sizes are often smaller but include a variety to choose from. One of my favorites is a portable “breakfast charcuterie board.” The great thing about preparing it ahead of time is it's already assembled and ready to grab from the refrigerator before work. In the picture, you'll see I have included an egg bite with veggies, 2 whole wheat mini pancakes, vanilla Greek Yogurt, and berries. I also put any sauces or additional add-ons in souffle containers with lids to keep them separated. I have also included all 5 food groups from MyPlate! I prepare my portable board the night before so I can quickly grab it before heading to work.

Another favorite I like to make is a snack charcuterie board. You can customize it based on how many you're serving, what you have on hand, what's on sale, and personal preference. This snack charcuterie board includes a variety of foods that support good brain and heart health. The board includes the following foods:

- Veggies paired with hummus: I used cucumbers, carrots, and celery. Peppers and cherry tomatoes would add even more color. Hummus can also be replaced with a spinach artichoke dip or other dip of choice.
- Black olives have plenty of healthy fats in them that support your heart and brain health. I recommend rinsing under water prior to serving to reduce the salt



• Berries are quick an easy finger food that are loaded with fiber, antioxidants, and other important nutrients. You can also add grapes into the mix!

• Trail mix made with dark chocolate, mixed nuts, and whole grain cereal. Dark chocolate contains Flavanols that have anti-inflammatory and antioxidant effects. This is satisfying treat full of protein.

• Pistachios - research suggests consuming about one palmful or ¼ cup of nuts at least five times per week for optimal health. Pistachios, as well as trail mix can also help you meet this recommendation.

• Tuna salad is great to use as a spread on a whole grain cracker. According to the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 90% of American's don't meet the seafood recommendation. This is a great way to boost your seafood intake

• Yogurt topped with granola - yogurt provides calcium and protein and can be topped with granola!

• Turkey and cheese are nice to roll up and add to the board. Instead of rolling the cheese, another option is to use various sliced cheeses to your board.

Next time you are hosting a gathering, try creating a snack charcuterie board for your guests. Also, challenge yourself to create portable charcuterie board for one of your meals. Breakfast ones are great to make ahead since we are often short on time in the morning. It's a fun way to plan ahead, while incorporating MyPlate into your meal planning.



OSU EXTENSION CALENDAR OF EVENTS

MARCH 2022

- 6-12 Ohio 4-H Week
- 7 ServSafe Food Protection Manager Certification Program, 9-3 p.m., Ag Credit Building Conference Room
- 7 Jr. Fairboard Meeting, 7 p.m., Fairgrounds
- 10-13 National 4-H Youth AgriScience Summit, Washington, D.C.
- 12 Ohio 4-H Conference – Greater Columbus Convention Center
- 15 Cake Decorating 101 **Registration Due**
- 15 BOA Re-Certification & Certification, 6:30 p.m., Ag Credit Building Conference Room
- 17 Seeds To Start Early Program, 10:30 a.m., Selover Library in Chesterville
- 17 4-H Horse & Pony Committee, 7:30 p.m., Ag Credit Building Conference Room
- 17-20 Ohio Beef Expo, Ohio Expo Center, Columbus
- 19 Cake Decorating 101, Ag Credit Building Conference Room, 10 a.m. or 1 p.m.
- 22 4-H CARTEENS, Ag Credit Building Conference Room, 6:30 p.m.
- 23 Pesticide/Fertilizer Recertification, 5:30-9:30 p.m., Ag Credit Building Conference Room
- 24 Sr. Fairboard Meeting, 7:30 p.m., Fairgrounds
- 30 Seed Starting Class, 2 p.m., Perry Cook Memorial Library, Johnsville
- 31 Seed Starting Class, 6 p.m., Ag Credit Building Conference Room

APRIL 2022

- 1 Career Exploration Workshop – Construction Trades **Registration Due**
- 1-3 Showstick Wars, Morrow County Fairgrounds, Check out facebook or contact Kyndall 419-571-6623
- 4 Jr. Fair Board, 7 pm, Fairgrounds
- 4 County Quality Assurance Test-out, see article
- 5 Opening Up Your Garden Class, 6 p.m., Headwaters Education Center

- 6 Morrow County Cattlemen's Meeting, 6:30 pm, Ag Credit 2nd Floor Conference Room
- 8 Career Exploration Workshop – Nursing **Registration Due**
- 9 Career Exploration Workshop – Construction Trades, Tri-Rivers Career Center, 9 a.m.-2:30 p.m.
- 12 Growing Your Own Food Class, 6 p.m., Headwaters Education Center
- 12 New 4-H Volunteer Training, 6:30 pm, RSVP Required
- 14 Career Exploration Workshop – Nursing, Marion Technical College, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.
- 21 Horse and Pony Committee, 7:30 pm, Ag Credit Building Conference
- 21 Container Gardening Class, 10:30 a.m., Selover Library, Chesterville
- 26 First & Second Year Members QA (Parent Required), 6:15 p.m., Fairgrounds, RSVP Required
- 27 Companion Planting Class, 2 p.m., Perry Cook Memorial Library, Johnsville
- 28 Sr. Fairboard, 7:30 p.m., Fairgrounds
- 30 4-H Project Enrollments Due!!!! Join 4-H!

MAY 2022

- 2 Plant Swap Class, 6:30 p.m., Selover Library, Chesterville
- 2 Jr. Fair Board, 7 p.m., Fairgrounds
- 2 Youth Photography Workshop **Registration Due**
- 4 Morrow County Cattlemen, 6:30 p.m., Ag Credit Building Conference Room
- 7 Youth Photography Workshop, Ag Credit Building Conference Room, 10-1:30 p.m.
- 9 Quality Assurance, 6:15 p.m., Fairgrounds
- 10 Hanging Basket Make & Take Class, 6 p.m., Headwaters Education Center
- 12 Plant Swap, 6:30 p.m., Selover Library, Marengo
- 17 Quality Assurance, 6:15 p.m., Fairgrounds
- 19 Horse and Pony Committee, 7:30 pm, Ag Credit Building Conference Room
- 23 Quality Assurance, 6:15 p.m., Fairgrounds

- 24 4-H CARTEENS, Ag Credit Building Conference Room, 6:30 p.m.
- 25 Creating a Pollinator Garden with Native Perennials Class, 2 p.m., Perry Cook Memorial Library, Johnsville
- 30 Happy Memorial Day - Office Closed

JUNE 2022

- 1 Morrow County Cattlemen, 6:30 p.m., Ag Credit Conference Room
- 6 Jr. Fairboard, 7 p.m., Fairgrounds
- 7 Jr. Fair Entries **Due**
- 17 Illustrated Talks & Public Speaking Contests **Registration Due**
- 20 Early Project Judging
- 20 Ohio State Fair Entries **Due**
- 21 Illustrated Talks & Public Speaking Contests, Ag Credit Building Conference Room, 6 p.m.
- 22 Common Garden Insects Class, 2:00 p.m., Perry Cook Memorial Library, Johnsville
- 28 How To Enter Flowers in the Fair Class, 6 p.m., Headwaters Education Center
- 29-July 1 S.T.E.M. Camp, Ag Credit Building Conference Room, Times TBD

JULY 2022

- 6 Morrow County Cattlemen, 6:30 p.m., Ag Credit Building Conference Room
- 21 Herb Garden Make & Take, 6 p.m., Bunkers Mill Winery, Cardington
- 23 Cloverbud Fun Day, Ag Credit Building Conference Room, 9 a.m.
- 26 4-H CARTEENS, Ag Credit Building Conference Room, 6:30 p.m.
- 27 Common Garden Diseases Class, 2 p.m., Perry Cook Memorial Library, Johnsville

CFAES provides research and related educational programs to clientele on a nondiscriminatory basis. For more information: <http://go.osu.edu/cfaesdiversity>.

THANK YOU Central Ohio Farmer's Co-op

for over 37 years of donations toward 4-H project books!

Approximately \$1,200 each year is donated! Thanks for helping make the best better!

Central Ohio Farmer's Co-op, Inc.

500 West Marion Road • P.O. Box 152 • Mt. Gilead, OH 43338

Phone: 419-946-4015 • 800-482-5905 FAX: 419-946-4025