

Staying Healthy

FALL 2016

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Axis doubles capacity for health care to needy

‘Patients can feel good just by being here’

By JEB BING

Axis Community Health has opened its new \$12 million health center in Pleasanton, a 24,000-square-foot complex on West Las Positas Boulevard that doubles service capacity for the more than 14,000 Tri-Valley low-income, uninsured and under-insured individuals it serves each year.

“This is a true milestone for Axis, for the people we serve, and for the many community members, government representatives and supporters who have helped make this project a reality,” said Sue Compton, Axis’ chief executive officer. “Access to care has taken a huge, wonderful step forward.”

The conversion of the former commercial building involved a complete interior renovation in order to create 27 exam rooms, seven counseling rooms and ancillary service areas. The project was completed by INDE Architecture and general contractor Oliver & Co.

Some funding for the \$12 million project came from Alameda County, the cities of Pleasanton, Dublin and Livermore, and the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development. The remainder is being financed through The California Endowment and Capital Impact Partners.

Axis also raised \$1.7 million for construction through a capital campaign, and it is now raising an additional \$300,000 for medical equipment and furnishings.

Major campaign supporters included Kaiser Permanente, Palo Alto Medical Foundation, Stanford Health Care-ValleyCare, Fremont Bank Foundation and HEDCO Foundation, an organization that helps make fundraising more effective.

Axis also has additional medical clinic sites, including one in downtown Pleasanton on Railroad Avenue and one at Livermore’s multi-services center, as well as two behavioral health sites and a Women, Infants and Children (WIC) nutrition program site. All of those sites remain open.

Founded in 1972, Axis provides quality, affordable medical, mental health and substance abuse services that promote the well-being of all members of the community. In the last year, Tri-Valley residents made more than 100,000 visits to one of Axis’ five locations.

Compton said Axis brings access to affordable, quality care to thousands in the Tri-Valley who otherwise would not be able to receive primary and preventative care.

“When people are able to stay healthy, they can go to work and school which helps families thrive,” she said. “Access to care also reduces the number of acute episodes requiring hospitalization for chronic conditions like asthma and diabetes. Avoiding high-cost emergency care is good for families and the community.”

Building a new health center has been



CHUCK DECKERT

Top photo: Dr. Gunjan Mujal examines a patient at Axis Community Health’s new \$12 million center on West Las Positas Boulevard in Pleasanton.

Above: Alameda County supervisors Nate Miley (center) and Scott Haggerty present congratulatory resolution to Axis leaders at opening of nonprofit’s new complex. Others in photo (from left) are James Paxson, Axis board chairman; chief development officer Valerie Jonas and Axis CEO Sue Compton.

Axis’ goal for many years.

Even with its two facilities in downtown Pleasanton and Livermore, with 22 exam rooms combined, it wasn’t enough.

“We did everything possible to increase

the number of service visits,” Compton said, “adding evening and Saturday hours, hiring more providers, moving administrative services off site to create more clinical space. But we simply couldn’t serve more people

without more clinical space.”

Axis went from serving 10,000 medical patients in 2011 to currently serving 14,000, while needs assessment data show the number of low-income and uninsured people in need of care is more than 20,000. Axis expects to serve 20,000 patients within a few years.

“We are doing a lot of outreach to let people know they can now gain access to health care with us,” Compton said. “We struggled for many years, while this project was in development, to see as many people as we could in our limited space, but could not meet everyone’s needs.”

“We now have enough exam rooms to eliminate any delays in getting care, so now is a time to let people know they have this wonderful service available to them,” she added.

The location at 5925 W. Las Positas Blvd. in Hacienda is ideal for patients. The street is a major thoroughfare, BART is close and there is bus service. That helps because an increasing number of Axis patients are coming from Dublin and Contra Costa County, so this new site is well-located.

The Axis multi-services center in Livermore and its Railroad Avenue site in Pleasanton serve behavioral health needs and WIC nutrition services. Both are operating at full capacity.

The new Axis center is light and spacious. Great attention was given to designing a place that is welcoming and soothing. Architects used nature as their theme, incorporating the curves and colors of the Tri-Valley’s surrounding hills.

“It has been our goal all along to create a center where our patients can feel good just by being here,” Compton said.

The new site is fully operational and offers primary and preventative medical care and mental health services for all ages. Services include pediatrics, internal medicine, family practice, women’s health and care for chronic illnesses, such as diabetes, hypertension and asthma. Other services include nutrition consultation, case management and health education.

Enrollment services are provided for patients as well, which provides access to Medi-Cal and Covered California insurance plans. Axis is the certified enrollment entity for Covered California in the Tri-Valley. Staff at the site includes more than a dozen physicians and nurse practitioners, as well as mental health professionals, nurses, registered dietitians and support staff.

The new facility also has on-site services that Axis didn’t have space for before, including an on-site lab for blood draws and a patient pharmacy for medication refills. There is a spacious classroom for patient health education.

A key opportunity in building the new facility was designing the space specifically for patient-centered care teams, a care model that supports patients in meeting all of their care needs.

For example, Axis has integrated counseling services at all its clinic sites, wherein doctors and mental health counselors work together to develop care plans that treat the “whole” person. To facilitate this model, the new clinic has team rooms, rather than private offices, where providers and staff work side-by-side, which facilitates communication and achieves better health outcomes for patients.

Axis’ campaign committee is working to raise an additional \$300,000 to cover costs

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GETTY IMAGES

Family meal time is a chance to put away electronic devices and keep the focus on each other.

Family meals make a difference

Eating together has many benefits

Juggling jobs, kids and the demands of a busy, modern life often comes at the expense of family mealtime at home. Even though life never seems to slow down, now is the perfect time to renew your commitment to creating and serving meals at home that nourish your kids' brains and help them flourish.

Not only is time together around the table an opportunity to catch up and reconnect, numerous studies provide evidence of the positive, lifelong benefits of family meals. Regular family meals are linked to the kinds of outcomes that ensure a bright future for children: higher grades and self-esteem, healthier eating habits and less risky behaviors.

For example, according to research published in the "Journal of Pediatrics," kids and teens who share meals with their families three or more times per week are significantly less likely to be overweight, more likely to eat healthy foods and less likely to have eating disorders.

Other studies have shown that children who grow up sharing family meals are more likely to exhibit positive social behavior as adults, such as sharing, fairness and respect.

On the other hand, research also suggests that aside from missing out on the benefits, families that have fewer meals together can also experience adverse effects when it comes to certain risky behaviors.

A study on the relationship between certain family characteristics and adolescent problem behaviors, published in the "Journal of Adolescent Health," found that teens who have infrequent family dinners (fewer than three per week) are 3.5 times more likely to have abused prescription drugs or have used an illegal drug; 2.5 times more likely to have used tobacco; and 1.5 times more likely to have used alcohol.

Meal planning tips

Planning for family mealtime can be tough, but it doesn't have to be. Take the stress out of planning and preparing family meals with these tips and begin reaping the benefits of more time together around the dinner table.

- Commit to having one additional meal with your family each week at home. It doesn't matter whether it is breakfast, lunch or dinner. The benefits are the same. After a month, you may be surprised by how easily your new commitment has become a habit for the entire family.
- Rely on the resources available at your local grocery store. Even when you don't feel like cooking, there are countless meal planning solutions such as pre-prepped fresh ingredients, delicious ready-made entrees and

wholesome heat-and-eat dishes.

- Make meal planning a family affair. List each family member's favorite foods in each of the main food groups and see how many combinations you can create. Then ask your children to accompany you to the store to help select the ingredients (and use the trip for age-appropriate learning, such as comparing prices, reading labels, etc.).
- Save time by engaging the whole family in meal preparation. Even the littlest hands can help with tasks like setting the table.
- Set a regular meal time so you can plan other activities around it. Sit around the table, turn off the TV and put away phones and electronic devices. Keep the focus on each other.

Make family meals count

Gathering the family for a daily meal offers numerous ways to make lasting impressions. Promoting one more family meal each week is an educational program created by the Food Marketing Institute Foundation and the nation's grocery stores.

Role-modeling

Spending time with adults where they can observe positive behaviors in action teaches kids valuable life skills such as using table manners and taking turns talking without interrupting.

Family values

In a busy home where various activities and demands create divides in time and attention, family meals let everyone come together to honor the family unit. Demonstrating value for family and making this together time a priority helps teach youngsters lessons about the importance of work-life balance that they will carry into adulthood.

Time to relax

Not only is mealtime a time to nourish bodies, it's a chance to force each member of the family to pause and put a temporary hold on the chaotic pace of life. Kids and grownups alike can benefit from a daily break to recharge not only physically, but mentally as well.

Fond memories

A family meal tradition has all the makings for fond childhood memories. An activity that plays an important role in the family's schedule is sure to create a lasting impression for kids when they look back on their formative years. ■

—Family Features

New strides in breast health care

3-D imaging, relaxing atmosphere are latest for mammograms

BY DOLORES FOX CIARDELLI

Debra Babin, 57, is diligent about scheduling annual mammograms for herself.

"My grandmother had breast cancer," said Babin, office manager for an energy efficiency company. "And my colleague was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2011...it reoccurred in 2013."

Although her colleague had a double mastectomy, cancer was found in her brain, and she died earlier this year.

"It was very sad," Babin said.

So she educates herself on developments in breast care and cancer prevention.

"Since I was diagnosed with dense breast tissue," Babin said, "I have for the last two mammograms selected the 3-D imaging one."

Most patients do opt for 3-D imaging mammograms, said Linda Womack, executive director of imaging services at John Muir Medical Center.

"Bay Area women are very educated," Womack said. "There has been a lot in the press about density in breast tissue and the benefits of 3-D mammograms, so people will call to schedule an exam and say they heard about it."

Some insurance plans do not cover the 3-D mammogram, in which case the patient pays the extra \$35.

"The reason is it does take a lot longer for the radiologist to read, it's a much more in-depth test," Womack said.

The new mammogram uses multiple low-dose images, creating a three-dimensional view of the breast that lets the doctor examine it layer by layer. This imaging has been clinically proven to detect 41% more invasive cancers compared to two-dimensional mammography. It is especially helpful for breasts with dense tissue, Womack noted.

"All of a sudden, we've got the technology and are starting to see Stage 1 cancer — the dense breast tissue was literally hiding the cancer," she said. "This new technology is able to get through all that density and really see

See **MAMMOGRAMS** on Page 12

AXIS

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for remaining medical equipment and furnishings. Contributions can be made at www.axishealthcampaign.org.

Though this project is complete, Axis won't be rest-

ing for long. It has already started working with the Tri-Valley cities to see how affordable dental services can be brought to the area. As it is, low-income residents must travel to Oakland to get dental care, and the waiting lists are very long.

"Since dental care affects many other health indicators, we are hopeful that we can make these services available locally in the next few years," Compton said. ■



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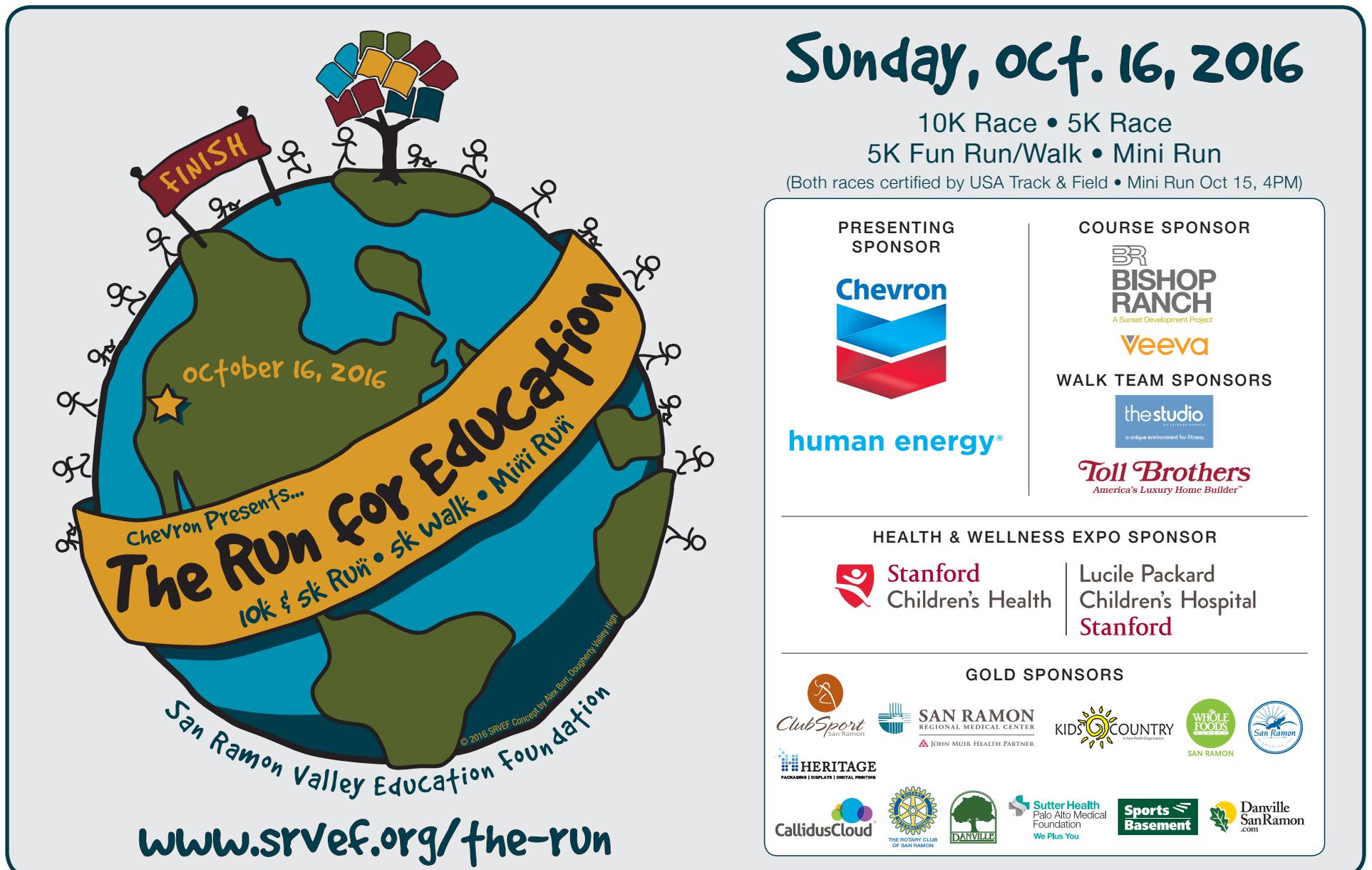
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5 health and wellness rules to live by this year and beyond

Fight germs, sleep well, eat right, be prepared



At school, kids are exposed to an influx of germs that can cause a number of preventable sicknesses, including cold and flu.

The top germiest school-based culprits include water fountains, plastic reusable cafeteria trays, keyboards, toilets and — students' hands. Desks are found to have 400 times more bacteria than the average toilet; backpacks have 10,000 germs per square inch.

To keep your family free from the sniffles all year long, here are five easy-to-follow tips to ensure a healthy, happy and absence-free school year.

1. Teach kids to wash their hands the right way.

It seems simple enough, but research shows that only 5% of people wash their hands properly. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends following five simple steps: wet, lather, scrub (for at least 20 seconds), rinse and dry.

Don't forget backs of hands, between fingers and under the nails. Handwashing is the best defense against germs, but if soap and water aren't available, hand sanitizer is a good alternative.

2. Sanitize school supplies.

Sanitize school supplies, lunch boxes, bottoms of backpacks, etc., weekly. These items are

exposed to a variety of germs lurking in places like gym lockers, on desks and in bathrooms.

Use disinfecting wipes on plastic objects, and throw items like lunch boxes and backpacks in the washing machine. Send kids to school with disposable wipes so they can clean surfaces like desks, cafeteria trays and other surfaces throughout the day.

3. Set a sleep schedule.

A regular bedtime and an alert morning go hand in hand. The National Sleep Foundation recommends a calming nighttime routine like reading a book or taking a bath to signal the brain that it's bedtime, and leave technology, like tablets, laptops and cell phones, out of the bedroom.

If you're wondering how much sleep your child needs each night, it's recommended that toddlers receive 11 to 14 hours, preschoolers 10 to 13 hours, school-aged children nine to 11 hours, and teenagers eight to 10 hours.

4. Keep healthy snacks and meals on hand.

A healthy, balanced diet has been proven to keep kids mentally sharp and focused, but fast-paced schedules during the school year can sometimes result in quick-fix, and often unhealthy, food choices.

Keep nutritious grab-and-go snacks like trail mix and fruit at the ready. And don't skip breakfast. It can mean decreased cognitive performance in areas like alertness, attention, memory and problem solving.

5. Nurse kids back to health.

Germs are lurking everywhere — school, preschool and daycare, so be prepared if sickness does strike. Tools like TempTraq come in handy for unexpected fevers. A wearable, Bluetooth temperature monitor continuously senses, records and transmits body temperature for up to 24 hours and can even send alerts to your smartphone via its mobile app.

From hectic schedules to germ-ridden classrooms, the stress and environment of school can take a toll on kids' health. Keep them healthier with a few simple strategies and you'll be headed to a perfect attendance record. ■

—StatePoint

MAMMOGRAMS

Continued from Page 11

what is going on."

The mammography is performed the same, with the same amount of time and compression, but it is imaged differently, Womack explained.

"The dense tissue looks like a big ball of white, and trying to decipher all the layers of whiteness is hard," she said, "but on a 3-D image, we are looking at every layer."

The new technology helps to diagnose breast cancer early, before it spreads and when it can be treated less invasively.

"At a later stage it is more aggressive and spreadable," Womack said.

John Muir Health opened its new Breast Health Center in April, locating imaging, biopsies, genetic counseling, a nurse navigator (who educates and advocates for the patient), a consultation room and a breast education library all in one location, which shares the parking lot with the hospital in Walnut Creek. The center was designed for a soothing experience, with spa robes rather than patient gowns, relaxing music and calming nature pictures on the walls.

In Pleasanton, Stanford ValleyCare offers breast cancer detection, including 3-D mammograms, treatments and specialized care at its Breast Center of Excellence, and has also designed its imaging center to be soothing as well as private. It is located in the same building as its ValleyCare Health Library and Ryan Comer Cancer Resource Center.

San Ramon Regional Medical Center also offers comprehensive breast health services in one location, including 3-D mammograms and other tests for breast cancer. It also was designed to be an inviting and patient-focused environment.

During October, in recognition of Breast Cancer Awareness Month, from 5-7 p.m. each Tuesday, the John Muir Breast Health Center will host evenings with information on breast health plus offer refreshments, spa robes and chair massages. Mammography screenings can also be scheduled on these evenings with a doctor's prescription or order. Call 952-2701.

By the end of the year, John Muir health plans to deliver same-day imaging and same-day biopsies.

Meanwhile, Babin was pleased to find her annual mammogram was clean, and she noted the ambiance and efficiency at the new John Muir Breast Health Center.

"I'm very healthy, and I am happy for that," Babin said. ■

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month

Except for skin cancer, breast cancer is the most common cancer in women in the United States. Deaths from breast cancer have declined over time, but it remains the second leading cause of cancer death among women overall and the leading cause of cancer death among Hispanic women.

Each year in the U.S., about 220,000 cases of breast cancer are diagnosed in women and about 2,000 in men. About 40,000 women and 400 men in the U.S. die each year from breast cancer.

Over the last decade, the risk of getting breast cancer has not changed for women overall, but the risk has increased for black women and Asian and Pacific Islander women. Black women have a higher risk of death from breast cancer than white women.

The risk of getting breast cancer goes up with age. In the United States, the average age when women are diagnosed with breast cancer is 61. Men who get breast cancer are diagnosed usually between 60 and 70 years old.

—Centers for Disease Control and Prevention





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Eat healthy at home

Resist temptation to eat junk food

Even if you've mastered the art of a smart workday lunch and can pick the most nutritious items on a restaurant menu like a pro, eating healthy at home is an unexpected downfall many people face.

When you find the chance to take a break from the busy pace of life and spend some time at home, it can be easy to slip into an all-indulgence mindset. Just remember that doesn't have to mean going all-out on junk food.

Enjoy the comforts of home and keep your eating on track with these helpful tips.

When you're spending time with family

It's easy to catch a carefree spirit while you're running the bases in an impromptu game of backyard baseball or being tempted by yet another imaginary dessert from the kiddie kitchen. When playtime winds down for dinner, there's no reason for the fun to stop. Have kids get hands-on to help assemble a healthy meal everyone can enjoy. You can skip the cutting, peeling and mess by using jarred fruit to prepare salads, desserts and even main dishes that satisfy the whole family's sweet tooth.

When you're tackling chores

From seasonal landscaping to the myriad projects you've been putting off, the list of chores around the house may seem never-ending. Remember to stay hydrated, espe-

cially if you're working outdoors, and be sure you make time to eat, even if it's just a quick bite to keep you fueled. Air-popped crackers and hummus is a smart alternative to chips and dip, or get your pick-me-up from a handful of nuts and a serving of sweet, juicy fruit.

When you want to be a couch potato

When a new TV season begins this fall, keep your guilty pleasure in check with quick, healthy dishes to enjoy as you binge watch your favorite shows. Keep your kitchen stocked with ingredients such as high quality, ready-to-eat jarred fruit so you can create quick and easy snacks with a serving of fruit in between episodes or during a commercial break.

Tickle your taste buds with these tricks that transform a kitchen staple like jarred fruit into a tasty treat:

- Brighten up bland yogurt or frozen waffles with a serving of jarred fruit, such as sliced peaches or mandarin oranges.
- Dip jarred pineapple chunks in melted chocolate and pop them in the freezer until hardened.
- Top a serving of jarred tropical fruit with coconut flakes for an island escape.

See attached recipes that are easy to enjoy at home. ■

—Family Features



Tropical rum raisin dessert

Total time: 30 minutes

Servings: 4

1 jar (23.5 ounces) Tropical fruit, drained, juice reserved

1/2 cup seedless raisins

1/4 cup spiced or coconut rum

2 cups vanilla ice cream or frozen yogurt, divided

4 teaspoons toasted shredded coconut, divided

Place fruit in medium bowl and set aside. In small bowl, combine raisins, rum and 1/4 cup reserved juice. Allow raisins to soak at least 20 minutes until plump. Drain off liquid.

Combine fruit and rum raisins; spoon into serving bowls. Top each bowl with 1/2 cup scoop of ice cream and top each with 1 teaspoon toasted coconut.

Tip: 1/2 teaspoon rum extract and 1/2 cup reserved juice may be used instead of rum.



Orange chipotle avocado toast

Total time: 10 minutes

Servings: 1

1 slice whole wheat bread

1/2 avocado, diced or smashed

salt

pepper

1/3 cup Mandarin oranges, drained

1/2 teaspoon chipotle peppers in adobo sauce, finely chopped

1/4 lime

Lightly toast whole-wheat bread and top with diced avocado. Season with salt and pepper, to taste.

In medium bowl, toss oranges with chipotle peppers.

Spoon oranges over avocado toast and finish with a squeeze of lime.

Tip: For spicier toast, include pepper seeds. For milder heat, remove seeds. A sprinkle of chili pepper can also be used to add spice.

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