

# Family Issues

November/December 2008

## Holidays: A Time for family, laughter, and sharing



With changes and uncertainty in the economy, many individuals will be facing difficult times. It is normal to spend time reflecting on the upcoming holiday season and the expense and stress that could ensue. Before your “to do” list gets too big, take a step back to decide what this holiday season really means to you and how you want to spend it. Authors from Better Living give us a few suggestions for simplifying the season:

- Slow down. Don't be in such a hurry to get from point A to point B. Take the time to enjoy the magic of the season.
- Make a gift. Instead of purchasing an expensive gift that you can't afford, make your gift recipient's favorite thing.
- Pot luck the meal. Just because the dinner is taking place in your home doesn't mean you have to foot the bill or make all the dishes. Ask each visitor to bring a dish, and don't be afraid to specify what you would like each guest to bring.
- Play games. What games do you remember playing as a child? Are there any games that an entire group of people can play together? Make time to be a kid again.

Additional ideas can be found on the inside page (page three.)

Joey Peutz  
Extension Educator

**District II  
Extension Educators  
Family and Consumer Sciences**

Barbara Abo	◆	Ada
Beverly Healy	◆	Ada
Linda Gossett	◆	EFNEP
Joey Peutz	◆	Canyon
Marsha Lockard	◆	Owyhee

**County Extension Offices**

Ada.....	377-2107
EFNEP .....	376-1036
Adams .....	253-4279
Canyon .....	459-6003
Elmore.....	587-2136
Gem/Boise.....	365-6363
Owyhee .....	896-4104
Payette.....	642-6022
Valley .....	382-7190
Washington.....	414-0415

Family Issues is published six times a year. This newsletter provides current information in the areas of family development, leadership skills, nutrition, food safety, money and time management.

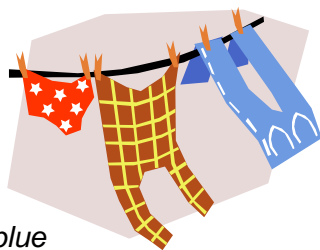
## Because You Asked:

**Q.** Does peanut butter have any trans fats in it?

**A.** Recurring rumors that commercial peanut butters contain hidden trans fats have no basis in fact, according to an ARS (Agricultural Research Service) study. It's true that small amounts of hydrogenated vegetable oils are added to commercial peanut butters (1-2% of total weight) to prevent the peanut oil from separating out. ARS scientists tested 11 brands of peanut butter, including major store brands and "natural" brands. The laboratory found no detectable trans fats in any of the samples, with a detection limit of 0.01% of the sample weight.

Source: Tufts University Letter October 2008

**Q.** I have a pair of jeans that have a suede lace that ties at the side. It is natural-colored suede. They are not new jeans; they have been washed several times. I washed the jeans with a light blue sweater, now there are yellowish-brown stains from the suede all over the sweater. What should I do?




**A.** Dye bleed is difficult and sometimes impossible to remove. Do not dry fabric until all attempts to remove the dye bleed have been exhausted. Sometimes simply rewashing in hottest water appropriate for fabric and a cup of ammonia along with detergent is effective. Rewashing in detergent and all-fabric bleach is sometimes effective. There are commercial dye bleed remover products that may be effective and are available in laundry product aisles.

Send your questions for possible publication to: **Joey Peutz**  
[joeyp@uidaho.edu](mailto:joeyp@uidaho.edu)



## Ideas to Eat Better and Cheaper

With 2008 food costs expected to rise at 2.5 times the average rate of recent years, eating smart on a budget keeps getting tougher. But you can do it—with the help of these tips to boost your nutritional health while actually trimming your grocery bill:

1. **Minimize meat.** Instead of making meat (typically the most expensive item on your plate) the star of the show, relegate it to a supporting role for vegetables and whole grains. Most experts recommend a serving of meat that's just three ounces.
2. **Plan your meals (and your shopping).** By taking the time to plan your meals, you can make sure they are nutritionally sound; then fine-tune your grocery list so you buy only what you'll actually cook and nothing goes to waste. Eliminating spur-of-the-moment meals also cuts down on trips to fast-food and take-out restaurants.
 
3. **Cut down on "convenience foods."** A UCLA study found that so-called "convenience foods" (typically pricier, more heavily processed and less healthy than meals made from scratch) don't really save much time. Most households saved only 10-12 minutes of hand prep time by using packaged food products. Families that used more raw ingredients, didn't significantly increase total meal-preparation time, and were found to eat meals with greater nutritional value (according to researchers.)

4. **Bypass the deli counter.** Processed and cured meats have been linked to an increased risk of colorectal cancer in several studies; they can also be pricey, especially if bought at the deli counter. Consider making your own. Broil an extra boneless, skinless chicken breast at dinnertime, then slice and save the leftovers. Per pound, plain chicken breast costs about half the typical sliced deli meat.
5. **Season it yourself.** Buying pre-flavored poultry or pork tenderloins, in varieties such as “teriyaki” or “chipotle” can add two dollars a pound or more to your tab, along with excess sodium. A teriyaki flavored pork tenderloin, for example, has almost eight times the sodium of a plain tenderloin. Seasoning plain, unflavored meats yourself lets you control what you’re eating.
6. **Buy fresh fruits and vegetables in season.** They cost less and are likely to be at their peak flavor, according to the USDA. If this means eating more winter squash in, well, winter and less asparagus, figure you’ll make up for it by binging on asparagus when it’s in season and at its cheapest. Buy frozen fruits and vegetables when they are not in season. Many fruits and vegetables freeze well and cost less frozen than fresh.

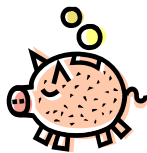
Source Tufts health and Nutrition Letter, August 2008

### Tip Hero

TipHero is a website where community members post money-saving tips and share advice. They feature new tips each day. You are encouraged to add your own tips and rate others tips.


Give it a try.

<http://www.tiphero.com>



## Holiday Ideas

...continued

- Stay home. Make arrangements to visit friends and family the day before or after the holiday, so that you can spend Christmas day at home, with your loved ones.
- Light watch. Is there an area in your town that goes all out with outside Christmas decorations? Nothing brings more cheer to the holiday than watching the faces of young children “oh and ah” at the beauty of the lights. 
- Christmas carol. Take your family and friends Christmas caroling. You could even bring along a tin can and get donations for your local charity.
- Donate your time. Take a day, out of the holiday season, to give back to the community. Volunteer in a retirement home—some don’t have family visiting for the holidays. Serve the homeless a hot meal. Hold a drug-addicted baby at your local hospital.
- Delegate tasks. Don’t take on the responsibility of making everything work and look perfect. After making your “to do” list, break it up between family members according to age, maturity, and physical ability to get the task done.
- Request kitchen help. Sure, it’s your home. But it’s your family attending the celebration. Ask them to lend a hand cleaning up after the festivities are over.
- Prepare meals ahead of time. Prepare one dish a day and freeze or refrigerate that meal. Reheated food really isn’t that bad and you’ll have more time to mingle and laugh with your guests, instead of missing out on all the fun.
- ❖ • Just remember: **Creating memories** is a priceless gift. **Memories** will last a lifetime; things only a short-period of time. What’s important is the **time** you share with those you love—for you never know what tomorrow holds.

University of Idaho  
Cooperative Extension System  
Canyon County  
PO Box 1058  
Caldwell, ID 83606

NON-PROFIT ORG  
US POSTAGE PAID  
CALDWELL, ID  
PERMIT NO 6

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

---

## Botulism in Home Canning



Foodborne botulism is very rare. However, it occurs occasionally and is a **reminder that home canning practices must be done correctly**. A recent news article reported that a man was in critical condition and his grandson in serious condition at hospitals in Ohio after becoming sick from eating home-canned green beans. Two granddaughters were treated for botulism and released from the hospital. The news article does not specify how the green beans were improperly prepared. The effects of botulism are severe and can affect individuals for years.

Source: Kinton, J. "Home canning leads to botulism in Crestline," *Mansfield News Journal*, September 18, 2008, <http://www.mansfieldnewsjournal.com>

## What's Inside

- ❖ Because You Asked
- ❖ Ideas to Eat Better and Cheaper
- ❖ Tip Hero Website
- ❖ Holiday Ideas