

# Home Winterization Checklist

- Check the attic, walls and basement for adequate insulation.
- Feel around electrical outlets and switche-plates for cold air, add insulation where necessary.
- Look around doors and windows for gaps and potential places where warm air can escape. Caulk or apply wather-stripping around problem draft areas.
- Consider replacing windows with energy efficient double-paned windows.
- Clean gutter and downspouts in mid-fall and double check them before winter.
- Replace the filter in your furnace.
- Have chimneys and woodstoves cleaned arly in the season. Test the flue for each fireplace for a tight seal when closed.
- Close any vents in your home that may have been opened for the warm weather.
- Disconnect hoses form outside faucets and turn off the water.
- Buy a snow shovel and other winter supplies before the messy weather hits.
- Keep extra water and canned food in storage just in case.



# The District Informer

Serving our Communities in Shelby - Henry - Spencer - Trimble

**Dark  
Chocolate  
for your  
heart**



**Folic Acid**  
making a healthy choice

**Septic Systems Revealed**

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## Director's Address

Welcome to the District Informer it has been a long holiday season and I hope you have been greeted well by the New Year. This year is already filled with exciting new challenges that I know we are prepared to meet and overcome.

The state session is getting ready to start back and the North Central District Health Department is watching a few bills that will be coming to session with great interest. A couple of bills are the Methamphetamine Lab clean-up bill-HB 94, Bike helmet requirements-HB169 and Childhood lead prevention to name a few; the North Central District Health Department and KHDA (Kentucky Health Departments Association) will be keeping a watchful eye on these bills. Other KHDA news, I have become the president of the organization; this is a responsibility that I accept and hope to manage very well. We are working on a statement to send to the state that would allow for staggered retirement of personnel that are of retirement age in 2008. This statement will allow those employees that choose to remain working past the cut-off point to do so without being penalized by a reduction in the amount of retirement they would receive for retiring in 2008. This measure would also help to retain some of the more seasoned personnel, who would keep the fountain of knowledge flowing from them to their predecessors. Another program we are working on is The Medicare Case Management Model; this model is a program in which a letter is sent to an eligible person who needs to receive Medicare, from that point the person will come to the health department for patient care and from the health department the patient will be referred to multiple types of medical services that they might not have become aware of otherwise. We will also soon begin rolling out new community outreach programs and working in great strides to bring assistance to our communities at large.

I would like to relay thanks to my fellow co-workers for the outstanding time and effort they put into their work here at the district. Without the constant dedication and assistance from everyone that works at North Central District Health Department we would be hard pressed to accomplish all the goals that we set forth and ultimately achieve. Once again thank you for all the hard work and I hope to see everyone soon.

District Director, Reneé Blair



## Oatmeal Cookies with Cranberries & Dark Chocolate

©2007 Prevention

Serves: 18

### Ingredients:

2 cups rolled oats  
1/2 cup whole grain pastry flour  
3/4 teaspoon baking soda  
1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon  
1/4 teaspoon salt  
1/2 cup brown sugar  
1/3 cup canola oil  
3 egg whites  
2 teaspoons vanilla  
3/4 cup cranberries, coarsely chopped



### Directions:

1. Preheat the oven to 350. Coat 2 large baking sheets with cooking spray.
2. In a large bowl, combine the oats, flour, baking soda, cinnamon and salt.
3. In a medium bowl, whisk the brown sugar, oil, egg whites, and vanilla extract until smooth. Stir in the cranberries and chocolate chips. Add to the flour mixture; stir just until blended.
4. Drop the batter by scant tablespoons onto the prepared baking sheets. Bake for 10 minutes, or until the cookies are golden brown.
5. Cool the cookies on racks. Store in an airtight container.

### Nutrition Info (per serving)

Calories 132 (40% from fat) | Protein 2.6g | Fat 6.2g (sat 1.2g) | Carbohydrate 17.5g | Fiber 1.7g

Cholesterol 0mg | Iron < 1mg | Sodium 97mg | Calcium 15mg  
(Original recipe called for chocolate chips, but this recipe substitutes with dark chocolate chips. Nutritional information does not reflect this change.)

## Free Tobacco Cessation Assistance

For help quitting smoking contact:  
**National QuitLine**  
**1-800-QUITNOW**  
**(1-800-784-8669)**



# Quitter's Resources to Stop Smoking

If you're a smoker chances are you have tried to quit or at least given serious thought to quitting. The fact is, most smokers will seriously try to quit several times before they actually quit successfully. There are many different methods and schools of thought on how to go about quitting for good. You may not have thought about it before, but there are two separate issues involved with quitting smoking; quitting the habit of smoking (much like quitting biting your fingernails etc.) and getting off of the drug nicotine. So in this article you will find several methods to quitting smoking that you may have heard of, some you have likely tried and some you may not have even heard of. Probably the method most everyone is familiar with is "cold turkey," which simply means you quit smoking. This is touted by many as the only way to truly to quit and stay quit and scoffed at by others who would sooner chew off their own arm as to just stop smoking altogether. Many people have quit this way and it can be done, but for most people this method just leaves them feeling irritable, bored and in a sense lonely or like something's missing. This is probably the method that most people turn to first when contemplate quitting smoking., it is by far the cheapest method and easiest to control, but this method also allows to the smoker to realize just how hooked they are on the drug nicotine.

For a lot of people they may turn to nicotine replacement products. These are products like Nicoderm patches, Nicorette gum, Commit lozenges or Nicotrol inhalers. These products work much like tapering, only you aren't smoking while using these products. You are given a specific dose of nicotine which is gradually reduced in hopes of weaning you off the drug. Many people achieve success with this method because they are allowed to break from the habit of smoking while maintaining a comfortable nicotine level within their body so that withdrawal symptoms are not as noticeable. In the short term, this method is a little bit more expensive than smoking, but thinking long term, nicotine replacement is usually a 12 week commitment whereas smoking is an interminable commitment. It is always wise to check with your doctor before beginning a nicotine replacement program as there may be side effects associated with their use. Here at the Health department we use a combination of nicotine replacement and group therapy in the "Cooper Clayton Method to Stop Smoking." This is a twelve week support group that meets once a week and has lessons that coincide with the body's reaction to the nicotine replacement. This is a very successful method to stop smoking since it combines the two highly effective methods. Some good news comes in the way of financial support for nicotine replacement products for employees under the state health care package. With enrollment into a Cooper Clayton class your insurance will pay for the cost of products after your \$5 co-pay.

Another service provided by the state, 1-800-QUITNOW, will also get you the insurance covered products. This is a relatively new service in which you call the number and an operator counsils you through quitting. They will set up times that they call you and check on your progress and give you advice. This is a totally free service that is easy and convenient.

A brand new product on the market available by prescription from your doctor is the drug Chantix. This drug works by blocking the nicotine receptor sites in your brain making the nicotine that you get from smoking unavailable to your brain, in turn aiding in the quit process. This is also a 12 week program that may be extended for a further 12 week increment depending on your level of addiction. In studies this method has shown to be up to 70% effective. Again this is available by prescription only and any side effects that may occur would be discussed with your doctor.

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Another way to avoid damage to your system is not digging in the lateral field area, not building anything over the septic site, or allowing anyone to park cars on top of the lateral field. You also don't need to use commercial septic tank additives. These products are not necessary since the body will produce all of the needed bacteria that a septic tank will need to work correctly. Another item to avoid is a garbage disposal; the garbage disposal chops food products into fine pieces which are easily mixed into the clear zone allowing them to easily flow

out of the septic tank directly into the sidewalls of the lateral lines causing them to become clogged and keep them from working correctly. Some behaviors that would be recommended to help maintain the life of a septic system would be practicing water conservation (reduced shower times, excessive water usage while washing dishes and fixing leaking toilets and faucets); redirect downspouts, gutters, foundation drains and surface water away from the septic area and

always call a professional when you have any problems. These are just a handful of behaviors that can be corrected to keep from paying the price of repairing or replacing a septic system.

If maintained correctly a septic system will work for many years without many problems. A small amount of maintenance will be required for the system keep working properly. A few of these maintenance items are; having your septic tank pumped every 3-5 years depending on the amount of use it receives, cleaning the filter in the septic tank if one is in place and getting one if you don't already have one, keeping a good stand of grass over the lateral area, avoid the common mistakes listed above and work on the wanted behaviors to aid the septic system. With a little work and a small amount of consideration for the septic system you will have years of trouble free use from this most dedicated and constantly working component of a home.

Please contact the North Central District Health Department for any questions on septic systems or any other environmental related questions. Our environmentalists numbers are as follows:

**Shelby County (502) 633-9377**  
**Henry County (502) 845-7995**

**Spencer County (502) 477-8146**  
**Trimble County (502) 255-4851**

The office hours are between 8:00 – 10:00 or leave a message and they will return the call.

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Hopefully this has helped people who want to quit smoking become aware that there is a way for them to quit smoking and that just because they tried one thing and failed at that method doesn't mean to give up hope. You can quit smoking, there is help available and you will thank yourself for quitting as soon as you start to notice the health benefits!

Although this article focused on smoking, spit or smokeless tobacco has the same adverse health problems, addiction qualities and quitting methods.

For further information from North Central District Health Department on quitting contact Gina Jesse, R.N. at (502)845-2882 ext 12.



Going red in your own fashion is about finding a personal way to take part in the fight against heart disease in women. Whether it's visiting your healthcare provider, eating a healthier diet, increasing your exercise, purchasing products that support the cause, or wearing red on National Wear Red Day — you can do something special to love your heart.

Now is the time to go red in your own fashion by spreading the Go Red For Women "Love Your Heart" message to your friends, family members and colleagues. Make your promise to be heart healthy — join the movement to help conquer heart disease, and encourage others to do the same.

Explore the website at:  
**<http://www.goredforwomen.org>** or call **1-888-MY-HEART** for ways to Go Red For Women.

impede the work the tank performs. Some systems have an added feature to the outlet of the septic tank that keeps the solids in the tank and is used as a pretreatment option for the effluent called a filter.

Once the effluent leaves the septic tank and enters the drain field (or lateral field), if designed and installed correctly, the effluent will disperse into the soil. The type of lateral field will depend on the different types of soil in the area, the depth of the good soil and other mitigating factors. Basically, the lateral field will have an equal flow or hillside box allowing for the distribution of the septic into the individual lateral beds. Once in the lateral beds the effluent will seep into the sidewalls of the soil or be evaporated into the air, the entire time the bad bacteria will continually be broken down and removed from the effluent. Additional cover soil or a curtain drain could be used to remove excess water from the surrounding system area allowing for another level of protection to the lateral lines. Having a good stand of grass over the system area will not only assist in keeping the soil from eroding out of the area, but also the grass roots will absorb some of the water and aid in breaking down the bacteria.

With the basic understanding of how a septic system works, let us turn our attention to the common signs of a failing septic system and how to prevent any future problems in your home. Sometimes the signs of a failing septic system will become very obvious to the homeowner, and other times the homeowner may never know the system is failing due to unseen problems deep in the ground. It is important to note that a failing septic system is not only a health hazard to the homeowner and their families, but will also cause irreversible harm to the surrounding environment, not to mention it is a costly endeavor to repair or replace a septic system. The obvious signs of a failing septic system would include the system backing up into the home, water standing in the yard, wet or soggy areas in the yard, bright green colored grass and/or a septic smell. With these apparent signs the homeowner should contact the local health department or a certified septic installer to assist them with correcting the problem. These professionals will assess the problem areas and work to correct them and help to prevent future troubles to the septic system. There are a few ways to avoid some common mistakes to help prevent septic problems from arising. One such way is being careful of what is flushed down the toilet. Paints, condoms, diapers, oils, disinfectants, grease, medicines and other non-biodegradable material should never be flushed down the toilet.

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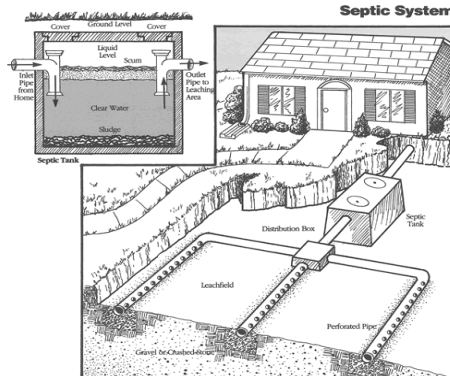


# Septic Systems revealed

Most people with a septic system understand the steps it takes for the system to work. Step one '...', step two flush, step three 'don't see it anymore, don't worry about it'. It is a fact that most homeowners do not think of their septic systems until it returns to them in the form of a wet spot in the yard or worse. The septic system is one of the most forgotten aspects of the home, but it is the most dedicated and constantly working component of a house. The septic system is always working silently in the background by breaking down bacteria and removing the water from the home, starting at the early morning showers to the last bathroom break of the night. Every homeowner must learn to keep the septic system in mind and protect it from harm so it will continue to work for many years into the future. To understand how to protect the septic system in your home, let us look at how the system works and ways to avoid many common mistakes that causes problems for the system.

A septic system is not a complicated device; it only contains two main components, the septic tank and the drain field. Understanding how the septic system works will assist a homeowner in keeping the system functioning properly and avoiding future problems. The septic system starts with a flush and disappears down the drain; the effluent or sewage leaves the home and enters into a septic tank. At this location the wastewater separates into three different levels a scum layer, the clear zone and the sludge level. The scum layer contains fats, oils, greases and other particles that if put into the septic system will clog up the sidewalls of the soil causing the system to no longer function. The sludge area is where all the solids have settled out and now reside. The clear zone is the area where all the solids have settled out and only the true effluent resides. This effluent is ready to leave the septic tank and move on into the lateral field.

Throughout the entire septic tank the bacterial breakdown of the sewage solids occurs naturally without the use of additives that you might see on the market, mainly because the homeowner produces these bacteria themselves. The bacterial breakdown is the reason individual septic systems work, this action allows for the solids to be broken down and digested permitting the continuing use of the septic tank. It is understood that most people do not think about their bacteria down in the deep dark septic tank buried in the backyard, but a homeowner must be aware of the soaps, cleaning supplies and bleach that enters into the drain, these products harm the bacteria and



# Folic Acid

## Making a healthy choice

Having a healthy baby means making sure you're healthy, too. One of the most important things you can do to help prevent serious birth defects in your baby is to get enough folic acid every day - especially before conception and during early pregnancy.

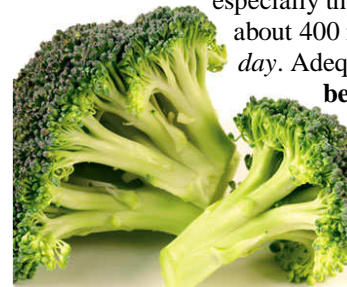
Folic acid, sometimes called folate, is a B vitamin (B9) found mostly in leafy green vegetables like kale and spinach, orange juice, and enriched grains. Repeated studies have shown that women who get 400 micrograms (0.4 milligrams) daily *prior* to conception and during early pregnancy reduce the risk that their baby will be born with a serious neural tube defect (a birth defect involving incomplete development of the brain and spinal cord) by up to 70%. The most common neural tube defects are spina bifida (an incomplete closure of the spinal cord and spinal column), anencephaly (severe underdevelopment of the brain), and encephalocele (when brain tissue protrudes out to the skin from an abnormal opening in the skull). All of these defects occur during the first 28 days of pregnancy - usually *before* a woman even knows she's pregnant.

That's why it's so important for all women of childbearing age to get enough folic acid - not just those who are planning to become pregnant. Only 50% of pregnancies are planned, so any woman who could become pregnant should make sure she's getting enough folic acid. Doctors and scientists still aren't completely sure why folic acid has such a profound effect on the prevention of neural tube defects, but they do know that this vitamin is crucial in the development of DNA. As a result, folic acid plays a large role in cell growth and development, as well as tissue formation. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that all women of childbearing age - and especially those who are planning a pregnancy - consume about 400 micrograms (0.4 milligrams) of folic acid *every day*. Adequate folic acid intake is very important **1 month before conception and at least 3 months after-**

**ward** to potentially reduce the risk of having a fetus with a neural tube defect.

So, how can you make sure you're getting enough folic acid? In 1998, the Food and

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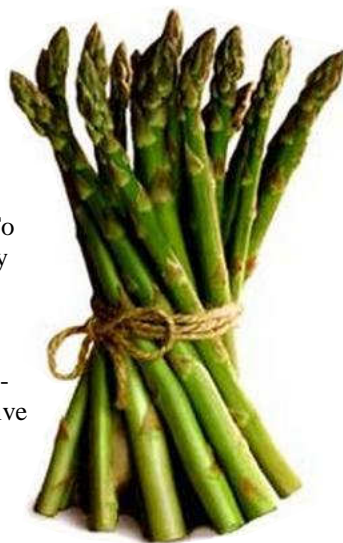
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Drug Administration mandated that folic acid be added to enriched grain products - so you can boost your intake by looking for breakfast cereals, breads, pastas, and rice containing 100% of the recommended daily folic acid allowance. But for most women, eating fortified foods isn't enough. To reach the recommended daily level, you'll probably need a vitamin supplement.

During pregnancy, you require more of *all* of the essential nutrients than you did before you became pregnant. Although prenatal vitamins shouldn't replace a well-balanced diet, taking them can give your body - and, therefore, your baby - an added boost of vitamins and minerals. Some health care providers even recommend taking a folic acid supplement in addition to your regular prenatal vitamin. Talk to your doctor about your daily folic acid intake and ask whether he or she recommends a prescription supplement, an over-the-counter brand, or both.

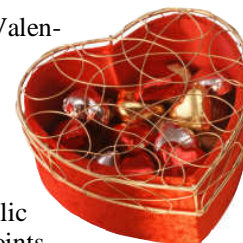
Also talk to your doctor if you've already had a pregnancy that was affected by a neural tube defect. He or she may recommend that you increase your daily intake of folic acid (even before getting pregnant) to lower your risk of having another occurrence.

Source: [http://www.kidshhealth.org/parent/pregnancy\\_newborn/pregnancy/folic\\_acid.html](http://www.kidshhealth.org/parent/pregnancy_newborn/pregnancy/folic_acid.html)



## Dark Chocolate for your heart

There may be good reason to hope for chocolates this Valentine's Day. Some new research has found that dark chocolate is actually good for your heart. One of the latest studies found that eating 3.5 ounces a day lowered blood pressure in people with hypertension. Thirteen people ate 3.5 ounces of dark chocolate every day for 2 weeks and their blood pressure dropped: the systolic (top) number by 5 points, the diastolic (bottom) by 2 points.



What about white chocolate? In the same study the same people then ate white chocolate for 2 weeks. White chocolate had no effect on blood pressure. So what's in the dark chocolate that's not in the white? Dark chocolate is loaded with antioxidant flavonoids (polyphenols) that guard your heart from disease by reducing "bad" LDL cholesterol, elevated blood pressure, and unhealthy blood clotting. Specifically a flavonoid called Epicatechin is responsible for the blood vessel benefits. The processing of chocolate ultimately reduces these flavanoids though so that they are greatly reduced in milk chocolate and absent in white chocolate. And another study finds that milk may keep your body from absorbing the antioxidants from chocolate, so having a glass may cancel out the potential health benefits from eating a moderate amount of dark chocolate.

Some of you reading this may be thinking that you've just won the golden ticket to Willy Wonka's chocolate factory for an all you can eat smorgasbord, but let's don't forget that chocolate has calories and fat and that it has had a bad name for those two little items for years. But don't give up hope, as it turns out even the fat in chocolate is not all that bad. There are three different types of fat in chocolate (who knew?) and only one is bad. Chocolate contains equal portions of oleic acid, stearic acid and palmitic acid the latter two of which are saturated fats. It is commonly known that saturated fat increases LDL, so what gives? The stearic acid has a neutral effect on cholesterol and the oleic acid is monounsaturated

(heart-healthy) and the palmitic acid does negatively affect cholesterol, but overall those effects are neutral. You do still have to worry about the calories however. Just keep in mind that when you eat chocolate you are replacing some other food with it, and hopefully not the nutritious ones. And don't forget to eat other flavanoid rich foods such as apples, red wine, tea, onions and cranberries.

So this Valentine's Day ask your sweetie to make your chocolate dark and your heart will be doubly happy.



## Teriyaki Stir-Fry

### Ingredients:

- 1 tablespoon oil
- 1/2 cup sliced yellow onions
- 1/2 cup julienne sliced carrots
- 1/2 cup red bell pepper strips
- 1 cup snow peas
- 1 package JENNIE-O TURKEY STORE® SO EASY® Teriyaki Breast Fillet (18 oz)
- Hot cooked rice

### Prep & Cooking

**Times**  
 Prep: **15 minutes**  
 Cook: **15 minutes**  
 Servings: **4**

**Directions:** Heat oil in a wok or large skillet over medium-high heat. Add onion and carrots; sauté 2 to 3 minutes. Add bell peppers and cook for 2 minutes. Add snow peas and cook for 1 to 2 minutes or until crisp tender. Remove vegetables from skillet; set aside. Add teriyaki turkey to wok. Cook turkey until warmed through. Return vegetables to skillet or wok and heat until warmed through. Serve over hot rice.

