

Hike for Health // 4 Safety Tips

HIKE FOR HEALTH: 4 SAFETY TIPS



LIVE WELL UTAH

A great way to be physically active in Utah is hiking. You can choose hikes to match the abilities of everyone in the family.

Hiking outdoors can help you get Vitamin D (don't forget the sunblock), fresh air, and can reduce stress.

Before you head out, consider the following tips for staying safe as you hike.

1. **Let someone know before you go.** Make sure to have someone expecting you after your hike. Some trails may not have rangers checking for lost hikers every day. Having someone who can inform them that you are missing can be lifesaving.
2. **Do your research and gear up for the conditions.** Find out from experts what to expect on the hike. Be prepared with the correct gear and supplies. Lots of sun and no shade? Make sure to have sunblock and a hat. Lodged logs and rocks? Be prepared to scramble or bring some climbing gear. Check road and weather conditions with the local ranger station. It is also important to be aware of weather forecasts in locations where rain may lead to a flash flood where you are hoping to hike. Be willing to cancel a trip if the conditions are risky. There may be safer alternative hikes in the area.
3. **Stay hydrated.** When temperatures are high, we lose more water as we sweat. You may need to take more water than you think. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) recommends that day hikers in the Paria Wilderness Area in Southern Utah and Northern Arizona pack at least a gallon of water per person in the summer. Check with park service, forest service, or BLM officials to find out how much water is recommended for your particular hike.
4. **Orient yourself on your way to help you get back out.** When hiking to a certain site, instructions often focus on how to get you there. This can sometimes lead

to people being confused about how to get back to the trailhead. Stop and turn around (maybe even take a picture) to help you be more familiar with how the landscape will look on your way back. Search for large land markers like mountain ranges that can help you keep going in the right direction – both in and out.

Safe hiking, and happy trails!

This article was written by LaCee Jimenez, Food \$ense (SNAP-Ed) Coordinator with Utah State University Extension

Making Family Mealtime Part of Your Daily Routine

MAKE FAMILY
MEALTIME
PART OF YOUR
DAILY ROUTINE



LIVE WELL UTAH

Want to give your kids every opportunity to thrive and succeed? Try making time in your routine for family meals.

Was it truly just one generation ago that the majority of American families ate at least one, if not two, meals together every day? In today's fast-paced world, Sunday dinner as a family is a great tradition, but it is a giant step away from more regular or daily time spent eating and socializing around the table.

In recognition of its importance, September is now branded as National Family Meals Month. Why all the fuss about sitting down together for a routine that may only last 15-20 minutes? The benefits are actually numerous.

Utah State University Extension's Food \$ense program lists a few of the benefits—especially for children whose families eat together five or more times a week as opposed to those whose families eat together two times or less each week:

- Nutrition and physical development – kids eat more fruits and vegetables, get a wider variety of nutritious foods, have lower rates of childhood obesity, and make healthier choices when they are on their own.
- Emotional development – kids are better able to manage negative emotions, are at less risk of developing eating disorders, and have more positive interactions with others.
- Social development – kids learn important turn-taking skills, have improved communication skills, and learn appropriate ways to share thoughts, feelings, and opinions.
- Academics – kids are more likely to make A's and B's in school, and they develop larger vocabularies, even more than those who read together with their parents.
- Behavior – kids are much less likely to use marijuana,

alcohol, or tobacco or have friends who use these substances and are less likely to engage in other risky behavior such as premarital sex.

If a family is new to the idea of eating meals together, there will undoubtedly be a few challenges. For example, it may be unrealistic to go from zero meals together to every day. So, set a realistic goal all family members can agree on – it may very well be Sunday dinner once a week and that is a great start. If dinner isn't the best option, perhaps having family breakfast time on Saturday may work better for you.

Here are some additional tips for making family mealtime a positive experience:

1. Plan meals ahead of time.
2. Schedule a set time for meals.
3. Involve all family members in the meal prep and clean up.
4. Turn off the TV and all other electronic devices, including phones.
5. Have pleasant conversation and leave discipline and other negative emotions for another time.

Additional helps are available online from Food \$ense, including conversation starter ideas and making the meals fun using themes (e.g. Taco Tuesday). Ideas for menu planning with recipes can be found there (e.g. citrus chicken salad, oatmeal nut pancakes and honey glazed chicken).

Learn more about family mealtime or eating healthy on a limited budget [here](#), or contact your local USU Extension office to find out about upcoming classes taught by certified nutrition education assistants in your area. From the Food \$ense homepage readers can select from a variety of additional information resources for menu planning, preparing foods, eating healthier, and incorporating physical activities in the day.

Food \$ense in most counties also has a local Facebook presence. For example in Iron County, search for “Food \$ense Iron County” or see “Food \$ense Utah State University.”

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Preparedness Ideas You Might Have Forgotten



PREPAREDNESS



IDEAS YOU MIGHT
HAVE FORGOTTEN

LIVE WELL UTAH

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- How many phone numbers do you have memorized? If your cell phone is down, so is your phone list.
 - How can you help? When you get to an evacuation gathering site, do you have skills to help take care of frightened children? Computer skills to help take down information? Carpentry skills to help rebuild or stabilize homes?
 - How many people do you know by name on your street? Can you recognize their children—more importantly, can their children recognize *you*?
 - How long can you stay cheerful?

The current buzzword in community help agency circles is **resilience**. It's the ability to cope and overcome problems. Resiliency in a community is key in recovering from disasters, or just plain hard times. Community resilience is built on a foundation of people knowing each other. If you don't know the people who live next door to you, or behind you across the fence, or on the other side of town, you can't help them and they can't help you. I've heard that when a natural disaster first hits an area, everyone bands together—the first week. By the end of the month, everyone is “all funned out,” as Cuzco says in *The Emperor's New Groove*, but the rebuilding has only just begun.

Popular Mechanics has a special edition of “The Ultimate Survival Guide” on newsstands, so you can “adapt like the Special Forces.” Ultimately, survival depends on how a community can work together using the knowledge and experience of everyone in it. That sense of community starts now: know the people around you, know the people on the other side of town, know what you can do to help once you've been helped.

It's not the Apocalypse we have to worry about: it's each

other.

Interested in learning more about preparedness? Come to the Utah Prepare Conference and Expo this Friday and Saturday, September 8 & 9 at the South Towne Expo Center in Sandy.

This article was written by Cathy Merrill, USU Extension Assistant Professor, Utah County

Dear Future Me,

A young man with short brown hair and black-rimmed glasses is sitting and looking down at a notebook he is holding. He is wearing a blue button-down shirt. The background is dark and textured. The text 'LIVE WELL UTAH' is at the top, and 'Dear Future Me, WHY YOU SHOULD WRITE A LETTER TO YOURSELF' is overlaid on the bottom half of the image.

LIVE WELL UTAH

Dear Future Me,

WHY YOU SHOULD
WRITE A LETTER
TO YOURSELF

Have you ever wondered what you will be like and what you will have accomplished 10 years from now? Are there lessons you've learned you never want to forget? How about writing a letter to your future self and connecting yourself to the future?

Dear Future Me:

How are things going? Have I been following my dreams? Have I made it?

I understand if I'm not where I thought I would be. Sometimes things work out differently than expected, but have I made the most of what I've been given?

Right now, my goals include buying a house within five years and getting settled in my career. I would like to be married and start a family, but I also understand those things don't always go according to plan. After some time, I would like to start a small business, maybe even sell products at the local farmers markets. Currently I'm not sure what product I want to sell, but I know inspiration will come as I continue to explore new ideas.

Future me, I hope I am still a saver when it comes to money. There are so many things I want to do and see, and it won't happen if I spend more than I make. But I'm trying to set good habits now so I can be more successful.

Future me, have my dreams changed? Have I myself changed and grown? I hope I have, and I hope I am a better person than I

am today. I hope I continue to help those less fortunate and become a friend to all.

Keep moving forward despite the hard and discouraging times; success is always within reach. Smile, it will help me feel better and brighten the day of those around me.

I believe in me!

Love,

Me

Writing a letter to your future self is something that can be truly beneficial. Do you ever look back on your recent past or distant past and think, "I've changed so much," or "I haven't quite accomplished what I hoped to at this point in my life?" Have you forgotten what your dreams were five or 10 years ago?

I want to invite you to write a letter to your future self. Pick a date – five, 10, 20, or however many years in the future you'd like. Include things that are meaningful to you, hopes, dreams, passions, apprehensions, fears, etc. For example, you could write about a weakness you are trying to overcome and in the years to come, you may find that though it was challenging, you were able to change.

Other things you may include as you write your letter:

- Things you've learned in life and want to keep close
- Things you'd like to improve
- Things you think you are already good at
- Motivational thoughts
- Dreams and goals
- Financial, career, and family goals and plans
- What motivates you to work hard

- Dates you are planning to have some specific things accomplished
- Ask yourself things you truly wonder about your future self
- Talk about what you are already doing to accomplish your goals

Ask, "What am I doing now to be the person I'd like to become? That is where it all starts.

Writing to yourself gives you the opportunity to check in on progress and reassess where in your life needs more work and effort. Maybe you find in 10 years you have drifted far from your goals, but the goal still remains. What are you willing to change now to reach that goal? Reading this letter to yourself can help you realign and re-evaluate how you will reach further than you ever have before.

You can write a handwritten letter and store it in an envelope labeled with the date you would like to open it. Another option is provided at www.futureme.org where you can write a letter and it will be emailed to you on the date you request.

Make It a Back -To- School Family Activity

You could even make this a family affair and invite your children to write a letter to themselves about what they want to accomplish in the coming school year. Let them set personal goals for themselves, acknowledge their strengths, and identify things they want to work on. Then it could be fun for the whole family to read their own letters at the end of the school year and see what has happened in all of your lives the past nine months.

This article was written by KJ Lamplugh, USU Extension Finance

& FCS Program Assistant, Salt Lake County

References:

<https://www.futureme.org/>