

Creating Balance with Food and Fitness

Staying fit and healthy can be a balancing act: which foods to eat more of, which to eat less of? How much physical activity is required and what kind of activity?

Helping Nebraskans find that balance is the goal of a seven-week program sponsored by the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension and in coordination with the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services and Work Well. "Creating Balance with Food & Fitness" is a series of weekly interactive sessions to be broadcast on the World Wide Web on Tuesdays in February and March.

Participants can watch the classes live, or as recorded presentations anytime their schedules allow. They can participate from home, organize their own groups, or join groups that will be participating at some Extension offices around the state. Early registration starts now and will continue until January 28.

"Creating Balance with Food & Fitness" is designed to help build skills that adults need for healthy living. Participants will learn about portion sizes, Nutrition Facts Labels, smart lunches, meal planning, recipe modification, healthy beverages and snacking, and how to be more physically active

"You can take the class alone; get together with co-workers or friends; or a combination of both, depending on your schedule," said Deb Heidzig, at UNL Kimmel Education and Research Center. "It is a great worksite wellness class that can be taken over the noon hour."

"Creating Balance with Food & Fitness" will consist of weekly webinars each Tuesday from noon until 1 p.m. CST for seven weeks (Feb. 4 through March 18, 2014). Recorded sessions will be available for those who want to watch it later at their convenience.

Either way, all that's required is a computer with an internet connection and a web browser, such as Internet Explorer or Mozilla Firefox. The on-line sessions use the Adobe Connect platform, where participants in the live webinars can submit questions to instructors and interact with other participants. There will also be on-line support where participants can post their thoughts and interact with instructors and other participants and have access to handouts, links and additional resources.

There is a fee and after Jan. 28, 2014, the registration fee increases. On-line registration is available at <http://go.unl.edu/creatingbalance>. Deb Heidzig said people who have taken earlier classes have listed some of the benefits they received. Examples:

- "... educational, engaging and very affordable. It was a great foundation for life-long changes."
- "I learned to eat healthy, make new choices, and eat more fruits and vegetables."
- "It helped me continue my journey with my new lifestyle of three years and provide me with useful tools to continue building my healthy lifestyle."
- "A great part of this program was the option to attend class or participate on your own time. It covered a variety of areas needed to complete a healthy body."
- "It was fun to meet in a small group with others of my age to eat our balanced lunches and work out during the demonstrations."

- "Sometimes it just takes an organized program with other participating to get you motivated for a positive lifestyle change"
- "The information was very useful and when the presenters shared their personal ideas, goals and struggles with us, it was great. It just wasn't our little group with our goals and struggles; it was others across the state."

For those who want to participate as part of a group, UNL Kimmel Education and Research Center is organizing groups, or is willing to do so if there is enough interest:

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