

## *Family & Community Health*

### *“Connections” in Taylor County*



## *Tips for a Healthy Halloween Party*

### **Remember Balance**

Keep in mind, Halloween is just one day a year — it's what kids eat each day that has the most impact on their nutrition and health. Instead of making candy and sweet treats off-limits, serve healthy snacks first, and bring out the sweet treats later when the kids have already filled up on more nutritious foods. One idea is to choose orange foods for the healthy options, such as carrots or baked sweet potato fries. Try adding green guacamole for a dose of heart-healthy unsaturated fat.

For a heartier choice, try black and orange tortilla roll-ups made by layering lean roast beef and low-fat provolone or mozzarella cheese on a sun-dried tomato tortilla. (For a veggie option, use refried black beans instead of roast beef.)

For those special sweet treats that you do allow, provide small portions. Choose fun-size — instead of full-size — candies, miniature cupcakes or muffins, and smaller cookies and brownies (think 2 inches). Serve each child rather than leaving treats out on a table to regulate how many servings each child consumes.

### **Limit Leftover Candy**

When the fun of Halloween is over and kids are left with lots of candy, encourage mindful enjoyment of the treats without restrictive deprivation. Try putting the candy away in a place that is out of sight and you may find that the kids forget about it after a few days. You also can mix leftover candy with whole-grain cereal, nuts and a few pretzels to make a homemade trail mix for snacks.

Make this Halloween an opportunity to teach your child to enjoy special treats, in moderation, as part of an overall healthy diet.

### **Make Your Own Healthier Treats**

Make your own treats that have some nutritional value by including a source of fruits, vegetables nuts or whole grains. Try popcorn tossed with cinnamon and sugar or chocolate-covered fresh fruit as healthier alternatives to candy. Go for pumpkin treats, such as Apple slices with a fruit dip made with yogurt mixed with canned pumpkin and pumpkin pie spice

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Source: [eatingright.org](http://eatingright.org)



# *How to choose and care for fall mums*

Fall chrysanthemums, or “mums,” are a seasonal favorite that brings vibrant color to porches, patios and landscapes each year.

Their colorful blooms range from sunny yellow and crisp white to autumn shades of orange, red and lavender. Mums have become as much a part of the fall season as pumpkins and hay bales.

Andrew King, Ph.D., ornamental specialist with Texas A&M AgriLife Research and assistant professor in the Texas A&M Department of Horticultural Sciences shares advice for buying and caring for mums so they last as long as possible.

“I grew up growing and selling chrysanthemums,” he said. “They’re widely available and synonymous with fall, but it’s not always easy to keep them looking great.”

## *How to grow and care for mums*

Choosing suitable plants is only the first step.

Providing the proper care will keep your mums thriving throughout the entire season. Follow some tips from King to grow mums with long-lasting blooms:

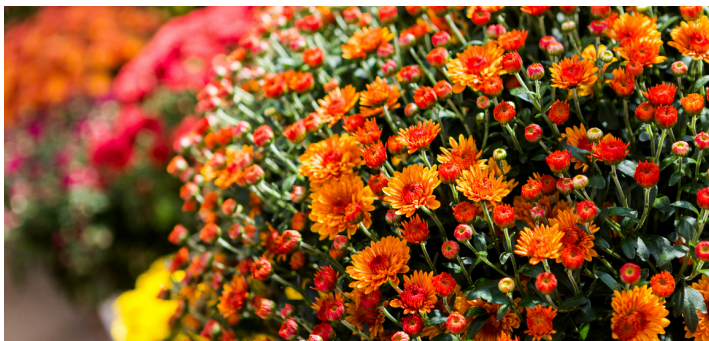
- **Water wisely.** Too much or too little water can reduce bloom production or kill your mums. Check the soil with your finger and water only when the top feels dry.
- **Provide good drainage.** Roots need well-drained soil, whether in a nursery pot, planter or garden bed.
- **Find the right light.** Mums thrive in full sun but need to adjust slowly when moving them from a shady spot. Transition them gradually to avoid stress.
- **Watch temperatures.** Mums prefer temperatures ranging from 60 to 70 degrees. Move them to the shade if it reaches 90 degrees and bring mums in containers inside before a freeze.
- **Repot if needed.** Rootbound plants appreciate more room and rich, peat-based soil.
- **Deadhead for more blooms.** Pinching off faded flowers encourages new buds and often a second round of blooms.

Source: [agrilifeextension.tamu.edu](http://agrilifeextension.tamu.edu)

## *Tips for buying the best mums*

Follow these tips from King to find the healthiest plants that best meet your needs:

- **Shop early to get the best selection.** The later you wait, the fewer fall colors and sizes you will find.
- **Choose buds over blooms.** Look for plants full of tight, green, unopened buds. They will bloom over a few weeks, providing you with more color for a longer period.
- **Avoid stressed plants.** Skip mums with yellowing leaves, spindly stems or few to no buds. Healthy, compact plants will last longer.
- **Match the plant to your purpose.** Annual mums provide a pop of color for the season while perennial plants return each year in gardens or landscapes. Your nursery can help you choose the right plant.



# *Your Breast Cancer Risk*

Your breast health journey starts with knowledge. Whether you're concerned about your risk of breast cancer, have a history of breast cancer or other cancers in your family, or are curious about genetic testing, the first step is learning more about risk.

Everyone is at risk of breast cancer, and some of us are at a higher risk than others. Learning about your breast cancer risk can empower you to make important breast care decisions to take charge of your health. Below are Susan G. Komen Breast Self-Awareness Messages.

1. **Know Your Risk.** Talk with both sides of your family to learn about your family health history. Talk with a health care provider about your risk of breast cancer.
2. **Get Screened.** Talk with a health care provider about which screening tests are right for you if you're at higher risk. Have a mammogram every year starting at age 40 if you're at average risk. Have a clinical breast exam at least every 3 years starting at age 25, and every year starting at age 40.

- 3. **Know What is Normal for You.** See a health care provider if you notice any of these breast changes: Lump, hard knot or thickening inside the breast or underarm area, swelling, warmth, redness or darkening of the breast, change in the size or shape of the breast, dimpling or puckering of the skin, itchy, scaly sore or rash on the nipple, pulling in of the nipple or other parts of the breast, nipple discharge that starts suddenly, new pain in one spot that doesn't go away.
- 4. **Make Healthy Lifestyle Choices.** Maintain a healthy weight. Make exercise part of your routine. Limit alcohol intake. Limit menopausal hormone therapy (postmenopausal hormone use). Breastfeed if you can.

HOPE



## *Breast Cancer Screening for Women*

- Talk with your doctor about which screening tests are right for you.
- Have a mammogram every year starting at age 40 if you're at average risk.
- Have a clinical breast exam at least every three years starting at age 25, and every year starting at age 40.

Talk with your doctor about your risk of breast cancer. If you're at higher risk, you may need to be screened earlier and more often than women at average risk.

Some women at higher risk may have a breast MRI recommended as part of breast cancer screening.

Source: [komen.org](http://komen.org)

## Pork Pozole

Kim Miles, CEA-FCH  
Taylor County  
1982 Lytle Way,  
Abilene, TX. 79602  
kamiles@ag.tamu.edu  
325-672-6048  
taylor.agrilife.org  
Facebook: Family &  
Community Health -  
Taylor County



2 cups low sodium chicken broth  
1 15-oz. can golden or white hominy drained  
1 4-oz. can diced green chilies

### Garnishes

- Sliced avocado
- chopped cilantro
- Diced onions
- Sliced radishes

1. Wash your hands and clean your cooking area. In a large saucepan, heat olive oil on high heat. Add pork and sear on all sides. Continue cooking pork until internal temperature reaches at least 160 ° F.
2. Add onions, peppers, garlic, oregano, cumin, and black pepper. Cook until the onions are translucent.
3. Add chicken broth. When the broth starts to boil, turn down the heat and simmer for 30 minutes.
4. Stir in hominy and green chilies; cook until pork meat is tender and stew thickens, about 30 more minutes.
5. Serve soup hot, with garnishes.

Source: [dinnertonight.tamu.edu](http://dinnertonight.tamu.edu)

**TEXAS A&M  
AGRI**LIFE  
EXTENSION

How can this course help you?

- Understand the major causes of foodborne illness and how to prevent them
- Increase the food safety knowledge of your employees
- Improve relationships with health officials
- Upon passing the certification exam, you will fulfill state requirements for Certified Food Manager status.
- Topics covered include:
- Foodborne illnesses and how they are caused
- Food safety hazards
- Sanitation regulations
- HACCP
- AND MORE!
- Registration Information (\$125.00)
- Included with your registration:
- 2-Day Course ANSI-CFP Accredited Certified Professional Food Manager exam (CFM)- ServSafe
- "Food Safety: It's Our Business" course book in English or Spanish
- You must bring an acceptable photo ID to be able to take the exam

**FOR MORE INFORMATION AND CLASS DETAILS, PLEASE CONTACT:**  
**KIM MILES**

**Contact Us**  
325-672-6048

**More Information**  
kamiles@ag.tamu.edu

**CERTIFIED FOOD  
MANAGER COURSE**



**FOOD SAFETY  
EDUCATION**  
TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION

**REGISTRATION DEADLINE:**  
**OCTOBER 12, 2026**



8 AM - 5 PM

**26-27**

OCTOBER

**TAYLOR COUNTY  
EXTENSION OFFICE**

1982 LYTLE WAY  
ABILENE, TX. 79602

### Family & Community Health "Connections" is provided by the following Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service Family & Community Health Agents:

Courtney Parrott, Brown County  
Vacant, Burnet County  
Chanie Schaffner, Coleman County  
Milissa Wright, Concho Valley  
Kelli Maberry, Jones County  
Karen DeZarn, Lampasas County  
Vacant, Llano County  
Karissa Palmer, Mason County  
Carrie Ross, McCulloch County  
Staci Winders, Nolan County  
Kandice Everitt, Runnels County  
Vacant, San Saba County  
Kim Miles, Taylor County  
Courtney Redman, Tom Green County  
Stacy Drury, D7 Regional Program Leader