

MAY NEWSLETTER

2025 | Hopkins County Cooperative Extension Services

In this issue

- SPRING CLEANING FOR YOUR MENTAL HEALTH
- FOOD PRESERVATION CANNING CLASS
- LIVING WITH ALPHA GAL SYNDROME WATCH PARTY
- MONEY WISE: BUDGET-FRIENDLY VACATION TIPS
- HEALTH BULLETIN: TICK PROBLEM PREVENTION

Life Simplified

On PodBean, Spotify, Amazon Music, & iHeartRadio:

New episodes every Tuesday!

<https://lifesimplifiedpodcast.podbean.com/>



Office Info

75 Cornwall Drive
Madisonville, KY 42431
270-821-3650
hopkins.ext@uky.edu

Meal Magic Facebook Live

Learn how to make banana pancakes on May 7th at 12 pm!

Facebook: Hopkins County Nutrition Education Program



Following us online is an easy way to keep up with Hopkins County Extension Family and Consumer Sciences

AMANDA DAME

County Extension Agent for
Family and Consumer
Sciences

Cooperative Extension Service

Agriculture and Natural Resources
Family and Consumer Sciences
4-H Youth Development
Community and Economic Development

MARTIN-GATTON COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND ENVIRONMENT

Educational programs of Kentucky Cooperative Extension serve all people regardless of economic or social status and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ethnic origin, national origin, creed, religion, political belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy, marital status, genetic information, age, veteran status, physical or mental disability or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity. Reasonable accommodation of disability may be available with prior notice. Program information may be made available in languages other than English. University of Kentucky, Kentucky State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and Kentucky Counties, Cooperating. Lexington, KY 40506



SPRING CLEANING FOR YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

Ever feel like your home is practically shouting at you to tidy up? You're not alone! With busy schedules and endless to-do lists, it's easy for clutter to pile up—along with your stress levels. While spring cleaning might seem like just another chore, it can actually work wonders for your mental health. A fresh, organized home doesn't just look good; it helps you feel better, too.

Believe it or not, clutter can contribute to feelings of anxiety, overwhelm and even depression. When you're surrounded by mess and disorganization, it's a constant reminder of everything you still need to do. On the flip side, an orderly space can foster mental clarity, reduce stress and give you a sense of calm. If you're ready to spruce up your home—and your mind—here are some practical strategies:

1. **Prioritize tasks:** Start small instead of throwing yourself into a massive cleaning frenzy. Pick one manageable job—like decluttering a drawer or organizing a single shelf—and go from there. Success with smaller tasks can motivate you to tackle bigger ones later on.
 2. **Focus on one room at a time:** It's easy to get stuck rushing from one part of the house to another, only to realize you've created more chaos. Concentrate on one area until it's done. Checking off each room provides a sweet sense of accomplishment.
 3. **Use a timer:** Got a big job ahead, like sorting through an entire closet? Break it down. Set a timer for 20 or 30 minutes and work until it goes off. This keeps you focused, helps prevent procrastination, and makes large tasks feel more approachable.
 4. **Spread out the cleaning:** Unless you thrive on marathon cleaning sessions, don't try to do everything at once. For most of us, it's easier on both mind and body to spread tasks over several days or weeks. This way, you won't burn out before you're done.
 5. **Ask for help:** Do you have more on your plate than you can handle alone? Call in reinforcements! Friends, family, or even roommates can make big projects more manageable. Plus, it can actually be fun when you're working together. Crank up the music, chat and turn it into a social event.
 6. **Mindful cleaning:** As you dust or scrub, pay attention to the sensations in your body. Feel your muscles working, notice the scents around you and focus on the moment. This kind of mindfulness can reduce stress and help you relax.
-

SPRING CLEANING FOR YOUR MENTAL HEALTH....

7. Celebrate your progress: Give yourself a pat on the back or even a small reward each time you complete a task. Recognizing your achievements keeps you motivated and encourages a positive outlook.

Remember, the goal of spring cleaning isn't just a squeaky-clean home, it's also about giving your mental health a little TLC. By chipping away at clutter, focusing on one task at a time, and inviting mindfulness into your routine, you can turn spring cleaning into a surprisingly refreshing and stress-relieving experience.

CONTACT HOPKINS COUNTY EXTENSION OFFICE FOR MORE INFORMATION ON HOW TO SPRING CLEANING YOUR HOUSE.

SOURCE: NATESE DOCKERY, CLINICAL ASSISTANT PROFESSOR AND EXTENSION SPECIALIST FOR MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Upcoming Events

- EXTENSION DISTRICT BOARD; May 15th
(11:30am - 1:00pm)
- COUNTY EXTENSION COUNCIL; May 19th
(5:30pm - 6:30pm)
- FOOD PRESERVATION CANNING CLASS; May 21st
& May 22nd (9:30am - 2:00pm)
- LIVING WITH ALPHA-GAL SYNDROME WATCH
PARTY at Baptist Health; May 29th
(6:00pm - 7:30pm)

MONEYWISE

VALUING PEOPLE. VALUING MONEY.

MAY 2025

Nichole Huff, Ph.D., CFLE | Assistant Extension Professor Family Finance and Resource Management | nichole.huff@uky.edu

THIS MONTH'S TOPIC: BUDGET-FRIENDLY VACATION TIPS

From transportation to lodging, food, or activities, it is easy for travel costs to skyrocket when taking a family trip. Planning ahead can help manage travel costs and provide extra savings while on vacation. Here are some tips for making lasting memories on road trips without breaking the bank.

LOCATIONS AND LODGING

Choose low-cost destinations and accommodations when planning your next adventure. Road trips to national or state parks are affordable with endless chances for outdoor activity. Camping can also be a way to save money on lodging while adding adventure to your trip. No matter where you choose to go, compare the cost of hotels, camping sites, and rentals. Some accommodations have extra fees for amenities, cleaning, pets, or incidentals. Also, think about staying a few miles outside of major tourist areas or going in "off" seasons to find better deals.

CUTTING FOOD COSTS

Road trips also allow you to bring food from home, which is often cheaper than buying groceries or eating out on your trip. Preparing simple meals in advance, or packing picnic lunches, can keep you from paying a high price to dine in touristy areas.



Pack drinks (including reusable water bottles) and snacks to save on overpriced convenience items. For more ways to make the most of meals while traveling, read [https://ukfcs.net/Traveling Meals](https://ukfcs.net/Traveling%20Meals).

EXPERIENCES > EXPENSES

Finding affordable activities can add to any vacation. Opt for low-cost experiences and outdoor activities like hiking, beach or lake days, and picnics. Look for free entertainment within the community including tours, movie nights, concerts, or museums. These activities allow families to make memories without overspending. Visit <https://www.kentuckytourism.com/> to explore all the vacation choices the Commonwealth has to offer!

**Cooperative
Extension Service**

Agriculture and Natural Resources
Family and Consumer Sciences
4-H Youth Development
Community and Economic Development

MARTIN-GATTON COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND ENVIRONMENT

Educational programs of Kentucky Cooperative Extension serve all people regardless of economic or social status and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ethnic origin, national origin, creed, religion, political belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy, marital status, genetic information, age, veteran status, physical or mental disability or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity. Reasonable accommodation of disability may be available with prior notice. Program information may be made available in languages other than English.
University of Kentucky, Kentucky State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and Kentucky Counties, Cooperating.
Lexington, KY 40506



Disabilities
accommodated
with prior notification.

AVOIDING TRAVEL SCAMS

The Federal Trade Commission offers tips for travelers to protect themselves from scams at <https://consumer.ftc.gov/articles/avoid-scams-when-you-travel>. Common travel scams are fake travel deals, pressuring you to make quick decisions, or asking for money by wire transfer or gift cards. Book your travel with reputable companies, be careful of unexpected requests, and stay vigilant throughout your trip to make sure you have a safe travel experience.

CONSIDER SUMMER CAMPS

One more way to make priceless summer memories while saving on travel costs is to explore summer camps. From day camps to overnight adventures, reach out to your county Extension office to learn more about summer camp opportunities in your area. Camps may be grouped by age, a special theme, or offer something for the whole family.

May is Military Family Appreciation Month



FOR MILITARY YOUTH: Military teens (13-18 years old of Active Duty, Guard, Reserve, and Retired personnel) have a chance to join adventure camps at little to no cost. These high energy, high adventure, and high experience camps are planned across the United States through Purdue Extension. Learn more: <https://extension.purdue.edu/4-H/get-involved/military-teen-adventure-camps/index.html>

FOR MILITARY FAMILIES: Kentucky Extension offers camps for military parents and their teenage children to attend together through funding from Purdue Extension. Come spend some time with your child whitewater rafting, hiking, rock climbing, ziplining, and more, all free! Each camp offers a unique outdoor experience that will allow you to build your leadership, self-confidence, and teamwork skills while engaging with the outdoors. Camps have funding available to assist with transportation costs. Learn more: <https://fcs-hes.ca.uky.edu/MTAC>

Written by: Kristen Jowers and Kerri Ashurst

Edited by: Nichole Huff and Alyssa Simms | Designed by: Kelli Thompson | Images by: Adobe Stock

Nichole Huff, Ph.D., CFLE | Assistant Extension Professor Family Finance and Resource Management | nichole.huff@uky.edu

FOOD PRESERVATION CANNING CLASS

HOPKINS COUNTY



Cooperative
Extension Service



**75 CORNWALL DRIVE
MADISONVILLE, KY 42431**



**MAY 21 - WATER BATH CANNING
MAY 22 - PRESSURE CANNING**



9:30 AM - 2:00 PM



**TO RSVP SCAN HERE OR
CALL THE OFFICE TODAY!
+270-821-3650**

**Cooperative
Extension Service**

Agriculture and Natural Resources
Family and Consumer Sciences
4-H Youth Development
Community and Economic Development

MARTIN-GATTON COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND ENVIRONMENT

Educational programs of Kentucky Cooperative Extension serve all people regardless of economic or social status and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ethnic origin, national origin, creed, religion, political belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy, marital status, genetic information, age, veteran status, physical or mental disability or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity. Reasonable accommodation of disability may be available with prior notice. Program information may be made available in languages other than English. University of Kentucky, Kentucky State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and Kentucky Counties, Cooperating. Lexington, KY 40506



Disabilities
accommodated
with prior notification.

ADULT HEALTH BULLETIN



MAY 2025

Download this and past issues
of the Adult, Youth, Parent, and
Family Caregiver Health Bulletins:
[http://fcs-hes.ca.uky.edu/
content/health-bulletins](http://fcs-hes.ca.uky.edu/content/health-bulletins)

Hopkins County
Extension Office
75 Cornwall Drive
Madisonville, KY
42431
(270) 821-3650

THIS MONTH'S TOPIC

TICK PROBLEM PREVENTION



Spring has officially sprung in Kentucky, with flowers in full bloom and the horses off to the races! While we may be excited to get outdoors and enjoy the sunshine, the warm weather also draws out other critters ... ticks. Ticks are tiny arachnids that need to feed on blood to go through their life cycle, putting the ICK in tick. These critters can transmit microbes that can cause disease in people, pets, livestock and horses, and even wildlife. While not every tick bite will lead to disease, it can take just one bite in some circumstances. That is why reducing your risk of tick bites is important. You should include these simple steps outdoors, especially when working or playing in a "tick-risky habitat."

Ways to reduce your risk of tick bites

- Wear long pants.
- Wear tall socks with pants tucked in and taped OR wear tall boots with pants tucked into boots.
- Wear long sleeves when walking through thick brush or tall grasses.

Continued on the next page ➔

**Cooperative
Extension Service**

Agriculture and Natural Resources
Family and Consumer Sciences
4-H Youth Development
Community and Economic Development

MARTIN-GATTON COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND ENVIRONMENT

Educational programs of Kentucky Cooperative Extension serve all people regardless of economic or social status and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ethnic origin, national origin, creed, religion, political belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy, marital status, genetic information, age, veteran status, physical or mental disability or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity. Reasonable accommodation of disability may be available with prior notice. Program information may be made available in languages other than English. University of Kentucky, Kentucky State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and Kentucky Counties, Cooperating. Lexington, KY 40506



Ticks can transmit microbes that can cause disease in people, pets, livestock and horses, and even wildlife.

→ Continued from the previous page

- Buy pre-treated clothing or treat clothes with permethrin.
 - If you treat your clothes, follow all label instructions and keep cats away from the wet clothing as it is toxic to cats when wet (but safe when dry!)
 - Re-treat clothing after the number of washes shown on the label.
- Use DEET or other repellents before going into a risky habitat.
 - Find the right repellent for you and your family members by using the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) tool: <https://www.epa.gov/insect-repellents/find-repellent-right-you>.
 - Remember to spray your socks and (non-rubber) boots!
- Do a tick check periodically while outdoors and soon after returning home.
 - It is easiest to do a full tick check in the shower; this will help dislodge any ticks that may not have fully attached yet.
 - Do a tick check on your pets too.
 - Focus on areas where ticks could find an easy blood meal — “hidden” locations and spots with increased blood flow are ticks’ favorites, such as the scalp, armpits, belly button, groin, behind the knees, and in between toes (especially on pets).
- Throw clothes in the wash, then the dryer, on HIGH heat.
 - Heating clothes on high for 10 to 15 minutes will kill ticks.

Take a “tick kit” with you while out and about. This will include items that help you locate, remove, and collect ticks and clean the bite site. When removing ticks, pull the skin tight, grab as close to the skin as possible with your tweezers, and pull straight up and out. Do NOT twist ticks to remove, that can break ticks and leave the mouthparts attached, potentially leading to infection.

Tick kit items

- Magnifying glass to find ticks

- Tweezers or forceps
- Bottle (a small pill bottle works well, with identifying information removed) or zip-top bag to keep ticks if you want them identified or tested
- Hand sanitizer or cleaning towelette to clean the bite site after removing the tick

Tick testing

Kentucky residents can send in ticks (found on people and pets) for testing by following instructions through the UK’s Tick Submission Program: <https://entomology.ca.uky.edu/ticksurveillance2022>

What makes a location “tick risky”?

While many different tick species live in Kentucky and prefer different habitats, they are generally found in “wilder” areas — think brush, tall grasses, or leaf litter. You can reduce your risk by walking in the middle of hiking trails, limiting time in tall grass and brush, and using personal protection measures when in these habitats.

But don’t let ticks keep you from enjoying all the beauty that Kentucky has to offer! Using a combination of these methods, you can reduce your risk of tick bites whenever you and your family are working or recreating outdoors.

For more information on reducing your tick and mosquito bite risk and creating “bite safe” spaces around your home, check out UK’s Extension Resources: <https://entomology.ca.uky.edu/ef618> and UK’s From the Woods Today series, episodes 212 and 214.

• **Episode 212:** https://youtu.be/pr2__iPdndI?si=z1u72TXK556QQAOL

• **Episode 214:** https://youtu.be/DNTXX_DIGA4?si=F-EsaDdTMW-XFdUT

Written by: Hannah Tiffin, Ph.D.,
Assistant Professor, Dept. of Entomology

Edited by: Alyssa Simms

Designed by: Rusty Manseau

Stock images: Adobe Stock





LIVING WITH ALPHA-GAL SYNDROME

WATCH PARTY

Hosted at Baptist Heath Deaconess

About the event

In response to the growing interest and concern around Alpha-Gal Syndrome, UK Extension is offering a statewide webinar opportunity.

- ✓ COVERING THE BASICS OF ALPHA-GAL SYNDROME
- ✓ TICK BITE PREVENTION
- ✓ DIET/LIFESTYLE MANAGEMENT
- ✓ LIVE Q&A SESSION

CALL TO RSVP

**Thursday,
May 29, 2025**

6:00-7:30 PM

**Baptist Health Deaconess
Madisonville; 8th Floor**

**Conference Room
200 Clinic Drive
Madisonville, KY 42431**



1-270-821-3650

Hopkins County Extension Office

Phone: (270) 821-3650

Email: hopkins.ext@uky.edu

**Cooperative
Extension Service**

Agriculture and Natural Resources
Family and Consumer Sciences
4-H Youth Development
Community and Economic Development

MARTIN-GATTON COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND ENVIRONMENT

Educational programs of Kentucky Cooperative Extension serve all people regardless of economic or social status and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ethnic origin, national origin, creed, religion, political belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy, marital status, genetic information, age, veteran status, physical or mental disability or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity. Reasonable accommodation of disability may be available with prior notice. Program information may be made available in languages other than English. University of Kentucky, Kentucky State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and Kentucky Counties, Cooperating.

Lexington, KY 40506



Disabilities
accommodated
with prior notification.