

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**Healthy weight starts with family mealtime**

Family mealtimes provide daily opportunities to help reduce the obesity epidemic in West Virginia. By offering your family proper food varieties and proportions, a healthy lifestyle can be learned and sustained long-term.

The Mountain State as the third most obese in the country. According to 2012 research, 31 percent—almost one-third of the state’s population—is considered to be obese.

West Virginia University Extension Service experts and educators encourage West Virginia families to win the battle against obesity by regularly having family mealtimes at the table. Sitting down as a family to eat together can cultivate numerous positive behaviors and control food intake, which helps control weight.

According to letsmove.gov, family mealtime and planned mealtimes also have significant impact on your child’s eating habits and behavior. Regularly scheduled meal and snack times help kids learn structure for eating. Family meals focus on eating and enjoying food and each other. Eating as a family is an opportunity to practice good behavior.

Research has proven that family meals have a positive impact on avoiding portion distortion, letting tastes control the waist by slowing down eating pace, and promoting family interaction and involvement.

Preventing obesity and maintaining healthy body weight can start at your family’s dinner table. Take steps each day to improve eating habits and behavior through family binding, support and a commitment to a healthy lifestyle.

To learn more about living a healthy lifestyle and maintaining a healthy body weight, contact your local WVU Extension Service county office or visit www.ext.wvu.edu.

WVU Extension Service’s Heart Health Movement is adapted from the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute’s campaign and is targeted to help West Virginians become educated and enabled to take charge of their own health.

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