

## Prairie Fare

By Julie Garden-Robinson, Food & Nutrition Specialist, NDSU Extension

### Take care of your muscles and joints this winter

“Take small scoops, and lift with your legs – not your back,” I said to myself.

I was clearing an unexpected snowfall and high winds that led to drifting. The city snow plow had dropped a very generous amount of snow at the end of my driveway. I needed to be somewhere in an hour.

I should have been retrained on the use of our snow blower before my husband’s knee surgery. We ran out of time for my tutorial, so I just hoped for no snow in January. Obviously, wishful thinking was not my friend.

For the past 16 years, I had turned over nearly all major snow removal duties to my husband after he recovered from his previous joint replacement. I had taken care of snow removal prior to the major flooding of 2009, and I retired from that task.

I may need to work out with weights before I work with our large snow blower again.

I went in the house and wrapped a large scarf around my head. Wearing layers during extreme cold and taking breaks is always a good plan. I had a glass of water before continuing. Caffeinated and alcohol-containing drinks are not the best options for hydration.

My kind neighbors took pity on me and arrived with a snow blower and shovel.

As I drove away, I felt the strain I had put on my muscles, but my knees and hip joints seemed to be working OK.

Most of us know many people who have had hip, knee, shoulder or ankle joint replacements. We are fortunate to live in a time when these medical procedures are available.

Diseases such as arthritis and overuse through work or sports can wear away joints. Genetics can sometimes play a strong role. Maintaining a healthy weight is important,

because extra weight can put added strain on your joints.

As my husband and I watched the pre-surgery videos to prepare for his operation, I was happy to hear the medical experts talk about eating a healthy diet. The video did not go into detail about nutrition.

Some foods can worsen inflammation and arthritis pain, which often underlies the need for joint replacement.

Which foods promote joint health and which foods might make the pain worse? Here are some tips based on arthritis and nutrition research:

Aim for a balanced diet with all five food groups, including two to three cups of fruit and two to three cups of vegetables. Have some vegetable soup or a casserole made with a variety of colorful vegetables as the ultimate winter comfort food.

Use lean meats in your food preparation, instead of highly processed meats. Lean meats, poultry and seafood are high in protein that can help nourish your muscles and joints.

Add more fish to your diet. Salmon and other fatty types of fish are rich in omega-3 fats, which may reduce inflammation.

Avoid excess sugar in your diet. Having a candy bar or highly sweetened beverages such as pop may taste good but trigger inflammation. Read and compare nutrition facts labels, which now includes “added sugars” as a component.

Consume more whole grains such as oatmeal and whole-grain breads in place of refined grains.

Choose low-fat dairy options, such as fat-free milk.

Choose fewer ultra-processed foods and fried foods that may be high in trans fats. Ultra-processed foods have very long, complicated ingredient statements on the food packages.

Cook more often “from

scratch” using one- or few-ingredient foods that you can find throughout the grocery store. For example, choose frozen or canned vegetables and fruits without added salt or sweeteners. Budget-friendly dry beans, lentils, split peas and whole-grain rice are other examples.

For more tips about eating healthfully for all body systems, visit [www.ag.ndsu.edu/nourish](http://www.ag.ndsu.edu/nourish) and check out the online and face-to-face classes being offered by NDSU Extension. For more tips on snow shoveling, read NDSU Extension’s “The Scoop on Snow Shoveling Safety.”

January is National Soup Month for good reason. Soup is warm and nourishing. Pair this soup with whole-grain rolls, baked apples and milk.

#### Split Pea Soup

2 tablespoons canola oil or olive oil

1 large onion, chopped

1 cup chopped celery

1 cup chopped peeled carrots

8 cups vegetable broth or chicken broth

2 teaspoons dried leaf marjoram

1½ cups green split peas, dry

Heat oil in heavy large pot or Dutch oven over medium-high heat. Add onion, celery and carrots. Sauté until vegetables begin to soften, about eight minutes. Add marjoram; stir one minute. Add peas, then broth and bring to boil. Reduce heat to medium-low. Partially cover pot; simmer soup until vegetables are tender and peas fall apart (about one hour), stirring often.

Makes six servings. Each serving has 260 calories, 5 grams (g) fat, 13 g protein, 42 g carbohydrate, 14 g fiber and 220 milligrams sodium.

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## Prairie Public launches annual PBS KIDS Writers Contest

This year, the age range has been expanded to include children in kindergarten through fifth grade.

Fargo, ND – Prairie Public has launched its annual PBS KIDS Writers Contest to encourage children’s reading and writing skills through hands-on, active learning.

Children in kindergarten through fifth grade in the Prairie Public broadcast area are eligible to submit stories,

and the deadline is March 31, 2025. Each story entered will be evaluated by Prairie Public staff and a team of local teachers and librarians until a First-Place Winner and three Red Ribbon Favorites are chosen for each grade level.

Every child who enters the contest will receive a Certificate of Achievement. First-Place Winners and Red Ribbon Favorites will receive prizes, and their stories will

be featured on the Prairie Public website. First-Place Winners will also have the opportunity to read their stories on Prairie Public’s statewide radio network.

Teachers who help students submit stories will be entered to win a \$100 Target gift card.

Entry instructions and complete rules are available at [prairiepublic.org/writerscontest](http://prairiepublic.org/writerscontest).

## GET SCORED

### 9 Steps to Reduce Your Risk of Fraud

Regardless of your company size or industry, you should never assume that you’re immune to bookkeeping fraud, financial statement fraud, or cyber fraud. The risk of fraud is real – just look back at the statistics!

That’s where anti-fraud controls come in. The ACFE reported that anti-fraud controls lead to lower fraud losses and quicker fraud detection, which could save you thousands of dollars.

Let’s look at some controls you can implement in your business to reduce the risk of fraud:

1. Set up your credit card and bank account access to “view only” or “bookkeeper access level.”

Put this setting to use for people that don’t need complete access – like your bookkeeper! This helps protect you from bookkeeper fraud by restricting the actions they can take on your accounts.

2. Utilize a password management tool.

Don’t share passwords to your accounts through email, Slack, or another nonsecure platform. We recommend using a password management tool like LastPass to securely share your login information.

Tools like LastPass not only provide an additional layer of security, but they also keep track of who has access to what, which is useful in the case of any suspicious activities.

3. Review your financial records on a consistent basis.

Regardless of who’s managing the books, you as a business owner should make a habit of reviewing your bank statements and credit card statements regularly.

This simple practice can act as a safeguard against bookkeeper fraud, financial statement fraud, and even cyber fraud, helping you to spot any irregularities early on.

4. Familiarize yourself with your bank’s “roles” for online bill pay.

Banks typically have different roles for online bill pay to ensure that each team member has the right level of access. Assign the least privilege necessary to each of your team members to reduce risk and prevent unauthorized transactions.

These roles vary by bank and may include things like payment approver or payment initiator.

5. Regulate who has the ability to sign checks and approve

online transactions.

Restricting who can sign checks and OK online transactions helps you keep control of your company funds. Keep this to just a few trusted people – you don’t want blank checks in just anyone’s hands.

6. Routinely check up on your payroll details.

Make it a habit to frequently check your payroll for any unusual activity, a warning sign for potential fraud.

Watch out for unexpected increases in wages, payments to employees who no longer work for you, or to those who never worked for you (also known as “ghost employees”), and excessive overtime charges. Even small, consistent discrepancies shouldn’t be ignored as they might point to an ongoing fraud.

And if you have a bookkeeper or accountant running payroll, make sure they’re not the only ones reviewing payroll. Having a different person check these details can provide an additional layer of control, and further reduce the risk of bookkeeper fraud.

7. Divide financial duties.

In other words, the people who handle bookkeeping and financial record-keeping should be different from the people who approve how money is spent. That way, mistakes or fraud are more likely to get noticed and reported.

8. Conduct regular internal audits.

Find time for consistent internal audits to guard you from bookkeeper fraud and financial statement fraud. These audits dive into your books and financial statements to spot any inconsistencies.

You can do them yourself if you’re confident in accounting, or a financial controller can perform them. Plus, these audits don’t just help you spot fraud early, they highlight areas for improvement in your business.

However, it’s important to note that while audits should occur on a regular basis, you should maintain a level of “surprise” so that potential fraudsters cannot easily anticipate them.

9. Stay up-to-date on the latest cybersecurity threats and phishing scams.

Knowing what to look out for will help you protect your business from cyber attacks and identity theft. Use reliable security software and educate your team about these risks, too, to reduce the risk of falling victim to cyber fraud or scams.

## What is Frostbite?

Frostbite is an injury caused by freezing of the skin and underlying tissues as a result of prolonged exposure to freezing or subfreezing temperatures. Frostbite can cause the loss of fingers, hands, arms, toes, feet and legs.

#### Emergency Steps

1. Check the scene safety, form an initial impression, obtain consent and put on PPE, as appropriate.

2. Check for signs and symptoms.

Blisters\*

Black Skin\*

Signs of hypothermia\*

Numbness

Skin cold to the touch

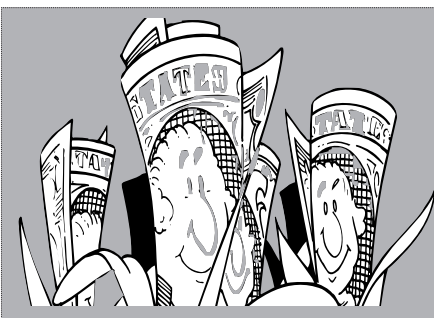
Waxy appearance

White, yellow, blue or red skin

\*Note: Signs and symptoms with a \* require immediate emergency medical treatment.

3 Call 9-1-1 and get equipment if the person requires immediate emergency medical treatment.

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